

Professors and Associate Professors in Communist Czechoslovakia – A Case Study of the Process of Awarding Academic Degrees in the 1950s

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Abstract

The paper focuses on the scientific degrees awarded by the University of Economics, Prague (UEP), in 1950s Czechoslovakia. Unique primary sources, such as minutes from UEP Scientific Board meetings and witness statements, were used in an interdisciplinary economic-historical analysis of the UEP scientific research position after the implementation of the Soviet model doctrine, through the dogmatic teaching of Marxism-Leninism in 1953. The results show that the UEP failed to increase the number of scientists and teachers, particularly associate professors and professors. Changes in the law, which saw the introduction of the CSc. (candidatus scientiarum) and DrSc. (doctor scientiarum) degrees and a “deputy” version of the associate professor degree, allowed a number of combinations for scientific career progression with the possibility to waive or skip some of the traditional requirements thereof, such as a dissertation thesis or previous scientific experience. Contrary to our expectations, political economics was not given preference at the expense of other fields of study among the new associate professors. Due to the new cadre policies, only highly politically reliable teachers were appointed. This frustrated many and prevented them from working for the universities. The lack of flexibility at the Ministry of Education, the rigid bureaucratic policies of the State Committee for Scientific Degrees, continuous changes in laws and regulations along with the total control of the Communist Party, led to a lack of experienced scientists. It also created a class of deprived teachers who had no time to immerse themselves in intense research activities due to inadequate preparation in both knowledge and methodology. In addition, a teacher’s salary was unsatisfactory and young graduates were not motivated to remain in the academic field. The results also suggest that the appointment of professors without appropriate education, pedagogical and scientific activities wasn’t an easy task. This proves that the Communist leadership was, to some extent, reluctant to completely ignore the need for a scientific background.

Keywords: Academic degrees, University of Economics in Prague, Czechoslovakia after 1948, Communist Party, Marxist-Leninism, economics, candidacy

Introduction

This study analyses the process of awarding academic degrees in the 1950s. It focuses on the only school, the University of Economics in Prague (UEP), which educated economists and managers in readiness for a career in a centrally controlled economy. Particular attention was paid to the associate professor and professor academic degrees. The awarding process combined a traditional procedure known to universities across Central Europe and a practice affected by the totalitarian regime in communist Czechoslovakia. This practice was supposed to adequately raise the number of loyal university teachers. This process is analysed in detail, including all the problems associated with the effort to increase the number of new teachers and scientists (Stellner and Szobi 2013).

The new “socialistic” intelligence was an ultimate purpose project run by the universities in Communist countries. It was based on the “production” of highly qualified and ideologically loyal cadres and a process of “suppression” which was aimed at the predominance of students from a “non-workers-class”. The universities based their teaching on Marxism-Leninism, which completely dominated economic science at the time. This approach followed the completely dogmatic Stalinist interpretation with no opportunities to relativize or challenge it (Ash, 2010, 215-245; Maňák, 2004, p. 140).

After 1945, the Communists faced the risk of losing their very limited influence in the academic senates and the professoriate. They therefore restricted participation in academics to “excellent practitioners and politicians” and enlarged the definition of professor in order to award the degree to people without the necessary qualifications. University professors could be appointed in a very specific way: “...the outstanding individuals who have proven themselves in politics, in the social field, or journalism may have, in the opinion of the Academic Senate, the other requirements waived.” (Urbášek and Pulec, 2012, p. 37). For example, a Communist functionary named Ladislav Štoll was appointed professor at the University of Political and Social Studies in Prague (Vysoká škola politická a sociální v Praze) although he had only graduated from a common middle school and taken a one-year course at a business secondary school (Štoll, 2005, p. 87; Devátá, 2010; Šmok, 2014).

In the 1950s, the associate professor and professor degrees were the highest academic qualifications a scholar could achieve in Czechoslovakia. Until 1950, the UEP professoriate had the power to award an associate professor degree. A defence took place in front of a commission and, similar to the process of a doctoral dissertation, the scientific activities of the applicant and, usually, their teaching ability were evaluated. The relevant ministry would then confirm the whole process by awarding the degree. The candidate, also called “habilitant”, had to have a research doctorate and a habilitation thesis in print. The status “private associate professor” meant a teacher, a university associate professor, who wasn’t paid for their lectures and usually had another occupation (Stellner, 2015).

Until 1950, the UEP professoriate also had the power to award the professor degree. A defence took place in front of a commission and then the president had to confirm the process and appoint the candidate. The status “extraordinary professor” signified a

professor without a chair who was paid the same as an associate professor. This traditional Central European procedure had been gradually modified from 1950 onwards until the Communists instituted the new Higher Education Act (Czechoslovakia, 1950). This act repealed the rigorous procedures for achieving the doctorate degree, abolished the private associate professor status, and eased the process of habilitation, allowing the waiver of existing conditions.

At the same time, the position of “deputy” associate professor and “deputy” professor were introduced. These new temporary university positions allowed practitioners to teach at a university without any previous scientific activities or teaching experience (ČSR Parliament 1950).

From 1956 (Czechoslovakia, 1956) both the associate professor and “scientific-pedagogical” professor degrees were separated from university jobs. Departments containing several professors replaced the existing teaching chairs managed by a professor. They could be appointed and recruited from individuals, “...who have demonstrated outstanding scientific (artistic) and teaching competence i.e. usually, from university doctors of science or associate professors” (Czechoslovakia, 1956). In contrast to most Central European countries, the new Czechoslovak professor degree became a non-job related pedagogical-academic title that could be obtained with ease by skipping some of the traditional academic requirements (Mates, Průcha and Svatoň, 1984).

The law also introduced the university scientific boards that replaced the institution of the professoriate. These reforms completely removed the last remnants of academic autonomy and introduced a new organization along the lines of the so-called Soviet model. A 1958 Ministry directive states that the competency evaluation “... for university teachers has to be based on all the fundamental aspects of political, ideological and professional maturity of the applicants i.e. aspects, which are completely equivalent and their application must be uniform and comprehensive” (The Ministry of Education and Culture, 1958).

In reality, this meant that the Communist Party’s representatives were in charge of assessing the political and ideological aspects of applicants thereby gaining an instrument with which to strengthen their control over the cadre at the universities. The professional maturity of the applicants remained in the hands of scientific boards. Upon the presentation of the habilitation thesis and the discussion of opponents’ opinions, the board voted on the appointment. However, the party representatives made the key decisions and the appointment was more of a formal procedure. In the case of the University of Economics in Prague, the associate professors (or their deputies) were approved by the city committee and professors (or their deputies) were approved by the political bureau (Stellner, 2015).

The process of awarding academic degrees was modified several times. New laws and directives were introduced to meet the requirements of the Soviet model (Tromly, 2014). This model established a new pedagogy-scientific system, which included professors, doctors of science (DrSc., doctor scientiarum), associate professors, candidates of science (CSc., candidatus scientiarum), engineers, teaching assistants, lecturers, instructors and specialized instructors.

Methods and data

This study required the combination of economic, social, cultural and political history methods. The study also utilises economic and statistical methods. This interdisciplinary approach enabled the determination of general factors i.e. an analysis, which describes and examines, in detail, the research and scientific position of the UEP in the 1950s. We used previously untapped resources preserved in the UEP archives, including professoriate records (Scientific Board records from 1956 onwards), minutes of meetings, personal memories, political speeches and diaries.

An analysis was also made of contemporary newspapers and journals. This puts high demands on the criticism of those sources, the evaluation of their documentary and historical value, and their appropriate use as valid data with high information value. Using the method of oral history, we processed the memories of witnesses - mostly university teachers. We also relied on current economic and scientific literature dealing with science and education development in communist Czechoslovakia.

Results

Year	Teachers total [Head count]	Associate professors (AP) [Head count]	Professors [Head count]	Relative shares of AP's and professors of the total teachers
1953	193	16	4	10.36 %
1958	267	37	3	14.98 %
1959	266	40	3	16.16 %

Table 1. Teachers, associate professors and professors at UEP 1953-1959¹

The UEP played an important role in education in the former Czechoslovakia. Established in 1953, the UEP became one of the key institutions where political economics was developing towards a dogmatic form of Marxism. Stalin formulated this dogma in, among other things, the work called *Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR*. The first dean of the UEP described it as a “brilliant” masterpiece (Sedlák, 1953, p. 182).

Due to a lack of good quality political economics teachers, the Communist leadership placed high priority on the initiation of the new “cadres” as soon as possible (Connelly, 2008, p. 342; Spurný, 2012). In the period 1953 – 1959, there was an approximate increase in the number of UEP teachers of 38% (see Table 1). In the same period, the number of associate professors increased to 40 (150%) and there was a reduction in the number of professors by one (25%).

The UEP numbers were significantly behind the national average. The proportion of associate professors and professors to the total number of teachers in the country was, in the academic year 1948-1949, approximately 24%. By the academic year 1958-1959, this had dropped to 18.6% (Urbášek and Pulec, 2012, p. 367-368). The UEP Scientific

¹ University of Economics, Prague (UEP) archive, *Academic year 1957/58 Annual Activity Report*, UEP Scientific Board records 1953-1959/60, 1960, 31.

Board had always examined the professional standards of applicant associate professors. At the end of the 1950s this standard was also examined by a Faculty Scientific Board, which took place during the appointment discussions regarding professors and associate professors.

There were, for example, subjects such as English or Physical Education. Between 1953 and 1959 the UEP Scientific Board examined a total of 43 appointments (38 successfully), of which 4 were for professors and 39 for associate professors. The most represented field was political economics with five proceedings. There were three proceedings in each of the fields of labour economics, industrial economics and accounting.

Out of 38 appointments, only one concerned a woman, leading to a deeper gender imbalance. This woman was Zoe Svoboda-Klusáková, an Associate Professor of Political Economics², and daughter of Army General and President of Czechoslovakia, Ludvík Svoboda (Klusáková-Svobodová, 2005). In 1957, the university and all the faculties' scientific boards were appointed. Out of the 108 members, there was only one woman, Jaromíra Zapletalová. She was an Associate Professor, and a member of the UEP and Faculty of Production Economics Scientific Board.³ At the time, only about 16.6% of students were female (Urban, 1958, p. 137). In 1966, the situation in the German Democratic Republic was similar. Of the 328 professors only 9 of them were female (2.7%) (Budde, 2003, p. 166).

The first ever UEP deputy professor appointment procedure concerned Edward Vopička. Vopička came from the Institute of Industrial Economics and led a systematic cycle of lectures on the Soviet "khozraschyot" at the Czech Technical University in Prague (CTU).⁴ In 1955, the Scientific Board approved his application to be appointed as a deputy professor at the Department of Industrial Economics in the field of Organization and Company Planning. In the same year, he took over management of the Department of Industrial Economics (Kubr, 2012).⁵ By the end of the 1950s his appointment procedure had not been completed and he didn't become a deputy professor.

In 1957, the first appointment procedure for a professor degree (full professorship, not deputy) at the university was started for Benedict Korda in the field of Statistics. His appointment was not completed until 1959.⁶ He graduated from the School of Special Sciences at CTU and gained experience at the Ministry of Fuels. At the UEP he held the position of vice-dean for academic work⁷. He subsequently completed his habilitation

² UEP archive, *Minutes of University Board meeting*, *ibid*, No. 3, Nov. 12, 1954, 2.

³ UEP archive, *UEP Scientific Board meeting*, Record No 1 (4), Jan 25, 1957, 2; UEP archive, *ibid*, 1-3.

⁴ Archive Czech Technical University in Prague (CTU), *Minutes of CTU Economic Sciences Faculty Board meeting in Prague*, Professoriate meeting protocols VŠO collection, Box 01, Folder 6, 1951-52, Jan 18, 1952, 1.

⁵ UEP archive, *Minutes of University Board meeting*. No. 10 UEP Scientific Board records 1953-1959/60, May 26, 1955. The economist Milan Kubr worked at UEP until 1965, emigrated in 1968. Among other things, he is the author and editor of the famous book: "Management consulting: A guide to the profession", which was translated into 16 languages.

⁶ UEP archive, *UEP Scientific Board meeting*, Record No. 1 (4) p. 2, UEP Scientific Board records 1953-1959/60, Jan 25, 1957, 4; He wasn't identified as a professor in the 1959 annual report. UEP archive, *Academic year 1958/59 Annual Activity Report*, *ibid*, 27.

⁷ UEP archive, *Minutes of University Board meeting*, No. 7, *ibid*, Jul 7, 1954.

and assumed leadership of the Department of Statistics (Cyhelský, 1992).⁸ Unlike Vopička, he had extensively published before the professor appointment procedure.

An analysis of the minutes of the UEP Scientific Board meetings shows that the vast majority of the proceedings before the Scientific Board ended with a unanimous vote. When a proceeding was postponed it was for administrative reasons. The proceeding for Edgar Semmel, in the field of Industrial Economics, was disrupted at the last minute by party agencies. Their orders resulted in the rejection of the proposed appointment.⁹ His colleague mentions this moment in his memoirs: "He was more open and his critiques were sharper than the high party instances were willing to tolerate after the XX Party Congress. Someone from the school reported Semmel. He therefore didn't stay at the university very long and instead decided to vacate the field and return to the ČKD factory after 'fine' recommendations from above. It also did not help him that he had been a volunteer in the Czechoslovak military units in England and fought at Dunkerque during the war, and that he had studied in Leningrad after the war!" (Kubr, 2012).

Felix Oliva and Eduard Vopička were the most frequent authors of habilitation thesis assessments. The long-term party member F. Oliva was known as "Doyen" of the UEP and a leading dogmatic. The theses in the field of Political Economics were compilations of dogmatic precepts which were published in huge quantities. Unfortunately, they failed to help the economy or the development of economic science. The second most frequent author of habilitation thesis assessments was E. Vopička, the "khozraschyot" lecturer¹⁰.

The Scientific Board records suggest that during the appointment procedures, the most important and most discussed factors were the dissertation thesis, practical experience, studies in the USSR, teaching experience, scientific publications and political activity. A lengthy discussion was a rare phenomenon. The appointment procedure for Miroslav Peroutka was an exception. One of the debaters said that his thesis "...does not fully meet the requirements," and that most of his publications concern "works of official activities."¹¹ In spite of this, he received all the votes in a secret ballot. Original scientific work was only rarely taken into account during the formal discussions of the appointment procedure. Habilitation and professorial work ceased to be a monograph, but textbooks and original scientific studies were mostly replaced by office reports, etc.

At the end of the 1950s, the UEP had to cope with yet another major change that affected the structure of scientific and pedagogical degrees. From its establishment, it had not been possible to obtain a doctoral degree (Ph.D.) at the UEP. The rigorous proceedings had already been abolished in 1950 and it was only possible to finish older on-going proceedings until 1953. These abolished proceedings in engineering, agricultural sciences and business economics included one oral exam, called "rigorosum", and the defence of a written scientific discourse, the dissertation. There was neither a special admission procedure nor a fixed study plan or a certain position for doctoral students. The universities decided themselves about doctoral graduations and the procedure was solely in their hands.

⁸ UEP archive, *Minutes of University Board meeting*, No. 9 *ibid*, Apr 5, 1955.

⁹ UEP archive, *UEP Scientific Board meeting*, Record No. 1 (4) p. 2, *ibid*, Jan 25, 1957, 5.

¹⁰ Archive CTU in Prague, *Minutes of CTU Economic Sciences Faculty Board meeting in Prague*, VŠO collection Box 01, Folder 6, 1951-52 - Professoriate meeting protocols, Jan 18, 1952, 1.

¹¹ UEP archive, *Minutes of University Board meeting*, No. 3 UEP Scientific Board records 1953-1959/60, Nov 12, 1954, 2-3.

Instead of the rigorous proceedings, the 1953 Governmental Regulation introduced a new proceeding - the candidacy of sciences (the CSc. degree, "candidatus scientiarum"), also called "aspirantura", which, according to the Soviet planning model, was called the "production of professional forces" (Albrecht, 2000, p. 274). Connelly describes the activity of the CSc. students: "Aspirants usually obtained a three-year scholarship and didn't have to participate in teaching" (Choma, 2012). During this period, they had to write a candidate's dissertation thesis and obtain the candidate of science degree. It was expected that the students would become a new type of graduate who would carry out detailed, centrally approved study plans. A series of tests and exams had to be taken including Russian and Marxism-Leninism. Aspirants went through a series of qualification meetings at the college, university and at ministry level" (Connelly 2008, p. 117; comp. Kausch, 2009, p. 158-159; Applebaum, 2015).

It was assumed that before habilitation the aspirant would achieve candidacy (CSc.). Similarly, before the professor appointment procedure the aspirants would achieve habilitation (Dr.Sc.). In this way, the Communists wanted to ensure the emergence of a new class of teachers who had undergone thorough Marxist-Leninist training. This new class started to replace the older "cadres" who had experienced traditional rigorous proceedings and were affected by the *bourgeois* "reactionary" past.

In the academic year 1956-1957, the UEP had 104 CSc. students, of which 26 had a full-time scholarship.¹² In 1956 there were 1263 CSc. graduates in Czechoslovakia, 695 full-time CSc. students and 1343 distance study CSc. students (Connelly 2008, p. 118, note 364). In the academic year 1957-1958, 28 CSc. students ended their candidacy, of whom four submitted their thesis and only two defended them.¹³ In the following school year, there were 112 CSc. students of which only 11 graduated.¹⁴ In the German Democratic Republic there were about 1650 aspirants in 1954 (Jessen, 1999, p. 59).

The UEP leadership tried to improve the quality of CSc. studies and often discussed this issue at Scientific Board meetings. However, the necessity to maximize the number of graduates was discussed more often. The statement relating to improving quality also didn't correspond to the possibility to do the habilitation without the CSc. degree.¹⁵ Due to the changes in the appointment procedures, a number of combinations for career progression were possible.

In 1957, one of the members of the Scientific Board, Václav Bernášek, complained: "There are two categories of teachers: (1) UEP graduates who are going through the candidacy, (2) practitioners, who are going through the associate professor appointment procedure and don't feel the pertinence to undergo the candidacy. We must therefore ensure that the associate professors become candidates of science and vice versa that the candidates of sciences become associate professors, however not universally."¹⁶ The quality of the "cadres" should have been influenced by the introduction of CSc. studies

¹² UEP archive, *Minutes of UEP Scientific Board meeting on UEP aspirantura progress in the academic year 1956/57*, Record No. 5 (8), *ibid*, May 28, 1957, 1.

¹³ UEP archive, *Academic year 1957/58 Annual Activity Report*, *ibid*, 1958, 21-23.

¹⁴ UEP archive, *Academic year 1958/59 Annual Activity Report*, *ibid*, 1959, 22.

¹⁵ UEP archive, *Minutes of University Board meeting*, No. 8, *ibid*, Mar 1, 1955, 1-3; For example the waivers requested a statistician Benedikt Korda. UEP archive, *Minutes of University Board meeting*, No. 10, *ibid*, May 26, 1955, 5;

¹⁶ UEP archive, *UEP Scientific Board meeting*, Record No. 5(8), *ibid*, May 28, 1957, 3.

and the DrSc. degree. However, at that time, it was possible to do the habilitation, obtain the Doc. (associate professor) degree, all without the CSc. degree. In such cases an applicant didn't have to be an author of two academic publications. One was enough and this was often substituted with a textbook.

The thesis opponent reports show that the UEP cooperated intensively with the University of Economics in Bratislava, University of Agriculture in Prague and the Czech Technical University (CTU). This was due to the field of study "Relatedness" as well as the fact that many personalities came to the UEP from CTU and maintained their previous contacts.

In the second half of the 1950s, the authorities recognized that there was a problem with the lack of appropriate "cadres". For example, in April 1956, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia plenary session concluded that the rapid growth of universities had inevitably brought some shortcomings (in comparison to 1937, the number of universities had quadrupled, the number of students had increased 2.5 times, and the university network had expanded from 4 to 17 cities).

"This allegedly resulted from the fact that university teachers were mostly young, and lacking the necessary experience because they had just started their academic careers and began acquiring their first scientifically pedagogical experience. [...] The connection of universities to common life and production was described as inadequate. Serious dissatisfaction was also expressed with the deficiencies in the educational work of university teachers who weren't properly paying attention to purposeful educational activities and tended to pursue only professional teaching, or an increase in their (often missing) professional preparedness and qualifications. [...] In the case of academic officials, it was discussed that they shouldn't be overburdened by administrative work" (Morkes, 2000, p. 60; comp. Čudová, 1997, p. 22-23).

One witness described the conditions manifesting themselves at UEP: "Our university teacher preparation in this system was, both in terms of knowledge and methodology, completely inadequate. And, I'm not even referring to practical experience. We only had the superficial and dogmatic teaching of Marxist economic theory and a few rather short exploratory courses in disciplines that were crucial for industrial economics and business management. The only possible solution was to start with everything again, from scratch and simultaneously with the job, as beginners with a heavy work load" (Kubr, 2012).

Discussion

Throughout the 1950s, the UEP leadership began to realize that they were operating under extremely unfavourable conditions, "...when it comes to teaching cadres (professors and associate professors)". It was concluded that "...for scientific work, study material is not a problem, the lack of time is..." and "The plan of scientific-research work is extensive, but fragmented..."¹⁷.

¹⁷ UEP archive, *Academic year 1957/58 Annual Activity Report*, *ibid*, 1959, 1.

Further, the lack of interest in the Russian¹⁸ language was criticized and the necessity to “broaden the Scientific Board with comrades from the factories and bring its actions in line with practice”¹⁹ was discussed. In the 1959 annual report it was stated: “In the scientific work of our departments, we are still observing the fragmentation of scientific themes, the lack of connection between scientific research and practice and a lack of discipline in the performance of scientific tasks and the like.”²⁰ The scientific-research work should have been improved by the “narrow contact with practice”, “the coordination of scientific work”²¹ and the implementation of a five-year plan for scientific-research work.²²

The collected data shows that a very small number of professors worked at UEP in the 1950s. This suggests that the appointment of professors without appropriate education, pedagogical and scientific activities wasn’t an easy task and proves that the Communist leadership was reluctant to completely ignore the need for scientific work. There is no evidence any particular subjects were favoured e.g. political economics wasn’t preferred in the proceedings at the expense of the other subjects.

Furthermore, we can conclude that the UEP significantly failed to increase the number of professors and associate professors in the first seven years of its existence. If we compare the years 1953 and 1959, there was a decline in the number of professors from 4 to 3, and an increase in the number of associate professors from 16 to 40, together with a significant increase in the number of students.

One of the reasons for this was the failure of the Communist leadership to approach academia. Most of the universities were traditional scientific institutions and symbolized the bourgeois world for Communists, a world and society they sought to revolutionize and newly constitute according to the Soviet planning model. This resulted in a series of missteps.

One of the factors was the cadre policy. The policy thwarted a number of scientists’ chances to work at universities and allowed only politically reliable teachers to enter academia.

The consequences of the bureaucratic apparatus and structural rigidities also did not help the situation. This was evident in the negative impacts of the constant changes in laws and regulations as implemented by the Ministry of Education and the State Committee for Scientific Ranks. These changes had a negative impact on teachers’ professional development and therefore on their lack of scientific experience. Teachers and scientists were overburdened by administration and various extracurricular activities and didn’t have much time to really immerse themselves in research activities.

In addition, a teacher’s salary was quite unsatisfactory in comparison to a number of manual or mere administrative occupations. Young graduates weren’t motivated to

¹⁸ UEP archive, *Minutes of University Board meeting*, No. 3, *ibid*, Nov 23, 1954, 2-3.

¹⁹ UEP archive, *UEP Scientific Board meeting*, Record No. 1, *ibid*, Oct 7, 1958, 1.

²⁰ UEP archive, *Academic year 1958/59 Annual Activity Report*, *ibid*, 1959, 16.

²¹ UEP archive, *Minutes of University Board meeting*, No. 2, *ibid*, Sep 28, 1954, 1-4.

²² UEP archive, *Minutes of University Board meeting*, No. 3, *ibid*, Nov 23, 1954, 4.

remain in the academic field. On top of that, and in contrast to the inter-war period, being in academia wasn't considered a prestigious career.

The Communists entirely controlled the appointment procedure of both the associate professor and professor degrees. In summation: (a) the Communist Party designated officials, often sworn party members, to be stationed in universities; (b) all appointment procedures were only started with the permission of the head of the department i.e. a Communist Party member; (c) the relevant faculty Communist Party organizations and officials prepared the cadre testimonies which were a key instrument with which to make decisions; (d) the Communists had a majority on the Scientific Boards; (e) the relevant Ministry was also completely under Communist Party control; (f) the President of the Czechoslovak Republic was the highest representative of the party.

On the one hand, the system provided teachers loyal to the party with a career path without having to present original or valuable scientific work. On the other hand, the system didn't completely prohibit those with actual scientific capacities to achieve the position of associate professor and professor; they just had to conform to the principles of the Communist Party's higher education policy. When the appointing procedure got to the phase where the Scientific Board discussed the opponent reports, especially when they were about to grant the associated professor degree, it was in the vast majority of cases a smooth procedure with a unanimous vote. This also meant that personalities in ideological or opinionated opposition, which is a good scientific quality, had almost no chance to undergo the procedure; moreover, when such a procedure started by coincidence, it was terminated and they had to leave the university.

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STELLNER F. a M. VOKOUN. Professors and Associate Professors in Communist Czechoslovakia – A Case Study of the Process of Awarding Academic Degrees in the 1950s. *Littera Scripta* [online]. České Budějovice: Vysoká škola technická a ekonomická v Českých Budějovicích, **8** (2), 103-115 [cit. 2015-12-17]. ISSN 1805-9112. Dostupné z: <http://portal.vstecb.cz/publishingportal/littera-scripta/rocnik/8/cislo/2>
