



Offers Difficult to Refuse: Miloš Havel and Clientele Transactional Networks in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia

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Miloš Havel was arguably the most influential person in the Czech film industry of the 1930s and the Protectorate era and, as his appointment as vice-president of the International Film Chamber (*Internationale Filmkammer*, IFK) in 1937 indicates, a person with strong connections and significant status in the European film industry. Born in 1899 into the family of wealthy civil engineering entrepreneur Václav Havel, Miloš entered the cinema business already in 1917 at age eighteen, when he became manager of the *Lucerna* cinema owned by his father. Two years later he founded a film distribution business of his own, the *American*

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Film Company. Despite some setbacks (*American Film Company* went bankrupt in 1927), Havel rose to become a highly influential person during the 1920s in the area of film production and distribution, shaping the business through his membership in an array of film organizations, unions, or chambers.¹

In 1921, Havel established the *A-B* joint-stock company with about a third of the stocks owned by himself. Although *A-B* produced movies, its main purpose was to keep the business of studios and laboratories working. The production facilities opened by *A-B* in Prague's Vinohrady district were in operation throughout the 1920s until the arrival of sound, and *A-B* company produced twenty silent movies there. However, the technological revolution of sound film demanded new infrastructure, and Miloš Havel, an enthusiastic promoter of sound cinema, launched the most influential business project of his life: the construction of new sound studios in Prague. In 1929, Havel gained control over the *A-B* company when he took ownership of 70 per cent of its shares. Ten years after its formation, the *A-B* company invested in *Barrandov Studios*, arguably one of the best equipped and most modern European film ateliers at the time. The studio complex opened its gates on 20 February 1933, from which time it significantly influenced film production standards in Czechoslovakia (and beyond).² Miloš Havel situated the new studios in the Prague district of Barrandov, where his brother, Václav Maria Havel,³ owned real estate development sites and operated a restaurant.

Despite their technological superiority, the *Barrandov Studios* under the direction of *A-B* still had to face competition from three other atelier companies in Prague. In addition to the pre-existing studios *Favorit* and *Host*, the new *Foja* ateliers were opened in 1937. Although *A-B* was by far the most productive of the four companies (in 1937, e.g., thirty-seven movies were shot at *Barrandov*, compared to eight at *Foja*, five at *Host*, and only one in *Favorit*),⁴ Havel decided to extend his activities and to renew the operation of the *Lucernafilm* company in 1937, which had originally been established by his parents and his uncle Richard Baláš in 1912. Over the next two years, *Lucernafilm* produced sixteen features, and from 1943 until the end of the war it was, together with *Nationalfilm* (headed by Karel Feix), one of only two Czech feature film production companies still in operation in the *Protektorát Čechy a Morava* (Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia). At the time of German occupation in 1939, Havel was arguably the most influential personality in the Czechoslovak national film industry, which was by then capable of producing up to fifty

movies a year. Considering that lobbying and networking were important aspects of the charismatic businessman's strategy, a close examination of the continuities and shifts in Havel's status during the radical change in political regime in 1939 and again in 1945 offers compelling insight into the measures, with which one local agent sought to maintain his network and capital, to preserve his pre-war period resources, and to keep established structures working under highly volatile circumstances. The concepts of patronage, brokers, and transactional networks provide the theoretical framework for the analysis of Havel's career during the period under consideration.⁵

BATTLES OVER THE *BARRANDOV STUDIOS*

On 16 March 1939, the day after the German military occupation of the Czech part of the Second Republic of Czechoslovakia,⁶ Hitler decreed the establishment of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia as a part of the German Reich.⁷ On the same day, Miloš Havel received a phone call from *Barrandov Studios*. The technical director of the ateliers, Ladislav Hamr, informed him that Czech fascists had arrived to the studios with the intention to 'Aryanize' the company. The action was initiated by the leader of political party *Národní obec fašistická* (National Fascist Community) Radola Gajda who had authorized a director's assistant at the studio, Josef Kraus, to implement the order for Aryanization. Gajda additionally sent a member of the Czech fascists organization *Klub červenobílých* (Club of Red-White Ones) and film functionary Zdeněk Zástěra to support Kraus, who used a gun to forcibly occupy an office and threaten studios employees. Although this Aryanization attempt ultimately failed, at least twice during the occupation (in 1940 and 1942) the Czech fascist daily *Vlajka* strove to frame this event as a moment when 'our friend Josef Kraus [...] drove the monsters out of their salons. Barrandov still remembers how the horrified representatives of "art" were running out [...]'⁸ and claimed that 'our friend Kraus [...] arrived to the film business Jericho and fired the Jews one by one'.⁹ This move to glorify the act did not name Kraus' accomplice Zdeněk Zástěra, who had in the meantime gotten into conflict with the fascist organization *Vlajka* (which published the daily of the same name) and died in 1942 in a concentration camp. In addition, the articles also fail to mention two other important facts: that Jewish directors Jiří Weiss and Walter Schorsch had already left Barrandov before these events to save their lives,¹⁰ and that the Czech fascists were in fact easily expelled

from the studios shortly after their arrival. Upon being informed about the incident, Havel asked to have Zástěra put on the phone and ordered him and his companions to leave Barrandov immediately, and they followed his demand.¹¹ Havel used his authority to solve the situation from a distance. No more than three-and-a-half months later, however, Havel faced a much stronger enemy, the Reich administration personified by Hermann Glessgen, who was responsible for the film sector at the Department of Cultural Policy Affairs at the *Amt des Reichsprotectors/Úřad říšského protektora* (Office of the Reich Protector).

On 28 June 1939, Glessgen announced to Havel that the *A-B* company was perceived by the Reich as Jewish property. This was based on a decree from the Reich Protector Konstantin von Neurath that established the rule that a company is perceived as 'Jewish' when a Jew was a member of its board of directors on 17 March 1939 or later. However, Havel had removed the only Jewish member of the board, Oswald Kosek, from the Commerce Register already the day before, on 16 March. In reaction, the Protector issued a new decree which shifted the decisive moment to 15 March and Karl Schulz was installed at Barrandov as *Treuhänder*, an ethnic German trustee appointed to take over management of a company defined as Jewish. However, Havel turned down all of Glessgen's many offers to buy-out Havel's share in the company even under rising pressure, including Glessgen's threat to imprison Havel based on allegations of homosexuality.¹²

Havel still owned a 70 per cent share of the company, while the German occupiers had sequestered 15 per cent as Jewish property and the rest was owned by minor shareholders. The Czech President of the Protectorate, Emil Hácha,¹³ intervened on Havel's behalf and objected to the installation of a *Treuhänder* at the *A-B* company, where only four of 350 employees had been Jews. Havel's position in the negotiations were also bolstered by a client that he financially 'supported' named Paul Thümmel, who was a member of the military intelligence service *Abwehr* and a double-agent (and later executed by the Nazis in April 1945). It took almost a year for the Germans to complete the take-over of the desired super-modern Barrandov Film Studios. In April 1940, a deal was finally made between Havel, *Cautio Treuhand GmbH*,¹⁴ and the Protectorate government: Havel received 6.88 mil. crowns for 51 per cent of shares in the company bought by the German trust company *Cautio* (Glessgen's original offer in summer 1939 was no more than 1.5 mil.). After the deal, the Protectorate government owned 29 per cent, and Havel retained 20 per cent of the shares. Havel was permitted to make up to five movies per year in the

studios with a 20 per cent discount on the rental price. Although Havel was not able to shape the deal with *Cautio* according to his financial objectives (he had demanded 25 mil. for his share in *A-B*), he was more successful in another negotiation due to the involvement of several of his patrons, including Jaroslav Kratochvíl, the Minister of Industry, Trade and Crafts. Kratochvíl backed Havel's compensation demands to the Ministry of Finance for losing his majority stock in *A-B*, and consequently in September 1940 Havel received another 8 mil. crowns from the Protectorate government. The final transfer of Havel's shares to the hands of the Nazis was completed in June 1941 as the *Reichsministerium für Volksaufklärung und Propaganda* (Reich Ministry of Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda) was initiating its plans to expand the studio with the construction of new buildings. In the light of these plans, Havel's ongoing participation in the company was perceived by the Office of the Reich Protector as unacceptable, and he was bought out of the last 20 per cent for 5 mil. crowns.¹⁵

HAVEL'S TRANSACTIONAL NETWORKS

The above account of the battle of nerves, paragraphs, and resources over the *Barrandov Studios* intentionally highlighted the role of Havel's patrons to focus attention on Havel's position within the local transactional networks that had been abruptly restructured after the occupation. To understand his position as a client, as well as an influential agent patronizing his own clients in the Protectorate era, however, requires going back a few years and examining the transactional networks he participated in during the earlier part of the 1930s.

Havel's networking skills enabled him to establish important political connections, including among members of the *Československá národní demokracie* (Czechoslovak National Democratic Party, ČsND), to which he belonged. As a member of this party, he had the opportunity to become a client of other party members, including Vladislav Klumpar, director of *Ústřední sociální pojišťovna* (Central Insurance Company), who mediated favourable conditions for Havel to repay debts for *A-B*.¹⁶ This affiliation also brought him into contact with personalities at the film department of *Ministerstvo průmyslu, obchodu a živností* (Ministry of Industry, Trade and Crafts), which was controlled by ČsND. The reputable weekly magazine *Přítomnost* (*Presence*), headed by the respected legend of Czech journalism Ferdinand Peroutka, reported critically about the connections between Havel's *A-B* company and the Ministry:



Fig. 6.1 Miloš Havel presents his new villa on Barrandov hill to his nephews, Ivan and Václav, 1941. (Knihovna Václava Havla/Archiv Ivana M. Havla)

Decisions about public matters of film, as well as about the financial support of private business from public sources, are made neither by the ministry's referent, nor the minister of trade representing the *Czechoslovak National Democratic Party*. These decisions are made by a national-democratic oriented private company which was able to occupy all of the most important positions in the cinema industry's alphabet [*an allusion to Havel's company, A-B*] through the artful use of the political party's influence and through personal connections.¹⁷

On a few occasions, however, Havel faced opponents, who were supported by political patrons too strong to be outmatched, for example when his production vision for the prestigious and massively expensive film project *Svatý Václav* (*St. Wenceslas*) in 1928–1929 was defeated by ministry councillor Josef Hronek, who successfully promoted his competing approach to the project.¹⁸ Nevertheless, in the period of the early 1930s, which turned out to be decisive for his career, Havel was able to push through his plans for the construction of the Barrandov Studios and to successfully lobby for the contingent regulations, which linked film import with the requirement to invest in domestic movie production in Czechoslovakia, that is with the de facto necessity to use his new studios. He was widely perceived as a phantom element pulling the strings of the industry with the help of his political patrons, including ČSND member Josef Matoušek who was the Minister of Trade from 1929 to 1934 (the period when the Barrandov Studios were built).¹⁹ This widely shared perception of Havel's position intensified during the transformative period of the early 1930s when the contingent system was introduced (in 1932) and then later replaced by a registration system (in 1934). Havel founded an organization named *Svaz filmové výroby* (Film Production Union) in 1934, which had the capacity to influence film politics. Another way of building up contacts and strengthening his influence in the cinema industry was his membership in professional organizations, including *Sdružení premiérových biografů* (Association of Premiere Cinemas) and *Filmové studio* (Film Studio)—in both of which he held the position of president—as well as *Syndikát čs. půjčoven* (Syndicate of the Czechoslovak Rental Companies), *Ústřední svaz kinematografů* (Central Union of Cinema Owners), *Filmový poradní sbor* (Film Advisory Council, FPS), *Filmová liga československá* (Czechoslovak Film League), and *Filmový klub* (Film Club). In July 1937 he was elected vice-president of the *Internationale Filmkammer* (International Film Chamber, IFK).²⁰ As a leading film journal's critique

of Havel's lobbying practices clearly suggests, Havel's networking capacity was widely recognized and contributed to his status: 'All of Miloš Havel's activities are accompanied by mystery and, very often, by the charm and influence of his personal contacts'.²¹

Another issue which significantly influenced Havel's public image, and for which he was both respected and criticized, was his intensive contacts with the German film milieu. These connections to German politics and film affairs caused clashes with the *Ministerstvo zahraničí* (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and led to public criticism. The Ministry worried about its control over foreign film policy due to Havel's tremendous influence in these affairs,²² while the weekly *Přítomnost* accused the A-B company of creating a dictatorship through the contingent regulations, which forced importers to produce one movie in Czechoslovakia for every five it imported. Since American producers withdrew from this regulated market, most of the imports under this system came from Germany. The author of the article in *Přítomnost* harshly criticized the perceived submissive policy towards the Reich, which allegedly provided fuel for separatist tendencies within the German-speaking parts of Czechoslovakia by allowing the import of such a vast amount of German productions.²³ Havel nevertheless maintained contacts with German representatives, which in July 1938 resulted in the FPS²⁴ at the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Crafts asking him and another FPS member, Emil Sirotek, to negotiate the conditions of film export with the *Reichsfilmkammer* (Reich Film Chamber) and the Reich Ministry for Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda.²⁵ In January 1939, no more than two months before the occupation, Havel held talks with directors of the German companies *Tobis* and *Klangfilm* in Prague and made agreements for shooting German films at the Barrandov Studios.²⁶

After the occupation, Havel's network was inevitably damaged, especially in the political arena. A new level had been added to the power structure that influenced film policy—or, rather, two levels, which occasionally clashed over the control of Czech cinema: the *Office of the Reichsprotector*, and Goebbels' *Reich Ministry of Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda*, both of which had dominion over the Czech government of the Protectorate.²⁷ Havel, though now limited in his resources and stripped of the Barrandov Studios, was nevertheless appointed to several representative positions within the official structures organized by the Nazi administration. For example, in July 1941 he became a member of the delegation representing the Protectorate at the IFK, plus, he remained

on the board of directors *A-B* until July 1942 even after it had been re-branded *Prag-Film* in 1941.²⁸ More importantly, he was able to maintain some of his old contacts and managed to establish new ones within the reshaped industrial and political structures. Within the Protectorate administration, his most important patrons were the lawyer and secretary to president Hácha, Josef Kliment, who lobbied on Havel's behalf within the government in the matter of Barrandov,²⁹ and Jaroslav Kratochvíl, the Minister of Industry, Trade and Crafts and friend of Miloš's brother Václav.³⁰ In addition to Kratochvíl, Václav M. Havel included another Protectorate's government minister as his personal friends: the Minister of Social and Health Administration Vladislav Klumpar, who advised both brothers in financial matters in the late 1930s.³¹

Due to a reorganization of the Protectorate government in January 1942, however, Kratochvíl and Klumpar did not remain in the government anymore. Meanwhile, Miloš Havel found some new patrons within the German administration. In addition to the above-mentioned Paul Thümmel, he also maintained close connections with another Abwehr agent named Augustin Seidl, who the Gestapo forcibly appointed as director of Havel's *Lucerna* company. Both Havel brothers admitted that Seidl occasionally helped them attain certain material advantages; for example, they were able to hunt venison and serve it in their restaurants, instead of being forced to turn it over to authorities.³²

Havel was occasionally a patron himself: he employed a number of writers in *Lucernafilm* just to provide them with regular income, or to save them from forced labour in the Reich; he provided money to support the resistance; and gave loans to employees.³³ In other cases, he provided financial support or help finding work when acquaintances, colleagues, or friends asked him for it.³⁴ Havel's resources for patronizing were rather limited. He was, nevertheless, very active and effective as a broker, able to mediate patronage from (German) individuals, who had more power and resources than he did. Havel widely employed both his personal charisma and his luxurious property in order to win the grace and support of his patrons, or to negotiate patronage for others. In general, Havel had the power to offer German officials access to the lavish world of film stars—the most notorious being Wilhelm Söhnle, who had romantic affairs with two of the biggest film stars of the era, Adina Mandlová and Nataša Gollová. Havel regularly hosted both the cream of film society and top German film culture officials either at his villa in Barrandov or at the *Filmklub* (Film Club) in the Lucerna palace.³⁶

Havel's main opponent in the post-war lawsuit, film director Elmar Klos, sarcastically commented on Havel's tactics in his memoirs:

As an experienced strategist, he knew the rules of manoeuvring, and as a skilful negotiator, he was aware of tools for building useful contacts. [...] He guessed with striking precision the greediness and self-indulgence of the overmen and sensitively identified the proper kind of corruption for each of them – from smaller or bigger favours or presents, to the pleasurable company of attractive young ladies or direct, shameless bribing. [...] At the moment when Havel's Lucernabar in Vodičkova street was in danger due to the seizing of nightclubs for the war effort, he changed the bar into an exclusive Film Club designated for social contacts between the Czech and the German actors and filmmakers [...] The spot received prominent deliveries of imported drinks and food in short supply. Thanks to this, an ideal, prospering playground was prepared for its owner to [...] spin the web of his behind-the-doors diplomacy and personal policy. It needs to be admitted that he did not use his contacts with Germans for his own good only. When necessary, he knew how to interfere in the interest of Czech artists that came under the spotlight of the occupying power. During the last years of the war he provided the bread and butter for many important writers, including those from the extreme left side of the political spectrum, and sheltered them from the labour office by signing contracts that he did not ask to be fulfilled.³⁷

This presentation provided by Klos, who definitely was not fond of Havel, offers a critical, and yet rather balanced, reflection on Havel's tactics—and even Klos admitted that Havel was brokering on numerous occasions to the benefit of Czech filmmakers and writers. The editor-in-chief of the anti-Semitic *Árijský boj* (Aryan Struggle) confessed in the post-war lawsuit against Havel that the film tycoon asked him to halt attacks on the film star Oldřich Nový and the poet Vítězslav Nezval, and that he complied with the request (Fig. 6.2).³⁸ Film director Otakar Vávra wrote with appreciation in his autobiography about the good contact Havel had to the Gestapo agent Seidl, who, according to Vávra's account, withdrew denunciations against Vávra thanks to Havel.³⁹ In January 1945, Havel publicly affirmed the patronage of Söhnel and Anton Zankl⁴⁰ for Czech filmmakers when in a meeting at FPS he thanked those two German officials (in addition to two Czech producers, Karel Feix and Vilém Brož) for their intervention at the *Německé státní ministerstvo pro Čechy a Moravu/Deutsches Staatsministerium für Böhmen und Mähren* (German



Fig. 6.2 From right: Miloš Havel, surrealist poet Vítězslav Nezval, Havel's nephews Václav and Ivan and their mother Božena Havlová, the film director František Čáp, and photographer Balcar at the Havel family residence Havlov, early 1940s. (Knihovna Václava Havla/Archiv Ivana M. Havla)

State Ministry for Bohemia and Moravia) on Oldřich Nový's behalf, advocating for his status as an 'indispensable representative' of Czech comedy and thereby saving him from being drafted into the war effort.⁴¹ In 1943, Havel asked Söhnel to shelter Czech film production from possible attacks from film reviewers. To this end, the two made a deal that all film reviews should be approved by the *Česko-moravské filmové ústředí/Böhmisch-mährische Filmzentrale* (Bohemian-Moravian Film Union) before publication; these measures were never implemented, but in December 1944 Havel proposed at an FPS meeting that he had the authority to activate this deal.⁴² This clearly implies how much Havel relied on Söhnel's patronage, as well as on his own capacity for brokering. It goes without saying that this capacity had its limits, which Havel likely respected and rather rarely tested. He did push the limits at least once, though: according to

Vávra's recollection, Havel tried to intercede on behalf of the actor Anna Letenská, who was investigated in connection with the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich, but 'the Gestapo men warned him immediately that it is a vain effort'.⁴³ The experience of being forced to sell off the Barrandov Studios also taught Havel a lesson about the limited effectivity of his resources within the new administration structures. Another area that tested his capacity to change the established rules of the game was film export. Here he had a clash of interests with another influential broker: the *Transit* company.

AMBITIONS TO EXPORT: HAVEL VERSUS TRANSIT

Film export and import played an essential role in Havel's business activities throughout his career. His negotiations with politicians, producers, and film functionaries in these matters allowed him to apply his charisma and energy, as well as his managerial and communication skills,⁴⁴ and to capitalize on his already established transaction network. In fact, Havel's very first independent activity in the film business was the import of movies from the American company *Universal* in 1918.⁴⁵

When Havel renewed the activities of the production company *Lucernafilm* in 1937 and, above all, as his control of the Barrandov Film Studios was being increasingly undermined after the inception of the Protectorate, film export and the production of potentially exportable movies became more important in his business portfolio than ever before. Furthermore, in the early stage of the occupation Czech film producers believed that the export possibilities for domestic production would increase. The fact that the very opposite turned out to be true situated Havel in a position of opposition to the Reich company *Transit*.

Representatives of the Czech film industry initially believed that the Reich's administration in the Protectorate would keep its promises for the autonomy of Czech culture, not only with regard to film production, but also in the management of film export. In September 1939, the director of the Czech production company *Nationalfilm*, Karel Feix, authored an article in a leading film journal, in which he addressed 'export opportunities' and called for the establishment of an export department within a newly proposed film chamber, which would be in charge of planning export abroad, including 'to the empire with 80 million people', that is to the Nazi Reich. According to his vision, increased profits from export

would result in an overall improvement in the quality of Czech film production.⁴⁶

Miloš Havel was no less optimistic about the possibilities of Czech film export. At an FPS meeting in 1939, he demanded the securing of financial resources which would ensure the creation of ‘films of better quality and possibly with more luxurious sets’.⁴⁷ Under these conditions, the movies ‘would have a chance to increase exploitation both in the empire and abroad; according to the promises given by the Germans, the import of Czech films to Germany [to the Sudetenland as well as to Reich, as Havel phrased it] should not be restricted if the films are of a better quality’.⁴⁸ Accordingly, the whole system of state support was adjusted to avoid the slightest delay in export: the *Ministry of Industry, Trade and Crafts* gave up any preliminary review of the supported movies, because of the risk that this could cause a delay that might jeopardize an export deal.⁴⁹

Contrarily to the hopes of Czech producers, however, the German authorities maintained a ban on film export until 1942. Even Protectorate president Emil Hácha’s direct appeal to *Reich Protector* Konstantin von Neurath in December 1940 was unable to affect the situation.⁵⁰ Shortly after that, the Reich Minister of Propaganda Joseph Goebbels, following his intention to make Germany the dominant production country for Europe, confirmed the ongoing validity of the ban.⁵¹ When the ban was finally lifted in 1942, at least thirty-four Czech movies were exported to twelve European countries.⁵² For the first time ever, audiences in a substantial portion of Europe got the chance to become acquainted with Czech movies, and Havel’s *Lucernafilm* was by far the most successful of the exporting production companies—with nineteen movies of the total thirty-four exported, it comprised more than half of the overall export volume. Nevertheless, distribution was not coordinated to the benefit of Czech producers. The German *Transit* company was the agency responsible for regulating the process and dividing the exported movies among distribution companies based in the Reich and in the occupied countries.⁵³

The company was established as *Transit Deutsche Filmimportgesellschaft* in November 1940 (renamed to *Transit-Film GmbH* in March 1942) under the control of Goebbels and the *Reichsbeauftragter für die deutsche Filmwirtschaft* (Reich Commissioner for the German Film Industry), Max Winkler, with the purpose of regulating the appropriate number of film imports into the Reich. Only two national production regions were excluded from *Transit*’s monopoly over import to the Reich: the French *Continental* company and Italian movies, which were imported by *Difu*

and *Cefi*. In general, *Transit* gave preference in delegating the imported movies to two companies—*Deutscher Filmvertrieb GmbH* and *Märkische Filmgesellschaft*—and what films remained were offered to other rental companies.⁵⁴ The Reich's leading film journal *Film-Kurier* announced that *Transit's* purpose is to prevent conflicts between producers and distributors, resolve problems with foreign exchange, and provide advice and recommendations regarding movies deemed appropriate for distribution.⁵⁵

The true role of the company, however, was quite a different one: to be an instrument of transition in service of the Reich's film policy to centralize, control, and coordinate the European market. This intention is obvious due to various indicators, including the fact that the same approach to regulation was included in Hermann Glessgen's conception of film policy for the Protectorate written already in 1939. When Glessgen took over administration of the Czech film industry, which at the time had the high productivity level of forty movies a year,⁵⁶ he needed to eliminate the risk of increasing competition for the Reich's movies on the market. To this end, he proposed plans for an export company that would have a monopoly over domestic production to create a situation whereby 'the export of inappropriate movies would simply be denied by the monopoly with no need of an official prohibition'.⁵⁷ Glessgen explained to Günther Schwarz that the purpose of this company would be to serve as a tool for influencing export and, consequently, decreasing production within the Protectorate. However, once *Transit* became capable of fulfilling this same role, there was no need for such a new company that would be focused exclusively on the Protectorate.

Czech producers perceived *Transit* as a helpful broker so long as they believed that it could open the door to the Reich's market for them. Havel negotiated with *Transit* on behalf of *Lucernafilm* and other producers (*Nationalfilm*, *Lloydfilm* and *Bromfilm*) and achieved a deal of 15,000 RM for European distribution rights and a 25 per cent share of receipts in the Reich.⁵⁸ *Transit* was, however, expected to follow the rule that foreign movies should never be more than just a supplement to German movies in the Reich's cinemas.⁵⁹ Havel's resources were by no means sufficient to affect the decisions that *Transit* made in its role as a tool for the intentions of the *Reich Ministry of Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda*.

Nevertheless, as was typical for Havel, he did attempt to use his resources to influence the situation. In 1944 he complained about *Transit* to the German State Ministry for Bohemia and Moravia and proposed a

new, Prague-based company that would be responsible for Czech film exports instead of *Transit*. He stated that another company would be able to acquire significantly higher receipts for screenings of two *Lucernafilm* movies, *Noční motýl* (Nocturnal Butterfly, 1941) and *Krok do tmy* (A Step into the Darkness, 1938), in Reich cinemas.⁶⁰ In a letter to a ministry executive at the *Reich Ministry of Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda*, Havel expressed discontent about the fact that *Transit* did not keep its promise to accept at least nine movies for import to the Reich, as only two had been accepted so far.⁶¹ Ultimately, no more than three Czech movies played in Reich cinemas during the war—*A Step into the Darkness*, *Nocturnal Butterfly*, and *Modrý závoj* (The Blue Veil, 1941) (the latter being produced by *Elekta*, not by *Lucernafilm*).⁶² Havel's resources, contacts, authority, charm, and negotiating capacities were not strong or influential enough to effectively oppose *Transit's* mandate.

AFTER THE WAR

The post-war Czechoslovak political administration managed to nationalize the entire film industry, including the Barrandov Studios, within three months from the end of the war. President Edvard Beneš issued the decree to nationalize the film industry on 11 August 1945. Havel was not involved in any of the three conceptions of post-war film industry regulations that were developed during the war simultaneously in London, Prague, and Zlín (of course, only covertly for the latter two locations). Instead, he proposed his own model to the *Národní výbor českých filmových pracovníků* (National Committee of Czech Film Workers) on 9 May 1945, whereby the state would only have a majority share of the industry; however this proposal came too late to influence the situation. The film industry came under the authority of the *Ministerstvo informací* (Ministry of Information), which was controlled by the Communist Party—a situation substantially unfavourable for Havel.⁶³ He was already arrested for five days in July 1945 by the *Komise pro vnitřní národní bezpečnost* (Commission for Internal National Security), and a criminal prosecution for charges of collaboration was launched against him in spring 1946 and discontinued in December 1947. Although he was never found formally guilty of a criminal act, the disciplinary commission at the *Svaz českých filmových pracovníků* (Czech Film Workers' Union) excluded him from any activity in the branch of cinema already in 17 October 1945 for 'acts incompatible with the national honour of Czech film workers'.⁶⁴ Those, whom Havel

had patronized in the Protectorate era now had a good chance to reciprocate the favour, and many of them did, including the poet Vítězslav Nezval, who had become the head of the film department at the *Ministry of Information*. But none of Havel's previous clients, not even Nezval, was influential enough to help Havel establish himself within the emerging political and industrial networks.⁶⁵

In response to an offer in 1949 from the Israeli ambassador to build up film studios there, Havel applied for a passport in order to travel to Israel, but his request was denied.⁶⁶ He attempted to illegally flee Czechoslovakia in July 1949, but was captured at the border and imprisoned for two years. After serving some time in prison, he was moved to a forced-labour camp and later released in November 1951 due to his health problems. A second escape attempt, in August 1951, was successful, when Havel, together with his partner Dušan Hubáček and former film director Jan Antonín Holman, managed to safely cross the border into Austria. Havel and Hubáček then settled in Munich. In Germany, Havel established the film company *Lucerna-Film GmbH*, which produced three movies, all of which were financial failures. With the help of the lawyer and former employee of the Protectorate administration Wilhelm Söhnel, Havel litigated with the *Ufa-Film GmbH* (Ufi) and Cautio over additional payment for the coerced sale of the *A-B* company and for royalties from the Protectorate era movies *A Step into the Darkness* and *Nocturnal Butterfly*, which had been distributed in post-war Germany and Austria. In 1955, Havel received significant financial compensation, but due to a series of failed business projects, he died a pauper in 1968 as the owner of a small flower shop in Munich.

CONCLUSION

Havel's activities in the 1920s and 1930s were oriented towards building up a transactional network, which made it possible for him or to patronize certain individuals, or to motivate other influential personalities (most importantly from the political realm) to patronize him. Havel had support from the only liberal party in the Czechoslovak political scene of the 1930s, the ČsND. During the Protectorate, however, Havel was deprived of the main resource of his agency, the Barrandov Studios by the end of 1940, and lost most of his Czech political patrons when the Protectorate government was reorganized in January 1942. He was allowed to keep other assets, however, including *Lucernafilm*, which produced twenty-eight movies from 1940 to 1944, the highest number made by any Czech

film production company of the era. Although he lost support within the heteronomous world of politics, he was able to maintain his transactional network inside the field of films thanks to the fact that the model of film production did not change substantially in terms of the overall system or (non-Jewish) personnel during the Protectorate. With a few exceptions, such as the Jew Hugo Haas and the leftist-avantgarde team Jiří Voskovec and Jan Werich, most of the leading Czech stars (including Adina Mandlová, Lída Baarová, Vlasta Burian, etc.) made a seamless transition to film production in the Protectorate. The occupation powers preferred the Sudeten Germans Söhnel and Zankl over Czechs (but also over Reich Germans)⁶⁷ as supposedly better mediators between the Reich film administration and the Czech film industry. Havel was able to secure patronage from both Söhnel and Zankl for himself as well as for others and, thereby, to somewhat replace the connections to political patrons that he had lost under the new conditions. Still, his capacity for agency had clearly demarcated limits: the German occupying powers would not allow their economic and political control of the Protectorate to be compromised, as the three incidents described above clearly illustrate—the forced sale of the Barrandov Studios, the restrictions on film export to the Reich, and the arrest of the actress Anna Letenská.

The second major disruption of Havel's network in mid-1945 was much more destructive and irreparable for him than the one brought by the German occupation. It also proved to be worse for him than the disruption in the aftermath of the Communist putsch in 1948, which was just a radicalization of the post-war anti-liberal, collectivist ethos, rather than a complete break or shift in values.⁶⁸ Although most of Havel's clients returned to him after 1945 and confirmed his 'national reliability', the change of the social structures was by far too radical to enable Havel to restore his position as patron and broker. The transactional networks within the film industry that had survived from the 1930s or were established by Havel during the occupation were submitted to radical reinterpretation and deemed as reprehensible, regardless of the gains and advantages they brought to Czech clients. The demand for 'retribution' against Havel came from both the film and the political fields, represented by, among others, the director Elmar Klos and the Minister of Information Václav Kopecký respectively. The ownership of production facilities was often perceived as an act of collaboration by participants in the resistance,⁶⁹ a stance that was adopted by the film workers involved in the underground planning of the nationalization of the industry, as well as by the

communist minister Kopecký, who upon his return from exile in Moscow confronted Havel with the viewpoint that having maintained financial capital during the occupation is in itself suspicious.⁷⁰ The crisis of liberal democracy throughout East-Central Europe, together with the moral delegitimization of film stars (with all of the three biggest film stars mentioned above—Mandlová, Baarová, and Burian—being imprisoned at least briefly), allowed no opportunity for Havel to restructure his transactional networks.

NOTES

1. For the history of Miloš Havel's activities in the Czech film industry, see Horníček, J. (2000) *Miloš Havel a český filmový průmysl*. MA thesis. Charles University: Praha; Wanatowiczová, K. (2013) *Miloš Havel – český filmový magnát*. Praha: Knihovna Václava Havla; Havel, V.M. (2018) *Mé vzpomínky*. Praha: Knihovna Václava Havla; and Czesany Dvořáková, T. Barrandov and its Founder Miloš Havel, in Bernd Herzogenrath (ed.), *Hollywood in Eastern Europe: The Barrandov Studios*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press (Forthcoming). When not indicated otherwise, bibliographical data in the chapter comes from these publications.
2. For the influence of the studios on Czech production and its stylistic characteristics, see Kokeš, R.D. Barrandov on the Horizon: Czech Cinema as a Regional Cinema and Problem of Continuities in (Writing) its Stylistic History, in Herzogenrath, B. (ed.), *Hollywood in Eastern Europe: The Barrandov Studios*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press. (Forthcoming)
3. Miloš's brother, and father of dramatist and politician Václav Havel.
4. Národní filmový archiv (hereafter NFA), Filmový poradní sbor, box 3, file 19, report 'Československé filmové hospodářství v r. 1937', p. 2.
5. On the role of the patronage system as a mechanism for distributing scarce goods in a totalitarian regime and the broker function assumed by leading members of cultural professions, see, e.g., Fitzpatrick, S. (2000) *Everyday Stalinism. Ordinary Life in Extraordinary Times: Soviet Russia in the 1930s*. Oxford: Oxford University Press; Tomoff, K. (2002) 'Most Respected Comrade...': Patrons, Clients, Brokers and Unofficial Networks in the Stalinist Music World. *Contemporary European History* 2 (1), pp. 33–65. Katherine Stovel and Lynette Shaw provide a good overview of discussions on transactional networks and brokerage in the field of sociology in: Stovel – Shaw (2012) Brokerage. *Annual Review of Sociology* 38, p. 140. For a more general explanation of the concepts and their merits for doing research on agency in the occupied societies, see the first chapter of this volume.

6. This was the official title of the rump Czechoslovak Republic resulting from the Munich Agreement in September 1938 and the subsequent loss of territory.
7. This was, however, only nominally a 'protectorate', with certain similarities to France's Protectorate in Tunisia since 1881. The Czech lands lost their international subjectivity and the Czech position was rather one of suzerainty. See Maršálek, P. (2002) *Protektorát Čechy a Morava. Státoprávní a politické aspekty nacistického okupačního režimu v českých zemích*. Praha: Karolinum, pp. 25–26. For more details on the occupation and its impact on the film industry, see the chapter 'How to Mediate the Bohemian-Moravian Film Culture?' in this volume.
8. -m. (16 March 1940) 16. březem – konec Židů na Barrandově in *Vlajka*.
9. *Vlajka*, 26 April 1942, quoted in Motl, S. (2006), *Mrakynad Barrandovem*. Praha: Rybka Publishers, pp. 42–43.
10. See, for example, Weiss's memoir: Weiss, J. (1995) *Bílý Mercedes*. Praha: Victoria Publishing, p. 41.
11. Havel commented on the event in his post-war testimony as follows: 'I was not there at Barrandov at that moment, but the director Hamr reported on phone about the situation, I talked to Dr. Zástěra and expelled him from the factory.' Concept of Miloš Havel's defence, 1945, quoted in Wanatowiczová (2013), p. 130.
12. Havel married in 1934. The marriage was, however, rather a matter of social conventions and his homosexuality was an open secret (and he divorced in the early stages of WWII).
13. Lawyer and president of the Supreme Administrative Court Hácha was elected as president in November 1938, more than three months before the occupation and briefly after the previous president Edvard Beneš' abdication, and he held the position until the end of the war.
14. The trust company, headed by the later Reich Delegate to the German film industry Max Winkler, was established in 1936, from which time it was used to build up the state monopoly of film production and to control production facilities. See Vande Winkel, R. & D. Welch (2007) Europe's New Hollywood? The German Film Industry Under Nazi Rule, 1933–45, pp. 18–23 in Vande Winkel, R. & D. Welch, *Cinema and the Swastika. The International Expansion of Third Reich Cinema*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
15. For a detailed history of the taking over of Barrandov Studios by *Cautio*, see Bednařík, P. (2003) *Arizace české kinematografie*. Praha: Karolinum, pp. 39–56. See also Dvořáková, T. – Klimeš, I. (2008) *Prag-Film AG 1941–1945. Im Spannungsfeld zwischen Protektorats- und Reichs-Kinematografie*. München: Richard Boorberg Verlag, pp. 39–44.
16. Wanatowiczová (2013), pp. 50–52, 124.

17. Walter, J. (1934) Filmová diktatura v ČSR – I, pp. 154–156 in *Přítomnost* 11 (10).
18. See Kos, M. (2020) Ochránit křesťanskou ideu proti čachrům židovské kšeft-kliky. *Svatý Václav* jako střet ambicí, představ a zájmů, pp. 41–60 in *Illuminace* 32 (1).
19. Wanatowiczová (2013), p. 74; Klimeš, I. (2016) *Kinematografie a stát v českých zemích 1895–1945*. Praha: Univerzita Karlova, pp. 184–185.
20. NFA, FPS, box 2, file 17, 117. session, 15 July 1937, p. 4.
21. Menčík, J. A. (1935) Cesta k reparacím, p. 1 in *Filmová politika* 32 (2).
22. Horníček (2000), pp. 71–74.
23. Walter, J. (1934) Filmová diktatura v ČSR – II, pp. 167–169 in *Přítomnost* 11 (11); Walter, J. (1934) Filmová diktatura v ČSR – III, pp. in 187–190 *Přítomnost* 11 (12).
24. An important institution which, starting in 1935, distributed state financial support to film projects.
25. 156. FPS meeting 21 July 1938, box 3, file 20; 162. FPS meeting 19 October 1938, box 3, file 21.
26. Štábla, Z. (1990) *Data a fakta z dějin čs. kinematografie 1896–1945, sv. 4*. Praha: Československý filmový ústav, p. 60.
27. See, for example, Czesany Dvořáková, T. (2002) Německá dohoda o budoucnosti kinematografie protektorátu, pp. 101–106 in *Illuminace* 14 (4). For reorganization of the culture's administration, see Czesany Dvořáková, T. (2011) *Idea filmové komory. Českomoravské filmové ústředí a kontinuita centralizačních tendencí ve filmovém oboru 30. a 40. let*. PhD Thesis. Praha: FF UK; and the chapter by Dvořáková and Mohn in this volume.
28. See Martin, B.G. (2016) *The Nazi-Fascist New Order for European Culture*. Cambridge—London: Harvard University Press, p. 190; Dvořáková & Klimeš (2008), p. 57.
29. Kliment, who was sentenced to life in prison after the war for collaboration, commented in his unpublished memoirs about the negotiation for reparations for Havel: 'I can remember these issues in detail due to the fact that I personally argued in favour of the issue to all the members of government'. Quoted in Wanatowiczová (2013), *Miloš Havel*, p. 151.
30. Havel, V.M. (2018), p. 124. For the support of film production by Kratochvíl and his ministry, see Klimeš, I. (1999) Stát a filmová kultura, pp. 125–136 in *Illuminace* 11 (2).
31. Havel, V.M. (2018), p. 723.
32. Born Gustav Sedláček, he became a Gestapo confidant in 1942 and changed his name to Seidl. See Wanatowiczová (2013), *Miloš Havel*, pp. 247–259.

33. See Wanatowiczová (2013), Miloš Havel, pp. 224–228, 253; Havel, V.M. (2018), p. 127.
34. For cases documented in the correspondence of *Lucernafilm*, see NFA, Lucernafilm, box 10, file 77. Many other examples of such patronage are provided by the testimonies collected for the post-war lawsuit against Havel. See more details on this below.
35. The Sudeten German Söhnel, a lawyer by profession, became *Treuhänder* for several Czech film companies and, more importantly, he became the head of *Verbindungsstelle des Reichsprotectors in Böhmen und Mähren bei der Böhmisch-Mährischen Filmzentrale* (Reichsprotector's Joint Office in the Bohemian-Moravian Film Union). The office was entitled to mediate any contact between the Film Union and German or foreign entities.
36. Wanatowiczová (2013), pp. 213–214, 217–221, 268–274, 277–78; Havel, V.M. (2018), p. 125.
37. Klos, E. (2011) *Dovětek za tečkou*, p. 204 in Lukeš J. (ed.), *Černobíly snář Elmara Klose*. Praha: NFA.
38. Wanatowiczová (2013), *Miloš Havel*, p. 304.
39. Vávra, O. (1996) *Podivný život režiséra*. Praha: Prostor, p. 115. Letenská was imprisoned and murdered in Mauthausen. See Čvančara, J. *Z jeviště na popravistiště. Příběh herečky Anny Čalounové-Letenské*, pp. 101–115 in *Paměť a dějiny* 2009 (2).
40. Zankl, a Sudeten German like Söhnel, replaced Glessgen as deputy head of the *Abteilung für kulturpolitische Angelegenheiten* (Department for Cultural Policy Affairs) in the Office of the Reich Protector. For more details on both Zankl and Söhnel, see the chapter by Dvořáková and Mohn in this volume.
41. FPS meeting of the union's group for film production, 11 January 1945. FPS, box 5, file 28.
42. FPS meeting of the union's group for film production, 8 December 1944. NFA, FPS, box 5, file 27.
43. Vávra, O. (1996), p. 121.
44. These characteristics are repeatedly reported in reflections on his personality by his friends and relatives, as well as by people who did not yield to his personal charm. See, for example, the characteristics described by Miloš's brother Václav and by *Lucernafilm* employee and scriptwriter Jiří Brdečka. Václav Havel: 'Miloš knew how to win real friends and admirers in the important areas of art, economy, and politics'. Havel, V.M. (2018), p. 128; Brdečka: 'He had no illusions about the people he met, but he certainly had as good insight into their qualities, as he had into film business, and was able to pick the right man for the right position'. Brdečka, J. (1992) *Pod tou starou Lucernou*. Praha: Primus, p. 66.
45. Horníček, J. (2000), pp. 15–18.

46. Feix, K. (1939) Možnost vývozu. *Filmový kurýř* 13 (35), p. 1.
47. 179. FPS meeting 2 May 1939, pp. 2–3. NFA, FPS, box 4, file 22.
48. Ibid.
49. Směrnice na podporu výroby českých celovečerních filmů (1941), §10, odst. 5, in Havelka, J. (1946) *Filmové hospodářství v zemích českých a na Slovensku 1939 až 1945*. Praha: Čs. filmové nakladatelství, p. 15.
50. Hácha complained in the talk with Neurath on 17 December 1940 that '[t]he question of the export of valuable Czech movies has not yet been decided by the Reich administration. The existing demand for the movies from abroad implies that loosening the export restriction would make foreign exchange economy stronger'. In Otáhalová, L. & Červinková, M. (1966) *Dokumenty z historie československé politiky 1939–1943*. Praha: Academia, p. 591.
51. See: Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren. Unsigned report, received on 22 April 1941. Kulturpolitik im Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren. Unsigned report, received on 2 December 1941. BArch R 109 I/1615.
52. A preliminary report on productivity of the company Transit-Film GmbH. Berlin, 31 May 1944, BArch R I/2561.
53. Drewniak, B. (1987) *Der deutsche Film 1938–1945. Ein Gesamtüberblick*. Düsseldorf: Droste, p. 816.
54. See: report on books of accounts' audit and balance of the account year 1942/43. BArch, R 109 I/2452; auditor's report on *Transit's* business activities, 6 February 1953, BArch, R109 I/4552.
55. Gründung der ‚Transit‘. *Film-Kurier* 22 (269), 15 November 1940.
56. The number of films produced in 1939 was forty-one. After the inception of the Protectorate, the level of productivity steadily decreased in accordance with the plans of the occupying administration: to thirty-one films in 1940, twenty-one in 1941, eleven in 1942, ten in 1943, and only nine in 1944. See Havelka, J. (1946), p. 27.
57. Hermann Glessgen, *Filmová politika v Čechách a na Moravě*, p. 510. See also: *Filmová produkce v protektorátu*, BArch, R 109 I/1615, a report on negotiations of *Reichsfilmkammer* representative Günther Schwarz with Hermann Glessgen on 5 December 1939, where Glessgen presented the company's role as a tool for decreasing the quantity of Czech film production.
58. NFA, Lucernafilm, box 17, file 101.
59. Auditor's report on *Transit's* business activities, 6 February 1953, BArch, R109 I/4552.
60. A letter from 28 March 1944. NFA, f. Lucernafilm, box 17, file 101.
61. Havel ministerskému radovi ministerstva lidové osvěty a propagandy Friesovi. NFA, Lucernafilm, box 17, file 101.

62. The premiere dates in the Reich were: *A Step into the Darkness* (under the German title *Schritt ins Dunkel*)—15 January 1943, *Nocturnal Butterfly* (*Nachtfalter*)—12 March 1943, and *The Blue Veil* (*Der blaue Schleier*)—8 September 1944. Screenings of *Nocturnal Butterfly* were stopped after eleven months, while *A Step into the Darkness* was withdrawn after twenty-three months. See: report on *Transit-Film GmbH*'s economic results for December 1944, BArch, R 109 I/2561; preliminary report on *Transit-Film GmbH*'s economic results, Berlin, 31 May 1944, *ibid.*; an expert witness' evaluation on *Transit-Film*'s activities, 6 February 1952, BArch, R 109 I/4552.
63. Václav Kopecký, the Minister of Information, demonstrated his attitude towards Havel immediately when they first met on 30 June 1945 at Barrandov, when, according to Václav M. Havel recollections, Kopecký reprimanded Miloš for his activities during the occupation. See Havel, V.M. (2018), p. 131.
64. Horníček, J. (2000), p. 112. See also, Černá, Z. (2016) Disciplinární rada Svazu českých filmových pracovníků a případ Oldřicha Papeže, pp. 149–157 in *Illuminace* 28 (1); Wanatowiczová (2013), p. 325.
65. Nezval testified that he was released from prison during the occupation 'only thanks to Mr. Miloš Havel, who made it possible strictly through his official contacts at influential German administrative positions. He was subordinated to German officials and he knew how to negotiate with them on behalf of Czech film and on behalf of the families of Czech film workers'. Quoted in Horníček, J. (2000), p. 111.
66. Report by *Státní bezpečnost* (State Security), 11 June 1951, Archiv bezpečnostních složek, file 23678.
67. This was a source of tensions among Reich Germans, such as Karl Schulz, the *Treuhänder* for Barrandov Studios and later *Prag-Film* director. According to an SD report, Schulz mentioned '*sudetendeutsche Arschlocher*' (Sudeten German assholes) complicating his work at Barrandov. Schulz's career ended in December 1942 when he was arrested and sentenced for black marketeering. See Bednařík, P. (2003), p. 89.
68. For an analysis of 1945 as a moment when the pre-existing cohesiveness of society and the legitimacy of its foundations were submitted to a substantial revision, see Rákosník, J. & Spurný, M. & Štaif, J. (2018) *Milníky moderních českých dějin. Krize konsenzu a legitimacy v letech 1848–1989*. Praha: Argo, pp. 167–210.
69. *Ibid.*, p. 199.
70. A letter from Miloš Havel to Václav Kopecký, 9 July 1945, in Havel, V.M. (2018), p. 158.