

“I NEVER NEGOTIATED WITH THE JEW”.
ON THE ARYANIZATIONS OF SLOVAK WRITER ĽUDOVÍT
MISTRÍK-ONDREJOV

JÁN HLAVINKA

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The study is devoted to the participation of the notable Slovak writer Ľudovít Mistrík-Ondrejov in the Aryanization of Jewish property in Slovakia in the period 1939–1945. The fact that Ľudovít Mistrík-Ondrejov profited from the Aryanization of Jewish firms is relatively well-known and was already publicized in connection with the bookshop owning Steiner family, whose business Mistrík-Ondrejov Aryanized. The present study is a comprehensive study of the Aryanizing activities of Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov, covering not only the Aryanization of the Steiner bookshop, but also of the Känzler Brothers firm in Bratislava from which Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov personally profited. The study provides hitherto unknown fact about both Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov’s Aryanizations.

Key words: Holocaust. Aryanization. Bratislava. Ľudo Mistrík-Ondrejov. Jews.

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The life story of the notable Slovak writer Ľudovít Mistrík, who published under the artistic pseudonym Ľudo Ondrejov, can serve as a convincing example for the view that every person has various biographies. There is a “public” biography directed towards the general public, and a “private” biography directed towards the circle of the closest people. Both versions are updated over time. This also clearly applies to “textbook” writers, whose lives become known to many only in the form of selected facts in literature textbooks or brief biographical texts in their works.

Today the Slovak public does not know the writer Ľudovít Mistrík-Ondrejov only as the author of the novel *Outlaw Youth (Zbojnická mladost’)*, the travel book *African Notes (Africký zápisník)* and other works, but also as a person whose “private biography” was uncovered after many years. It is known that during the Slovak Republic of 1939–1945 Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov participated in the forcible expropriation and transfer of Jewish property, described at the time

as “Aryanization”. The fact that he Aryanized the important Bratislava bookshop and printed music business of the Steiner family appeared long-ago not only in historical works,¹ but also on the pages of Slovak newspapers and magazines.²

To some degree it is possible to say that Ľudo Mistrík-Ondrejov is one of the most publicized Slovak Aryanizers. Publication of surviving documents in which he described the original owners of the firm and their relations – the Steiner family – as unnecessary for the bookshop after its Aryanization in 1942, also contributed to this. He wrote that the bookshop and the Slovak state would not be harmed by their deportation.³ However, this information does not give the whole picture of the Aryanizing activities of Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov. In this study, I will try to give a more comprehensive picture of the Aryanization activities of this well-known Slovak writer, while also considering how he saw them in this period.

The process of Aryanizing Jewish firms in Slovakia, from which Ľudovít Mistrík-Ondrejov also profited, was relatively complicated and full of twists. In practice, it started in 1939, developed against the background of the political struggle between the conservative and radical wings of the ruling Hlinka’s Slovak People’s Party (HSĽS) through 1940, culminated in 1941 and continued more slowly until the fall of the Ľudák regime.

Discussions of Aryanization and how it should be done, which already started in the period of Slovak autonomy (6 October 1938 – 14 March 1939), led, after the declaration of the independent Slovak state, to the introduction of various preparatory measures such as the introduction of temporary administrators and trustees of Jewish businesses.

In April 1940, the Parliament of the Slovak Republic passed the so-called First Aryanization Act, written by officials at the Ministry of the Economy to

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- 1 TRANČÍK, Martin. *Medzi starým a novým. História kníhkupeckej rodiny Steinerovcov v Bratislave*. (Between old and new. A history of the Steiner bookselling family of Bratislava.). Bratislava: Vydavateľstvo PT, 1997. ISBN 8096702696.
 - 2 GLEVICKÁ, Marcela. “Dedička antikvariátu Steinerovcov prežila vojnu vďaka pestúnke, keď arizátor Ondrejov poslal jej rodičov do Osvienčimu”. (“The heiress of the Steiner Bookshop survived the war thanks to a foster-mother, when Aryanizer Ondrejov sent her parents to Auschwitz”). In *Denník N* [online]. Accessible on-line: <<https://dennikn.sk/531876/dedicka-antikvariatu-steinerovcov-prezila-vojnu-vdaka-pestunke-ked-arizator-ondrejov-poslal-jej-rodicov-do-osviencimu/>> [cit 2019-01-10]; SIVÝ, Rudolf. “V detstve ju Tiso hladkal po vlasoch. Matku roztrhali psy v Osvienčime.” (“In childhood Tiso stroked her hair, her mother was torn to pieces by dogs in Auschwitz”). In *Aktuality.sk* [online]. Dostupné online: <https://www.aktuality.sk/clanok/365047/v-detstve-ju-tiso-hladkal-po-vlasoch-matku-roztrhali-psy-v-osviencime/> [cit 2019-01-10].
 - 3 TRANČÍK, ref 1, s. 208, NIŽŇANSKÝ, Eduard (eds.). *Holokaust na Slovensku 6. Deportácie v roku 1942. Dokumenty*. (The Holocaust in Slovakia 6. The deportations of 1942. Documents.). Bratislava: Nadácia Milana Šimečku, 2005, Dokument no. 321, p. 406.

regulate the whole process for the first time.⁴ It appeared that the Aryanization of firms would follow the course set by Tiso's conservative wing of the HSĽS. Only firms of Jewish owners with fewer than 20 employees were to be included in the Aryanization of firms. The First Aryanization Act gave county offices and the Ministry of the Economy the power to decide whether firms of Jewish owners would be liquidated or Aryanized, that is sold to new non-Jewish owners. Aryanizers had to be qualified to Aryanize particular firms or their majority shareholdings. They needed to have enough capital to pay for the property they acquired by Aryanization. Apparently because of the economic caution of the conservative wing of HSĽS, the First Aryanization Act gave the Jewish owners of firms in Slovakia the possibility to select and propose Aryanizers for their firms. This was described at the time as "voluntary Aryanization". The original owner of the firm could propose a particular Aryanizer to be the majority shareholder of his firm.⁵ However, everything had to be approved by the Ministry of the Economy. Otherwise, the regime already gave the original owners no official space to influence the Aryanization process, and they could only helplessly watch as official decisions took away their source of income. The First Aryanization Act became valid on 1 June 1940.⁶

The story of the Aryanization of Sigmund Steiner's Bookshop at Ventúrska 22 in Bratislava, later Aryanized by the writer L. Mistrík-Ondrejov, began to be written at around this time. What was this firm?

Around 1940 Sigmund (or Sigmund) Steiner's Bookshop was one of the most important firms in its field in Slovakia. It already had a history of almost 100 years behind it. In 1848 the Jewish tradesman Sigmund Steiner married the widow Jozefína König and acquired the small second hand bookshop, which J. König had established only recently, in 1847. Sigmund Steiner enlarged the shop, and in 1867 his eldest son Hermann joined the business. Hermann went to Leipzig for training in the book trade, and in 1878 he fully took over the business from his father, although it continued to bear the name Sigmund Steiner. It was precisely Hermann Steiner who moved the bookshop to a better address in Bratislava, on

4 Zákon (Act) no. 113/1940 Sl. z. o židovských podnikoch a Židoch zamestnaných v podnikoch. (On Jewish businesses and Jews employed in businesses.). *Slovenský zákonník* (Slovak Statute Book), year 1940, pp. 163–172; HALLON, Ludovít. Arizácia na Slovensku 1939 – 1945. In *Acta Oeconomica Pragensia*, 2007, vol. 15, no. 7, p. 151. ISSN 0572-3043.

5 For more details on the First Aryanization Act see HLAVINKA, Ján. Sklamanie „umiernejších“ Židov: Prvý arizačný zákon a jeho výsledky. (The disappointment of the "moderate" Jews: The First Aryanization Act and its results). In *Historik a dejiny : v česko-slovenskom storočí osudových dátumov. Jubileum Ivana Kamenca*. Bratislava: Historický ústav SAV vo Vede, vydavateľstve SAV, 2018, pp. 87–102. ISBN 9788022416535.

6 KAMENEC, Ivan. *Po stopách tragédie*. (On the trail of tragedy). Bratislava: Archa, 1991, p. 67. ISBN 8071150150.

Ventúrska Street, where he and his wife bought a house in 1880.⁷ After Hermann Steiner and his wife Selma, the bookshop was taken over by their two sons: Max Steiner and Jakub Jozef Steiner. From 1 January 1930, it was the Zigmund Steiner public commercial company with two partners Max Steiner and Jakub J. Steiner.⁸ The annual turnover of the company was 411,797 Kč in 1938.⁹ In comparison with other firms in this field, the Zigmund Steiner Bookshop was one of the most important in Bratislava on the eve of Aryanization.

After passing of the First Aryanization Act, the owners of the bookshop Max Steiner and Jakub J. Steiner like hundreds of other Jewish businessmen understood that they were faced with two possibilities: either to let the Ľudák regime decide on the liquidation or Aryanization of their business, or enter the process of so-called voluntary Aryanization themselves by proposing an Aryanizer of a majority share in their business and its profit. The second possibility offered the chance to keep at least some income from the firm. It was a logical but certainly not a voluntary decision.

The sources show that in the summer months of 1940, the Steiner brothers agreed on the partial Aryanization of their firm with Jozef Ján Csákos, who is mentioned in the documents as an “artistic writer”. In August 1940 in harmony with the practice of the time, the Steiner brothers and J.J. Csákos signed a Company Agreement, according to which J.J. Csákos would enter the Zigmund Steiner company as a third “Aryan partner”. After his entry, he would gain a 60% share of the property of the company and its profit. The company’s name would change to “*Zigmund Steiner, successor J. Csákos and co., seller of books and music*”.¹⁰ The Company Agreement between the Steiner brothers as partners in the Zigmund Steiner firm and J.J. Csákos was submitted to the City Notary’s Office, which had to pass it on to higher offices for approval. If they gave it and the County Office in Bratislava could get the approval of the Ministry of the Economy, an Aryanization decision in harmony with the contract would be issued and the company of the Steiner brothers would be Aryanized by J.J. Csákos.

However, other people also applied to Aryanize the bookshop without declaring an interest in agreement with the Steiners. In their case it would be

7 TRANČÍK, ref 1, p. 71.

8 United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives (hereinafter USHMMA), Record Group 57.001M Slovak Documents Related to the Holocaust (hereinafter RG-57001M), Reel 972, File 219 (hereinafter 972/219).

9 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 972/212, Oznámenie Daňovej správy Bratislava-mesto (Declaration to the Bratislava city tax office) no. 23.531/1940 from 15 Oct 1940.

10 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 972/210-211, Spoločenská zmluva (Company agreement) from 15 Aug 1940.

forcible Aryanization decreed by the authorities. The applicants included a certain Karol Maukš, who stated in his application that he was a technical writer by profession, a retired post office official, and of Slovak nationality.¹¹ There was an application from Emil Natali, who had worked as an account keeper and office workers in various commercial companies in Graz and later in Bratislava. He had experience of the book trade and declared German nationality.¹² The offices began to verify all the applicants. The correspondence between the City Notary's Office and the County Office in Bratislava shows that the decision makers were inclined to select Emil Natali to undertake the forced Aryanization of the Steiner business.

Meanwhile, however, the overall development of the anti-Jewish policy of the Ľudák regime prevented Aryanization according to the First Aryanization Act. After the German – Slovak talks on the highest level at the end of July 1940 in Salzburg, and the strengthening of the radical wing of HSĽS on the internal political stage in Slovakia, the conception of the anti-Jewish policy including Aryanization began to change in September 1940. On 3 September 1940, only a few days after the Steiners and Csákos, the Parliament of the Slovak Republic passed a constitutional act by which it empowered the government to enact decrees that would exclude the Jews from the economic and social life of Slovakia, and carry out the Aryanization of their property.¹³ The cabinet headed by Vojtech Tuka, leading personality in the radical wing of HSĽS, became the decisive factor in the anti-Jewish policy after this step. It was generally known that Tuka and his supporters did not agree with the First Aryanization Act and especially so-called voluntary Aryanization, which they attacked in the press. Prime Minister Tuka and other radicals had their own ideas about the faster and more vigorous Aryanization of firms. On 11 September 1940, the Ministry of the Economy had to stop the already prolonged Aryanization process according to the First Aryanization Act. A few days later, the Central Economic Office (Ústredný hospodársky úrad) was established by decree of the government. It was given exclusive responsibility for the Aryanization of Jewish firms, and later for the Aryanization of all other types of property with the exception of agricultural property.¹⁴

11 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 972/264, Žiadosť Karola Maukša o nariadenie arizácie žid. podniku. (Application from Karol Maukš to Aryanize a Jewish business.)

12 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 972/256, 259, Žiadosť Emila Nataliho o nariadenie arizácie žid. podniku, Životopis E. Nataliho, (Application from Emil Natali to Aryanize a Jewish business. Curriculum vitae of E. Natali.)

13 Ústavný zákon (Constitutional Statute) no. 210/1940 Sl. z., ktorým sa vláda splnomocňuje, aby činila opatrenia vo veciach arizácie. (By which the government is empowered to enact measures concerning Aryanization). *Slovenský zákonník*, year 1940, p. 343.

14 For more details see HLAVINKA, Ján. Vznik Ústredného hospodárskeho úradu a určenie

The regional state offices, which had been really flooded with various Aryanization applications and company contracts like that concluded between the Steiner brothers and J.J. Csákos, had to gradually hand over the whole agenda to the newly established Central Economic Office. This also happened in the case of the documents connected with the Aryanization of the Steiner Bookshop, which came to the Central Economic Office in the middle of December 1940. Meanwhile, in November 1940, the government issued the government decree with force of law, also known to historiography as the Second Aryanization Act, which radically changed the mechanism for the Aryanization of “Jewish businesses”.¹⁵ Voluntary Aryanization was no longer possible. Aryanization was decided with final validity exclusively by the Central Economic Office, which had the exclusive right to decide who would obtain a particular “Jewish business” and under what conditions. Augustín Morávek had the decisive position at the CEO as its chairman. Before the establishment of the office he was adviser to Prime Minister V. Tuka on Aryanization.¹⁶

After taking over the documents, the CEO did not act for a relatively long time, as was typical for the initial period of its activity, which was filled with the process of establishing the office, appointing personnel, working out new Aryanization norms and so on. Meanwhile, however, the number of people interested in Aryanizing the Steiner Bookshop increased. Karol Terebessy submitted an Aryanization application in February 1941. He had completed his studies at a commercial academy, but not at the higher commercial college, and on the day of submitting the application had no proper employment. He declared Hungarian nationality. In contrast to Karol Maukš and Emil Natali, who declared themselves propertyless, Karol Terebessy stated that he had capital of 30,000

jeho kompetencií do leta 1942. (The Central Economic Office and the setting of its powers up to summer 1942.). In SOKOLOVIČ, Peter (eds.). *Od Salzburgu do vypuknutia Povstania : Slovenská republika 1939 – 1945 očami mladých historikov VIII*. Bratislava: Ústav pamäti národa, 2009, pp. 63–92. ISBN 9788089335213; FIAMOVÁ, Martina. “*Slovenská zem patrí do slovenských rúk*”. *Arizácia pozemkového vlastníctva židovského obyvateľstva na Slovensku v rokoch 1939 – 1945*. (“Slovak land belongs in Slovak hands”. The Aryanization of land ownership in Slovakia, 1939–1945). Bratislava: Veda: Historický ústav SAV, 2015. ISBN 9788022414463.

- 15 Nariadenie vlády s mocou zákona (Government decree with force of law) no. 303/1940 Sl. z. o židovských podnikoch. (On Jewish businesses). *Slovenský zákonník*, year 1940, pp. 472–476. The provisions of this decree were later incorporated in decree no. 198/1941 Sl. z. o právnom postavení Židov, (On the legal position of Jews), also known as the Židovský kódex (Jewish Code).
- 16 A. Morávek advised the prime minister from the position of head of the Hospodárska úradovňa predsedníctva vlády, (Economic Office of the Prime Minister), which V. Tuka created for the purpose of intervening in the Aryanization process in January 1940. For more details see: HLAVINKA, ref. 14.

Ks.¹⁷ In February 1941, the CEO received an application from Maria Rosewatsch, a German living in Bratislava, stating that she had capital of 70,000 Ks and had completed study at commercial school. She was recommended for Aryanization by the Deutsche Partei.¹⁸ The writer Ľudo Mistrík-Ondrejov submitted his application to Aryanize the bookshop in June 1941. He stated in his application that he had no capital, only a guarantee of access to credit of 50,000 Ks. He wrote that from the point of view of education he was a qualified notary and he would submit a notary's diploma later.¹⁹ The final Aryanization application came in August 1941 from Oľga Lukáčová, an office worker of Slovak nationality, who had completed study at the commercial academy and had capital of 4,000 Ks.²⁰

After recording the applications, the Central Economic Office started its usual administrative procedure, the first step of which was to ascertain the opinion of the power structures of the Ľudák regime on the individual applicants. The office asked the General Secretariat of HSLŠ, the appropriate district commands of the Hlinka Guard and the State Secretariat for the Affairs of the German National Group for their written positions on the individual applicants. Police investigations of the affairs of each applicant were carried out at the same time. On the basis of these reports and of the decision of the chairman of the CEO, the office usually decided on the appointment of a temporary administrator for a firm. The temporary administrator was not the owner of the firm, but had the legal authority to represent the firm and act in its name. For this, he received a monthly salary at the expense of the original owner. The principle was to enable practice in running the business at the expense of the original owner before the final transfer of the firm. Morávek himself justified the appointment of temporary administrators with the argument that specific persons had to get the opportunity to work in a firm.²¹ The actual Aryanization decision was the next step, and it was rather exceptional for the serving temporary administrator not to be chosen as the final Aryanizer.

In the case of the Zigmund Steiner firm, the above mentioned Maria Rosewatsch was chosen as the temporary administrator, even before Ľ. Mistrík-

17 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 972/272, Žiadosť o vymenovanie za dočasného správcu. (Request for appointment of a temporary administrator.).

18 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 972/276-278, Dotazník o osobe a pomeroch uchádzača. (Questionnaire about the person and situation of the applicant.).

19 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 972/296, Dotazník o osobe a pomeroch uchádzača.

20 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 972/307-308, Dotazník o osobe a pomeroch uchádzača.

21 Slovenský národný archív (Slovak National Archives) (hereinafter SNA), archívny fond (archive fund) (hereinafter f.) Povereníctvo priemyslu a obchodu–VII. odbor, (Commission for Industry and Trade – VII Department), carton number 100 (hereinafter c.), VII-1224 Dávid Grauberd, výroba dreveného uhlia, Humenné. Vyjadrenie predsedu ÚHÚ. (Dávid Grauberd, production of charcoal, Humanné. Statement by the chairman of the CEO.).

Ondrejov and Oľga Lukáčová applied to Aryanize it. The chairman of the CEO set Maria Rosewatsch's monthly salary at 2,500 Ks, which was the pay of a high state official at the time.²²

The fact that the applicants to Aryanize the business included people of Slovak and German nationality meant that the question of the future Aryanizer moved from the Central Economic Office to talks by the so-called "Mixed Commission" of representatives of HSLŠ and the Deutsche Partei. Andrej Germuška and Jozef Kosorín from the General Secretariat of HSLŠ formed the Slovak side of the commission, while the German side comprised Eugen Reisinger head of the Main Economic Office of the Deutsche Partei and Karl Bloudek (later Karl Blondel) head of the Aryanization Department at the Main Economic Office.²³

On 5 September 1941, the commission decided that it had "to find out whether L. Mistrík-Ondrejov had Aryanized anything, and if not he would get this business".²⁴ A few days later, on 8 September 1941, the staff of the III Department of the CEO, responsible for Aryanizing and liquidating "Jewish businesses" with various fields of activity, wrote and signed the following text: "I confirm that Ludovít Mistrík (Ondrejov) writer of Bratislava has not Aryanized any business from our department."²⁵ The final decision on who would Aryanize the business had to be taken by the chairman of the CEO A. Morávek.

Morávek decided that Z. Steiner Bookshop and music business would not go to the existing temporary administrator M. Rosewatsch, but to the writer L. Mistrík-Ondrejov. It happened on 9 September 1941, when the chairman of the CEO signed the "Decision on the complete transfer of the business (type B) to Ludovít Mistrík-Ondrejov."²⁶

As the characteristics of the applicants show, Mistrík-Ondrejov was not either the most qualified or the richest applicant. On the contrary, he had dug deep into his pockets in this period. He had recently moved from Turčiansky Sv. Martin to Bratislava and had not been successful in earning his living. He drank in the pubs, and was always short of money.²⁷ Where the decision of the chairman of

22 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 972/391. Revízna správa Slovenskej revíznej a dôverníckej spoločnosti (Report on an audit by the Slovak Auditing and Trustee Society) from 6 Sept 1943.

23 HLAVINKA, Ján. „Kapitál má slúžiť národu...“. Korupcia v arizácii podnikového majetku na Slovensku. ("Capital has to serve the nation..." Corruption in the Aryanization of business property in Slovakia.). In ŠOLTÉS, Peter – VÖRÖS, László (eds.). *Korupcia*. Bratislava: Historický ústav SAV; Veda, 2015, pp. 374–421.

24 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 972/430, Záznam „Židovský podnik“ (The record "Jewish business") from 5 Sept 1941.

25 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 972/431, Úradný záznam (Official record) from 8 Sept 1941.

26 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 972/411-414, Rozhodnutie o prevode židovského podniku (Decision on transfer of a Jewish business) no. 37182/III/7/1941.

27 MAŤOVČÍK, Augustín. *Čiri a čistý rozprávač Ludo Ondrejov. Život a dielo v dokumentoch*. (The clear and pure story-teller Ludo Ondrejov. His life and work in documents). Martin:

the CEO to select him from among the applicants is concerned, we have available only the very brief record from the above-mentioned mixed commission, where no reasons for his selection are given. Was the decision of this commission the only reason for Morávek's signature at the bottom of the Aryanization decision?

There is a theory that Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov's wife Oľga Harmanová had a decisive influence on the awarding of the Steiner Bookshop to him.²⁸ The journalist Peter Getting discovered that O. Harmanová was the sister of Viktor Harman, one of the leading officials at the Central Economic Office. Therefore, he thinks that the reason for the awarding of the Steiner Bookshop to Ľudovít Mistrík-Ondrejov must be sought precisely here.²⁹ From the beginning of the existence of the CEO until the middle of 1942, Viktor Harman was the head of its Legislative Department and had an important position in the hierarchy of this special office. It was not only that he helped to create the office, but also that together with chairman A. Morávek, he participated in writing the legislation on Aryanization according to which the office acted. He was also co-author of a publication giving a legal explanation of the legislation.³⁰ According to the German adviser on the Jewish question Dieter Wisliceny, Viktor Harman was an especially influential and important person at the CEO, and was absolutely trusted by chairman Morávek.³¹ Thus, it could have been a matter of protection, and it would not have been the first case of protection at the CEO.³²

Vydavateľstvo Osveta, 1986, pp. 159–161.

- 28 Oľga Harmanová (1907–1950) devoted her life to writing stories. In the period 1928–1941 she worked as a teacher at an elementary school in Bratislava. Her first book: *Cupinôžka* appeared in 1941. MAŤOVČÍK, Augustín et al. (eds.). *Slovník slovenských spisovateľov 20. storočia*. (A dictionary of Slovak writers of the 20th century). Bratislava: Vydavateľstvo spolku slovenských spisovateľov; Martin: Slovenská národná knižnica, 2001, p. 138. ISBN 808061122X.
- 29 GETTING, Peter. “*Temná minulosť slovenského spisovateľa: Poslal Židov do koncentrákov kvôli majetkom?*” (“The dark past of a Slovak writer: Did he send Jews to concentration camps because of property?”) In *Plus 7 dní*. Accessible on-line: <<https://plus7dni.pluska.sk/historia/temna-minulost-slovenskeho-spisovateľa-poslal-zidov-koncentrakov-kvoli-majetkom>> .
- 30 HAMMER, Oskar – HARMAN, Viktor – ZIMAN, Ladislav (eds.). *Komentovaná zbierka najnovších právnych predpisov upravujúcich arizáciu a právne postavenie Židov na Slovensku*. (Collection of the latest legal norms regulating Aryanization and the legal position of Jews in Slovakia with comments). Second edition. Bratislava: C.F.Wigand, 1941. The first edition of this publication appeared in 1940.
- 31 NIŽŇANSKÝ, Eduard. Arizácie a problémy majetku Židov na Slovensku v hláseniach predstaviteľov nacistického Nemecka (Aryanization and the problems of Jewish property in Slovakia in the statements of representatives of Nazi Germany) (1939 – 1943). In NIŽŇANSKÝ, Eduard – HLAVINKA, Ján (eds.) *Arizácie*. Bratislava: FiF UK; Dokumentačné stredisko holokaustu, 2010, Dokument no. 8, Správa D. Wislicenyho z 18. 7. 1941 o A. Morávkovi a Ústrednom hospodárskom úrade, (Report of D. Wisliceny from 18 July 1941 on A. Morávek and the Central Economic Office), p. 174.
- 32 SNA, f. 209, 209-927-1, Zápisnica (Record) from 15 June 1942. On the various forms of corruption in the decision-making of the Central Economic Office see HLAVINKA, ref. 23.

Information about the influence of O. Harmanová on the whole case already appeared in 1986, when Augustín Maťovčík wrote very inaccurately from the point of view of the nature of the case in a biography of Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov: “*He consented after agreement with his wife to take over the administration (sic!) of the well-known Steiner second hand bookshop.*”³³ The theory of the influence of Oľga Harmonová is also supported by the statement of a personal friend of Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov, the writer Ivan Kupec, who wrote in his diary that Mistrík-Ondrejov had been pushed to Aryanize by his wife.³⁴

It is necessary to say here that Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov was single when he applied to Aryanize the Steiner Bookshop. He married Oľga Harmanová in November 1941, two months after he was granted possession of the firm.³⁵ This obviously does not exclude the possibility that O. Harmanová and her brother Viktor influenced the decision of A. Morávek in favour of the writer Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov.

However, it is also possible that Morávek relied only on the decision of the already mentioned mixed commission, which included representatives of Hlinka’s Slovak People’s Party and represented the view of the powerful elements of the regime on Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov’s Aryanization application.

Whatever the motivation of A. Morávek to decide in favour of Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov, the fact remains that in September 1941 he became the Aryanizer and so the new owner of the Z. Steiner Bookshop and music business in Bratislava, and this did not happen by agreement with the original owners.

It is not well-known that the Aryanization of the Steiner Bookshop was not the only case in which the Ľudovít Mistrík-Ondrejov figured as an Aryanizer and it was not the first. On 8 July 1941, on the basis of a decision of the same chairman of the Central Economic Office, he gained a share in the ownership and profit of a much larger Bratislava firm: the Känzler Brothers wholesale business in woven, fashion and textile goods located at Klobučnícka street 4 in Bratislava.³⁶ The original firm owned by Bernát Känzler was Aryanized by Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov and Štefan Cenknér. The Central Economic Office imposed on the owner of the firm Bernát Känzler a so-called partial Aryanization (type

33 MAŤOVČÍK, ref. 27. p. 169.

34 KUPEC, Ivan. *Denník*. (Diary). Bratislava: Slovenský spisovateľ, 1999, p. 33. ISBN 9788022010207.

35 MAŤOVČÍK, Augustín. *Život a dielo Ľuda Ondrejova v dátach* (Pramene a dokumenty). (The life and work of Ľudo Ondrejov in dates (Sources and documents).). In VALENTOVIČ, Štefan (eds.). *Biografické štúdie 9*. Martin: Matica slovenská, Biografický ústav, 1980, p. 58. ISSN 1338-0354.

36 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 876/1907, Rozhodnutie o zrušení prevodu 50% účasti (Decision on cancellation of transfer of a 50% share) II/B/-4579/5-44.

C) involving the creation of a public commercial company with Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov and Štefan Cenknér. The shares were divided as follows: 35% each for Ľudovít Mistrík-Ondrejov and Štefan Cenknér, with 30% left to the original owner Bernát Känzler.³⁷ However, the final division of the company gave the Aryanizers 38% each, while B. Känzler kept only 24%.³⁸ Before Aryanization, this firm was much larger than that of the Steiner brothers. Its annual turnover in 1938 was 2,374,000.50 Ks.³⁹

Bernát Känzler's shop also originated in the 19th century. It was initially established by his parents at Horný Kamenec. After the father of the family died, Bernát Känzler's older brother ran the shop with their mother, while Bernát was an apprentice at a similar shop in Nitra. Later he worked in Vienna and he was called up for service at the front in the First World War. After the return of both Känzler brothers from military service at the end of 1918, they transferred the shop to Bratislava, where they worked together until the older brother Mór Känzler died in 1935.

There were also various applications to Aryanize this business, starting after the passing of the First Aryanization Act. Anton Cseh, Johann Hatváni, Hermína Bezáková. Hermína Jusková and the above mentioned Štefan Cenknér applied to the County Office in Bratislava to Aryanize it. The original owner B. Känzler agreed on "voluntary Aryanization" with Hermína Jusková, wife of the Bratislava police chief, just as the Steiner brothers did with Ján J. Csákos.⁴⁰ However, the effort of the original owner was also unsuccessful here. Ľudovít Mistrík-Ondrejov was one of the last to submit an application, four days after he applied to Aryanize the Steiner Bookshop. However, it was an entirely different type of shop.

It is interesting that in his application to Aryanize the Känzler Brothers wholesale business, Mistrík-Ondrejov gave different data about his assets. In the space of four days, apart from a loan of 50,000 Ks, he put in the column "other financial facts and rights" a sum of 100,000 Ks, which he completed with the note: "*authorship rights of one publication of literary works published up to now*".⁴¹ At the same time, he replied to the question in the application to Aryanize the Känzler business to the question of whether he could prove that

37 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 876/1918, 1921, Evidenčný hárok, Rozhodnutie ÚHÚ (Record sheet. Decision of the CEO) C3 from 8 July 1941.

38 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 876/1986, Revízná správa (Report on and audit) SRDS, p. 2.

39 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 876/1985, Revízná správa SRDS, p. 1.

40 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 876/2174, Oznámenie Mestského notárskeho úradu. (Notification by the City Notary's Office).

41 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 876/2053, Dotazník o osobe a pomeroch uchádzača.

“he would not just cover up the illegal economic activity of the Jew” with the statement: *“I never negotiated with the Jew.”*⁴²

Ľudovít Mistrík-Ondrejov was not the richest or the best qualified also in this case either. As in the case of the Steiner Bookshop, a temporary administrator, namely Štefan Cenker, was appointed even before Mistrík-Ondrejov had applied.

However, there is another more important factor. It is clear that the above-mentioned decision of the mixed commission of representatives of HSES and the Deutsche Partei that Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov had to get the Z. Steiner Bookshop and music business if he did not get another Aryanization, had not been observed by the CEO. On the contrary, Mistrík-Ondrejov got the Steiner shop in spite of the fact that he had already Aryanized a majority share in the Bernát Kändler shop in July 1941.

Where this Aryanization by Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov is concerned, we do not know why the Central Economic Office decided to divide the Kändler Brothers wholesale business between two applicants with the original Jewish owner still involved. It is possible that since both Š. Cenker and Mistrík-Ondrejov were entirely unqualified, they wanted to avoid the rapid decline of this large wholesale business.

Aryanization always had a serious impact on the running of a firm and on its original owners. In better cases they retained minority shares or became employees of the Aryanizer. In worse cases they were immediately excluded and remained unemployed. The regime presented allowing the original owners to keep property shares or employment as a necessary evil. Permission to keep a property share or employment in a firm depended on decisions of the Central Economic Office.

Relatively little information has survived about the situation at the Z. Steiner Bookshop after Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov became its new owner. A member of the Steiner family said this about: *“Our Aryanizer Mistrík immediately told us that he was intelligent and not anti-Semitic. He was a great drinker, he showed himself here once a month, sometimes twice, pocketed the profits and went away. On the other hand, however, management of the shop remained in the hands of the Steiner family. Three uncles worked in the shop with my father. Four members of the Steiner family were employed there. There were also other Jewish employees. At first, Mistrík left them all.”*⁴³

There is even less information about how Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov acted in his other Aryanized firm, which became “CE-KA – Ľudo Mistrík and Co.” public

42 USHMM, RG-57.001M, 972/2057, Žiadosť o nariadenie prevodu podniku.

43 TRANČÍK, ref 1, p. 204.

commercial company.⁴⁴ We only know that Bernát Känzler continued to work in the firm for several months. However, already in autumn 1941, the Aryanizers Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov and Š. Cenková began to make an effort to eliminate B. Känzler from the firm. On 11 November 1941 Mistrík-Ondrejov and Š. Cenkner the “Aryan partners” wrote an application to the Central Economic Office “to divide the share of the Jewish partner (24%) between the two undersigned Aryan partners (12% each) because the Jewish partner Bernát Känzler is no longer needed for the successful running of the firm. The undersigned partners can run the business successfully without him”.⁴⁵ On the other side of the document is a note by an official of the CEO stating that Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov had intervened personally with the CEO about this matter on 25 November 1941.⁴⁶ Less than a month later, on 20 December 1941, the two partners informed the CEO by letter that they were taking over Känzler’s share.⁴⁷ According to the letter of the law this was illegal because only the Central Economic Office could award the property share. The office later granted the Aryanizers their wish. In March 1942, the CEO officially deprived B. Känzler of his share of the firm, and divided it between Mistrík-Ondrejov and Cenkner, who became the owners of 50% each from 15 March 1942.⁴⁸

Thus in mid March 1942 Ľudovít Mistrík-Ondrejov was joint owner of a large Bratislava company concerned with wholesale trade in textiles under the name CE-KA Ľudo Mistrík and co. public commercial company as well as being exclusive owner of a large bookshop called the Mistrík Bookshop. With some simplification, it is possible to say that by filling in several forms, the writer Ľudovít Mistrík-Ondrejov had gained possession of two large Bratislava commercial companies, which had been built up over generations by their Jewish owners.

The deportation of Jews from Slovakia began at the end of March 1942. The HSEŠ regime used it to get rid of the socially dependent Jews, who had been deprived of their property by Aryanization. Deportation trains left Slovakia almost every day carrying Jews to the Nazi concentration and extermination camp at Auschwitz or to the Lublin district, where Operation Reinhardt was happening. During the deportations members of the Hlinka Guard, Freiwillige Schutzstaffel and gendarmerie violently seized first young Jewish men and women and later

44 Some documents use the name: „CEKA“, public commercial company.

45 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 876/2013, Letter from 11 Nov 1941.

46 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 876/2013, Letter from 11 Nov 1941.

47 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 876/2012, Letter from 20 Dec 1941.

48 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 876/1991, Rozhodnutie o prevode židovskej účasti (Decision on the transfer of a Jewish share) no. 71710/III-4/41.

whole Jewish families in Bratislava and other places so that they could be put in cattle wagons and deported. Then the possessions of the deportees were publicly auctioned in the street.

In June 1942 during the deportation of Jews from Slovakia, Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov also attempted to get rid of the original owners of the bookshop and other Jewish employees. He wrote and sent to the authorities a declaration stating: *“I declare that I do not need in my bookshop at Ventúrska Street 22 in Bratislava the following Jews: Max Steiner, Jozef Steiner, Regina Lebensfeldová, Žigmund Steiner and Viliam Steiner. The arrest and deportation of these Jews will not harm the shop in any way or harm the economy of the Slovak state, because I have found a replacement in the person of the Aryan Mr. Viliam Fábry from Turčiansky Svätý Martin. I still need for the business Max Wimer, Cecilia Gelbová and perhaps for one more month also Leopold Mendlinger. Bratislava, 12 June 1942. Na stráž (On Guard). Ludo Mistrík, owner of the bookshop at Ventúrska Street 22 by my own hand”*⁴⁹

Max Steiner and Jozef J. Steiner illegally supported themselves as building workers in Bratislava for a few weeks after this step by Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov. However, Max Steiner was arrested in summer 1942 and deported. Jozef Jakub Steiner was also arrested and deported in July 1942. His wife insisted on going with him, although the policeman, who arrested him, tried to talk her out of it.⁵⁰ None of them survived the Holocaust.

The process of Aryanizing firms was formally conditional on the Aryanizers paying for the property they had Aryanized. However, what A. Morávek called “revolutionary Aryanization” included the principle that property was transferred before its value and the amount to be paid by the Aryanizer had been worked out. In the case of the two firms from which Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov profited, this question was considered by the authorities for months, as was typical in the Aryanization process. The Central Economic Office simply did not manage to determine the value of businesses, so it made the Aryanizers promise to estimate the value of their businesses themselves, and submit their subjective estimates within ten days of receiving property.⁵¹ After an official valuation there would be a settlement.

In the case of complete Aryanization, the Aryanizer was supposed to pay the so-called liquidation value of the business, which essentially meant the value of all its assets. In the case of a so-called partial Aryanization with the continued

49 TRANČÍK, ref 1, p. 208.

50 TRANČÍK, ref 1, p. 207.

51 SNA, f. Ministerstvo hospodárstva (Ministry of the Economy) (hereinafter MH), c. 404, Dokument „Rozdelenie podnikov“.(Document “Division of businesses”).

participation of the original owner, the basic value was determined by deducting all the liabilities of the firm from the liquidation value.

L. Mistrík-Ondrejov physically took possession of the Z. Steiner Bookshop and Music business on 30 September 1941 and informed the Central Economic Office of this on 1 October 1941. The record of the state of the business on 30 September 1941 signed on 20 October by L. Mistrík-Ondrejov, the original owners Max Steiner and Jozef Jakub Steiner and two witnesses, stated that the business had assets worth a total of 363,900.55 Ks and liabilities of 146,559.80 Ks.⁵² Then Mistrík-Ondrejov took a skilful step: He declared that he was taking over the liabilities of the firm, which enabled him to deduct the liabilities from the assets also in the case of a complete Aryanization. Thus, the liquidation value of the business that he had to pay was 217,340.75 Ks and the claims of creditors could be solved separately.⁵³

However, a few months later, on 23 March 1942, L. Mistrík Ondrejov sent a letter to the Central Economic Office withdrawing his signature under the record of the state of the business agreed with the original owners with the following justification: *“This record was signed by me, but I was seriously ill at the time, I had only a few days available, and did not have the physical possibility to study the record and especially its extensive supplements in detail. I wrote my signature only ‘in good faith’, and now, after detailed study of the materials, I reject the validity of this signature. I urgently ask that the respected office consider the record in question to be invalid.”*⁵⁴ He reported an entirely different calculation of the assets and liabilities of the business, making the assets lower and the liabilities higher, so that he theoretically had to pay only 26,173.50 Ks for the firm.⁵⁵ He asked the Central Economic Office to set payments based on this sum, but the payments were not approved.⁵⁶

Definitive setting of the value each Aryanizer had to pay was exclusively the responsibility of the Central Economic Office. It determined the value of businesses on the basis of reports from the auditors of the Slovak Auditors’ and Trustees’ Society (Slovenská revízna a dôvernícka spoločnosť – SRDS),

52 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 972/486-487, Zápisnica o majetkovom stave (Record of state of property from 20 Oct 1941).

53 HAMMER – HARMAN– ZIMAN, ref 30, p. 39.

54 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 972/456, Letter from 23 March 1942.

55 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 972/457, Bilancia podniku. (Company balance sheet) This document was dated 1 Oct 1941, but at the CEO it was recorded only on 25 March 1942 together with the letter in which L. Mistrík-Ondrejov withdrew his signature under the balance from 20 Oct 1941.

56 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 972/459, Žiadosť o povolenie splátok likvidačnej hodnoty. (Application for approval of instalments towards the liquidation value.).

which was inundated with valuations of hundreds of Aryanized firms throughout Slovakia, so that it took years to deal with these firms. It was no different in the case of Mistrík's bookshop. The auditors from the SRDS came only on 18 January 1943. By this time, Augustín Morávek and Viktor Harman no longer worked at the Central Economic Office. The situation at the CEO and the decisions of its chairman A. Morávek were investigated by a special commission in spring 1942. As a result, Morávek resigned on 1 July 1942 and the whole original leadership of the office left with him.

The audit by the SRDS took four days, Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov did not physically participate and the liquidation value of the firm that he had to pay as Aryanizer, was finally estimated at a sum of 248,180.30 Ks. The auditors stated that up to the day of the audit, Mistrík-Ondrejov had paid only 11,000 Ks.⁵⁷ However, determination of the liquidation value of a firm was not official until the CEO issued an official decision. The Central Economic Office definitively determined the liquidation value of the Aryanized book and music business on 8 May 1944, fully accepting the estimate of the Slovak Auditors' and Trustees' Society. Up to 25 August 1944, 40,771.10 Ks was paid towards the liquidation value.⁵⁸

The auditors from the SRDS came to the firm that had originally belonged to B. Känzler, to determine its value on 19 June 1942.⁵⁹ They reported that the firm had no liabilities. They finally determined its value as 958,158.20 Ks.,⁶⁰ from which Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov was supposed to pay: 494,381.05 Ks.⁶¹ Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov was not present at this audit either, with only the other Aryanizer participating. The auditors wrote in their report: "*Ludovít Mistrík was not present in the business premises during the audit and nobody knew where he was. As a result, it was not possible to ascertain his property position.*"⁶² The report does not say whether Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov had paid anything towards the liquidation value of the firm up to the day of the audit.

Everything suggests that both firms functioned after their Aryanization without Mistrík-Ondrejov actively leading them. After getting rid of the owners, the writer still employed a chief manager of the bookshop. For some time Viliam Žingor held this position.⁶³ Mistrík-Ondrejov lived with his family in Turčiansky

57 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 972/397, Revízná správa (Auditor's report) SRDS, p. 7.

58 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 972/156, Oznámenie Mestskej sporiteľne (Notification from the City Savings Bank) from 25 Aug 1944.

59 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 876/1985, Revízná správa SRDS, p. 1.

60 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 876/1987, Revízná správa SRDS, p. 4.

61 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 876/1987, Revízná správa SRDS, p. 4.

62 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 876/1989, Revízná správa SRDS, p. 5.

63 Viliam Žingor participated in the SRDS audit as chief manager of the shop. The report on the audit gives his monthly salary as 2,000 Ks. USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 972/392, Revízná

Svätý Martin and sometimes travelled to Bratislava. The size of his total profit from the two firms cannot be ascertained from the documents studied. We can get some idea from the official declarations of the firms from 1943. He gradually took 57,054 Ks from the CE-KA firm in 1943,⁶⁴ and he took 41,000 Ks from the Mistrík Bookshop in 1943.⁶⁵

It is necessary to say that, where the question of obtaining the value of an Aryanized property was concerned, Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov's Aryanizations were similar to other Aryanization cases. Payment of the value in the case of the Mistrík Bookshop occurred gradually, although the Aryanizer had no official authorization for this. The approved liquidation value of 248,180.30 Ks was never paid.⁶⁶ In the case of the CE-KA firm, only 297,041 Ks was paid from a total of 958,158.20 Ks.⁶⁷ The amounts paid in both cases went to blocked accounts belonging only theoretically to the original owners, or to judicial deposits.

However, the case of the Aryanizer Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov is special in another way, namely that the Ľudák regime itself deprived him of both his Aryanized firms. This has not appeared in the literature up to now. It appears that the basic factor leading to this was Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov's participation in the Slovak National Uprising, which broke out on 29 August 1944, when the Nazi German units began to occupy Slovakia.

The Einsatzgruppe H der Sipo und des SD began to operate in Bratislava and gradually also in other parts of western and central Slovakia. Its main task was to pacify everybody who participated in or supported the uprising, while also liquidating all Jews who still lived in Slovakia. On 28 September 1944, Department III B of the staff of Einsatzgruppe H in Bratislava produced an official record describing Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov as "*one of the leading persons in the uprising movement at [Turčiansky] Sv[ätý] Martin*".⁶⁸ The document states that Mistrík-Ondrejov had Aryanized two firms in Bratislava, and it would be a good idea to investigate these firms in detail and arrest all their employees. The Nazis devoted special attention in the document to Mistrík-Ondrejov's partner in the

správa SRDS, p. 2.

64 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 876/2239-2240, Podrobný výkaz o výberoch spoločníka Ľ. Mistríka. (Detailed statement about the withdrawals of the partner Ľ. Mistrík.)

65 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 972/164, Hlásenie podľa vyhlášky ÚHÚ (Report according to the declaration of the CEO) from 19 Jan 1944, no. 30.

66 SNA, f. MH, k. 404, Zoznam arizovaných firiem s vykázanými platbami, položka č. 923. (List of Aryanized firms with received payments, item no. 923).

67 SNA, f. MH, k. 404, Zoznam arizovaných firiem s vykázanými platbami, položka č. 1639.

68 Archiv bezpečnostních složek (Archives of the security services) (hereinafter ABS), f. Různé německé bezpečnostní složky (f. Various German security services) (135), 135-1-1/38, Vermerk.

CE-KA firm: Štefan Cenkner. According to the document, Cenkner had studied in Vienna and was described as a Czechoslovakist – Pan-Slavist inclined.⁶⁹

It is not clear whether this document got things moving, but on 29 September 1944 German soldiers and members of the Hlinka Guard closed the Mistrík Bookshop. On 10 October 1944, an official at the Central Economic Office on orders from the leadership of the office, checked up on the bookshop and stated that “*Mistrík has not been seen in Bratislava for 3 months, and is probably with the partisans*”. On the next day, the General Secretariat of HSEŠ proposed the cancellation of the transfer of the bookshop to Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov “*because he has openly joined the partisan movement*”.⁷⁰ A few days later, on 20 October, the Central Economic Office put a lead seal on the shop.⁷¹ HSEŠ proposed to place the bookshop under a temporary administration, and Prof. Belo Polla became the temporary administrator.⁷² On 30 November 1944, the Central Economic Office cancelled the Aryanization transfer to Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov.⁷³ The shop was then awarded by another decision to the personal secretary of the head of the Propaganda Office Otto Kaušitz and to Štefan Burčák.⁷⁴

In the case of the firm CEKA-Ľudo Mistrík public commercial company, on 20 October the General Secretariat of HSEŠ proposed that the CEO should place the firm under temporary administration because of the 50% participation of “*Ľudovít Mistrík, who has joined the partisans and still not reported his position*”.⁷⁵ After further urging on this matter, the CEO began to act, and on 9 November 1944, it appointed Anton Špalek as temporary administrator of the firm “CEKA”.⁷⁶ A few weeks later, on 5 December 1944, the Central Economic Office cancelled the transfer of 50% of the Känzler Brothers’ firm to Ľudovít Mistrík-Ondrejov. On the same day, it transferred 50% of the public commercial company “CEKA” to Ladislav Müller.⁷⁷ Meanwhile, the Ľudák press reported

69 ABS, f. Různé německé bezpečnostní složky (135), 135-1-1/38. Vermerk.

70 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 972/119, Návrh GS HSEŠ (Proposal from the General Secretariat of HSPP) no. 17.614/DJ/R/1944 from 11 Oct 1944.

71 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 972/111, 124, Úradné záznamy (Official records) from 10 Oct 1944 and 20 Oct 1944.

72 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 972/117, Úradný záznam from 31 Oct 1944.

73 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 972/115, Rozhodnutie o zrušení prevodu podniku (Decision to cancel the transfer of a business) no. II/F/597/10/44 from 30 Nov 1944.

74 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 972/139, Rozhodnutie o prevode podniku (Decision on transfer of a business) no. II/F/597/10/44 from 30 Nov 1944.

75 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 876/1915, Návrh GS HSEŠ č. 17.449/Dr.Mi/R/1944 from 20 Oct 1944.

76 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 876/1906, Rozhodnutie II-B-4579/4-1944.

77 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 876/1909, 1900, Rozhodnutie o zrušení doč. správy, Rozhodnutie o prevode 50% účasti Ľ. Mistríka. (Decision to cancel temporary administration. Decision on

on Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov. On 25 November, the daily *Gardista* named him as an Aryanizer among the writers who had joined the partisans.⁷⁸

At the beginning of December Ľudo Mistrík-Ondrejov's reaction came to the Central Economic Office. He wrote in a letter addressed to the chairman of the CEO: "*Most honoured Chairman, It has come to my attention that the CEO has cancelled the transfer of the bookshop at Ventúrska Street 22 (the Mistrík Bookshop, formerly the Z. Steiner Bookshop) Aryanized by me, and the CEKA shop at Klobočnická Street 4, in which I had a share. These steps have happened on the basis of some newspaper articles in which an unknown writer has accused me of participating in the Slovak uprising, or of participation in the partisan movement.*

As a result of illness (pneumonia) I cannot come in person to refute these untrue claims, so I am writing that I played no role in the uprising movement, either among the partisans or apart from them. As an inhabitant of Turčiansky Svätý Martin, after evacuation from Bratislava, I had enough concern with moving before the advancing front with my family including two small children, who were entirely dependent on me. It is also unthinkable that the uprising movement would have ignored a person, who had Aryanized, so that he was marked as person who harmed the Jews and supported the idea of the Slovak state.

Nobody has investigated these accusations against me, but I hope that everything will soon be clear, and I will be able to prosecute the malicious person, who wrote such stupid and untrue things about me.

I ask the CEO to wait for the result of this investigation which I will ask for. Regards, Na stráž! (On guard!) Ľudo Mistrík."⁷⁹

This letter from the writer Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov has not been published and considered by historians up to now. It evokes at least questions about how Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov saw the situation at the time, the position and future of the Ľudák regime, and what was his view of the uprising at the time.

The Aryanization of Jewish property is a painful theme in 20th century Slovak history. As the case of Ľudovít Mistrík-Ondrejov also shows, the documents capturing the course of Aryanization in Slovakia often uncover unknown recesses of the human character, not only among ordinary people, but also among publicly known figures from cultural and public life.⁸⁰ By participating

transfer of the 50% share of Ľ. Mistrík.).

78 „Vývraždiť spisovateľov?“ (“To kill writers?”). In *Gardista*, year 6, no. 263, p. 1.

79 USHMMA, RG-57.001M, 972/96, Letter from 7 Dec 1944.

80 The study was produced in the framework of the projects: APVV-15-0349 *Individuum a spoločnosť – ich vzájomná reflexia v historickom procese* (The individual and society – their mutual reflection in the historical process) and VEGA 2/0043/16 *Vzostup a pád hospodárske-*

in the Aryanization process, Ľudovít Mistrík-Ondrejov placed himself among the writers, who profited in various ways from the totalitarian Ľudák regime in Slovakia.

„MIT EINEM JUDEN VERHANDELTE ICH NICHT.“ ZUR ARISIERUNGEN
DES SCHRIFTSTELLERS ĽUDOVÍT MISTRÍK-ONDREJOV

JÁN HLAVINKA

Die vorgelegte Studie widmet sich der Partizipation des bekannten slowakischen Schriftstellers, Ľudovít Mistrík-Ondrejov, an der Arisierung des jüdischen Eigentums in den Jahren 1939–1945 in der Slowakei. Die Partizipation Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejovs an der Arisierung der jüdischen Firmen in Bratislava ist schon längst bekannt, aber bislang schrieb man darüber nur ausschließlich im Zusammenhang mit einer konkreten Gesellschaft: mit der Buchhandlung von Žigmund Steiner, welche Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov gerade durch Arisierung in seinen Besitz im September 1941 brachte. Dieser Arisierung widmeten auch slowakische Medien mehrmals ihre Aufmerksamkeit.

Die Studie bietet einen komplexen Blick auf Arisierungsaktivitäten des Schriftstellers Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov, der, wie es aus der Forschung hervorgeht, nicht nur die Buchhandlung Žigmund Steiners, sondern auch bei 50% Beteiligung an noch größerem Unternehmen in Bratislava – Firma Bratia Känzler (Brüder Känzler) profitierte, die ihm noch im Juli 1941 in der Arisierung zugeteilt wurde.

Der Gegenstand der Studie ist die Analyse der Gründe, für welche Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov als (vollständiger, bzw. teilweiser) „Arisator“ dieser Bratislavaer Firmen benannt wurde, sowie die Analyse der finanziellen Aspekte der beiden Arisierungen. Sie widmet sich ebenso der Frage der Beziehungen zwischen Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov und den ursprünglichen Eigentümern der beiden betroffenen Unternehmen, genauer den erfolgreichen Bemühungen des Schriftstellers um ihre Beseitigung aus den genannten Gesellschaften nach der Arisierung.

Zur Studie gehören auch die bisher nicht veröffentlichten und praktisch unbekanntesten Feststellungen über beide arisierten Fälle, welche die Auflösung beider arisierten Übertragungen auf Ľ. Mistrík-Ondrejov noch vor dem Ende 1944 dokumentieren und seine Reaktion auf diesen Schritt des Regimes der Volkspartei beinhalten.

Ján Hlavinka, PhD.

Historický ústav SAV

P. O. Box 198, Klemensova 19, 814 99 Bratislava

Slovenská republika

e-mail: hisjhla@savba.sk

ho vývoja Slovenska 1942 – 1945 (The rise and fall of the Slovak economy 1942–1945).