

STUDY OF THE TOTALITARIAN SIMULATOR

PART OF THE PROJECT BEFORE AND AFTER THE WALL

ORGANIZED BY OPONA, O.P.S.

2009

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TOTALITARIAN SIMULATOR

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17 NOVEMBER 1989

CONCLUSION, WINDING DOWN

ROOM 30

AUTHORIAL TEAM

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VENUE STRUCTURE AND MECHANICS

The Simulator is divided into six basic parts with the following chronological sequence:

- Entrance and Introduction;
- 1950s (Stage I);
- 1950s (Stage II);
- 1960s;
- Normalization and the 1980s;
- November 17, 1989;
- Conclusion - Winding Down.

Each part consists of specific types of space that invoke the necessary atmosphere and are suitable for the requirements of the game's principles.

In order to make their way through the Simulator, players receive a personal file containing their character (information on their personality and status, e.g. "you're the son of a factory owner", and many more explanatory details), additional information about their life and family roots, the necessary documents, and the rules of the game. This file is also used to store other forms and materials that players come across in the Simulator. Various different checks are run on these personal files throughout the game.



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Players also receive a badge, on which they clearly write their name and which they must wear in a visible place throughout the game.

The individual decades place a stress on several cross-cutting events that affect all the participants as a group (1950s – the trial of Milada Horáková, the abolition of the Stalin personality cult, monetary reform; 1960s – amnesties, August 1968; 1970s – Charter 77, anti-Charter). The Simulator rooms are controlled by radio (1950s), radio and television (1960s, 1970s, 1980s) and are bugged (1970s and 1980s - only certain rooms, in keeping with the requirements of the game).

The purpose of the game is to experience virtual character's life from 1948 to 1989 and take decisions based on visitors personal set of values.

As they make their way through the Simulator, not everyone will visit all the rooms (especially in the 1950s). It all depends on the decisions taken by players in the specific situations presented during the game.

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ENTRANCE AND INTRODUCTION

ROOM 1: ENTRY ROOM

Capacity: approximately 32 people (the group size will depend on the size of the premises; here we use the smaller dimensions of the original mobile version as our basis)

Players are assigned a character (a draw is held), select their values, receive a file, name tag, etc. While waiting for the instruction for the group to enter the next room, players can browse through their file, study their character, and listen to the basic Simulator rules (which are also provided in the file).

The Simulator “operator” comes to recap what the participants can expect and answers any questions. He then lets them in.

Description of room – the atmosphere we want to recreate in the Simulator is absent here because this room must be more practical in terms of capacity and comfort, and must make players eager to enter the Simulator.



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ROOM 2: INTRODUCTORY CRASH COURSE

Capacity: approximately 32 people

Situation in the room - Audiovisual stream of crucial, concise information and historical facts (historical footage edited by Benjamin Tuček) which affected the pre- and post-war situation in Europe and gave rise to conditions conducive for the establishment of Communism in Czechoslovakia. Information structured in such a way as to spell out and clearly indicate the fate of each class. Information preferably accompanied by sound effects. The stream of information ends with a recording of Gottwald's speech "I have just returned from the Castle...".

The players can take a seat, absorb the information, and take another look at their personal files. Towards the end, four guides (actors) enter this room from four follow-up rooms, and lead their group (based on "class origin") further into the Simulator. The game begins...

Description of room – evokes the plurality of the world from around 1938-1947 (a First Republic villa, private factories, Masaryk, Beneš, Nazism, the manifestos of the different political parties, farmland, various newspapers, US and Soviet flags, etc.)

Doors leading from the room: Workers, Bourgeoisie, Farmers, Intelligentsia

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1950S (STAGE I)

game – dramatic situations, simulation



This stage places an emphasis on giving players first hand experience of the absurdity of dividing society and people according to class. Immediately after receiving the initial information and randomly drawing a character, players find themselves in one of four rooms (depending on their class origin) where they start coming to grips with their fate in the Simulator, based on their class and personal history. Everyone must get a feel of what it means to be in their given class. An important element is the sharp contrast between the safety and security felt by players in the entry room and their situation after being thrust into a world functioning according to new, very absurd rules.

ROOM 3: WORKERS – “A FEAST OF APPEALING OFFERS”

Capacity: approximately 8 people

Description of room – the premises of a governmental office/committee, the Party secretariat, flags, busts, paintings of Gottwald, Stalin, etc.

Situation in the room – we enter the room safe in the knowledge that we have the “right” class origin and are confronted with a broad range of possibilities which we can indulge in more or less without any difficulty; the room is manned by an actor in the role of Committee Secretary.

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He starts by explaining the principle of choice in this room – that it would be good for everyone to be or become Party members. He motivates participants to make a choice and creates the appropriate atmosphere. The players start coming to grips with the opportunities open to them and make a choice. They make their choice and submit their papers to the Secretary, who assesses the choice and sends players to the relevant doors, telling them the room number they have to find. The Secretary has Party membership applications, which he hands out for players to sign and then collects (not everyone has to sign them, but refusing to sign means they will get a lower position than the one they wanted). Before leaving the room, players must remember to reel off the toast to Stalin's 70th birthday – there is a bust of Stalin with cards containing a photo of saintly Stalin on one side and the text of the toast on the other. Players must do this if they want to progress in the game (there is a space set aside for the toast to Stalin at the end of each of Rooms 3, 4, 5, and 6)

Types of offers/tasks – a carefully chosen form of evoking tempting offers, e.g. five peepholes, one for each of the rooms that the workers will be able to enter in the next stage (agricultural cooperative, factory, army, politics, university). The peepholes offer an attractive vision of a military career, a political career, a senior position in a factory or agricultural cooperative, etc.; tasks that need to be performed or descriptions of specific offers can be found by some of the peep-holes.

Doors leading from the room – doors to the lowest, medium and highest levels of the arena

Examples of tasks/offers

Become an officer in the Czechoslovak People's Army, get an apartment, a high salary, a uniform, a gun, the possibility to boss people around, an official car, the opportunity to travel to Moscow, Kiev, etc. Just sign the application to join the Party and the army, and take the oath.

Become an official (Chairman of a local People's Committee), get an apartment, a high salary, a car, career opportunities, social prestige, take decisions on the fates of other people. (Politician's room – congress, meetings, votes, put your name to documents sending people to labour

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camp, get a car, team up with the action committee to clean up the countryside in more ways than one). Just sign the application to join the Party. Remember to toast Stalin on his 70th birthday.

Go to study at university. The prospect of a promising future career, no need to do manual labour. Just sign the application to join the Czechoslovak Youth Union. Don't forget to toast Stalin on his 70th birthday.

Become chairman of an agricultural cooperative. Get your own office, secretary, apartment, car, higher pay, payments in kind, the possibility of deciding on other people's fates, etc. Just sign the application to join the Party. Remember to toast Stalin on his 70th birthday.

Become a factory foreman. In a year you could be a senior manager, perhaps even the factory director. Get your own office, secretary, apartment, higher pay, payments in kind, the possibility of deciding on other people's fates, etc. Just sign the application to join the Party. Remember to toast Stalin on his 70th birthday.

Anyone who doesn't sign the application form to join the Party and doesn't toast Stalin will only have access to more menial work in the factory or agricultural cooperative – jobs for unskilled labourers will be generated here.

Players should also have the chance to become informers if they want to come into more property – a labourer or farmhand who grasses on someone could be given a car previously owned by a bourgeois player.

ROOM 4: BOURGEOISIE – A CIRCLE OF LOSSES, MORAL CONCESSIONS, UNCERTAIN PROFITS

Capacity: approximately 8 people

Description of the room – a darkened space where speeches can be heard about the corrupt bourgeoisie, with the speakers saying how they wring the necks of the bourgeoisie, etc., the surroundings evoke anonymity, anxiety, insecurity, nervousness, where we have to make

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concessions and surrender our property; this room must be de-personalized, like an urban labyrinth (an important contrast with the Farmers' room, where players are not made to feel anonymous and find themselves in a relaxed setting, a pub, opposite a genial comrade...)

Situation in the room – we enter a gloomy room, evoking anxiety. An actor plays the role of a high-ranking Communist – vetting officer, cursing and threatening the players etc. We have to decide our fate in a totally Kafkaesque spirit, if we don't want to end up in the resistance or as an émigré, we are forced to make concessions in the face of unpredictable logic and constantly changing requirements. A pistol lies on the table. At the entrance to the vetting board we have to submit our decisions and papers to an official for approval, which is a precursor to the submission, to the board, of the concessions we are prepared to make.

Description of concessions/tasks – a carefully chosen form of concessions that players can offer to the vetting board to enhance their profile. Cards will probably be printed that contain certain concessions which players can select and place in their folder or submit to the official or the board, e.g. cards with concessions ranked vertically so that the most difficult concession is closest to the floor (the symbolism of bending over).

Doors leading from the room - resistance (leads to the Resistance room, with information about the resistance, and then straight to jail), emigration (leads to the Emigration room, with information about successful and unsuccessful émigrés, and then straight to jail), the vetting board – opting to go before the board is the key to further rooms.

Tasks/concessions

Surrender your assets (property) to the state/the people.

If you testify to allegations of profiteering by your acquaintances, you become head of their nationalized establishment.

Would you marry the daughter/son of a major Communist to improve your prospects?

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Renounce your parents.

Sign the death penalty in the trial of an aristocrat.

Sign a pledge to become an agent of the secret police.

Say a toast to Stalin on his 70th birthday.

You can become part of the Revolutionary Trade Union Movement and Union of Czechoslovak-Soviet Friendship to enhance your vetting profile.

You can sell off your goods on the black market – want to risk it?

There is a risk that you will lose your home and face eviction if you don't support the Communist Party – participating in May Day parades, flying flags, taking part in “voluntary” holiday work.

You have been reported for profiteering, will you sign a pledge to the socialist cause in order to avoid jail?

If you inform on your acquaintances for profiteering, you'll be handed a senior position.

If you join the Party, you can go to secondary school/university.

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ROOM 5: FARMERS – PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS AND COMMUNITY TRADITIONS VERSUS IDEOLOGY

Capacity: approximately 8 people

Description of the room: a village pub, family atmosphere, big table (contrast with the depersonalization of the Bourgeoisie room).

Situation in the room – you enter into a reasonably pleasant room in the style of a village pub, the friendly comrade "Chairman" of the agricultural cooperative is at the table speaking to you: "don't be a fool, Frank, enter the cooperative, join us, don't be difficult," etc.; you have to make a decision on your future in an informal and seemingly pleasant atmosphere, which, if you don't want to end up in the resistance or as an émigré, forces you to make concessions, give up your property, join the cooperative and "become part of the team".

Description of concessions/tasks – an offer to make concessions that will help improve your vetting profile, make progress

Doors leading from the room - resistance (leads to the Resistance room, with information about the resistance, and then straight to jail), emigration (leads to the Emigration room, with information about successful and unsuccessful émigrés, and then straight to jail), the vetting board – opting to go before the board is the key to further rooms.

Tasks/concessions

Surrender your assets (property) to the state/the people.

If you want to work, there's no complex procedure, just surrender your property and there is nothing to block your way.

If you want to go into politics etc., you have to up the stakes, make compromises.

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TOTALITARIAN SIMULATOR

Say a toast to Stalin on his 70th birthday.

If you testify to allegations of profiteering by your acquaintances, you become head of their nationalized establishment.

Would you marry the daughter/son of a major Communist to improve your prospects?

Renounce your parents.

Sign the death penalty in the trial of an aristocrat.

Sign a pledge to become an agent of the secret police.

They confiscated your property and forced you to move from the village, you are banned from entering. If you support the idea of a farming cooperative and attend propagandistic meetings, you can farm your own patch, albeit as a member of the cooperative. You try to supply mindlessly large quantities to meet the plan, you work yourself into the ground. You have been reported for profiteering, will you sign a pledge to the socialist cause in order to avoid jail?

They arrested your friend, will you stick by him even if he's imprisoned?

Sign a pledge to the secret police so they don't evict you.

The family is tired, wants to relax, yearns for the eight-hour day offered by the agricultural cooperative; you succumb to the pressure and give your property to the cooperative.

Snitch on other farmers, beat them to cooperative membership. Join the Party, be active in the Babice trial. The path to an illegal border crossing passes through your village, turn in the refugees to improve your status. Will you split up with your husband/boyfriend because he is a stubborn kulak (affluent peasant) in order to make a good impression? Will you marry the daughter of a local Communist Party chief?

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ROOM 6: INTELLIGENTSIA – IDEOLOGICAL PROPAGANDA

Capacity: approximately 8 people

Description of the room – a space evoking the role of propaganda for the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia, posters, paintings, panegyric poems, falsified history, etc.; the room is divided into corners, so that each of the characters belonging to the intelligentsia (writer, painter, architect, musician, teacher, scientist, etc.) finds examples of specific propaganda linked with their profession in that corner.

Types of offers/tasks – acceptance of official culture, language, tenets, etc., offered/forced.

Doors leading from the room - resistance (leads to the Resistance room, with information about the resistance, and then straight to jail), emigration (ditto), vetting board (if you do not want to acquiesce and create official culture, the board will force you to work in a lower position), path to the highest level of the arena (a condition is to reel off the official tenets, poems, etc., on camera).

Situation in the room – you enter a room presenting you with the way official culture, science, etc., appeared. Based on their character, everyone looks for their field of specialization and decides whether to learn the official version, which they then reel off on camera (e.g. they read a poem in praise of Stalin on camera and assume the pseudonym signed under the poem) in order to proceed (to the highest level of the arena), or they abandon their profession and take the escape route to the vetting board and lower positions, even manual labour in a factory. The last resort is to join the resistance or emigrate. Those who decide to be complicit and churn out the official line must sign the application to join the Party and toast Stalin (see above). The person staffing the room, who plays the role of a sort of Zdeněk Nejedlý, then assigns the players to the relevant doors based on their choices and the papers they present.

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Tasks/concessions

In front of the camera, demonstrate the official way of thinking of your profession (a poem, painting, read historical facts, confirm Michurinism. If you do, attractive offers will be made to you.

A teacher can go to university (to teach).

ROOM 7: VETTING BOARD

Capacity: approximately 32 people

Description of the room - grey, completely bare room with a large red star, a bust/picture of Stalin which can be removed after 1956, a sterile environment with desks, typewriters, lamps, papers, stamps, etc., behind which the actors (vetting officers) sit and wait for the players; in one part of the room there is a “platform of shame”, where the players, in keeping with the wishes of the board, have to revoke, repudiate, reel off learnt phrases, etc. We should not avoid harsh evocations such as "for some of you all we have is a bullet".

Situation in the room – you enter the room knowing that you are going to make some concessions and that someone will decide whether you can proceed, and if so, in which direction. The board receives players from the Bourgeoisie and Farmer rooms, vets them, and sends them sent back where they came from or forwards to another



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room. Many of them are sent to the Ancillary Technical Battalion (boys only here), then they are brought back and vetted, some are sent straight to a factory, the Sudetenland, an agricultural cooperative, factory owners are sent to labour camps, some are sent back the way they came. The board keeps everyone tense for as long as possible. The board can also feature players from the Workers room who already had a Party ID card in their file at the beginning of the game and decided to go into politics.

Description of offers/tasks – concessions the same as in the original rooms

Doors leading from the room - doors to all three levels of the arena, to prison, to the resistance, and emigration.

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1950S (STAGE II)

game – more of an exhibition, simulation

ROOM 8: ORBIS COMMUNISM EXHIBITION OF THE 1950S (LARGE AREA NEEDED)

Description of the room: The whole of this complex is actually an exhibition, but the visitors/players cannot enter all its parts. (They can visit certain parts only if they pay homage to the regime in front of the vetting board). The complex is enclosed (to give the impression of real borders). The boundaries represent the Sudetenland and other border areas. Where players come up against a border, they should be able to walk through a small exhibition on the Sudetenland (destroyed area, people; churches used for target practice by the Czechoslovak People's Army; cemeteries and villages razed to the ground; the proximity of the border; soldiers guarding the border; military zones...).

Through the complex, visitors can see a large space (the new world as a vision presented by Communism). This space is divided into three levels to reflect the relationship between visitors and the Party (e.g. three floors).

Level One – everyone who has not joined the Party; Level Two – those who have joined the party (they are politically conscious, but not politically active); Level Three is reserved for the politically active players.

Each of the three levels contains different “exhibition corners” (a factory, politics, university, military service, agricultural cooperatives). The aim is for players to see that they are confined to a particular level; they can see that there are other players on the other levels (e.g. above and below them) and that they cannot move up or down without another visit to the vetting board. Each corner therefore actually has three levels (e.g. a factory: worker, chairman, political leadership) which are mutually impermeable. However, players can take a look into other rooms

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(agricultural cooperative, military service...) but only at their own level. They can see all the cells on their level (e.g. from the factory, they can see the agricultural cooperative, military service, etc.)

Therefore, they can see virtually the whole world (the whole area), but are unable to reach all its parts.

The whole area of the arena (as well as the four rooms from the first stage) is controlled by radio; thematic reports in the language of propaganda must be audible everywhere. Slogans proclaiming how everyone is equal and that the world belongs to the people rain down on you from all sides, even though you are experiencing the opposite.

In the centre of the arena, there is an area for a “voluntary” work team. At the end of the 1950s, all the players meet up here to do some voluntary holiday work.

Objectives: it makes no difference what you know; what matters is the class you belong to and the extent of your involvement in the Party. The aim is to show the contradiction between ideological slogans and the real situation. A view of the new world order and how to read it.

CHARACTERISTICS OF INDIVIDUAL AREAS/SITES

In every room on the relevant level, there is a notice board communicating to the given class through specific schedules, slogans, information, etc. The room must also be adapted to accommodate information panels (e.g. in 1953 such and such a number of hectolitres were milked, such and such a number of tonnes of coal was extracted, etc.). In addition, each room displays several photos of real people with a brief description of their fate and specific artefacts evoking the typical nature of the place at the given level (hay and forks at the lowest level of the agricultural cooperative; a desk with paperwork and a stamp at the intermediate level of the factory; a leather chair with a large desk and relics at the highest level of the school; a tribune at the highest level of politics, etc.). In some places there will be projection screens showing authentic footage from the setting in question.

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1. FACTORY (IDEALLY SPLIT INTO THREE LEVELS*)

This is an area evoking the heavy industry (foundries, mills, mines) favoured by the regime.

The following are examples of what we want to evoke:

- Five-year plans, incredible stories about shock-workers (Stakhanov and 1,400%), planning, failure to meet the second five-year plan.
- The disproportion between heavy industry and the consumer industry – the consumer industry could not meet the needs of the population.
- A sacred area of socialist builders' literature, film.
- The purpose of human existence lies in work, the ruse of working for oneself (the factory belongs to you) – a reduction in the meaning of life.
- Ideas = sloth
- The importance of large-scale buildings – the East Slovak Ironworks in Košice.
- Socialist Realism – dam building, Havířov, Ostrava Poruba (the construction of towns from scratch), the metro (showcasing the efficiency of the normalization regime).
- The local boss of the Party cell must not be the director of a company (or a head teacher of a school etc.) .
- Worker, foreman, shift supervisor, manager, department director.

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LEVEL ONE – lowest factory work

Description of area: Evokes the surroundings in which the lowest-ranking workers/labourers worked (in this case, worker is a reference to those who do not belong to the privileged classes, do not kowtow to the regime, whereas Communist workers belong to the middle level - such as shift supervisors, miner leaders, etc.).

Ideas for specific props: pile of coal, lamp, mining hammer, mine cart, slag, steel rods, etc.

LEVEL TWO – lower and intermediate skilled work (foreman, shift supervisor, etc.)

Description of area: This area should preferably reflect the concept of an “office in the workshop”; battered office supplies alongside a helmet, tools, shift schedule, etc.

Ideas for specific props: Battered desk, heavy black phone, hanger with overalls, cabinet, paperwork, tools on workbench, etc.

LEVEL THREE – the highest position in the factory (the director, the local Party boss)

Description of area: Well-equipped office from the 1950s, with leather chairs, table, bust, paintings, etc.

Ideas for specific props: vodka on the table, phone with a direct line to the Central Committee, company car (Tatra), a bust of Lenin and Stalin, picture of Gottwald, bookcase with a few files.

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2. AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVE (IDEALLY SPLIT INTO THREE LEVELS*)

This is an area evoking kolkhoz (Soviet agriculture), collectivization.

The following are examples of what we want to evoke:

Quantity

Large-capacity operations

Chemicals, DDT

Irrigation, the ploughing-up of hedges, the lack of labour productivity, “abstract” concept of work, going home on the dot, machinery, the tractor as an emblem of the regime, the horse as a counter-emblem, harvest, harvest festival (students, actors, workers from town).

Successful propaganda, but with the realization early on that productivity is minimal.

Chairman (may be a member of the Communist Party Central Committee), specialist in animal husbandry, plant-grower, head of operations, head tractor driver.

Egalitarianism – those who work get paid the same as those who don't.

A drinking culture

TOTALITARIAN SIMULATOR

LEVEL ONE – lowest work in the cooperative

Description of area: Section evoking a cowshed

Ideas for specific props: pile of manure, fork, cow, milk cans, etc.

LEVEL TWO – lower and intermediate skilled work (plant-grower, specialist in animal husbandry, head of operations)

Description of area: Maps of land to be ploughed, five-year plans, charts, photos comparing ropes, workroom.

Ideas for specific props: see above.

LEVEL THREE – the highest position in the cooperative (chairman)

Description of area: sparingly fitted-out office from the 1950s

Ideas for specific props: telephone, desk, papers, plans, posters with shock-workers, picture of a tractor, etc.

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3. SCHOOL (IDEALLY SPLIT INTO TWO/THREE LEVELS*)

This is an area presenting the system of education, the nature of the system, educational priorities, etc.

The following are examples of what we want to evoke:

- Purges among students and teachers
- Academy founded by Zdeněk Nejedlý – doctor of political science, Marxist-Leninist speech (college of political science).
- Evening University of Marxism-Leninism, Department of Marxism-Leninism at each university
- Different view of history, more philosophically based, division into social classes, etc.
- Crash courses

LEVEL ONE

No one actually gets to this plane directly, only those who are in another room at the lowest level can learn about purges at universities.

Description of area: Simple information about how many students were expelled because of their class origin etc.

Ideas for specific props: photos, names, information

TOTALITARIAN SIMULATOR

LEVEL TWO - scientists, Michurinism supporters, students and professors at universities and night-study universities, et al.

Description of area: University department, classroom for various fields of study, posters on the tenets of Michurinism, Lysenkoism, falsification of historical data, purges in libraries, etc.

Ideas for specific props: scrapped and banned books thrown into a pile, works by authors for use as propaganda (see artists who in the Intelligentsia room with works under a pseudonym).

LEVEL THREE – highest political studies at the University of Political Science

Description of area: tenets of Marxism-Leninism, library with "Red" books, etc.

4. POLITICS (IDEALLY SPLIT INTO TWO/THREE LEVELS*)

This area represents the world of political involvement, propaganda, hierarchy, ideology.

The following are examples of what we want to evoke:

- The local Party cell (level – village, factory, school, faculty, agricultural cooperative)
- District Party Committee

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- Provincial Party Committee
- Central Party Committee – 200 members
- Presidium of the Communist Party Central Committee
- From the provincial secretaries – state sanatorium, shops, jumping ahead of others in waiting lists
- The principle of dual leadership (positions in the Central Committee are typically stronger)
- Success = flexibility, adaptability, servility not creativity
- Content – voting, constructive self-criticism, kissing by functionaries (= joy of meeting), first-name terms
- The challenge - to climb the mountain and bend over
- Language - Comrade Chairman
- Party membership card, stamp sticking, reproduction of Party gobbledygook

LEVEL ONE – same as for “School”

No one actually gets to this plane directly, only those who are in another room at the lowest level can learn about the fate of other political parties.

Description of area: Simple information about how many parties there were before the war, between the end of the war and 1948, what happened to them, how democracy was slowly crowded out, etc.

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Ideas for specific props: Photos, names, information, etc.

LEVEL TWO – lower and intermediate officials (chairmen of districts, local people’s committees, etc.)

Description of area: an area for meetings, voting, etc.

LEVEL THREE – higher and highest Party officials (Chairman of the Central Committee, Minister, Chairman of the Provincial Authority, etc.)

Description of area: tribune illustrating their power, material benefits, luxury, but also pressure from the Kremlin (no matter how high you climb, there’s always someone above you)

5. ARMY (IDEALLY SPLIT INTO THREE LEVELS*)

This area represents the world of military service, the Ancillary Technical Battalion, army hierarchy, border guards, etc.

The following are examples of what we want to evoke:

- Ancillary Technical Battalion (closed down in around 1958, then transformed into technical Battalion, less repression)
- At the end of the 1950s, people are no longer sent to penal correction camps
- You can be sent to prison for any minor offence

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- Key area of ideological indoctrination – Fučík's badge, military units, book editions
- Anyone who wants to go to the pub, or home, or wants leave must comply with requirements
- The army should be responsible for the oversight of military education
- Hierarchy: divided command – military and political chief
- The offer to remain in the army after military service – career (financially well rewarded in the 1950s)

LEVEL ONE – lowest level of army “prisoners” / Ancillary Technical Battalion

Description of area: Area evoking oppression and repression, pointless tasks and work, corrections, etc.

LEVEL TWO – people on military service

Description of area: the setting typical for two-year compulsory military service, repression from superiors, propaganda function, vision of imperialist enemy, drills and exercises, earning of badges of distinction, leaves and passes, military units, organization of the military training of the public, etc.

LEVEL THREE – higher and highest military positions (army chief, political chief, professional soldier, etc.)

Description of area: the benefits of army functionaries, ample goods and money, social advantages, ideological commitment to the regime, vision of the imperialist enemy, subordination to Russian models, etc.

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6. “VOLUNTARY” WORK

capacity: approximately 32 people

An area in the central part of the arena where all players have to meet at the end of 1950s stage. Organized, socialism-building, collective activities take place in this area (e.g. collection of potato beetles). The prison must have a separate door to the corridor leading to the vetting board. The prison is connected to the Resistance and Emigration room.

ROOM 9: PRISON

capacity: approximately 8 people

This room can be reached from all three levels. It's a cabin, and players only have a vague idea that it is something akin to a prison. Players cannot just “take a peep” into the prison and walk through it without a care. If you find yourself in the prison, then you’re locked in!

The prison has two (possibly three) parts:

- Pre-trial detention – extremely hard (Ruzyně, Koloděje, Domeček pod Loretou)
- Classic jail – sitting and doing awful, boring work, harmful to health (plucking feathers)
- Labour camp, penal camp – uranium mines, quarries, etc.)

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Typical prison, ideally split into an interrogation room and jail; the interrogation room can be a room with no entrance which you pass on the way to the cell, with light shining from the room into your eyes; figurines sit in the room and a recording of interrogations is played; in the jail/cell there is a warden (an actor) who tricks people into performing meaningless tasks and makes their stay in the room unpleasant (the actor can be assisted by one of the players who want to make a career out of being a guard – sent by the vetting board); somewhere in the jail there will be panels with information about prisons and punishments in the 1950s.

ROOM 9.1: RESISTANCE

capacity: approximately 5 people

ROOM 10: EMIGRATION

capacity: approximately 8 people

Two small exhibition rooms containing information, photos, etc., on these subjects.

After viewing the mini-exhibition, you can go back and change your mind or stick to your decision to emigrate/join the resistance. If you keep to your decision you go straight to prison (not that you knew that when you chose to continue following this path).

THE 1950S PROGRAMME ENDS WITH JOINT “VOLUNTARY” WORK, FROM WHICH PLAYERS ARE TRANSFERRED TO THE 1960S.

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1960S

game – filling in a questionnaire, exhibition

At the start of the 1960s, players can exchange cards with values they want to hold. (A sort of box of values where you can leave the values you had in the 1950s, and another box where you can select new values.) Along with their new values, players collect a questionnaire which they must answer on the way. The 1960s are characterized by economic crisis and a more relaxed atmosphere. This section will be prepared in two large rooms. A third space comprises a corridor screening the events of 21 August 1968.

ROOM 11: FIRST HALF OF THE 1960S - ENLIGHTENMENT

capacity: approximately 32 people

The topics we want to evoke: lack of goods, housing, having to wait for everything, the revelation of some of the unpleasant facts about the 1950s, the rehabilitation of certain prisoners.

The gradual improvement of the situation and relaxation (you can go on trips to Vienna, buy Elvis records, etc.)

Description of area: An exhibition room in which players pass through differently prepared topics as though they are in a queue. We anticipate a kind of corridor which gradually expands and zigzags through the room until it reaches the second half of the 1960s (the second room).

Principle of game: The players have a piece of paper with tasks (questions) in their file that must be answered on the basis of facts learned on the way.

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Specific ideas: Milada Horáková's dress, a demonstration of the failures of the first and second five-year plan, a fashion exhibition, a jukebox with Western hits, a television with the first television broadcast, etc.

ROOM 12: THAW

capacity: approximately 32 people

The themes we want to evoke: the relaxed atmosphere of the Prague Spring, the enthusiasm of transforming socialism (socialism with a human face).

Description of area: In one room you experience the boom in all possible forms of art (movies, screened concerts, poems, pictures) which literally roll down on you on all sides. The walls are littered with fervent slogans such as "socialism with a human face, long live Dubček", "you can wear your hair long", "censorship's abolished", "Ginsberg's here", etc. The whole area should give an impression of colourful freedom. As through the ceiling were transparent and we can see the sky.

Principle of game: It is actually a rest zone with no game principle (as a bit of relief).

ROOM 13: 21 AUGUST 1968 – INVASION

capacity: approximately 32 people

The atmosphere in the room should contrast as much as possible with the previous room. It creates a physically uncomfortable impression of pressure, noise, and helplessness.

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Description of area: We anticipate a long narrow corridor with tanks bearing down on people as they walk through; you can hear the din of the tanks and see photos of the victims along the walls. The audio component is almost unbearably loud (a booming sound, screaming, chanting, the sound of windows breaking). At the end of the room there is a small loudspeaker playing the Czech national anthem, as though it's a scratched record on a slow, broken gramophone. Next to the loudspeaker, players can sign their disagreement with the invasion.

ROOM 14: LESSONS FROM A CRISIS – VETTING BOARD 2

capacity: approximately 32 people

LIGHT IN YOUR EYES. The main theme is the signing of consent for troops to enter the country. We envisage a room with doors to nowhere around the edge (similar to the secret police's observation posts in front of the embassies of Western countries). It looks like someone is watching you. In the middle of the room is the text of the approval for armies to enter the country, with forms ready to be signed. There is a secret policeman in the room who watches you and collects the forms. If you want to walk through without a signed form, you will be marked out (e.g. with a sticker on your shirt).

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TOTALITARIAN SIMULATOR

NORMALIZATION, 1980S, 17 NOVEMBER 1989

game – performance of tasks, simulation

At the entrance, you again have the option of swapping the value you hold. The normalization section consists of a central compartment that is surrounded by various rooms. Drabness, time has stood still, immobility, murkiness, a lack of major historical events, the area is divided into public and private parts, dinginess.

Principle of game: at the beginning, players make their way to their base room to be assigned a task. They then perform this task in the other rooms, while constantly crossing the street. Occasionally the radio calls on them to participate in a joint action in the street (May Day parades, the Spartakiad, etc.); certain rooms are bugged.

ROOM 15: CENTRAL AREA = STREET ZONE

capacity: approximately 32 people

The setting of joint events; a transitional zone between rooms; a place where there are secret police, illegal money changers

Description of area: From the street, there is an entrance to each room; the street is lined with shop windows, notice boards, billboard areas, other components: a projection screen, a police booth with a police officer

The individual rooms of the booth represent places typical for the normalization regime. Only those which have a specific character in terms of the principle of the game are concretized. The other rooms encourage free artistic interpretation.

In terms of capacity, each room should be able to cope with chaotic visits by various numbers of players as they cross the street.

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ROOM 16: TUZEX (FOREIGN-CURRENCY SHOP)

"Peephole to the West" - the possibility of glimpsing what lies beyond the borders, evoking consumer desire for the West.

ROOM 17: NORMAL SHOP

Contrast with Tuzex, the specific gastronomic culture of Communism

ROOM 18: HOME

a place where tasks are assigned

An apartment during the normalization period (ideally a miniature two-bed flat), an armchair and television in the living room – Breathing space = contact with the culture of normalization, variety shows, news; from the Home there is a connecting passage to the Cottage

ROOM 19: COTTAGE

Breathing space

Entered from the Home

Free-time and DIY activities (soldering, domestic art, etc.)

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ROOM 20: POLICE INTERROGATION ROOM

a place where tasks are assigned

from the Interrogation Room, there is a one-way transparent (= semi-permeable) spy wall onto Banned Events and Home, and if appropriate to Dissent

ROOM 21: BANNED EVENTS

E.g. Plastic People concerts, songsters, underground, house meetings, etc.

Under the watch of the police

ROOM 22: DISSENT

A place where tasks are assigned

You enter Dissent from Banned Events

Under the watch of the police

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ROOM 23: PEOPLE'S COMMITTEE/MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR

a place where tasks are assigned

ROOM 24: PUB

Breathing space

ROOM 25: CULTURE

Breathing space = contact with the culture of normalization

Jukebox, disco, Michal David

Distastefulness, emptiness, a disco ball, blown glass ornaments,

ROOM 26: ORGANIZED FREE TIME

Pioneers, unions (Union of Anglers, Union for Cooperation with the Army, etc.)

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ROOM 27: HOLIDAY

Breathing space

"Peephole to emigration" - the possibility of glimpsing what lies beyond the borders, evoking consumer and ideological desire for the West and freedom.

The door from here leads to emigration

ROOM 28: EMIGRATION

You cannot return to the game from here.

It is a gallery above the Street, from where you get the best view of what is happening in the Street

ROOM 29: EMPLOYMENT

a place where tasks are assigned

normalization office

laminated hardboard partitions, coffee, linoleum, carpet, wall unit

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TOTALITARIAN SIMULATOR

17 NOVEMBER 1989

The arrival of November 1989 should take place in the central street (Room 16). The projection screen will show footage from demonstrations, contemporary news will be broadcast on the radio and television. To evoke the regime change, the fronts of all entrances to the rooms could be fitted with blinds containing signs and images that, when suddenly drawn down, transform the Public Security (the Communist police) into Police, a small shop into a supermarket, etc.

CONCLUSION, WINDING DOWN

ROOM 30

capacity: approximately 32 people

This room should be very quiet, pleasant, clean, with comfortable seating in a circle so that the players can see each other. Feelings should be left to wind down in this room. If school classes are present, there should be a short, controlled recap of what they have experienced in the Simulator.

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