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International Reporting of the Falklands War

Case Studies from Ireland, Czechoslovakia and Spain

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The present article is concerned with how the Falklands War of 1982 was reported and interpreted in leading newspapers from three European countries: Czechoslovakia, Ireland and Spain.¹ The intention is to identify which aspects of the conflict were dominant in the reporting and to assess to what extent there was a bias in favour of one of the two belligerents, Argentina and Great Britain. The Falklands conflict is an especially intriguing international event to study in the context of the mass media and its relationships to political elites and the general public because of its ambiguous implications for the three countries that are analysed. On one hand, each country could be said to have had historical reasons for nursing grievances against Britain that could have resulted in coverage of the war that was sympathetic to Argentina: Czechoslovakia was a Warsaw Pact member once “betrayed” by Britain during the Munich Crisis; Ireland was a former colonial territory of Britain; and Spain disputed claims to Gibraltar with Britain (not to mention the fact that the Spanish population could claim a sense of kinship with the Argentinean people). However, it was not necessarily so straightforward. Operating within a Communist country, the state-controlled media of Czechoslovakia was not a natural supporter of the right-wing junta that ruled Argentina; Irish nationalism and Anglophobia had been sobered significantly by the on-going Northern Ireland “Troubles”, and the two countries were closely connected economically; Spain had only recently emerged from its own military dictatorship, there was a boom in press freedom and its centrist government was negotiating the country’s entry into both NATO and the EEC. Then, of course, much turns on the choice of newspaper.

Each of the newspapers chosen can be considered to be a leading national daily and representative of the conservative establishment of the respective countries. The *Irish Independent* remains the largest-selling daily newspaper in Ireland, and, together with the more liberal *Irish Times*, is considered a newspaper of record. It has been associated with traditional middle class values, including Catholic orthodoxy and moderate patriotism; until the 1990s it was broadly supportive of the centre-

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right Fine Gael party.² Though also a leading national newspaper with a long history, the status of *ABC* in Spain is somewhat less equivocal than that of the *Independent* in Ireland. Not only has there historically been a proliferation of national dailies and important regional newspapers in Spain, since the fall of the Franco regime in 1975 newer, more liberal titles have challenged *ABC* for market share. However, its conservative, pro-monarchy outlook has helped to guarantee it a solid readership, and it continues to number among the leading half-dozen daily titles in Spain. (It is, incidentally, the longest newspaper of the sample, with editions commonly exceeding 100 pages).³ Turning to Czechoslovakia, *Rudé právo* ('Red Justice' or 'Red Right') was established in 1920. After the Communist coup in 1948, it became the leading newspaper in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic and the voice of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. It had the highest circulation and was by far the most read paper in the country. It was strictly obedient to the regime and highly propagandistic. Following the end of Communist rule in 1989, *Rudé právo* ceased publication, though a successor title, *Právo*, emerged to cater for left-wing opinion.⁴

THE IRISH CASE: THE IRISH INDEPENDENT

The Falklands war was a major international news story in the Irish media of the time. Certainly, it dominated the pages of the *Irish Independent*. Out of forty-two newspaper editions between 4 May and 19 June, the conflict made the front page on thirty-nine occasions; on twenty-seven occasions the war was the subject of the leading front-page article. All told, there were 344 articles (including letters to the editor) dealing with the war, ranging from twenty-three to two articles per issue, with interest peaking in late May.⁵ Occasionally, other international news stories took precedence. One article, titled "Conflict more important than the Falklands", argued that the Iran-Iraq war was of greater significance than the Falklands.⁶ Later, stories such as US-USSR arms negotiations, President Reagan's visit to Europe, the Israel-Lebanon conflict, the football World Cup, the pope's visit to Britain and riots in Poland sometimes challenged the Falklands for space; but no single international story came close to rivaling the Falklands in terms of column inches.⁷

2 LEGG, M.-L., *Newspapers*, in: CONNOLLY, S. J. (ed.), *The Oxford Companion to Irish History*, 2nd ed., Oxford 2002, p. 407.

3 PARRONDO, R., *Press*, in: RODGERS, E. (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Spanish Culture*, London 1999, p. 419; BARRERA, C. — ZUGASTI, R., *The Role of the Press in Times of Transition: The Building of the Spanish Democracy (1975–78)*, in: VOLTMER, K. (ed.), *Mass Media and Political Communication in New Democracies*, London 2006, pp. 23–41.

4 *Rudé právo*, in: *Encyklopedie Diderot*, Prague 1999.

5 *Irish Independent*, 22. 5. 1982 (twenty-three articles); *ibid.*, 14. 5. 1982; 4. 6. 1982 (two articles each).

6 *Ibid.*, 17. 5. 1982.

7 *Ibid.*, 17.–19. 5. 1982; *ibid.*, 1.–2. 6. 1982; 5. 6. 1982; 7.–11. 6. 1982; 14. 6. 1982.

The following section identifies and explores three major themes observable in the *Irish Independent's* coverage of the Falklands war. First, we will see that the *Independent's* reportage of the conflict was often from a British perspective, relying heavily on British sources and concentrating on the various implications of the war for the UK. Second, there was a pronounced Irish dimension to the affair, especially because of the controversial stance on the conflict adopted by the Irish government. Finally, as befitting such a major news story, much space was given over to journalists, including the editor and expert commentators, to provide analysis and opinion on the war. Perhaps surprisingly, the *Irish Independent* was broadly supportive of Britain's war.

The high level of attention devoted to the Falklands conflict was surely due in large part because it involved Ireland's nearest neighbour.⁸ Ireland and Britain were connected by historical links, the "Troubles", the large Irish diaspora in the UK and EEC membership; thus readers of the *Irish Independent* were probably more familiar with Britain and its politics and people than any other foreign country. Irish journalists were stationed in the UK and, of course, language was no obstacle to information gathering. This background helps to explain why the *Independent's* reporting of the conflict was largely from a British perspective: 128 out of 344 articles may be characterised as having an overwhelmingly British standpoint.⁹

This British perspective involved according a profound focus to the attitudes and statements of British politicians and officials. A selection of article titles serves to illustrate this: "No compromise — Maggie sticks to her guns", "Thatcher pledges no sell out", "Thatcher to give UN talks 'one more go'", "Final battle at hand, says defiant Maggie", "Maggie gives the go-ahead" and "Argentina role ruled out by defiant Maggie".¹⁰ Articles such as these were largely based on interviews and statements by leading British government figures, reports of Westminster debates, and unnamed sources from "Whitehall" or the Ministry of Defence. The articles offered detailed information on the British government's reactions and intentions. Throughout, there were frequent references to Mrs Thatcher, many of them complete with quotations from the prime minister. These intimate glimpses into the workings of the UK government are in contrast with the paltry information about the Argentinean government. A mere twenty-four articles can be considered Argentinean in perspective; General Galtieri was only quoted on six occasions, and most of these were clipped to one or two words.¹¹ Although this imbalance was almost certainly shaped by the reluctance of the junta to comment on the conflict as well as by Irish journalists' lack of familiarity with Argentinean sources and news agencies, these factors alone are insufficient

8 On Anglo-Irish relations see FERRITER, D., *The Transformation of Ireland, 1900–2000*, London 2004.

9 Admittedly gauging a newspaper article's "perspective" is not always easy. Herein, we posit that an article can be said to adopt a certain national perspective if it is wholly or mostly concerned with the reporting an incident in terms of a particular state, or if the sources cited are completely or mostly from a particular state. If we accept this as a working definition, it is clear that the *Irish Independent* reported the Falklands as Britain's war.

10 *Irish Independent*, 15. 5. 1982; 18. 5. 1982; 3. 6. 1982; 4. 6. 1982; 16. 6. 1982.

11 *Ibid.*, 14. 5. 1982; 17. 5. 1982; 24. 5. 1982; 9. 6. 1992; 18. 6. 1982; 19. 6. 1982.

to explain the comparative lack of detail on the Argentinean side. For most of the conflict's duration, the *Independent* could call on the services of the Northern Ireland-born Fleet Street journalist Ted Oliver, who, on the basis of his Irish connections, was one of the few UK reporters to be tolerated in Buenos Aires. However, despite his residency in the capital, Oliver only authored two substantial reports on the Argentinean experience of the conflict for the *Independent*, and the longest article was concerned with the exceptional circumstance of the papal visit to Argentina in mid-June.¹² Thus, there seems to have been an editorial decision to accord more attention to Britain.

Many articles were related to the British military aspect of the conflict. Details were given on issues including army manoeuvres, resources, tactics and strategy. Sometimes these articles were accompanied by photographs and drawings. Very often articles were based on the press briefings of the Military of Defence's chief spokesman, Ian MacDonald.¹³ That the newspaper's coverage of the military-strategic aspects of the conflict was largely from a British point of view can be illustrated by an article on Argentinean submarines. Although ostensibly about Argentinean military resources, the piece merely analysed the implications of this for the UK task force. It concluded: "Along with the political need for a quick victory in the Falklands, the most urgent problem facing British forces now is the imperative of discovering those submarines before they get in a deadly blow."¹⁴ Similarly, an article entitled "Haig fears result if Argentina humiliated" was in fact concerned, not with the substance of the US secretary of state's anxieties, but with the fact that British officials had yet to comment on them (how the junta might respond was not enquired into).¹⁵ There were also pieces dedicated to personnel, including profiles and interviews with and statements from commanding officers,¹⁶ and two illustrated articles detailing the equipment and rations of British.¹⁷ Other pieces carried verbatim reports from UK journalists (often from Independent Television News or the BBC) who were observers on manoeuvres.¹⁸ The financial implications were also discussed: three articles totted up the cost to Britain per day of the Falklands (although a later article described the implications of the costs of war for both sides); another calculated the cost of the destroyed battleship *HMS Sheffield*.¹⁹

Space was also given to internal political affairs. Brief notices were made of the British Labour Party's responses to the conflict, including leader Michael Foot's statements in the Commons and his handling of "rebels" from his party who voted against

12 Ibid., 11. 6. 1982; 12. 6. 1982; see also Oliver's obituary in the *Daily Telegraph*, 29. 9. 2007, in: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obituaries/1570843/Ted-Oliver.html>.

13 MacDonald's notoriously tight-lipped briefings were the subject of an entire article by one exasperated journalist: *Irish Independent*, 26. 5. 1982.

14 Ibid., 24. 5. 1982.

15 Ibid., 28. 5. 1982.

16 Ibid., 24. 5. 1982 (profile of Sandy Woodward); 27. 5. 1982 (quoting skipper of *HMS Sheffield*); 3. 5. 1982 (quoting Major-General Moore, chief of the land army).

17 Ibid., 25. 5. 1982; 22. 5. 1982.

18 Ibid., 24. 5. 1982; 26. 5. 1982; 31. 5. 1982; 10. 6. 1982.

19 Ibid., 5. 5. 1982; 7. 5. 1982; 21. 5. 1982; 8. 6. 1982; 11. 6. 1982.

the counter-invasion of the islands. Former Labour Prime Minister Jimmy Callaghan was also quoted.²⁰ British opinion polls on Thatcher's and the Conservatives' popularity and approval were reported, giving Irish readers an appreciation of the "Falklands Factor" in British politics.²¹

The war had implications for Ireland and these implications grew more critical as the Irish government ultimately pursued a controversial stance on the conflict. For these reasons there was a pronounced Irish dimension to the reportage: forty-nine articles focused solely on the consequences of the conflict for Ireland (twice as much as the numbers dealing with the Argentinean perspective).

In April 1982, the Fianna Fáil government of Charles Haughey had been understated in its reaction to the crisis. A temporary member of the UN Security Council, Ireland had supported Resolution 503 which called for the withdrawal of Argentinean troops from the Falklands as a precondition for a diplomatic settlement; and it had consented without protest to the EEC's imposition of trade sanctions on Argentina as a gesture of support for the UK. However, this changed after the sinking of the *General Belgrano* cruiser on 3 May. The following day Haughey announced that the government was re-thinking its position on sanctions, while making an extraordinary unilateral plea for a UN Security Council to discuss the conflict; that same day the Minister for Defence asserted that the British were "the aggressors now". From this point until the end of the war, the government opposed EEC sanctions and was public in its preference for a United Nations solution rather than a British military reoccupation. Though this damaged Ireland's relations with Britain, and its standing within the EEC and the United Nations, the government's policy undoubtedly had some popular support in Ireland and was justified by the government as consistent with the state's tradition of neutrality.²²

The government's Falklands policy was accorded a high priority in the *Independent*. In addition to reporting on the latest statements and rumours from the government, there was detailed coverage of the heated debate in the Irish parliament, as the liberal, pro-EEC opposition leader Garret Fitzgerald challenged Haughey's interpretation of Irish neutrality and harangued him for upsetting the British government and people and destabilising sensitive talks over Northern Ireland.²³ The political implications of the affair would certainly have been more profound had not the Thatcher government been deliberately muted in its official response. Thus the *Independent* fo-

20 Ibid., 24. 5. 1982.

21 Ibid., 13. 5. 1982; 18. 5. 1982; 20. 5. 1982; 24. 5. 1982.

22 FREEMAN, L., *The Official History of the Falklands Campaign. Vol. 2: War and Diplomacy*, Abingdon 2005, pp. 424–425. On the problem of neutrality, see e.g. JESSE, N., *Choosing to Go it Alone: Irish Neutrality in Theoretical and Comparative Perspective*, in: *International Political Science Review*, Vol. 27, 2006, pp. 7–28; for a contemporary assessment of the Falklands conflict in terms of Irish neutrality, see KEATINGE, P., *A Singular State: Irish Neutrality in the 1980s*, Dublin 1983.

23 *Irish Independent*, 5. 5. 1982; 7. 5. 1982; 8. 5. 1982; 10. 5. 1982; 12. 5. 1982; 13. 5. 1982; 15. 5. 1982; 17. 5. 1982; 18. 5. 1982; 19. 5. 1982; 20. 5. 1982; 22. 5. 1982; 24. 5. 1982; 1. 6. 1982; 3. 6. 1982; 19. 6. 1982.

cused also on the damage to Irish industry caused the furore, especially after the British *Sun* newspaper called on its readers to boycott Irish goods. Stories drew readers' attention to the apparent damage to the tourism and agricultural sectors.²⁴ The implications for Irish agriculture were also reflected on, especially in relation to the EEC and the question of Argentine trade sanctions. In this regard, the government's opposition to sanctions and the UK government's twin demands for support for its war as well as a budget rebate fused into a single complex dilemma that threatened to derail a proposed settlement on farm prices. The headline story of 8 May typified the awareness that the conflict had immediate ramifications for ordinary readers of the *Irish Independent*: "The Falklands crisis looks like overshadowing other items on a crowded agenda this weekend. And Irish farmers may well [have] seen their hope of price rises by mid-May shattered once again." The agricultural deal, it was often repeated, was worth £235 million to Irish farmers, and the travails of the Irish ministers for Agriculture and Foreign Affairs at EEC meetings were frequently reported.²⁵ The Falklands war was more than a distant conflict over sovereignty: according to the *Independent* it was also a conflict with immediate economic implications for Ireland.

The *Independent* came down in favour of Britain. This may be explained by the general editorial tone of the newspaper. Conservative in social, political and economic terms, the *Independent* was by ethos disinclined to look favourably on violent attempts at disrupting the status quo by a volatile state such as Argentina (whose chief supporters in the war included Cuba and the Soviet Union). The newspaper was also supportive of the Fine Gael party, which was more moderate in its approach to Anglo-Irish relations than the self-styled "republican" Fianna Fáil party. Nonetheless, there was sufficient hostility to the British handling of the Falklands conflict within the Irish media and society (and indeed internationally) to make the *Independent's* stance worthy of note. Charles Haughey alluded to "anti-British feeling" within his party and in Ireland and candidly declared that he was struggling to "keep a balanced and mature approach" to the issue.²⁶ The national broadcaster, RTÉ, referred to the islands as "Las Malvinas" and was accused of bias in favour of Argentina.²⁷ Internationally, there was predictable opposition from the Soviet Union and Cuba, but even EEC partners were concerned at the belligerence of the British response, while the Austrian government condemned the "colonial principles" which Britain was allegedly defending.²⁸

To be sure, there were expressions of sympathy for Argentina and dissatisfaction with Britain in the pages of the *Independent*. Peter Kellner, a prominent UK journalist then political editor at the left-leaning *New Statesman* current affairs maga-

24 Ibid., 6. 5. 1982; 7. 5. 1982; 8. 5. 1982; 17. 5. 1982; 19. 5. 1982; 25. 5. 1982; 14. 6. 1982; 15. 6. 1982; 16. 6. 1982; 18. 6. 1982. By the end of the conflict, the newspaper tended to conclude that the economic damage to Ireland had not been as dire as some had predicted.

25 Ibid., 15. 5. 1982; 17. 5. 1982; 18. 5. 1982.

26 Ibid., 7. 5. 1982; 1982; FANNING, R., op. cit.

27 *Irish Independent*, 3. 6. 1982. The allegation was made by a Fine Gael deputy. For RTÉ, see BOWMAN, J., *Window and Mirror: RTÉ Television, 1962-2011*, Dublin 2011.

28 *Irish Independent*, 5. 5. 1982. FREEMAN, L., op. cit., pp. 420-435.

zine, contributed a series of extended articles on the conflict.²⁹ His second piece was a broad endorsement of the Irish government's "refusal to underwrite Mrs Thatcher's jingoism".³⁰ On 24 May the tone was again pessimistic, because of the British government's apparent reluctance to forge a future for the Falklands that could enjoy cross-party and international support. Letters to the editor were also reflective of anti-British sentiment: most letters on the Falklands either evinced sympathy with the Argentinean claim (sometimes drawing parallels between the Falklands and Northern Ireland) or were supportive of the Haughey government's Falklands diplomacy.³¹

Nevertheless, editor Vincent Doyle's leader articles were broadly consistent in endorsing Britain's war. Although he paid tribute to the efforts of the UN, the USA and Peru in advancing peace proposals, and frequently lamented that the dispute had escalated to all-out war, Doyle was in no doubt that Argentina was the guilty party. The day after the *Belgrano's* sinking he asserted that "civilised countries do not settle disputes over pieces of territory by arbitrarily seizing those territories".³² As the Haughey government developed its response towards the conflict, the *Independent* editor put on record his disagreement, reminding his readers that Argentina was the aggressor.³³ In criticising Fianna Fáil's Falklands policy, Doyle was joined by the newspaper's chief political reporter, Bruce Arnold (whose telephone was "tapped" by the Fianna Fáil Minister for Justice in 1982).³⁴ Arnold accused Haughey's government of inconsistency and hypocrisy in its approach to Britain and the doctrine of neutrality; his arguments were similar to those of the Fine Gael leader Garret FitzGerald.³⁵ Doyle's editorials continued to criticise the Haughey government in the following weeks for isolating Ireland from her usual allies and sending Anglo-Irish relations into freefall.³⁶ From late May the leader articles became much more pro-British. On 22 May it was asserted that Thatcher "in serving Britain ... has served the interests of the free world". The endorsement of Britain's war was cemented in the wake of Pope John Paul II's visit to the UK at the end of May and the beginning of June. The *Independent* praised Thatcher and her government for not seeking an audience with the pope — a move that would have caused embarrassment to the pontiff who was trying to avoid taking sides.³⁷ The editorial of 1 June drew attention to the "tolerance and maturity of the British people [...] This maturity cannot be confined to religion. It has perhaps taken the first visit of a Pope to demonstrate a quality which is not properly appreciated. In those who have other quarrels with Britain — ourselves and Argen-

29 *Irish Independent*, 6. 5. 1982; 19. 5. 1982; 17. 6. 1982.

30 *Ibid.*, 19. 5. 1982.

31 *Ibid.*, 4. 5. 1982; 7. 5. 1982; 10. 5. 1982; 20. 5. 1982; 24. 5. 1982; 25. 5. 1982; 7. 6. 1982; 17. 6. 1982; 18. 6. 1982.

32 *Ibid.*, 4. 5. 1982.

33 *Ibid.*, 7. 5. 1982; 19. 5. 1982.

34 KEOGH, D., *Twentieth-Century Ireland: Nation and State*, Dublin 1994, pp. 363–364; FOSTER, R.F., *Luck and the Irish: A History of Change, 1970–2000*, London 2007, p. 110.

35 *Irish Independent*, 10. 5. 1982.

36 *Ibid.*, 13. 5. 1982; 15. 5. 1982; 20. 5. 1982; 25. 5. 1982.

37 *Ibid.*, 1. 6. 1982; 5. 6. 1982.

tina for example — understanding the latent reasonableness of her people might go some way to bringing peace closer”. This positive attitude towards the British was contrasted with the editor’s criticism of the Galtieri regime, which it characterised as repressive and “oblique” in its dealings with the international media.³⁸ As the conflict reached a climax, Doyle’s editorials reflected that the British approach to the controversy had been consistent and just, and that “World opinion has generally supported” the principles involved. A day later, the final leader column on the Falklands was rather more cautious. It expressed the hope that the British government, having been “Churchillian” in its rhetoric during the war, could now show “magnanimity in victory”, while speculating that the British triumph could make it less likely to negotiate any resettlement of its territories — including Northern Ireland.³⁹

THE CZECH CASE: *RUDÉ PRÁVO*

As in the case of the *Irish Independent*, the Falklands war was given extensive coverage in the pages of *Rudé právo* in May and June 1982. Given that the war was taking place in faraway islands with no direct relation to Czechoslovakia, the articles dealing with the conflict were voluminous in number and column inches. The Communist propaganda machine took the opportunity to present the war as an example of predatory imperialistic interests. The invasion was portrayed not only as a war *per se*, but also as a representation of the exercise of power and superiority of a strong state over a weak one.

The major source of information was the Czech Press Agency, with no specific authors named. Eight articles in the period under review were written by *Rudé právo*’s foreign correspondents Karel Starý, Milan Jelínek, Dušan Rovenský and Zdeněk Porybný. These articles were highly opinionated, biased and propagandist. (It may be noted in passing that in 1990 Zdeněk Porybný became chairman of the board of Borgis Publishing, the majority owner of *Rudé právo*’s successor newspaper, *Právo*. He also became the paper’s editor-in-chief, a position he has since retained.)⁴⁰ By using citations and quotes from the British press, *Rudé právo* tried to give the impression of being an independent observer. However, the two major sources of information were the tabloid the *Daily Mail* and the paper of the British Communist Party, *The Morning Star*.

Forty-one editions of *Rudé právo* were published between 4 May and 19 June, with fifty-three articles covering the conflict. There was usually only one article per issue, although on six occasions there were two articles. The maximum number of articles — four — was published on 8 May. The conflict made the front page on eighteen occasions in the period under consideration, for the first time on 5 May with the ar-

38 Ibid., 8. 6. 1982.

39 Ibid., 15. 6. 1982; 16. 6. 1982.

40 “Zdeněk Porybný odstoupil z představenstva vydavatelství Borgis” [Zdenek Porybny resigns from the board of Borgis Publishing], in: <http://zpravy.e15.cz/byznys/technologie-a-media/zdenek-porybny-odstoupil-z-predstavenstva-vydavatelstvi-borgis-1054822> (25. 11. 2014).

ticle “Hundreds of victims already”, and for the last time on 16 June with the article “Britain restores colonial status of Malvinas by force”.⁴¹ When the conflict did not make the front page, it usually dominated the page dedicated to foreign affairs (pages six and seven in each issue). The front pages were otherwise full of propagandistic articles on the successes of the Czechoslovak economy and on events in the countries of the Soviet bloc. Massive space was given over to the perpetual “imperialist” threat to international peace. Readers were constantly reminded of the danger of nuclear war imposed by the United States.

Rudé právo's reports fall into three major categories. First, we can observe a very strong anti-colonial perspective. The “colonialist” and “neo-colonialist” policy favoured by the Conservative Party was mentioned in almost every article about the Falklands. Second, there was explicit condemnation of the UK and the USA. Much space was given over to making sure readers understood that the two superpowers were acting from a position of strength and were not willing to settle the conflict peacefully. Finally, we will see the Czechoslovak Communist regime's support and sympathy for Argentina despite the rule of the military junta there.

Although its early notices of the conflict were rather neutral in tone as headlines ‘Intransigence of both sides’ or ‘Both sides continue with military preparations’⁴² suggest, *Rudé právo* soon came out strongly in favour of Argentina; as the conflict progressed, anti-colonialist, anti-imperialistic and anti-capitalist perspectives dominated its reports. *Rudé právo* presented the war as a conflict caused by imperialistic, neo-colonial, reactionary Britain. The British, it kept repeating, wanted to seize control over a territory which did not belong to the UK at all. Almost every article mentioned the history of the Falkland Islands, in particular the fact that Britain had seized them in 1833 by force. Especially worth noting in this context is Milan Jelínek's article of 16 April, “Colonialism is to blame”. It gives an idea of just how much stress *Rudé právo* put on the colonial issue and illustrates its strong anti-colonialist rhetoric. Commenting on responsibility for the conflict, he wrote: “The blame lies fully with one of the most hideous products of imperialistic policy — colonialism. How much evil, suffering and impoverishment colonialism has caused to the nations of the world!”⁴³

In his article “South Atlantic massacre”, Jelínek, in line with this anti-colonial rhetoric, fulminates against Britain, stating that the sinking of the *Belgrano* “was a massacre, a barbaric act. The British colonial conscience had been burdened again with immense human suffering... Proud Albion... had again punished the weaker side and did not want to negotiate or discuss the problem... No such policy or way of thinking belonged in today's world... Colonialism and neo-colonialism had caused enough

41 “Už dnes stovky obětí” [Hundreds of victims already], *Rudé právo*, 5. 5. 1982; “Británie silou obnovila koloniální status Malvín” [Britain restores colonial status of Malvinas by force], *ibid.*, 16. 6. 1982. All translations are by Jitka Vollandová.

42 “Neústupnost obou stran”, *Rudé právo*, 10. 4. 1982; “Obě strany pokračují ve válečných přípravách”, *ibid.*, 16. 4. 1982.

43 “Vínu nese v plné míře jeden z nejohavnějších produktů imprialistické politiky — kolonialismus. Kolik zla, utrpení a bídy již způsobil národům světa!”, *ibid.*, 16. 4. 1982.

suffering”.⁴⁴ Karel Starý asked in his report whether common sense would finally prevail over the outdated colonial pattern.⁴⁵ In line with this anti-colonialist stance, *Rudé právo* also reminded its readers about the Spanish claim on Gibraltar and reported Spain’s expectation that “the British government will be ready for scheduled negotiations about this British colony regardless of the outcome of the Falklands conflict”.⁴⁶

Rudé právo soon adopted a sympathetic attitude towards Argentina and came to condemn strongly the UK and the US. Its frustration with British and American power is revealed by headlines such as “Britain sets conditions”, “USA takes advantage of the Malvinas situation”, “London seeks alibi”, “Britain refuses negotiation proposals”, and “American missiles for colonizers”.⁴⁷ “Gunboat policy” became a popular expression for the British strategy. The paper said that Britain was playing for time while pretending it wanted to negotiate, and that the UN as a negotiator, despite all its efforts, was mostly being ignored by the British side. *Rudé právo* continued to convey the impression that Britain wanted to strengthen its naval fleet and troop numbers in the area. *Rudé právo*’s rhetoric about the conflict conformed fully to the anti-capitalist propaganda common to all Soviet satellites. It stressed the threat to international peace posed by Western powers. Rather surprisingly, however, there are only three reflections of the conflict as viewed by Soviet officials and the Soviet press.⁴⁸

On 3 May 1982, *Rudé právo* published a lengthy article, “Britain attacks Malvinas”, leaving no doubt as to who was to be blamed for the “first” attack. The British Ministry of Defence spokesman, it was asserted, was “cynically parading the alleged right to self-defence under the UN Charter”.⁴⁹ It further opined that the direct impetus for the British attack had been the decision of the Reagan administration to impose an economic and military embargo on Argentina, as this had strengthened the conviction of Thatcher’s government that it could enter into open military conflict. Washington, in turn, was dependent on the British Conservatives. The Conservative government was unreservedly servile to the foreign policy concepts of President Reagan. The US was prepared to take risks to keep Mrs Thatcher in power, despite the danger that US relations with South American states would be compromised.⁵⁰

Following the sinking of the *Belgrano*, the reoccurring themes in the reporting included US involvement in the conflict, British reliance on the support of the Rea-

44 “... byl masakrem, barbarským aktem. Koloniální svědomí Británie bylo znovu zatíženo nezměrným lidským utrpením... Hrdý Albion... opět trestá slabšího, o vzniklém problému nebo sporu nechce jednat, diskutovat... Ne, taková politika, takový způsob myšlení do dnešního světa nepatří... Koloniální a nekoloniální praktiky způsobily tolik neštěstí a utrpení”, *ibid.*, 5. 5. 1982.

45 “Převládne zdravý rozum?” [Is common sense to prevail?], *ibid.*, 6. 5. 1982.

46 *Ibid.*, 20. 5. 1982.

47 “Británie si klade podmínky,” *ibid.*, 7. 5. 1982; “USA zneužívají situaci na Malínách,” *ibid.*, 8. 5. 1982; “Londýn hledá alibi,” *ibid.*, 20. 5. 1982; “Británie odmítá návrhy řešení,” *ibid.*, 21. 5. 1982; “Americké rakety kolonizátorům,” *ibid.*, 31. 5. 1982.

48 *Ibid.*, 15. 5. 1982, 24. 5. 1982.

49 “Se cynicky oháněl údajným právem na sebeobranu podle Charty OSN”, *ibid.*, 3. 5. 1982.

50 *Ibid.*, 16. 4. 1982.

gan administration and British disregard for any international resolution initiatives. Under the headline “Argentine battle cruiser hit by torpedoes”, on 4 May *Rudé právo* stated that the ship had been sunk outside the 200-mile military exclusion zone around the islands. It informed readers that British Foreign Secretary Francis Pym’s visits to the USA had served “to coordinate US-British strategies and tactics... and to increase their common colonial pressure”.⁵¹ The frenetic shuttle diplomacy of US Secretary of State Alexander Haig was often condemned as a pretext for pushing through American and British demands. *Rudé právo* maintained that Britain had no intention of resolving the conflict peacefully, as “it must be the British peace, which the government is intent on achieving even through the use of military power”.⁵²

Many articles went into great detail about military aspects of the war. The numbers of ships, troops and weapons on each side were discussed in great length in the majority of articles. The numbers of casualties caused by the war were reported, using rhetoric such as “Hundreds of victims already”, suggesting that the war — despite lacking political and moral justification — would claim many more lives.⁵³ The requisition of merchant and passenger vessels for military purposes was reported as an arbitrary action of the British government. The military support of the USA was mentioned: “USA helps London with supplies of aircraft and fuel.”⁵⁴

The reactions of EEC countries were regularly reported, albeit selectively. Following the sinking of the *Belgrano*, *Rudé právo* reported a shift in opinion all around the world. The initial support for Britain was on the wane. France was “astonished”, Germany “horrified”, and Norway in “deep sorrow”. The Spanish and Italian governments were concerned. It was also reported that the strongest protest against the British action had come from Ireland. The Irish Defence Minister had described Britain as an aggressor, announcing that Ireland would withdraw its diplomatic support for Britain. Ireland was also re-thinking the EEC’s sanctions against Argentina, considering them no longer “appropriate” and asking for them to be lifted.⁵⁵

Although neither of the warring parties — one a military dictatorship, the other a capitalist, “colonialist” power — was acceptable to the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia, Galtieri’s junta was nonetheless portrayed as the victim and its repressive nature was glossed over. *Rudé právo* repeatedly pointed out to its readers that Argentina wanted to resolve the conflict peacefully, with the UN as an intermediary, and that it was the UK, backed by the United States, which was the aggressor. Several times it stressed that its solidarity lay with the Argentinean people and that the weaker state had the right to stand up to this “great aggression that would support the sustaining of colonialism and the suppression of nations and their submis-

51 “koordinaci britsko-americké strategie a taktiky...a k zesílení jejich společného koloniálního nátlaku”, *ibid.*, 4. 5. 1982.

52 “že to musí být mír britský, pro nějž dělá britská vláda vše včetně použití síly”, *ibid.*, 4. 5. 1982.

53 “Už dnes stovky obětí” [Hundreds of victims already], *ibid.*, 5. 5. 1982.

54 “USA pomáhají Londýnu novými dodávkami letadel a pohonných hmot”, *ibid.*, 13. 5. 1982.

55 *Ibid.*, 5. 5. 1982.

sion to imperialistic plans”.⁵⁶ In response to a reader’s question whether the fact that there was a military junta in power in Argentina was a problem, Jelínek wrote that Czechoslovak solidarity lay with the Argentinean people: “Argentine people YES!” Jelínek then went on to reiterate the entire colonial history of the islands, emphasising that Britain had never hesitated to use force to protect its interests. He referred to the opinion of the Argentine Communist Party, which “says no to the Junta but yes to the Malvinas”.⁵⁷

The growing support for Argentina in the conflict is perhaps best illustrated by the shift in the nomenclature used for the Falkland Islands. Initially *Rudé právo* used the name “Falkland Islands” followed by “Malvinas” in brackets, but as from 6 May 1982 — without any explanation — it started referring to the territory as the Malvinas only. Although the term “Falkland Islands” was well established in Czechoslovak encyclopaedias, atlases and literature, the Communist propaganda machine decided to use the Argentinean term. This shift in terminology mirrored the Communist Party’s interpretation of the conflict and was intended to manipulate readers.⁵⁸ However, this change did not pass unnoticed. On 8 May, a reader asked: “Why is *Rudé právo* turning readers’ heads [by changing its terminology]?” Zdeněk Porybný replied that “naturally it is not a question of turning readers’ heads” but “an expression of the political stance on this international issue”. He explained that the term “Falkland Islands” or “the Falklands” was associated with British colonial rule, as the islands had been named after the Viscount of Falkland, the Treasurer of the Navy, but that Czechoslovakia considered the colonial status of the islands to be an anachronism, a relic. Therefore, Porybný concluded, *Rudé právo* had opted for the Malvinas. The same approach was adopted for the capital city Port Stanley, which became Puerto Argentino.⁵⁹

At the end of the conflict, *Rudé právo* reported: ‘Britain restores colonial status of Malvinas by force’.⁶⁰ It briefly informed readers that the military junta had resigned and General Galtieri had been replaced. The consequences of this change for the leadership of Argentina were “yet to be seen”.⁶¹ Without any evaluation or deep analysis of the conflict, *Rudé právo* now shifted its attention to other events at the international scene, particularly to the Israeli-Lebanese conflict, with a strong anti-Zionist rhetoric. It continued with despising Reagan’s policy and the nuclear threat represented by the USA.

56 “velké agresí namířené na udržení kolonialismu, potlačení národů a jejich podřízení imperialistickým plánům”, *ibid.*, 18. 5. 1982.

57 “Junta ne, Malvíny ano”, *ibid.*, 20. 5. 1982.

58 *Válka o Falklandy* [Falklands War]: Interview with Prof. Martin Kovář and Jaroslav Hrbek (6. 4. 2007, Czech Television ČT24), in: <http://www.ceskatelevize.cz/ct24/exkluzivne-na-ct24/osobnosti-na-ct24/7024-valka-o-falklandy/> (13. 12. 2014).

59 “Proč takhle Rudé právo plete čtenářům hlavu?”, “nejde přirozeně o žádné pletení hlav čtenářům, ale o vyjádření politického vztahu k této mezinárodní otázce,” *ibid.*, 8. 5. 1982.

60 “Británie silou obnovila koloniální status Malvín”, *ibid.* 16. 6. 1982.

61 *Ibid.*, 18. 6. 1982.

THE SPANISH CASE: ABC

The conflict in the Falkland Islands became the most important international item commented during the conflict in ABC, and developments in the archipelago were monitored with anxiety. Several times per week, the conflict was featured on the front page, sometimes with photographs. The story dominated the international section on a daily basis. The extent of reporting on Argentina even provoked a letter of complaint to the editor, with a reader avowing that the amount of pictures from the conflict included in the newspaper was disproportionate, and was marginalizing coverage of other international events such as the anti-government demonstrations in Poland or the war in Afghanistan.⁶² Indeed, much space was given over to photographs and illustrations. These included various moments such as sinking of the *Belgrano*; Argentinean and British soldiers; Argentinean police; and photographs of important figures of the war such as Ronald Reagan, Margaret Thatcher, Sir Francis Pym, Alexander Haig, Nicanor Costa Méndez, Javier Pérez de Cuéllar and many others. On one occasion, Thatcher was the subject of a satirical cartoon, designed to highlight the foolishness and illogicality of Britain's military effort.⁶³ The conflict also appeared in the sports section, where possible repercussions of the war on the forthcoming World Cup were mentioned.⁶⁴ For a time at the beginning of June, the Israeli invasion of south Lebanon rivalled the Falklands as the main foreign news story, while from 7 July the headlines in the international news sections were sometimes devoted to the Lebanese conflict.

ABC's coverage of the conflict gave roughly equal attention to both combatants as well as other international actors. This was helped by the fact that the newspaper had correspondents in Buenos Aires, London and New York; the newspaper also drew on international news-agencies such as TASS from the Soviet Union. In terms of Britain and Argentina, ABC was interested in the political dimension and background but it also concentrated on the military actions. Most reports of offensives and counter-offensives were divided into separate Argentinean and British sections. The international perspective included reports and reflections on actors including NATO, the US and the UN (especially the mediation of the Secretary General, Peréz de Cuéllar). It also focused on the support of the EEC for Britain by way of its economic sanctions imposed on Argentina. Additionally, the newspaper gave attention to potential Soviet involvement and the possible attendant growth of Communism in Argentina, and the support of Latin American countries for Argentina. From early June, however, as the prospects of a British victory grew more certain, ABC began concentrating more on the British political scene and especially on Thatcher (who was earlier referred in one letter to the director as the 'Ice Lady' instead of the Iron Lady)⁶⁵. Also at this time, the newspaper reported on the dramatic changes occurring in Argentina, and speculated on the country's future political arrangements. It documented Galtieri's declining re-

62 ABC, 25. 5. 1982.

63 Ibid., 2. 6. 1982.

64 Ibid., 6. 5. 1982.

65 Ibid., 24. 5. 1982.

lationship with the rest of the military elite in Argentina and his ultimate enforced resignation,⁶⁶ and reflected on Argentine Foreign Minister Nicanor Costa Mendéz and the possibility that he could become president of the new government.

ABC's coverage of the Falklands war included reporting on the official Spanish reaction to the conflict; reporting was factual and was also reflected upon in letters by the reading public. The Spanish government of Leopoldo Calvo-Sotelo found itself in a difficult position regarding the conflict; the situation was ambiguous and the government struggled to develop a coherent response.⁶⁷ On one hand it had strong Western ties with the UK and US, and was preparing for NATO and EEC membership. Both NATO and the European Community acknowledged Spanish sensitivities in terms of the conflict. Spain's "special" position was even recognized by the President of the Council of Ministers, Leo Tindemans, who declared that unanimity is not obligatory within the political framework of the EEC.⁶⁸ On the other hand, Spain had significant historical, political and cultural ties with Argentina. Much of the Argentinean population were the descendants of Spanish emigrants and Spanish-born emigrants were among those Argentineans who were killed in the conflict; for reasons such as this, the Spanish public was generally solidly pro-Argentinean throughout the affair.⁶⁹ Another important factor was strategic: as most of Latin American opinion was firmly behind Argentina, Spain stood to lose favour in the region if it opposed Argentina's claim.⁷⁰ As well as detailing the Spanish Foreign Minister's attempts at offering mediation⁷¹, ABC's reporting of the official Spanish position reveals a shift in thinking in terms of Spain's position towards the conflict, and indeed its place in the world. After a period of indecision, Spain eventually became more confident about its position towards the conflict. At the beginning there were expressions of relief that Spain had not entered NATO and the EEC, which might have forced it to adhere to economic sanctions on Argentina.⁷² However, with the development of the conflict and international acceptance of the position of Spain, commentators rather saw Spain as among the international contributors to a solution and perceived the country as having the potential to enrich both NATO and EEC. Having questioned how their position could affect their membership of the EEC and of NATO (Spain joined the latter in early June), they reached the conclusion that Spain could help to promote understanding between Latin-American countries and the communities, as well as greater understanding between the West and Arab countries.⁷³

⁶⁶ Ibid., 12. 6. 1982.

⁶⁷ BARBÉ, E., *Entre Europa y America Latina: La diplomacia Española frente al conflicto de las Malvinas*, in: *Estudios Internacionales*, Vol. 27, No. 106, 1994, p. 1.

⁶⁸ ABC, 5. 5. 1982.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ DEL ARENAL, C., *Política Exterior de España y relaciones con America Latina, IberoAmericanidad, Europeización y Atlantismo en la Política Exterior Española*, Madrid 2011, p. 190.

⁷¹ ABC, 5. 5. 1982.

⁷² Ibid., 4. 5. 1982.

⁷³ Ibid., 28. 5. 1982.

Overall, *ABC* adopted a pro-Argentinean stance. This is not surprising: the official position of the government as well as the mainstream media became more favourable to Argentina as the conflict developed.⁷⁴ Some of the letters to the editor expressed frustration with the one-sided reporting of the state television channel *Televisión Española*; another letter complained about how the newspaper had crudely characterized the Argentines as the peaceful victims while casting the British as bloodthirsty.⁷⁵ *ABC* was not, however, overwhelmingly partisan. Credit was given to the UK as a consistent defender in Western Europe against Communism, for instance.⁷⁶ Sensitivity was shown when reports of the first British fatalities were presented. Moreover, blame for the conflict was not solely directed at Britain: according to *ABC* the US should have helped to prevent the conflict from escalating, while the EEC had been wrong to impose sanctions against Argentina.⁷⁷

Nevertheless, the conflict was, according to *ABC*, Britain's responsibility. Britain was claimed to be the aggressor, stubbornly protecting a historical mistake.⁷⁸ References were made to rampant British nationalism and Margaret Thatcher was portrayed as a colonial adventurer. British superior military resources were contrasted with those of Argentina. And *ABC* concluded that, whatever the role of the Galtieri regime in starting the conflict, the British actions, especially after the sinking of the *Belgrano*, were worse.⁷⁹

Many articles about the conflict were dedicated to other actors. *ABC* was greatly concerned with the Soviet Union's reactions and attitudes to the war. Ultimately, it feared that the Russians would assist Argentina and thus cause the Cold War to escalate. In such a case, the newspaper opined, atomic warfare was a possible worst-case scenario.⁸⁰ On 4 May the newspaper analysed the potential Soviet-Argentine connection. In the article "The EEC keeps solidarity with Great Britain" it was noted that Soviet food supplies were running low, implying that it would be feasible for the Soviet to exchange weapons for Argentinean foodstuffs.⁸¹ The same edition also speculated on the opportunities that existed during the crisis for the USSR to promote the growth of Communist ideology in Latin America. This was linked to the theme of British irresponsibility. According to *ABC*, the British adventure in the Falklands was putting regional and global stability at risk, by provoking an anti-Western reaction in South America, which could possibly embrace enthusiasm for Communism. Thus we can see how the conservative political bias of *ABC* was manifested.⁸² Space was also given to the various stances of American states, in particular the support that was offered to Buenos Aires. For instance, after the sinking of the *Belgrano*,

74 *Ibid.*, 3. 5. 1982; *Ibid.*, 15. 5. 1982.

75 *Ibid.*, 24. 5. 1982; *Ibid.*, 15. 5. 1982.

76 *Ibid.*, 14. 5. 1982.

77 *Ibid.*, 2. 6. 1982.

78 *Ibid.*, 3. 5. 1982.

79 *Ibid.*, 5. 5. 1982.

80 *Ibid.*, 4. 5. 1982.

81 "La CEE mantendrá su solidaridad con Gran Bretaña", *ibid.*, 4. 5. 1982.

82 *Ibid.*, 4. 5. 1982.

detailed information was presented on the emphatic expressions of support for Argentina and condemnations of the UK and the US from Cuba, Brazil, Nicaragua and Bolivia, as well as the most measured response of Peru.⁸³ Turning its focus to the US, ABC struggled to comprehend American policy on the Falklands. On 14 May it condemned the US for supporting Britain while at the same time claiming that it wished to have the best possible relations with Argentina.⁸⁴ Furthermore, the newspaper's New York correspondent, José María Carrascal, went so far as to accuse the US of false neutrality. He called the US "belligerents" because of their support for the UK by, for example, permitting the British navy to use American bases.⁸⁵

The ongoing controversy surrounding Gibraltar also, unsurprisingly, featured in ABC's reporting of the Falklands conflict. Generally speaking the Spanish public saw parallels between the Falklands and Gibraltar, which undoubtedly made Spanish diplomacy more sensitive during the conflict.⁸⁶ Parallels were most often drawn in the opinion sections of the newspaper. On one occasion it was noted that the older generation from the Franco regime was especially angry about British claims and actions.⁸⁷ The Gibraltar issue was also reflected upon in connection to negotiations on the entry of Spain to NATO, which was seen as an opportunity to open pacific negotiations about the sovereignty of Gibraltar and to establish progress on the island as one of the conditions of membership.⁸⁸ However, as Britain's resolve over the Falklands became increasingly obvious, the feeling within the pages of ABC was that no amount of diplomacy would persuade the UK to hand over Gibraltar to Spain, and negotiations with "stubborn" Britain were useless.⁸⁹

Finally, attention was paid on a daily basis to United Nations developments. In the early weeks of the conflict, these included the early attempts of the Secretary General to mediate between Britain and Argentina and the ultimate unwillingness of both sides to accept a mediated settlement on his terms. The reasons for the failure of the UN initiatives were explored, and Thatcher was quoted on the inability of the UN to convince the Argentineans to quit the islands. Commentary was given on the various solutions countenanced by the UN, such as UN administration of the archipelago.⁹⁰ The implications of the UN failure were perceived as crucial for Spain, as it was thought that if the conflict deepened it would eventually be Spain itself that would have to assume a mediation role. (Indeed, Spain formally announced the offer of mediation on 2 May.)⁹¹

83 Ibid., 4. 5. 1982.

84 Ibid., 14. 5. 1982.

85 Ibid., 3. 5. 1982.

86 DEL ARENAL, op. cit., p. 190.

87 ABC, 8. 5. 1982.

88 Ibid., 16. 5. 1982.

89 Ibid., 24. 5. 1982.

90 Ibid., 7. 5. 1982.

91 Ibid., 3. 5. 1982.

CONCLUSION

In the introduction, it was suggested that from an Irish, Czech or Spanish perspective the Falklands war was an ambiguous conflict, in which neither of the two belligerents could be unequivocally cast as either hero or villain. It is somewhat surprising, therefore, to conclude that the three national newspapers reviewed here — despite the very different domestic and international contexts in which they were operating — each came down with varying degrees of emphasis on one side's favour: *Rudé právo* and *ABC* supported Argentina, while the *Irish Independent* endorsed the case of Great Britain. In the Czech case it seems that traditional hostility towards a leading opponent of the Warsaw Pact was the crucial factor, as Galtieri's junta was hardly the most palatable regime from a Communist perspective. The Madrid paper *ABC*, on the other hand, seems to have been motivated by a sense of Spanish kinship with the Argentinean people, but its advocacy of the junta may also be seen as a reflection of the newspaper's conservative political inclination; *ABC* had, after all, been a loyal supporter of the Franco regime. Political orientation also seems to have been behind the *Irish Independent's* support for the UK. The newspaper's version of conservatism placed emphasis on the need to uphold international law and democracy as a check on instability, while its traditional support for Fine Gael made it unlikely to approve of the Haughey government's anti-British diplomacy.

The comments offered here on the three case studies invite further research. In particular, additional research into other Spanish and Irish titles would be welcome in order to test the interpretations offered. If the liberal *El País* or the republican *Irish Press* adopted significantly different attitudes from *ABC* and the *Irish Independent* respectively, it would tend to support the point that the newspapers' reporting on the war was heavily influenced by their political orientation. Meanwhile, a comparison between *Rudé právo* and other leading dailies of the Warsaw Pact states would help to indicate to what extent reporting on the war behind the Iron Curtain was seen uniformly through a Communist lens.

ABSTRACT

INTERNATIONAL REPORTING OF THE FALKLANDS WAR: CASE STUDIES FROM IRELAND, CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND SPAIN

The present article explores the reporting of the Falklands war in leading daily newspapers of Czechoslovakia, Ireland and Spain. The issues examined include the importance of the war as a news story, the various aspects of the war that were reported, and the perspectives and attitudes adopted by the newspapers. The article reveals that, while each newspaper operated in very different political circumstances, some commonalities may be observed. Not only was the Falklands war a dominant news story in each case, each newspaper, to varying degrees, demonstrated a clear sympathy for one of the two belligerents: the Czech and Spanish newspaper both endorsed the Argentinean perspective, while the Irish newspaper was more sympathetic to Britain.

KEY WORDS

Falklands war, newspapers, reporting, Czechoslovakia, Ireland, Spain

ABSTRAKT**MEZINÁRODNÍ REFLEXE VÁLKY O FALKLANDY
PŘÍPADOVÉ STUDIE Z IRSKA, ČESKOSLOVENSKA A ŠPANĚLSKA**

Studie reflektuje válku o Falklandy na stránkách předních deníků v Československu, Irsku a Španělsku. Soustředí se zejména na význam války jako zpravodajského příběhu, na různé aspekty války, o nichž tisk referoval, či na pohled a postoj jednotlivých deníků. Autoři dochází k závěru, že přestože jednotlivá periodika pracovala za velmi odlišných politických okolností, je možné sledovat několik shodných rysů. Nejenže válka o Falklandy dominovala zpravodajským tématům, ale každý deník vyjadřoval v různé míře jasné sympatie pro jednu z válčících stran: česká a španělská periodika podporovala argentinský pohled, zatímco irské deníky měly více sympatií spíše s Velkou Británií.

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