

A Russian Officer with Polish Roots in Czechoslovakia. On the Seventieth Anniversary of Vladimír Hejmovský's Victory in the Grand Pardubice Steeplechase

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Vladimír Hejmovský (Russian: Vladimir Geymovsky) was a tsarist officer in Russia who fought on the side of the Whites against the Bolsheviks. After arriving in Czechoslovakia in 1923, he became an officer in the Czechoslovak army. He was also a passionate equestrian who managed to win the Grand Pardubice Steeplechase in 1951 – when he was nearly sixty years old. But he would never again achieve a similar sporting achievement. Czechoslovakia's State Security (StB) sought to get rid of him for his earlier anti-Bolshevik activities (and his activities in the Russian émigré organization Victor), which they succeeded in doing in September 1952.

Key words: *Vladimír Hejmovský / Vladimir Geymovsky; Grand Pardubice Steeplechase; army officer; equestrianism; Vítěz (Victor)*

Introduction

The wave of Russian and Ukrainian emigration brought thousands of people from a wide variety of backgrounds to interwar Czechoslovakia. Many of these new arrivals had established themselves in a number of different fields of human endeavors such as science, literature, and culture. Most studies of Russian and Ukrainian emigration have focused precisely on these individuals, but very little attention has been paid to the sporting activities of Russian and Ukrainian émigrés in the Czechoslovak Republic. Émigrés established themselves in popular as well as less popular sports, but their successes often remained forgotten for decades. One example of such an achievement is Vladimír Hejmovský's 1951 victory in the Grand Pardubice Steeplechase, the most famous Czech (Czechoslovak) horse race. Hejmovský's name was thus indelibly inscribed on the list of victors of this famous race, especially because he remains the race's oldest winner. For many decades, however, Hejmovský was almost completely forgotten, his memory preserved by just a few of his colleagues and experts on horse racing. Hejmovský's tumultuous

life was revealed to the general public roughly ten years ago by the sports journalist Pavel Kovář, in particular thanks to his book *Velká pardubická. Příběhy z dějin, současnosti a zákulisí slavného sportu* (The Grand Pardubice: Behind-the-Scenes Stories from the Past and Present of the Famous Sport, Prague 2011). Our primary goal has been to use archival materials to shine a light on Hejmovský's military activities and, in particular, on his activities within the Russian émigré organization Victor in Czechoslovakia and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, which may have led to his mysterious and tragic death in 1952. Among other things, the study presents new information on the circumstances surrounding Hejmovský's death. On the sixtieth anniversary of his victory in the Grand Pardubice, we would thus like to remember and reevaluate the life and sporting activities of Vladimír Hejmovský.

Life and activities in the army

Vladimír Hejmovský was born on 30 October 1892 in the Lithuanian town of Shavli (today Šiauliai) in the Kovno Governate of tsarist Russia. He hailed from the Polish noble family Heymowski; one of his ancestors was Heymo, who distinguished himself at the 1683 Battle of Vienna while serving under John III Sobieski, for which he received the ending “-ski” (Heymowski). After Lithuania became a part of the Russian Empire, the family used the Russian form of the name, Geymovsky.¹ We know that Hejmovský graduated from the Second Military School of Peter the Great in St. Petersburg in 1910. In August 1913, he was made a subaltern of the 7th Siberian Artillery Brigade in Irkutsk, and on 30 July 1914 he was transferred to the 12th Siberian Artillery Brigade as subaltern of the 6th Battery (from 1 August on the Austrian front, from 1915 on the German front, and after August 1916 on the Austrian front again). From October 1916 to January 1917, he attended a quick course at the Nicholas Academy of the General Staff in St. Petersburg before serving as senior adjutant of the 7th Siberian Army Corps (from February to August 1917 on the Austrian front). After this, he was again in St. Petersburg, where he was a staff officer for special purposes at the Ministry of Defense from August to December 1917. In November 1918, he began his anti-Bolshevik activities in the Russian Civil War as subaltern of an independent artillery division of the 2nd Battery in Yekaterinoslav.

¹ Hlůzová V. (2010). *Prošli Šternberskem. Výběrový slovníček 225 osobností*. Šternberk: vlastním nákladem, p. 34.

² Kovář P. (2011). *Velká pardubická. Příběhy z dějin, současnosti a zákulisí slavného sportu*. Praha: XYZ, p. 76.

He then served in various officer functions in the field, ending up as chief of staff of general Aleksandr Nikolayevich Cherepov's army group. Like his brother Viktor, Hejmovský was evacuated to Turkey, where he lived with his wife Lydie, whom he had met in the army. In Gallipoli, he was made first officer of the 1st Alexeyev Artillery Battery (October 1920 – August 1922), and in June 1922, he was raised to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. After the army's dissolution, he and his wife and brother left for Bulgaria, where he worked on plantations.² When they got the opportunity in April 1923, they all left Sofia for Czechoslovakia.³ Hejmovský arrived with the goal of studying, but as a lieutenant colonel in the Russian army he was immediately included among twenty-two candidates who, once the necessary formalities had been completed, were accepted as officers into the Czechoslovak army.⁴

In February 1924, Hejmovský began his army service in Czechoslovakia as captain of the 6th Irkutsk Artillery Regiment in Brno. After completing firearms training at the artillery academy in Olomouc in 1926, he served as captain or major of the 4/6 Battery in Brno until 1931 (except for a month in July and August 1926, when he took a practical firearms course in Plavecké Podhradie, Slovakia, and the period from November 1927 to May 1928, when he attended artillery equitation school in Olomouc). From October 1931 to March 1932, he was commander of the 5th Battery of the 10th Artillery Regiment in Lučenec, and in 1932–1936 he served as commander of the 4/7 Battery of the 7th Artillery Regiment in Olomouc. In 1937, now holding the rank of major, he was the deputy commander of a division in Olomouc. In September 1937, he was transferred to the 10th Artillery Regiment in Lučenec, where he was deputy commander of the 3rd Division until November 1938 (in the meantime, he had completed a course for division commander). In November 1938, he was made division commander of the 110th Artillery Regiment, which was stationed in Čadca and Žilina, Slovakia. In late March 1939, he was charged with decommissioning the 7th Artillery Regiment in Olomouc, and in January 1940 he went into voluntary retirement. In 1939–1940, he was active in resistance activities in a group headed by Reserve Captain Hlaváč.⁵

³ Národní archiv Praha, fond: Ministerstvo zahraničních věcí – Ruská pomocná akce, Praha, karton č. 117, Hejmovský Vladimír, 1892, no. 1.

⁴ Národní archiv Praha, fond: Ministerstvo zahraničních věcí – Ruská pomocná akce, Praha, karton č. 117, Hejmovský Vladimír, 1892, no. 2, potvrzení generála Vladimira Šokorova, 27. 4. 1923.

⁵ Vojenský ústřední archiv Praha, osobní spis, SK, kartotéka, Kvalifikační listina válečná, Vladimír Hejmovský.

On 10 May 1945, Hejmovský volunteered as an interpreter for the Russian section of the Moravian Brigade in Olomouc. In May, he was made division commander of the 7th Artillery Regiment (from June to August 1945, division commander in Moravská Třebová). In August 1945 he was summoned to Bruntál, where he served as artillery commander or deputy artillery commander until January 1946. From January to March 1946, he was commander of the 1st Division of the 306th Artillery Regiment in Olomouc, and from March 1946 to February 1947 he was commander of the 1st Division of the 7th Artillery Regiment in Opava. He then returned to Olomouc, and in June 1947 began serving as division commander of the 7th Artillery Regiment in Opava, where he remained until November 1947. He retired on 1 February 1948. Hejmovský's service record describes him as follows: "Of a serious, clearly defined character with a sense of duty and responsibility. Thoughtful and enterprising. Refined behavior while in and out of uniform, with excellent social manners."⁶ Similarly, his record's description of his relationship to sports comes as no surprise: "He is a great admirer of physical exercise and a high-performing athlete in hiking, canoeing, swimming, skijöring,⁷ and especially horse racing, where he has earned a number of prizes."⁸

Equestrianism and a surprising victory at the Grand Pardubice

As indicated above, Vladimír Hejmovský had a warm relationship to sports, especially equestrianism. Besides proving his horse-riding talent during training exercises while an army officer, he also competed in races in Brno and especially in Olomouc, where he often achieved excellent results. Hejmovský was an active participant in horse racing in Czechoslovakia in the 1930s, and his retirement in 1948 allowed him to focus even more intensely on his favorite activity. One new ambition was to participate in Czechoslovakia's most celebrated horse race, the Grand Pardubice Steeplechase – naturally with the goal of placing as well as possible. To this end, he acquired the mare Stella and the filly Asja from the army in Bruntál. Asja was a highly talented horse, and Hejmovský achieved successes with her

⁶ Vojenský ústřední archiv Praha, osobní spis, SK, kartotéka, Kvalifikační listina, část II, za kvalifikační období od 15. října 1945 do 31. prosince 1945.

⁷ A form of winter sport in which a person on skis is pulled by a horse or dogs [author's note].

⁸ Vojenský ústřední archiv Praha, osobní spis, SK, kartotéka, Kvalifikační listina, část II, za kvalifikační období od 15. října 1945 do 31. prosince 1945.

Original text: „Je velkým ctitelcem tělesných cvičení a výkonným sportovcem v turistice, kanoistice, plavání, skijöringu a hlavně v jezdeckých závodech. Při jezdeckých závodech dobl mnoha cen.“

from the beginning.⁹ In 1950, she was one of the best steeplechase race horses in Czechoslovakia.¹⁰ But in 1951, just a month before the great race, she was tragically killed in a collision with a motorcycle. Under these circumstances, Hejmovský accepted an offer from the pharmacist Werner of Opava to start on Werner's stallion Salvator, who was already being prepared for the race and who had competed in the previous two Grand Pardubices, placing sixth in 1950.

Hejmovský was left with little time to get to know the new horse. A week before the race, he tested the course with Salvator. Describing Hejmovský's performance in the race, his friend Jaroslav Krečmer from Hradec Králové noted: "Hejmovský's ride was a prime horse-racing experience for the viewers, who welcomed him with both astonishment and hesitation. First off, he was a complete unknown; and with his tall and skinny figure and the gray hairs of a sixty-year-old, he differed significantly from the young riders. People had little faith in him, as most conclusively confirmed by the bewildered betting agent who confided in me that only one spectator had bet on Hejmovský – his son Igor. I made the second bet."¹¹ During the race, Hejmovský exhibited a highly tactical performance. In order to eliminate the possibility of a fall, he approached the Taxis Ditch as the first competitor, and Salvator masterfully leaped over it. Hejmovský managed the other obstacles as well and kept his horse between second and fourth place. In the home stretch, Hejmovský and Salvator overtook the two leading riders to achieve an unexpected victory. Describing the atmosphere at the track, Krečmer wrote: "All the spectators in the stands rose to their feet and roared with enthusiasm, appreciating the exceptional equestrian performance of the 'old man' in whom they had placed so little faith before. He was truly a great jockey. He triumphed on someone else's horse, one that he had been working with for less than a week."¹²

⁹ Such as placing third in Olomouc in May 1948; see 12 000 diváků na klusáckých dostizích. Lidová demokracie 5, no. 109, 10. 5. 1948, p. 3.

¹⁰ Cf. Kovář P. (2011). *Velká pardubická. Příběhy z dějin, současnosti a zákulisí slavného sportu*. Praha: XYZ, p. 76.

¹¹ Kovář P. (2011). *Velká pardubická. Příběhy z dějin, současnosti a zákulisí slavného sportu*. Praha: XYZ, p. 77.

Original text: „Jízda Hejmovského byla pro diváky vrcholným jezdeckým zážitkem. Přijali ho s údivem i rozpaky. Především jim byl zcela neznám, potom se značně lišil svou vysokou a štíhlou postavou a šedinami šedesátníka od ostatních mladých jezdců. Nedůvěřovali mu, což mi nejrůzněji potvrdil rozpačitý totalizátor, když mi přiznal, že na Hejmovského vsadil pouze jeden divák, to byl jeho syn Igor. Pak jsem si vsadil ještě já.“

¹² Kovář P. (2011). *Velká pardubická. Příběhy z dějin, současnosti a zákulisí slavného sportu*. Praha: XYZ, p. 79.

Original text: „Všichni diváci na tribunách vstávali a dlouho nadšeně bouřili, dovedli ocenit mimořádný jezdecký výkon, starého pána, kterému předtím nedůvěřovali. Byl to vskutku velký jezdec. Zvítězil na cizím koni, kterého si připravoval necelý týden.“

This enormous success gave Hejmovský more than a little motivation to continue his horse-racing activities. He soon acquired the thoroughbred Lovec, whom he began to prepare for races, with the goal of participating in the 1952 Grand Pardubice. Several further successes followed, including two victories. After the final races in August and early September 1952, Lovec appeared ready, and all Hejmovský had to do was to get into form for the Grand Pardubice in October. But he soon found himself caught up in the course of events. On 9 September 1952, Hejmovský was summoned to the information department of the Ministry of National Defense in Prague, from where he never returned. On 11 September, his wife received the news that Vladimír Hejmovský had committed suicide the day before by jumping from a window at the StB building on Bartolomějská Street. Shocked by the news of Hejmovský's tragic death, his wife and son asked the authorities to clarify the circumstances surrounding this terrible event. But it wasn't until 1994 that his son Igor received a partial answer, when the Office for the Documentation and Investigation of the Crimes of Communism sent him an official statement that merely confirmed that Hejmovský had been brought in to the Ministry of National Defense's information department at 10am on 9 September 1952, and at 12:45pm the following day he allegedly committed suicide by jumping from the window of the StB building at Bartolomějská 7.¹³ In 2010, a small piece of information relating to the cause of Hejmovský's death was revealed by the historian Prokop Tomek, who had been present at the 1997 testimony of Rudolf Untermüller, the StB investigator who, along with his colleague Albín Hejnek, had been guarding Hejmovský on the fourth floor of the "isolation section" on Konviktská Street, where (according to Untermüller) Hejmovský jumped from the window during lunch.¹⁴ Unfortunately, the actual circumstances of Hejmovský's death remain unclear. Vladimír Hejmovský was a member of the "White" interwar émigré community in Czechoslovakia, which the Soviet regime systematically sought to eliminate. For many Russian émigrés, the arrival of the Red Army in the former Czechoslovakia usually meant internment, often followed by death or deportation. Hejmovský's unfortunate demise in September 1952 was almost certainly related to "Operation Chameleon," during which the StB focused on Russian émigrés and the people they worked with.

¹³ Kovář P. (2011). *Velká pardubická. Příběhy z dějin, současnosti a zákulisí slavného sportu*. Praha: XYZ, p. 79.

¹⁴ Kovář P. (2011). *Velká pardubická. Příběhy z dějin, současnosti a zákulisí slavného sportu*. Praha: XYZ, pp. 79–80.

Activities in Victor

In Czechoslovakia, Vladimír Hejmovský remained a staunch opponent of Bolshevism and the Soviets' red dictatorship, as evidenced by a mention in the communist newspaper *Rudé právo* from February 1930, whose author V. Born ironically comments on a meeting of the Czech-Russian association in Brno on 4 February 1930, where Captain Vladimír Hejmovský moved to hold a financial collection for General Kutepov,¹⁵ who had been kidnapped on 26 January 1930 in Paris by agents of the Soviet Union's OGPU. Such collections were not nearly as nonsensical as *Rudé právo* made them out to be: At the time, Russian émigrés in numerous countries held fundraising drives to help finance the search for Kutepov. In addition, Kutepov's wife Lidiya Davidovna Kutepova, who was living in Prague, found herself in a difficult financial situation.¹⁶ Hejmovský clearly found it difficult to accept the Bolsheviks' victory.

Although he was a member of the Czechoslovak army, Hejmovský did not avoid community work and was involved in the patriotic education of the younger generation of Russians. In particular, his activities were associated with the Russian organization Victor (Czech: Vítěz, Russian: Витяз), which was the name of the Russian émigré scout organization, with offices in Prague and Brno. Very little information has survived on the organization's activities in Czechoslovakia and during the Protectorate. One of the few sources is from the StB files relating to Operation Chameleon, during which former members and organizers of a Victor camp were investigated in the early 1950s. One of the camp's main instructors was Vladimír Hejmovský. Considering the period in which they originated (during the peak of political trials in Czechoslovakia), these documents must be viewed with the proper amount of skepticism. The investigators' focus was on the "White Guardist" (to use the vocabulary of the communist regime) Victor camp in Milenovice near Protivín, which was described by two of the camp's participants. The first was the technical officer Michal Kovín (Kovín), the son of a Russian émigré,¹⁷ who was interrogated while serving a five-year sentence in Jáchymov for embezzlement (the interview was recorded on 22 May 1952). According to Kovín's testimony, the camp was divided into three groups. The first consisted of youth

¹⁵ Born V. (1930). Nezahyne Kutěpov na Solověckých ostrovech. *Rudé právo* 11, no. 37, 12. 2, p. 4.

¹⁶ Information from A. Kopřivová.

¹⁷ His father was probably the marriage con-artist and repeat offender Mikhail Dimitrievich Kovin; cf., e.g., Tři roky za sňatkové podvody (937). *Moravský deník* 32, no. 13, 16. 1. 1937, p. 2.

aged sixteen and younger. The second group consisted of older members, who were divided into smaller groups of no more than ten people, each with a military instructor who engaged them in military training. The heads of these groups formed the third group, whose members already had participated in several such courses and in other, specialized courses. The Chameleon report states that, “On the military front, the camp was headed by Colonel Hejmovský, who supervised the military training. Said person died this year in Prague as the result of an accident.”¹⁸

In 1937–1938 the camp was located in Kaplice near České Budějovice, in 1939 it was near Křivoklát, and in 1940–1941 it was held in the aforementioned Milenovice. While being interrogated in Jáchymov on 22 May 1952,¹⁹ Michal Kovín remarked of Vladimír Hejmovský: “He is a former Russian aristocrat, and served as a colonel in the Czechoslovak army in Olomouc, where he was commander of an artillery regiment. During the war, he was employed in the office of Dr. Andreev in Prague, Fenix Palace, Wenceslas Square.²⁰ He was a camp leader at the camp in Milenovice, where he organized military training. I heard from Leonid Víra that during the war Hejmovský recruited Russian émigrés into the German army.”²¹ According to Kovín, one participant in the Victor camp was the former aristocrat Karel Schwarzenberg (a prince from the Schwarzenbergs’ Orlik branch), who also supported the camp with pork and other foodstuffs from his estate. In addition, the camp’s participants dug trenches in Schwarzenberg’s forests and its leaders would visit him at Orlik for feasts. Schwarzenberg held various meetings at his chateau in Protivín that were attended by the camp’s leaders.²²

On 26 April 1952, the StB’s Regional Command in Brno began its investigation of Vladimír Hejmovský.²³ The StB subsequently determined that Hejmovský had lived in Brno in 1924–1932, and that in 1924 his mother Helena Hejmovská had moved from Moscow to be with him. His wife Lidiya (Lydie), with whom he

¹⁸ Archiv bezpečnostních složek Praha, OB-4BN, všeobecný svazek: Chameleon, Brno, report on group file Chameleon, no. 3.

Original text: „Po stránce vojenské byl vedoucí tábora plk. Hejmovský, který dohlížel na vojenský výcvik. Jmenovaný zemřel t. r. v Praze následkem úrazu.“

¹⁹ The date on the document is 22. 5. 1951, which is probably a typo.

²⁰ The Fenix Palace was the headquarters for a number of other Russian émigré organizations [author’s note].

²¹ Archiv bezpečnostních složek Praha, OB-4BN, všeobecný svazek: Chameleon, Brno, minutes of testimony of Michal Kovín, Jáchymov, 22. 5. 1951 [1952?], no. 13.

²² Archiv bezpečnostních složek Praha, OB-4BN, všeobecný svazek: Chameleon, Brno, minutes of testimony of Michal Kovín, Jáchymov, 22. 5. 1951 [1952?], no. 12.

²³ Archiv bezpečnostních složek Praha, OB-4BN, všeobecný svazek: Chameleon, Brno, Ministerstvo národní bezpečnosti – velitelství státní bezpečnosti, Brno, 26. 4. 1952, no. 44.

had a son Igor (born 1931), was investigated as well. Until 1930, Hejmovský's household also included his brother Viktor, who moved to Bratislava that year.²⁴ Over the following months, the StB continued to take an ever closer look at Hejmovský's past. It found that, while he was an officer in Brno, he was also a member of an officers' battalion of the Russian army under the leadership of General Leontiy Viktorovich Temnikov (1881–1944), who died in Brno on 30 April 1944.²⁵ The group, which also included former general Sergei Nikolaevich Voytsekhovskiy (1883–1951), was focused on fighting communism.²⁶

The investigation continued even after Hejmovský's mysterious death in September 1952. On 14 May 1953, agent "Xavera" (code 22411) testified about Hejmovský: "His wife was the tsarist aristocrat Lidiya Ivanovna, who was a doctor at St. Anne's. The Hejmovský family organized large feasts at their home, where the 'better' classes of Russian émigré society met. One such person was Dr. Vi[s]sarionov. Otherwise, the Hejmovský family had no assets, and everything they had in their home belonged to the army. They lived with his mother, who was German, and Hejmovský's father was a Pole, of Polish ethnicity."²⁷ Further information was provided to the StB by Tařána Jandová (whose father was the Russian émigré Vladimir Vasilievich Fotiev) on 26 May 1953. Jandová stated that had been a member of the Russian "White Guardist" organization NORM (National Organization of Russian Youth), which she had joined in 1942 (when she also spent two months at the camp in Milenovice). According to her testimony, the political arm of NORM was run by a Kovalevský/Kovalevsky [misspelled in the text as Kavalevský], while military training was led by Colonel Hejmovský.

²⁴ Archiv bezpečnostních složek Praha, OB-4BN, všeobecný svazek: Chameleon, Brno, report on the state of Hejmovský's home and family, 1952, no. 47.

²⁵ Leonid Viktorovich Temnikov's family in Czechoslovakia included his brother Georgy Viktorovich Temnikov (1879–1929) and two sisters: Margarita Viktorovna Voytsekhovskaya (1884–1965), who was the wife of General Sergei Nikolaevich Voytsekhovskiy, and Yelizaveta Viktorovna Nesterova (1890–1975). Two other brothers, Mitrofan and Antony, died in 1918 and 1920. See personal archive of A. Kopřivová.

²⁶ Archiv bezpečnostních složek Praha, OB-4BN, všeobecný svazek: Chameleon, Brno, record dated 17. 6. 1952, no. 68.

²⁷ Archiv bezpečnostních složek Praha, OB-4BN, všeobecný svazek: Chameleon, Brno, report from IN dated 14. 5. 1953, no. 121.

Original text: „Za manželku měl carskou šlechtičnu Lidii Ivanovnu, která byla jako lékařka u sv. Anny. Rodina Hejmovských pořádala ve svém bytě velké hostiny, kde se scházela tzv. lepší ruská emigrace. Docházel tam i MUDr. Vi[s]sarionov. Jinak rodina Hejmovských neměla žádného majetku a všechno, co měli v bytě, patřilo armádě. Společně s nimi žila jeho matka, která byla Němka a otec Hejmovského byl Polák, polské národnosti.“

On the relationship between NORM and Victor, Jandová remarked: “As to the composition of ‘NORM,’ I should point out that the camp as such was called ‘NORM,’ but the members of the group were called ‘VICTORITES’ because they would say I am going to ‘VICTOR,’ not I am going to NORM.”²⁸ The political activities at the camp were aimed against the USSR, the tsarist order was praised, and there were lectures on the leaders of the White Guardist armies. According to Jandová, the lectures claimed that the Germans would win the war against the USSR and the tsarist regime would be reinstated. She described the military training at the camp as follows: “Corporal Hejmovský came [to the camp] for military training. He supervised the drill which the second group had already done, and taught us field orientation using a compass and dead reckoning. He led this training through instructors. Its aim was to train the individual members against the ‘[b]olsheviks’ – in battle, if necessary.”²⁹ The activities of the alleged NORM organization, Jandová claimed, were guided from Prague and were led in Brno by Dr. Vissarionov [erroneously spelled Visarionov] and his partner Tamara Vírová.

Although Taťána Jandová’s testimony claims that the Russian organization NORM (НОРМ, Национальная организация русской молодёжи) was active in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia in 1942, it is highly unlikely that this was so. It seems far more likely that, during the interrogation (or consciously due to some kind of manipulation on the part of the interrogators), the organization’s name was mixed up with the acronym of another organization. NORM was not founded until 1944 in Germany, and it is far more logical that the organization in question was the Russian scouting organization NORS (НОРС, Национальная организация русских скаутов), which had been founded by Russian émigrés in France in 1920, and which operated in Prague and Brno under the name Victor (Вítěz/Витяз). But the version with NORM suited the Czechoslovak regime in the early 1950s, since that organization was the Russian national socialist counterpart to the Nazis’ Hitlerjugend.

²⁸ Archiv bezpečnostních složek Praha, OB-4BN, všeobecný svazek: Chameleon, Brno, minutes of testimony of Taťána Jandová, 26. 5. 1953, no. 138.

Original text: „Ke složení organizace „NORM“ upozorňuji, že tábor jako takový se jmenoval „NORM“, ale členové skupin byli zvaní „VÍTĚZOVCI“, to proto, že se říkalo, já jdu do „VÍTĚZU“, a ne do „NORMU.“

²⁹ Archiv bezpečnostních složek Praha, OB-4BN, všeobecný svazek: Chameleon, Brno, minutes of testimony of Taťána Jandová, 26. 5. 1953, no. 138.

Original text: „Z hlediska vojenského výcviku tam dojížděl plk. Hejmovský. Dohlížel na pořadový výcvik, který již prováděla druhá skupina, učil nás orientaci v terénu pomocí kompasu a odhadu. Tento výcvik řídil prostřednictvím instruktorů. Tento výcvik směřoval k tomu, aby jednotliví členové byli vychováni proti [b]olshevikům v případě nutnosti, pro boj.“

Conclusion

The documents from the StB's "Chameleon" file offer new information about why Vladimír Hejmovský, a former officer in the tsarist army and subsequently a lieutenant colonel in the White Army and major in the Czechoslovak army, was detained and quite possibly physically eliminated in 1952. The exact circumstances of his death in September 1952 will probably never be determined. Only the two previously mentioned StB investigators could say for sure. Nevertheless, the investigation of "Operation Chameleon" shows that the StB focused on Hejmovský because he was a lead instructor at the Russian scouting organization Victor in Czechoslovakia. As an anti-Bolshevik, a critic of the Soviet regime, and a former member of the tsarist army, Hejmovský was too inconvenient for the Czechoslovak regime. The relative calm that Hejmovský enjoyed after the arrival of the Red Army and during the first postwar years had probably been the result of his services in the Czechoslovak resistance in the Olomouc region during the Second World War. But when the political trials of the early 1950s unearthed testimony that recalled Hejmovský's anti-Bolshevik activities and his involvement with the Victor scouting organization, the communist regime "had" to act. In the postwar years, State Security frequently came up with false claims regarding some kind of association with the Germans, and the otherwise unfounded information that Hejmovský (a member of the Czechoslovak resistance) had helped to recruit Russian émigrés for the Germany army would appear to be just this kind of falsehood. The fact that Vladimír Hejmovský was no anonymous Russian émigré or "mere" retired officer, but that he was relatively well known thanks to his victory in the 1951 Grand Pardubice, almost certainly played a role as well – and so he had to be removed by the totalitarian regime. The involvement of Soviet intelligence agencies in his case nevertheless remains an open question.