

## PLOTKI – a Logical Evolution

### Historical Perspective on a Central European Magazine

*By Marek Canek, Prague*

The history of the Central European Magazine Plotki and its ever growing community of Plotkists has not been published yet. A year of existence seems to be a short time but the difference between what was before and what is now significant. As I am not a historian, I do not intend to be too precise about facts or too descriptive. I will supply you only with the following figures: we held three journalists' meetings and published two issues of Plotki so far. The third issue should be being published by now.

„Parallel worlds“, „Failed Projects“, „Playgrounds“, and „Normality“. One is easily tempted to systematize the history of Plotki according to the topics of the subsequent issues of the magazine. These are the most perceptible happenings that define the first year of existence and it is mysterious how the topics mirror quite well the development of Plotki as a magazine and as a community. Was this choice of topics a mere matter of coincidence?

After having personally experienced a few „failed projects“, I was not surprised that the second issue was to be called „failed projects“. This choice of topic did not reflect our scepticism about Plotki. We tried to write only about someone else's failed projects. The second issue was not going to be our last one.

Since the first journalists' seminar was in Berlin and the second one in Warsaw, quite a few Plotkists expected the third one to be in Prague. However, we ended up meeting in Brno. The locals tried to convince us in the interviews we conducted with them that we made a good decision to come to their town. Many of them told us that inhabitants of Prague were „arrogant, stupid and selfish“ as opposed to those in Brno. Anyway, it was refreshing to make Brno, a town with a second-in-the-country syndrome, our „playground“ for a few days. These were days spent hotly discussing what we had written back home when we still

did not know with whom we were going to drink that amazing Czech beer in a few weeks. Since our newest topic was „Playground“, we went to a local football game and strided through the cultural mixture of that „Not-Prague“.

The most important playground for Plotki is Central Europe. Most Plotkists are based in Germany, Poland, and the Czech Republic. In Brno we were joined by a few participants from other countries like Romania, Hungary and Lithuania. The Central European region is quite crucial in defining what makes our magazine unique. As it is not always clear what Central Europe is, where it begins and ends, Plotki will have to define this region on its own. In a way, Plotki is participating in the creation of the Central European space. This is true at least for the people that take part in publishing the magazine or those who are reading it. Some members of the Plotkistic community are fascinated by this region, by its different perspectives, changing character, by its opposing nature consisting of vitality and motionlessness.

What also holds the region together are languages. Our articles are written and discussed in English for practical reasons. English is, however, not our exclusive language. We also use various Slavic and also other languages. Often we use a mixture of languages understandable to Plotkists only. Thus, a Plotkist identity is being formed.

Amazingly, the Plotkistic world has gradually developed around the magazine. It started logically with the *parallel worlds* and after not having *failed* we are on the way to *normality*.

*Marek Canek, Plotkist der ersten Stunde und Namensgeber von „Failed Projects“, studiert Internationale Beziehungen in Prag und Brüssel.*

Die Zeitschrift **PLOTKI** geht von einem Projektutorium am Osteuropa-Institut aus und erscheint drei Mal pro Jahr unter einem ausgewählten Thema. Mittlerweile sind rund 40 Studierende aus Berlin, Frankfurt (Oder), Prag, Thorn, Vilnius, Cluj und Warschau als aktive Plotkisten beteiligt. Da Redaktion und Leserschaft international sind, werden die Artikel auf Englisch verfasst.

Und **PLOTKI** ist ein Internetmagazin. Unter [www.plotki.net](http://www.plotki.net) erscheint die erweiterte Digitalversion. Interessierte können sich an [plotki@gmx.de](mailto:plotki@gmx.de) wenden.