

# CZWARTKI Z SOCJOLOGIĄ HISTORYCZNĄ

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We invite to a seminar, on which  
**PETR WOHLMUTH (FHS UK)**

will present

## **MEMORY AND EXPERIENCE OF THE COMPULSORY MILITARY SERVICE IN THE CZECH LANDS 1969-2004**

Opening comment:

**OLGA NOWACZYK (UWr)**

The seminar will take place on Thursday, **June 9, 2022. at 16.00, room 3.012** Centre de civilization française, Université de Varsovie, Dobra 55, Warsaw. Online access to the seminar will be provided by **the Zoom**. To attend it online please write to Nicolas Maslowski ([n.maslowski@uw.edu.pl](mailto:n.maslowski@uw.edu.pl)) or Jarosław Kilias ([j.kilias@uw.edu.pl](mailto:j.kilias@uw.edu.pl)). We will send the links by e-mail.

*Jarosław Kilias  
& the Thursdays' team*



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**SEKCJA SOCJOLO-  
GII HISTORYCZNEJ**

## MEMORY AND EXPERIENCE OF THE COMPULSORY MILITARY SERVICE IN THE CZECH LANDS 1969-2004

An oral historical monograph *Mezi pakárnou a službou vlasti* (“Between *pakárna* and service to the country”; slang term “*pakárna*” means meaningless, strenuous activity), dealing with the memory and experience of the compulsory military service in the Czech lands has been published recently. The book is a result of the work of a team of historians from the Institute of Contemporary History, Czech Academy of Sciences and the Faculty of Humanities, Charles University, Prague. It is the first extensive research on the subject, based on more than 100 interviews and published egodocuments of the memories of the military service. The study challenges and problematizes the still dominant, stereotypical understanding of the military service in the Czech lands as a “transition ritual of masculinity” and a milieu where the hegemonic concept of masculinity in Czech society was confirmed and performed. The vast majority of narrators remembered the military service as a violation of human dignity and a disruption of masculinity, mainly because of a brutal system of bullying called “stagers’ war” (an equivalent of Polish “*fala*” or Soviet “*dedovshchina*”). The book has caused public controversy and is a subject of a widespread debate in Czech media. The research results challenge the consensus existing in a few previous ethnological and sociological texts on the military service, which suggest that the system of bullying during the military service was not a serious phenomenon.

Dr **Petr Wohlmuth** is a historical anthropologist and military historian who works at the Faculty of Humanities, Charles University, Prague. His main research field is the oral history and historical anthropology of the military. His publications include book monographs *Krev, čest a hrůza* (2017) and *Krymská válka (1853-1856) pohledem historické antropologie* (2020).

