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PRAGUE PERSPECTIVES III

Jan Slavík (1885–1978): A Czech Historian of Revolutions

edited by Lukáš Babka
and Petr Roubal





Jan Slavík in the 1930s

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PRAGUE PERSPECTIVES (III)

JAN SLAVÍK (1885–1978): A CZECH HISTORIAN OF REVOLUTIONS

(The Bibliography of Jan Slavík's Works Included)

Edited by
Lukáš Babka and Petr Roubal

Prague 2009

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Table of Contents

Foreword 7

Part I: Jan Slavík in the Context of the Czech Social Sciences

Jan Slavík in the Czech Historiographical Context
Zdeněk Beneš 13

The Journalist Jan Slavík
Jaroslav Bouček 25

Jan Slavík and *The Genesis of the Czech Nation*: Between Methodology, Politics, and Ideology
Martin Nodl 43

Jan Slavík in the Context of Czech Hussite Studies in the First Half of the 20th Century
Petr Čornej 53

Jan Slavík and "Anti-Guild" Discourse. Social History Between Historical Thought and Historian's Practice
Jiří Štaif 79

Max Weber and the Dispute on the Meaning of Czech History or Slavík's Readings of Neo-Kantian Methodology in Cultural Science
Miloš Havelka 89

Gloses on Jan Slavík's Theory of History
Martin Kučera 101

Phenomenon of Revolution in Jan Slavík's Historical Thought
Petr Středa 115

Jan Slavík a Marxist?
Jakub Rákosník 133

Part II: Jan Slavík's View on Russia and Russian Revolution

Jan Slavík's View of the Russian Revolution and Soviet Russia
Václav Veber 149

Jan Slavík's View of V. I. Lenin
Ľubica Harbuľová *159*

Jan Slavík and Czarist Russia
Vratislav Doubek *169*

The Soviet Union in the Reports of Jan Slavík and Some Western Intellectuals in the 1920s and 1930s
Jiří Vacek *177*

Jan Slavík and the Russian Emigration to Czechoslovakia
Miluša Bubeníková *189*

Jan Slavík and the Fate of the Russian Foreign Historical Archives
Lukáš Babka *203*

Jan Slavík, the Russian Emigration and Broadcasting from Czechoslovakia into the Soviet Russia
Mikhail Sokolov *223*

SUPPLEMENTS

Jan Slavík's Personal Papers in the National Museum Archives
Dagmar Buráňová *241*

Slavík's Thought and "Silence" after February 1948
Josef Hanzal *245*

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF JAN SLAVÍK'S WORKS AND WORKS ABOUT JAN SLAVÍK

Editors' Note *257*

List of Jan Slavík's Works (1906–2009) *261*

List of Works about Jan Slavík (1919–2009) *377*

Entry "Jan Slavík" in Encyclopaedias *431*

About the Authors *433*

Index *443*

Foreword

The following collected volume aims at presenting the work and life of one of the most versatile, inspirational, and controversial Czech historians of the 20th century, Jan Slavík (1885–1978). Not only did Slavík initiate the disciplines of social and contemporary history into the Czech historiography, but worldwide he was possibly the first historian to analyse the Russian revolution and the subsequent development from a critical Marxist point of view. Though there is already substantial literature on Slavík, including his biography and reprint of some of his works, the book *Jan Slavík (1885–1978): A Czech Historian of Revolutions* represents the first attempt to portray this exceptional personality in all his – often contradictory – dimensions.

The first part of the book is dedicated to Slavík's role in the development of Czech social sciences in the first half of the 20th century and focuses on a several key disputes that Slavík had with the academic establishment of the period. Slavík's aspiration to modernise the methodology and theory of Czech historiography, particularly in the direction of the contemporary sociology, caused possibly the biggest controversy. The articles of Zdeněk Beneš and Jiří Štaif show a specific position of Slavík as a critical outsider in the Czech academic framework, a position that he took primarily for his critique of the commonly held naively positivistic approach to historical sources as well as the lack of interest in understanding the long term trends and laws of historical development. It was typical for Slavík's uncompromising character that the target for his sharp and often unjust criticism was not an average production of the positivistic main stream, but the work of Josef Pekař, his former teacher and the most prominent figure of interwar historiography. Miloš Havelka places this conflict into a broader context of the debate about the "meaning of Czech history". He shows how Slavík used Weber's methodology as a tool for disqualifying Pekař's interpretation of Czech history, but he also points out at limits of Slavík's understanding of Weber's works. These intellectual limits in broader sense are explored by Martin Kučera. What distanced Slavík most from Weber was his own left-leaning democratic vision of future social order, which could hardly coexist with Weber's idea of value neutrality.

Another central theme in the first part of the book is the mapping of Jan Slavík's relation to Marxism and the Marxist left. As the text of Jakub Rákosník shows, Slavík appreciated Marxism not for its "truthfulness", but for its "usefulness" in the analysis of historical phenomena. On one hand, this eclectic approach allowed Slavík to combine Marxism with Weberian inspiration, on the other hand it earned him the label of "idealist" among the Czech Marxists. This unorthodox approach to Marxism can be seen in Petr Čornej's study of Slavík's view of the Hussite movement. Together with Záviš Kalandra, who was later executed by the communist regime, Slavík established the conceptual base for Marxist interpretation of the Hussite movement as social revolution resulting from the crisis of feudalism, without accepting the Marxist dogma of class struggle as the only right interpretative framework. Petr Středa in his more general study of Slavík's view of phenomenon of revolution shows that, it is precisely the refusal of the class struggle as a moving force of revolution and its replacement by a teleological "process of convergence" that puts Slavík much closer to Tomáš G. Masaryk than K. Marx. The chapter on Slavík in the context of Czech social sciences is complemented by two other texts that go beyond the framework of interwar academic debates: Martin Nodl's contextualisation of Slavík's post-war work on early Middle Ages *The Birth of Czech Nation* and Jaroslav Bouček's detailed survey of Slavík's journalism.

The second part of the book looks at Slavík's truly "revolutionary" work on the Bolshevik revolution and on Soviet Russia in general. The continuity between Czarist and Soviet Russia in Slavík's view is discussed by Vratislav Doubek. Texts of Václav Veber and Ľubica Harbuľová show Slavík's fundamental contribution to the discipline of Soviet studies. Slavík can be seen as the first "revisionist" who saw clearly the discrepancy between the Bolshevik program and the reality of (Soviet) Russia, a discrepancy that led in Slavík's words to establishment of "socialist feudalism, a hybrid of socialism and czarism". Unfortunately Slavík's influence remained limited to Czech linguistic territory, a fact that prevented the inclusion of his work into the broader European and world framework of Soviet studies. Slavík was a central figure for Soviet studies and for research on the Russian revolutionary movement not only as an intellectual inspiration, but also as a long-term director of Prague's Russian Foreign Historical Archives, which – as the study of

Lukáš Babka shows – became the most important centre of Soviet studies in its time due to its unique collections. Miluša Bubeníková outlines the nature of relations between Slavík and the interwar Russian exiles in Czechoslovakia. Slavík also was, as we can see in the study of Jiří Vacek, one of the few European intellectuals who was capable of writing an unbiased testimony of his visits to the Soviet Union.

Slavík did not let himself be confined by the academic boundaries of the discipline of Soviet studies but ventured passionately into journalistic disputes about the nature of the Soviet regime. Due to his unconventional standpoints, he was labelled as a "Sovietophile" by the conservative right and at the same time as a "Sovietophobe" by the Marxist left. This was also true about Slavík's shows broadcasted in Russian from Prague during 1933, which, as Mikhail Sokolov showed in his archival study, found a responsive audience not only among the Russian exile but more importantly in the Soviet Union itself.

The volume is accompanied by two addenda: Dagmar Buráňová's survey of Slavík's personal papers at the Archives of the National Museum and Josef Hanzal's study based primarily on Slavík's diary from the period of enforced silence after February 1948. In addition to that, the book contains an extensive bibliography of Slavík's works as well as publications about Slavík, which substantially extends and revises Jaroslav Bouček's bibliography of the early 1990s, and thus provides a key base for further study of Slavík's personality.

In conclusion, the editors would like to thank the Slavonic Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences and the Masaryk Institute–Archives of the Czech Academy of Sciences, as well as to the Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague for support for the conference "Life of Clashes", which was organised by the Slavonic Library in April 2008 to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of Slavík's death and which served as an inspiration for this volume. We would also like to thank the aforementioned contributors for their support in the publishment of this collective monograph.

Lukáš Babka and Petr Roubal

PART I

JAN SLAVÍK IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CZECH SOCIAL SCIENCES

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PART I

JAN SLAVÍK IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CZECH SOCIAL SCIENCES

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JAN SLAVÍK IN THE CZECH HISTORIOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT[1]

Zdeněk BENEŠ

We return here to Jan Slavík, and through him, by necessity, to the Czech, and also general, scholarly thinking of the 1920s and 1930s. Slavík aroused remarkable interest during his life, and today he is exciting it again. The first time, it was chiefly interest in "polemic"; the second time around it is discursive. We search for the prerequisites of Slavík's positions, for the reception of his works, and for their interpretation. It is obvious that these are interrelated, but it is not, however, trite to question by what mechanisms they are interconnected. We are thus asking the same questions that Slavík himself put to the historical scholarship of his day.

Let us first try to determine where Slavík as a scholar fits in. He belonged to the generation which may be called the "generation of 1900" – the group of historians who were born around this truly symbolic date. Zdeněk Kalista and Karel Stloukal were born in 1900; Otakar Odložilík was a year older. Slightly further back, in the 19th century, we find Jaroslav Prokeš (1895), Francis Dvornik (1893), Bedřich Mendl (1892) and Slavík himself, born 1885. The year 1901 is on the birth certificates of Karel Kazbunda and Jaroslav Werstadt, while František Michálek Bartoš was born in 1902. František Kutnar was the youngest, born in 1903.

Slavík belonged to this generation not only because of his birth date, but also because of the course of his life. He could, however, also be considered to be related to the generation that entered the scholarly world in the second half of the 1930s. Indeed, its representatives even named their journal after one of Slavík's fundamental essays – *Dějiny a*

[1] This text has been published as a part of the research project MSM 0021620827 *The Czech Lands in the Midst of Europe in the Past and Today* at the Faculty of Arts, Charles University, Prague.

Prague Perspectives III (Prague, 2009), 13–23.

přítomnost [The Past and the Present]. Their fields of interest coincided with his, but there was, nevertheless, a generational difference of opinion.

The list of names of Slavík's contemporaries is still firmly embedded in Czech scholarly consciousness (even if less so in general cultural awareness), and this alerts us to the following fact: we have here a group of scholars who were not homogeneous in their interests or methods used (to say nothing of their methodology), nor were their lives similar, but to point out that they were not a united cohort is beside the point. Despite their diversity, there are noticeable links among them.

The main connection is undoubtedly their common life experiences. It was a generation that came of age during the cataclysm of the Great War, which predetermined, to a certain extent, their outlook after 1918. It was not only the usual, albeit temporary, inclination toward the Left, as seen in the case of Zdeněk Kalista[2], but also the social changes of the "roaring 1920s", which came about partly as a result of the war, which marked them. One need only note the differences, brought about in a span of only ten years, in dress and behaviour at the outset of the war in 1914 and in the "jazz age" of the 1920s, with its bobbed hair, short skirts, flappers and "shocking" art.

When this generation was reaching its scholarly maturity and achieving their professional goals, the Second World War broke out, much greater in devastation and destruction than the first one. Moreover, after it ended, there was a period of shifting political conditions and ideological reorientations resulting in the establishment of new power structures. Some of this generation opted for emigration, some were "put aside" and some were prosecuted. Here we have a generation that lived the "Czech" 20th century "to the maximum".[3]

Yet this was not all. In addition, this generation witnessed a decisive change in scholarly thinking during its studies and scholarly development. We could interpret the first half of the 20th century as a break with traditional critical empiricism, or, if you like, with a positivistic foundation of science and scientific inquiry. Modern rationality[4], based on

[2] Comp. Zdeněk KALISTA, *Po proudu života*, 2 vols. (Brno: Atlantis, 1996, 1997); IDEM, *Kamarád Wolker* (Prague: Václav Petr, 1933).

[3] Further: Zdeněk BENEŠ, "Kontinuity a diskontinuity českého dějepisectví 20. století," in Jiří Hasil, ed., *Přednášky z XLVII. běhu Letní školy slovanských studií* (Prague: Univerzita Karlova, Filozofická fakulta, 2004), 207–218.

[4] For this comp. Václav ČERNÍK, Jozef VICENÍK and Emil VIŠŇOVSKÝ, *Historické typy racionality* (Bratislava: IRIS, 1997).

the "functioning of things" and not considering the prerequisites of that functioning, i.e., its foundations, was showing the first cracks. In fact, we could go back as far as the 19th century, to the great mathematicians and physicists such as Hermann von Helmholtz[5], to find intimations of future problems, and also in Wilhelm Dilthey's works. They were symptomatic of things to come.

There remains another reason why we are going to concern ourselves with the period between the wars (i.e., the end of the 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s), and that is because it was the period when Slavík formulated his theoretical and methodological thoughts most fully.

After pointing out the generational life experiences of Slavík and of his fellow historians, it is necessary to mention, if only in outline, the aforementioned methodological change. Let me start with historiography itself. At the beginning of the 1920s, the French "Annales" School developed a notable model of the "new history". It still wanted to be an empirical historiography, but it was revolutionary in its development of empirical methods. The upheaval in theories of cognition in the social sciences and humanities was happening at the same time; its reverberations and the ensuing applications came much later, particularly after the end of the Second World War. I am thinking specifically of Karl R. Popper, whose thesis, reflected in his title *The Poverty of Historicism* was conceived sometime in the winter months of 1919–1920. Surely this timing cannot be incidental. He rejected any credibility for "historical predetermination", and stated that "there can be no prediction of the course of human history by scientific or any other rational methods"[6]. It is a stand manifestly in conflict with Slavík's notion of historical progress. Slavík rejected as impossible any prediction on a specific, tangible level, but he supposed its possibility on a more general level, one sanctioned by the validity of sociological methods.[7] I shall return to this standpoint of Slavík later, but at this moment it is more important to discuss the fact that Popper later, in *The Logic of Scientific Discovery* (1934), arrived at the conclusion that it is impossible to approach reality purely empirically – "empirical sciences

[5] It concerns Helmholtz's famous lecture "Über das Verhältnis der Naturwissenschaften zur Gesamtheit der Wissenschaft" of 1862. In Czech see Milan TOMÁŠ, *Filozofický obraz světa Hermanna Helmholtze* (Prague: Academia, 1996).

[6] Karl Raimund POPPER, *The Poverty of Historicism* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1957), VII.

[7] See Jaroslav BOUČEK, *Jan Slavík: Příběh zakázaného historika* (Jinočany: H+H, 2002), 91.

are systems of theories", he wrote.[8] In the works of Rudolf Carnap and the Vienna Circle, as in the works of Ludwig Wittgenstein and Bertrand Russell, we can see constituents of logical positivism (empiricism) that turn the attention to testimony provided by science (and scientists). Analytical philosophy should have been the outcome of this trend – and here I wish to mention two titles, closely related to history: *The Analytical Philosophy of History* by Arthur Coleman Danto (1964) and *Explanation and Understanding* by Georg Henrik von Wright (1971). An accompanying phenomenon of this scholarly reasoning is the dissemination of formal logic as a tool for scientific discourse.[9] Their primary aim was to rid scientific reasoning of "subjectivizing" psychologism. This theoretical view was identified as constructivism, and was characterized as a viewpoint from which facts would be investigated, not as a "fact-in-itself", but as constructions that represent themselves by means of an accepted system of constructs. These constructs (and their systems) are products of (human) scholarly endeavour.[10]

One of the signs accompanying this about-face was the growing attention paid to the starting points or conditions of scientific cognition. The physical sciences began to show a perception that present conditions could only be understood through their development "over histories" (Richard Phillips Feynman). In the social sciences and humanities, the emphasis may be put either on the "natural world" of human reality (phenomenology), or on scientific epistemological instruments that should disclose the deeper levels of occurrences. An historian was thus

[8] Karl Raimund POPPER, *Logika vědeckého bádání* (Prague: OIKOYMENH, 1997), 41. Translated by Jana Kalíšová.

[9] "The goal is unified science. It endeavours to link and harmonise the achievements of individual investigators in their various fields of science. The emphasis on collective work follows from this aim, thereby putting an emphasis on what is intersubjectively understandable; hence searching for a neutral formal system, symbolicly cleansed of the impurity of historical languages. It strives for neatness and clarity; dark horizons and unfathomable depths are refused. There are no 'depths' in science, everything is on the surface: all that is experienced creates a net, which is complicated, not always lucid and often understandable only in detail. Everything is accessible to people; and the human being is the measure of all things." Rudolf CARNAP, Hans HAHN and Otto NEURATH, "Vědecké pojetí světa – Vídeňský kroužek [1929]," in Jiří Fiala, *Analytická filosofie* (Plzeň – Nymburk: OPS, 2005), 2 (První čítanka: Texty): 21.

[10] Wojciech SADY, *Spór o racjonalność naukową od Poincarégo po Laudana* (Wrocław: [Funna], 2000), 29–30. "Reality" is a "property of phenomena, which we consider independent of our will," say Peter L. BERGER and Thomas LUCKMANN, *Sociální konstrukce reality: pojednání o sociologii vědění* (Brno: CDK, 1999), 9.

offered either a route of "perceptive" historiography, as conceptualized by Zdeněk Kalista[11], or a "scientistic" route taken by František Kutnar[12], and then by Slavík. Both those streams tried to encompass a sphere of "pre-scientific" historical theories emerging from pre-conceptual generalization of personal or generational experiences, thus from the levels of thinking which constitute an integral part of cognition, at least in the social sciences and humanities.

As in any other similar process, the change from a critical empiricist model of scientific cognition to a model of non-traditional rationality had taken its time – almost half of the century. This new model may be characterized by a very abstract-sounding term – "inherent self-organization".[13] It took time, too, for it to permeate scientific consciousness, particularly research practice. This process was not devoid of heated discussions and scholarly conflicts – it is, as you know, the usual scholarly reality. For obvious reasons, the Czech milieu was slower, and more disparate, in accepting new trends than elsewhere.[14] The delay in methodological development in Czech science can be demonstrated in one example of formal logic. We first encounter attempts at the application of formal logic in Slovakia at the beginning of the 1940s. Up to that time, logic was trapped in the old psychologizing model that we see, for example, in a standard text on the subject entitled *Logika* [The Logic] by Josef

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[11] Summarily Zdeněk KALISTA, *Cesty historikova myšlení: prameny k moderní české historiografii* (Prague: Garamond, 2002).

[12] Comp. in this context two very important books: František KUTNAR, *Sociálně myšlenková tvářnost obrozenského lidu: trojí pohled na český obrozenský lid jako příspěvek k jeho duchovním dějinám* (Prague: Kistorický klub, 1948); IDEM, *Cesta selského lidu k svobodě* (Prague: Československá akademie zemědělská, 1948).

[13] A brief summary characterization: "Validity inherent in internally complicated systems is formed by a historically developed framework of evolutionary laws that are interconnected by a specific dominant law; it is necessary to investigate this framework in order to present an adequate explanation of natural and social phenomena. Inherently, dynamic systems, with their ability of self organization, tend to create complicated multi-level organizations with genetic structures (with historically evolving structures of essential relationships) or, let us say, a stratum organization." (ČERNÍK, VICENÍK and VIŠŇOVSKÝ, *Historické typy racionality*, 213.) It is evident that this thought is far from routine historical thinking; a theory has, however, a very different objective. A theory does not really create norms for scholarly thinking (even though it is its cogent feature); it should discover and formulate empirically unattainable levels of thinking.

[14] See Jozef VICENÍK and Pavel CMOREJ, eds., *K dejinám logiky a matedológie vied na Slovensku a v Čechách* (Bratislava: IRIS, 2002); Pavel CMOREJ, Václav ČERNÍK and Jozef VICENÍK, *Sondy do dejín logiky a metodológie vied na Slovensku a v Čechách* (Bratislava, s. a.).

Tvrdý (1937). Students at all levels from high school to university were familiar with, and learnt this model. There was perhaps one exception, that of Albína Dratvová[15] and later on Otakar Zich. One cannot be surprised that the prevailing line of reasoning in Czech historiography was that of perceptive history developing a traditional critical empiricist methodology in a direction of introspective empathy, which we can clearly follow in the theoretical works of Zdeněk Kalista.

Sociological stimuli fared better, even though the results here did not measure up to world-wide development.[16] Josef Ludvík Fischer's works were written at the beginning of the 1930s[17] and were more theoretical, combining philosophy and sociology. These and the more practical studies of Inocenc Arnošt Bláha[18] were coming to be noted by historians, especially by František Kutnar. It was happening on a methodological level through structuralism, not just purely on a sociological level. Structuralism took root quite quickly. We can detect it in historiography from the end of the 1930s in the works of the abovementioned František Kutnar. I would point out that his development was parallel in time, and in some research activities, to the development of the "Annales" School, despite a different terminology[19] (in itself worth a study).

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[15] See a concept of logic in a textbook: Albína DRATVOVÁ, *Filosofická propedeutika pro gymnasia a reálná gymnasia. Díl druhý – Logika* (Prague: Unie, 1928); and also a text on modern-mathematical or formal-logic in a preface to: IDEM, *Logika a lidé* (Prague: Bohuslav Hendrich, 1944), 7–8, demonstrating a marked progress towards a modern concept of logic and also arguments as to why the old (post) Aristotelian syllogistics still prevail: "Exclusivity of modern logicians' speculations practically prevents ordinary persons from following the outcomes; they think the activity is an intellectual game that defeats reality […]; and is therefore of little use to them". It is advisable not to overlook this psychological moment during implementation of scientific findings.

[16] Here I refer summarily to work: Inocenc Arnošt BLÁHA, *Československá sociologie: od svého vzniku do roku 1948* (Brno: Doplněk, 1997) and also: Miloslav PETRUSEK, "Místo Emanuela Chalupného ve vývoji československé sociologie," in Josef Zumr, ed., *Emanuel Chalupný, česká kultura, česká sociologie a Tábor* (Prague: Filosofia, 1999), 59–75.

[17] Out of those the most important is undoubtedly a two volume work: Josef Ludvík FISCHER, *Krise demokracie*, 2 vols. (Brno: Index: Pokrokový obzor, 1933). (New edition – Prague: Karolinum, 2005.) For evaluation of Fischer's work, see BLÁHA, *Československá sociologie*, 90–94; Jiří V. MUSIL, ed., *Josef Ludvík Fischer: 6. 11. 1894–16. 2. 1973: sborník příspěvků ze semináře k 105. výročí narození* (Olomouc: Vlastivědná společnost muzejní, 2001); Jiří GABRIEL, ed., *Hledání řádu skutečnosti: sborník ke 100. výročí narození Josefa Ludvíka Fischera* (Brno: Masarykova univerzita v Brně, 1994).

[18] BLÁHA, *Československá sociologie*, 84–88.

[19] See *Podíl Františka Kutnara a agrárního dějepisectví na formování obrazu české minulosti : sborník referátů z vědecké konference konané ve dnech 24.–25. dubna 1998*

Jan Slavík's first scholarly work appeared in 1906, at the time when the situation in the field of theory and methodology of historical science was by and large without problems. The critical empiricist methodology was at its height, and Jaroslav Goll, in his text from the 1880s, *Dějiny a dějepis* [History and Historiography],[20] constructed his famous meta--empiricist definition. During the culmination of his scholarly activities, that is, at the end of the 1920s and beginning of the 1930s, Slavík would bitterly complain that this superficial text remained the only one of its kind here, and he would rightly perceive it as greatly deficient. He would stress this fact and would continually return to criticism of a "naive source", and would point out that it was wrong to resort to sources without asking "how the image of the past is being created".[21]

As we know, Slavík found his answer in sociology. We are not going to follow specific usage of this or that sociological theory (namely that of Weber[22]). I would instead try to indicate what methodological conclusions arise from this trend. Simply said: Slavík accentuates an "Eleatic" understanding of history.[23] What does that mean? Either consciously or subconsciously, Slavík had to focus on a stable history, as a sociologist would have said then, or on a *longue durée* as today's historian would describe it.[24] In those days, however, Czech historians took a view of history mostly as a unique, individual course of events.

Slavík was familiar with contemporary theoretical and methodological literature; but at the same time, we find in his texts references to authors already regarded as traditional. He mentions Alexis de Tocqueville, Wilhelm Dilthey, Georg Simmel, Wilhelm Windelband, Heinrich Rickert, naturally Max Weber, and also Ernst Troeltsch. (We leave Masaryk aside

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v lázních Sedmihorkách (Semily: Státní okresní archiv Semily, 1998) – (Z Českého ráje a Podkrkonoší. Supplementum 4).

[20] Jaroslav GOLL, "Dějiny a dějepis," *Athenaeum*, (1888–1889): 73–77, 93–103. (Published also in *Jaroslava Golla Vybrané spisy drobné* (Prague: Historický klub, 1928), 1: 5–28.) Cf. the conclusion of the famous article: Josef PEKAŘ, "Dějepisectví," in *Památník na oslavu padesátiletého panovnického jubilea Jeho Veličenstva císaře a krále Františka Josefa I.* (Prague: Česká akademie císaře Františka Josefa pro vědy, slovesnost a umění, 1898), 3–58.

[21] Jan SLAVÍK, *Dějiny a přítomnost. Víra v Rakousko a věda historická* (Prague: Svaz národního osvobození, 1931), 15.

[22] Jan HORSKÝ, *Noetika kulturních věd Maxe Webera a české dějepisectví* (Ústí nad Labem: Albis international, 1994).

[23] Jiřina POPELOVÁ, "Filosofie dějin, její úkoly a rozdělení," *Český časopis historický* 45, no. 1 (1939): 9–30.

[24] Comp. Jean LEDUC, *Historici a čas* (Bratislava: Kalligram, 2005), 38.

as a special case.) In his essays, Slavík did not reflect on the newest methodological developments. Nevertheless, the fact that he constantly paid attention to questions of methodology and to the application of its concepts was in those days an asset. It was surely in the second half of the 1930s when more lectures on theory and methodology became available at the Faculty of Philosophy. Even though their standard varied greatly, they reflected on contemporary concepts of the meta-empiricist components of an historian's thought, and on the world of history as such. Karel Stloukal, Josef Matoušek, Milada Paulová, Felix Tauer and Jan Květ delivered these lectures.[25]

Slavík took the path of international historiography of the 20th century – the path of interdisciplinarity and scientism. About the first, we can say – with a necessary simplification – that various "positive" social sciences and the humanities became (in Slavík's time it was primarily sociology and psychology) in the process "auxiliary historical sciences" *sui generis*. It was necessary to adapt and apply their findings, to understand the constructs and possibly convert them to the needs of the science of history. The target of the second was to strip research of hitherto individual, introspective psychologism.[26] As I pointed out earlier, Slavík did not find much understanding for his pursuits among the Czech establishment. His contributions to the journal *Dějiny a přítomnost* do tell the tale.[27] For example, Slavík wrote about the psychology of revolution, about "attributes of revolution" as historic social phenomena. The question is to what extent was social psychology developed "strictly" as a science. Most likely, it was Kenneth J. Gergen who formulated a definite cultural conditionality for interpretation of social

[25] See Zdeněk BENEŠ, "Podmínky nástupnictví. Znovuobsazení profesur československých dějin na Univerzitě Karlově v roce 1937," in Tomáš Borovský, Jiří Hanuš and Milan Řepa, eds., *Kultura jako téma a problém dějepisectví* (Brno: Matice moravská pro Historický ústav AV ČR, 2006), 181–183.

[26] For his characterization see Václav ČERNÍK and Jozef VICENÍK, eds., *Problém rekonštrukcie sociálnych a humanitných vied* (Bratislava: Iris, 2004), 42–48. It is possible to agree with V. Černík on the following point: he sees as erroneous the basis of classic individualism because it does not differentiate between a given nature, i.e., the biological basis of man and his specific social human core (p. 47). It does not value interactions of individuals in a society; they have an emergent nature and therefore cannot be reduced to simple interactions among individuals (p. 46).

[27] For an overview with an erudite commentary see Josef PETRÁŇ, "Historická skupina," in Jaroslav Pátek and Věra Šádová, eds., *Studie z obecných dějin: sborník historických prací k sedmdesátým narozeninám prof. dr. Jaroslava Charváta* (Prague: Univerzita Karlova, 1977), 11–48.

phenomena in the field of social psychology – a fact that historians acknowledged was, as a rule, solved intuitively.[28] Jaroslav Bouček analyzed Slavík's concept of revolution and stated that revolution was for Slavík an ideal programme (ideology), the execution of which is, however, tied to an existing cultural situation. "An Eskimo cannot comprehend the foundation of an Academy of Sciences" Slavík dryly remarked at one point.[29] Revolution as a historical event cannot last forever and its duration is again culturally dependent (74 years of existence of the Russian revolution!, as Bouček points out) and is never wholly successful. A revolution may stimulate a development but never change history.[30] How many times in his *Lenin* (1934) did Slavík repeat an affirmation that the social psychology of the Russian social democratic party is the same as the psychology of Russian orthodox sectarianism?!

Even though Slavík accentuates the supra-individual mechanisms of historic processes, he does not yield to social determinism. We are not far from the truth if we call his position "nomic".[31] The limit to which the social phenomena are subjected to social laws (or in weaker sense to regularity) does not go as far as individual behaviour. Its limits do not extend beyond the border of the organizing system; they depend on the social and cultural set of indispensable conditions, though not necessarily all of them. Many secondary ones may also be of consequence. This position allows for the preservation of the individuality of real events. Lenin, just as Plekhanov, may have been wrong on numerous occasions; he might have been intentionally lying. In concrete political battles, he

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[28] Kenneth J. GERGEN, "Social Psychology as History," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 26, no. 2 (1973): 309–320. Comp. with Alena PLHÁKOVÁ, *Dějiny psychologie* (Prague: Grada, 2006), 273–274. See further for example Maciej DYMKOWSKI, *Między psychologią a historią: o roli złudeń w dziejach* (Warszawa: Scholar, 2000). We may recall a celebrated story, which L. Febvre was telling his students as a "preamble" to critical historical thought, about Francis I of France who, after a night spent with "a strange woman in a strange room", went in the morning, upon hearing the bells, to the cathedral to pray. What were his motives – a habit, daily routine or a sincere confession of his sin? The answer is not that simple, as we would quickly discover. See Jacques LE GOFF, Roger CHARTIER and Jacques REVEL, eds., *La nouvelle histoire* (Paris: Retz, 1978). Cited from the German translation *Die Rückeroberung des historischen Denkens: Grundlagen der Neuen Geschichtswissenschaft* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1994), 137–138.

[29] SLAVÍK, *Dějiny a přítomnost*, 25.

[30] BOUČEK, *Jan Slavík: Příběh zakázaného historika*, 50 and 85.

[31] See ČERNÍK and VICENÍK, eds., *Problém rekonštrukcie*, 28–29. John Stuart Mill pointed to the problem of nomicity.

might have been losing, and in a definite minority, but in the final analysis, he would have been perceived to be successful.

As Slavík said:

> For all of his verbosity and sarcasm, Plekhanov was whistling in the wind[32] because the Russian cultural establishment was against him. Plekhanov pointed out the poverty of the Russian masses and the lack of resistance to Lenin's tactics by the Russian intelligentsia, even though it was clear that just this situation brought Lenin's form of socialism to Russia. Socialism was not feasible, but it was nonetheless possible to use Marxist slogans to overthrow the government to the benefit of an organized group of revolutionaries.[33]

Let us leave aside a problem which the citation raises – that of the role of personality in history; let us be satisfied with the nomic principle and say that through the nucleus of this historical thought, Slavík walked on shaky ground, and, in the Czech milieu, quite foreign territory (see his polemics about *Žižka a jeho doba* [Žižka and His Time][34] by Josef Pekař). With his noetic strategy, i.e. treatment of sociology as an "auxiliary science" and thus with his interdisciplinary approach, Slavík stood on literally unprepared ground. He nevertheless strode in, as he always did, with all his verve and utmost engagement.

In fact, he became a nuisance. He was an historian who was troublesome in many ways, not only for his methodology. His scholarly subjects were irritating; his lifelong interest was contemporary history, and, on the top of that, the Russian (Soviet) one. His focal point there was the Russian revolution – a "hot" subject even for Czechoslovak historiography. The question of the day for Czech scholars was not only the Russian revolution (more aptly revolutions) of 1917 and its reception, but growing German Nazism as well. Naturally they did not leave aside national topics such as the revolutionary period of 1914–1918, and that traditional subject of study, the Hussite movement, and other European revolutions. Contemporary history was not, however, a fully accepted and respected scholarly discipline. As Josef Pekař wrote in a preamble to his *Dějiny československé* [Czechoslovak History], the year 1918 was "an unexpected gift of Providence", and time was too short for a proper "historical judgment"[35] on the first years of the new republic. Slavík did not agree with either of these two statements. He maintained

[32] At the 5th congress of the party in London in 1907.
[33] Jan SLAVÍK, *Lenin* (Prague: Melantrich, 1934), 212.
[34] Josef PEKAŘ, *Žižka a jeho doba*, 3 vols. (Prague: Vesmír, 1927–1933).
[35] IDEM, *Dějiny československé* (Prague: Agentura Tip Š, Akropolis, 1991), 207, 247.

the inception of the republic was a logical outcome of the revolution of 1918 and saw no excuse for the alibi of an "inadequate distance". Such an historian would stress a need for a "sufficient interval" for two reasons: he does not have access to the sources (one may ask when he would have it) or he does not know the consequences of a course of events. Such argumentation is contained in Slavík's thinking; however an empirical historian needs to have distance to be able – as Georg Henrik von Wright said fifty years later[36] – to construct not genetic, but a pseudo-teleologic succession that comes from (psychological?) necessity to find meaningful complexes in history. A sociologically orientated historian, on the other hand, proceeds from his knowledge of general historical developmental principles. This model allows him to predict within an historical time frame on the grounds of substitution. Slavík, however, was not right when he attributed to Pekař (most likely in the heated arguments with his teacher), the understanding of the inception of the Czechoslovak republic as a "twist of fate".[37] Pekař's intention was different. He disputed a "patriotic boosterism" and tried to convince his students and the general public that a republic is no easy undertaking, but is hard work and responsibility, not just a gift. Slavík had the same goal; he just had a different starting-point. Personally, Slavík was difficult. He was both very straightforward and sarcastic. Because of these qualities, he was annoying politically. Marxism inspired him, but he would never become a communist. He was troublesome socially. He did not belong to the university circles. He was in charge of a valuable archive of a political nature, but was not a public servant forced to keep official discipline. He was very free and he acknowledged that fully. His status was not typical for Czech historians; it was more reminiscent of a status of a French historian.

Slavík remained an irritant for a long time, but, at the same time, he was, and still is, an inspiration.

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[36] Georg Henrik von WRIGHT, *Explanation and Understanding*, part 2 (London: Routledge and K. Paul, 1971).

[37] Jan SLAVÍK, "Víra v Rakousko jako plod české vědy historické," *Sobota* 2, no. 2–3 (1931): 23. See also BOUČEK, *Jan Slavík: Příběh zakázaného historika*, 94.

THE JOURNALIST JAN SLAVÍK

Jaroslav BOUČEK

Unlike historians of the Goll School who presented themselves as apolitical for the good of scholarship, Jan Slavík was a committed scholar who programmatically tried to incorporate the present into the process of historical cognition. Using comparative methods, he strove to elucidate both historical sources and the future outcomes of present social conflicts. His nature prompted his journalistic activity, and he commented extensively on current events. He did not abandon writing, at least his diaries, when he was officially silenced during the German occupation, and he wrote his post-February, 1948 comments (entitled *Do vykotlané vrby* [For a Hollow Willow]) up to the end of the 1960s.

As he described in several leaflets, his initiation into the political life of a small town happened while he was a gymnasium student in Roudnice nad Labem.[1] During his university studies, he espoused constitutional democracy, with which the majority of university-educated intelligentsia then identified. This is documented in his occasional articles on historical topics published in *Národní listy* [The National Gazette] and the war correspondence with Kamil Krofta, then editor of *Česká revue* [The Czech Review].[2]

In Kladno, where Slavík had been a gymnasium professor since 1921, he became, after the republic was declared, the editor of the local *Věstník národního výboru* [Bulletin of the Municipal Council]. He became engaged in municipal politics, and, in the national-democratic weekly *Stráž svobody* [The Guard of Freedom], he pointed out the dangerous attempts of Kladno Communists to copy the Soviet example in Czechoslovakia and repeat the escapade known as the Hungarian Soviet Republic.[3] He explained that, in Russia, a great social upheaval

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[1] See Jaroslav BOUČEK, *Jan Slavík: Příběh zakázaného historika* (Jinočany: H+H, 2002), 20–22.

[2] Archiv Akademie věd České republiky (Archives of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic – further only AAV ČR), fund (further only f.) Krofta, box (further only b.) 3, inventory number (further only ivn. n.) 232.

[3] Jan SLAVÍK, "Učitel Náprstek (Doklady kladensko-bolševické kultury)," *Stráž svobody*, 13 December 1919, 1–2; 17 December 1919, 2; 20 December 1919, 1–2; 7 January 1920, 2;

Prague Perspectives III (Prague, 2009), 25–42.

was taking place, but, at the same time, warned that the plans of the Russian revolution could not be mindlessly copied to Western Europe.

So, little by little, Slavík gained a reputation as a reactionary among the Kladno Communist leaders. After the danger of spreading of the revolution passed, he attempted a deeper analysis of the Russian revolutionary process and was labelled a Bolshevik. Slavík terminated his collaboration with the press of the National Democratic Party at the same time when, due to a rift between the Castle and the camp of Karel Kramář, many journalists, such as the brothers Karel and Josef Čapek, left *Národní listy*, and also when historian Jaroslav Werstadt joined the "Castle" group. Slavík's decision was influenced by two impulses. One was his deep admiration of Tomáš G. Masaryk as a politician and a scholar who brilliantly analyzed the evolution of modern Russia; the other was mistrust of Kramář's chimerical Russian plans. He criticized them in a review of Kramář's *Ruská krize* [The Russian Crisis].[4] Slavík's series of articles about the Russian revolution, published in 1921 in the revived magazine *Čas* [The Time],[5] stirred great protestations amongst conservative intellectuals (expressed, for instance, in an anti-Masaryk book by František Zuman).[6] After this periodical folded, he contributed for many years to the legendary daily *Národní osvobození* [The National Liberation], where he usually wrote about events in the Soviet Union.

In his articles for *Národní osvobození*, Slavík defended Edvard Beneš's foreign policy against Kramář's invectives; he rejected the latter's Slavic – Great Russia concepts and supported the pragmatic and realistic Slavism of Beneš.[7] Slavík then was attacked in the National Democratic press.[8] One of the reasons for these assaults was linked to

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10 January 1920, 2; 28 January 1920, 1–2; IDEM, "Demagogové žízní," *Stráž svobody*, 28 May 1919, 1. A year later, on the other hand, Slavík wrote an article criticizing the owners of the Kladno iron works and mines, the *Bolshevism of well-creased pants*: IDEM, "Bolševismus nažehlených kalhot," *Stráž svobody*, 28 May 1921, 1–2.

[4] IDEM, "Kramářova kniha o Rusku," *Čas*, 26 February 1922, 7; 2 March 1922, 3–4; 4 March 1922, 3–4.

[5] IDEM, "Dějiny ruské revoluce," *Čas*, 12 November 1921, 2–3; 16 November 1921, 2–3; 23 November 1921, 2–3.

[6] František ZUMAN, *Osvobozenecká legenda: vzpomínky a úvahy o československém odboji v Rusku*, vol. 2 (Prague: self published, 1922).

[7] Jan SLAVÍK, "O slovanskou politiku," *Slovanský přehled* 19, no. 2 (1927): 90–94; IDEM, "Podivná obrana slovanské politiky," *Národní osvobození*, 4 January 1927, 1; 7 January 1927, 1; 14 January 1927, 1; 19 January 1927, 1; 29 January 1927, 1; 5 February 1927, 1.

[8] See "Benešovi 'historikové' pracují," *Národní listy*, 4 January 1927.

a discussion of Beneš's war memoirs. Their publication caused a wide--ranging polemic that became a part of political folklore from the beginning of the 1920s. The core of the debate was the question of which resistance was more important for the establishment of the republic in 1918 – the domestic one lead by Kramář or the external one lead by Masaryk.

In 1930, Jan Slavík, together with the General Secretary of the National Socialistic Party, Member of Parliament Karel Moudrý, founded the weekly *Sobota* [Saturday].[9] Its programme was to confront the growing activities of the far-right, especially fascistic fellow travellers of the National Democratic Party. Slavík's model for the new journal was the earlier *Čas* of Jan Herben. If it did not become the intended critical "cat among the pigeons", that was due to its financial dependence on the National Socialistic Party and its publishing house Melantrich. They had to take on Karel Jíše as editor-in-chief and another National Socialist politician, Otakar Klapka, who later became Prague's chief magistrate.[10]

Slavík saw the grounds for the success of the radical right in the absence of political education, when, as he said, textbooks were missing explanations of democratism, and democracy was described, at most, as a government of the people, without an elucidation of its evolution and the problems of its workings. Instead of a genuine explanation of republicanism as a progressive form of government, as opposed to a monarchy, high school textbooks, in Slavík's view, presented loyal articles about the president and the republic, written in the same manner as had been used about the emperor and the monarchy.

Civil servants were affected by the loss of their privileged positions in the old monarchy and by the weakened financial situation. All of this, as Slavík reflected, created a medium for the slogan of Jiří Stříbrný: "against hunger and against the Castle" ("Proti hladu a proti Hradu"). Another problem was the situation in socialist parties that was analogous to the Old Czech party at a time when it had exhausted its programme

[9] On March 21, 1930, publisher Jaroslav Motyčka informed the Police Directorate of the publication of *Sobota*. The first issue came out on April 5, 1930; the editorial *Domácí a zahraniční odboj* [Resistance at Home and Abroad] was written by Václav Klofáč. The editor-in-chief was Karel Jíše and, from January 8, 1938, Karel Moudrý. (Národní archiv (National Archives – further only NA), f. PŘ-d, Tisk 202/103, b. 288.) In June 1938, circulation was 3,000. (NA, f. PZÚ, b. 925.)

[10] See Jaroslav BOUČEK, "Jan Slavík – historik proti fašismu," in: *Moderní dějiny* (Prague: Historický ústav AV ČR, 2001), 9: 57–71.

and had nothing to offer. These parties had no personalities who were able to speak theoretically about present problems; there was no democratic opposition and no criticism presented by Czech realists in Austro-Hungarian politics. The independent press, such as *Lidové noviny* [People's Gazette] or *Národní osvobození*, could have played this role, but they failed to perform it.[11]

After Hitler came to power, Slavík repeatedly pointed out the imminent danger for Czechoslovak independence. In many articles, he spoke about the explicit reactionary character of Fascist regimes, which wanted to resolve social problems with medieval methods. They were persuading their inhabitants that to have a better life, they needed more living space, instead of social change, and they declared attacks on other countries and provoked chauvinism.

In an article *Základní omyl Hitlerova Německa* [A Fundamental Fallacy of Hitler's Germany],[12] Slavík referred to the anachronistic methods of the Nazis who wanted to continue where German crusaders broke off six hundred years earlier and conquer the eastern Slavic territories. They paid no attention to the fact that social conditions had changed since the Middle Ages. At that time, it was likely that the conquerors would obliterate the local feudal class and gain control of the local inhabitants. In the democratic structure of peoples in the 20th century, no European nation could be subjugated in such a way.

Slavík saw a source of Nazi ideology in the works of Oswald Spengler. In a wide-ranging polemic about Spengler's *The Decline of the West*,[13] he showed how this work, originally celebrating monarchy and Junkerism, became, in a post-war edition, a textbook directed against democracy which for Spengler was a temporary era of decline, leading toward the triumph of autocratic rule ("Drang nach Gewaltung und Macht"). Spengler, with his "philosophy of politics", paved the way for Hitler, because he emphasized the essential amorality of a leader and the blind faith in him felt by his people.

Slavík refuted Spengler's tirades against general suffrage and parliamentary democracy, in which Spengler saw only a political weapon

[11] Jan SLAVÍK, "Národní liga je zjev přirozený," *Národní osvobození*, 8 October 1931, 3; 11 October 1931, 4; 18 October 1931, 3; 5 November 1931, 3; IDEM, "Metternich mezi námi?," *Sobota* 5, no. 15 (1934): 317–318.

[12] IDEM, "Základní omyl Hitlerova Německa," *Národní osvobození*, 6 April 1935, 5.

[13] IDEM, "Dračí setba," *Sobota* 6, no. 37 (1935): 769–771; no. 38, 796–798; no. 39, 816–817.

for the dictatorship of money, and especially against a democratic press – reputedly the worst type of submission, where press magnates enslaved journalists and readers. For Slavík, the deficiencies of the freedom of the press were not caused by democracy, but by its lack. The worst influence the press had on the politically illiterate population, according to Slavík, was the unthinking identification with subordinates faithful to their master, in which each dictatorship found support.

Spengler cited Lord Northcliff, owner of *The Times* and founder of the biggest British press syndicate, to indicate that Germany was defeated in the First World War by the Anglo-American press. Slavík repeated that it would not have happened if Germany, with its feudal aggression and crushing of democratic rights, had not given the press an easy opportunity to show that more freedom existed in the Entente camp. The war was not decided by the manoeuvres of the press, but by the superiority of democracy over autocracy.

Spengler originally prepared his book as a rationalization of German brutality in the pursuit of victory. When Germany lost, Spengler used it to defend his theory that might transcends law. Spengler's work motivated his followers to write similar books that wanted to resolve the stagnation of the social order by returning to an order even more antiquated:

> ...it returns Germany to the same situation, which would be laughable if it did not entice Germans to repeat the dangerous Junker methods of Wilhelm II that were paid for by the whole world, and most of all by the Germans themselves. The first big fight "for power" ended in a total defeat of Germany. The second one cannot end any other way.[14]

In his note on the 20th anniversary of the onset of the First World War, Slavík wrote about the failure of the Second International, which, despite its solemn resolutions, did not prevent it. He described the present situation as more dangerous than 1914, because no Second International existed:

> No one relies on international solidarity [...] About all international treaties we could say what Chancellor Metternich said about the Holy Alliance: It is an empty nothing![15]

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[14] *Ibid.*, 817. See also the obituary: Jan SLAVÍK, "Zemřel duchovní otec dnešního Německa," *Národní osvobození*, 10 May 1936, 3–4.

[15] IDEM, "Před 20 lety selhala druhá internacionála. Co selhává dnes?," *Sobota* 5, no. 31 (1934): 676.

When Mussolini annexed Ethiopia, the right-wing press defended the occupation of the last free piece of Africa as a deed common before the First World War. Slavík noted that such a breach of the principles of international protection could turn against the Czechoslovak Republic. The Ethiopian war was for him a symbol of the decay of the capitalist order. A conservative bourgeois world approved of Italian brutality in Africa because the Ethiopians were not a "civilized nation". It made no distinction between the powerless Ethiopians and those who used poison gas against them. It advocated the methods of the decadent old world, and its compassion was compassion of a dying category of men.[16]

During the generals' putsch in Spain and growing Stalinist terror in the Soviet Union, Slavík turned his attention to a more general problem of autocratic regimes. In *Úvahy o diktaturách* [Deliberations on Dictatorships],[17] he based his views on Max Weber's explication of the role of a charismatic personality. Faith in a charismatic saviour who would lead people out of economic problems is marked by fanaticism, helping dictators to succeed because those who are led are ecstatically willing to sacrifice themselves. There lies the danger for democracy, because it would be a mistake to think that dictators stay in power only by terrorizing the majority. On the other hand, disappointed expectations and political failures such as a lost war can destroy a newly established dictatorship faster than an old monarchy that can rely on its traditions. Democracy is thus in danger only temporarily, because uncontrolled dictatorship would discredit itself relatively quickly.

The basic difference between fascist dictatorships and the Bolshevik one was, for Slavík, the encouragement of national chauvinism. The problems of the nation are supposed to lie in the fact that some of its population is abroad, and that therefore its happiness is in having a larger territory. Instead of attempting to achieve modern international settlements, dictators, feeling bound by their dogma of a national mission, build dikes against other countries. They try to solve contemporary problems with medieval methods; they are a reactionary upsurge and, as Slavík repeated several times, a recrudescence of the Middle Ages.

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[16] IDEM, "Jak civilisovaní uvažují o Habeši," *Sobota* 7, no. 13 (1936): 263.

[17] IDEM, "Úvahy o diktaturách," *Národní osvobození*, 15 August 1936, 3; 23 August 1936, 4; 2 September 1936, 2.

In many articles, Slavík paid attention to the question of how to defend the republic from hostile propaganda in the press.

> To those Hungarian enemies who call Czechoslovak state a 'monstrosity' we should answer by showing the principal difference between us and the Hohenzollern Germany and Habsburg Hungary that they wish to restore [...] To attack Czechoslovakia means to attack the whole of Europe. This is not to say, that no one will ever dare to do so. But the final outcome will surprise the one who triggers this European avalanche.[18]

Such reactionary nationalism distracts from real social and economic issues and can bring about unspeakable savageries, but the final outcome will be its inevitable defeat.[19]

Each world war bringing militarism and genocide would lead to a social revolution. That revolution would turn against the rich and powerful of this world as the foremost culprits of the butchery of war. "It will be exposed that war is a product of outdated economic orders that must be radically changed."[20] Slavík pointed out that a ban on Nazi literature would not provide any protection from Hitlerism. Fascist and Communist literature should be published, but with commentaries by democratic scholars and politicians. Banning and censorship had never defused a social movement.[21]

During the growing threat to the republic, Slavík came out against a professor of history at the German University, Josef Pfitzner, who tried to misuse the thoughts of Slavík's recently-deceased teacher and opponent in disputes about Hussitism and the meaning of Czech history, professor Josef Pekař, for Nazi politics. Slavík devoted a large treatise to criticism of Pfitzner's Nazism. Slavík collected articles about Sudetendeutsche irredentism in the brochure *Německý postup proti Slovanům a jeho sudetský agent* [German Move against Slavs and its Sudeten Agent], which was a direct answer to Henlein's Carlsbad demands.

Above all, Slavík rejected the second demand of Konrad Henlein that Czechs should give up "the thesis that they were the dike against Germany's 'Drang nach Osten'". He recalled that Czech politicians never accepted such a doctrine, but Sudeten Germans, in the eighth article of their Carlsbad programme, stipulated that they wanted

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[18] IDEM, "Hájíme tiskem republiku správně?," *Sobota* 7, no. 37 (1936): 769–770.
[19] IDEM, "Rozprava o českém děsu z Německa," *Sobota* 7, no. 20 (1936): 410.
[20] IDEM, "Z bilance strachu před válkou r. 1935," *Sobota* 7, no. 3 (1936): 51.
[21] IDEM, "Glosa o naší censuře," *Sobota* 7, no. 23 (1936): 484–485.

"absolute freedom to avow affiliation with Germany and with the German worldview". Thus, Henlein proceeded with the Nazi programme of the ferocious conquest of the Slavs set out in Hitler's *Mein Kampf*. In the given situation, such a request was cynical and unacceptable.

In an historical overview, Slavík showed that the opinions of Konrad Henlein and other Nazi ideologists were not new, but continued the German "Teutonic psychology" of the 19th century, when a concept of the German nation as a chosen people (as opposed to decaying nations) was developed. As representatives of this ideology he named philosophers Eduard Hartmann and Filip Mainländer, Berlin University history professor Heinrich Treitschke, with his psychology of might and violence, and another professor, a friend of Wilhelm II, Theodor Schiemann. He also recalled the "Manifesto to Civilized Nations" from the beginning of the First World War, which was signed by ninety-three German scholars (among them were, for example, the psychologist and philosopher Wilhelm Wundt and the chemist Wilhelm Ostwald); he also described how the ideology of the German "Drang nach Osten" was represented in the professional journals of Nazi Germany.

Slavík sharply refuted Heinlein's claims for territorial autonomy in the Czech borderlands. Hussite country cannot, he said, give autonomy to the Nazi Middle Ages, where freedom of the press and civic rights would not be respected, and the Jews discriminated against.

He also rejected a demand for a revision of Czech foreign policy. Nazis had no right to criticize the Soviet Union, which, in its minority policy, was more civilized than Nazi Germany. When Slavík compared the Nazi and Soviet systems, he speculated about which of the two dictatorial regimes had a better chance to evolve toward democracy, and, for Slavík, it was without doubt the Soviet Union.

Agreement with Germans would be possible only when Germans renounced Nazi doctrines. In this context, Slavík recollected the words of German historian Hermann Baumgarten addressed to Treitschke's extreme nationalism:

> This ultra-Prussian quirk could be just as dangerous as ultramontanist tendencies for healthy national development [...] Each nation that suddenly rises up to affluence and respect after a long political weakness is subjected to many temptations. National pride – a tendency to exaggerate its own things, and to belittle everything foreign – is the biggest one. It is well known that we experienced such a temptation in 1870. We should consider ourselves

> lucky that if we were to get into dire straits, we would be forced to seriously think about ourselves.[22]

The Czech-German controversy was not a controversy on a local or national level for Slavík, but predominantly an argument between two dissimilar social viewpoints, i.e., democratic principles and a feudal morality that proclaimed the "right" of aggression against another nation. He optimistically predicted: "When these two worldviews clash, we don't have to fear the result. Human evolution does not take a straight road, but never goes back."[23]

The day of the ill-famed Munich conference, September 29, 1938, Czechoslovak radio broadcast – also internationally – Slavík's commentary about the Hitler regime's anti-Czechoslovak campaign that defied the right of self-determination:

> In this frenzied situation, the cry for the right to self-determination keeps returning. German propaganda rebukes us because our state where a German minority lives violates this right [...] The idea of the right of self-determination postulates and, without exception, requests acceptance of another principle, i.e., the idea that all nations are equal. It is unacceptable that somebody would demand self-determination for a certain number of his fellow men and, at the same time, divide nations into higher and lower, and proclaim that one race should rule another race. Such teaching is a mockery of the self-determination idea. It is known that this teaching about superior and inferior races is the core of historical notions of the party that rules Germany. This teaching is proclaimed not only theoretically, but has, in the book *Mein Kampf* by A. Hitler, a concrete shape in the programme of aggression against Slavic countries. We can read in this book that contemporary Germany must follow up the progress of German crusaders on the shores of the Baltic Sea six hundred years ago [...] Then it is not we in Czechoslovakia who breach the principle of the self-determination of nations. After the restoration of our independence, our leaders and politicians, principally Masaryk and Beneš, strove for peace among nationalities and conciliation in our democratic state. If it is not yet achieved, it is not so much our fault as it is those who cry for the self-determination of nations, but hide completely different aims behind it...[24]

After the Munich disaster, Slavík tried to interpret this crushing disappointment. In a series of articles,[25] he explained the foundation of

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[22] IDEM, *Německý postup proti Slovanům a jeho sudetský agent* (Prague: Melantrich, 1938), 12.

[23] *Ibid.*, 7.

[24] Archives of the Czech Radio. J. Slavík 29. IX. 1938, audio record in Czech and English. Printed version: Jan SLAVÍK, "Ještě o právu na sebeurčení," *Sobota* 9, no. 39 (1938): 466.

[25] IDEM, "Kapitoly o naší pohromě," *Sobota* 9, no. 36 (1938): 422–423; no. 37, 436–438; no. 38, 448–449.

the republic, its nature and reasons for its fall. To those who, in the after-shock of Munich, felt sorry about the break-up of Austria-Hungary, he pointed out that the formation of Czechoslovakia was not a lottery win and the result of a random division of the old monarchy after the First World War, but a consequence of the historical democratization process and self-determination of European nations started by the French Revolution.

Addressing representatives of fascistic right-wingers who named Edvard Beneš as a cause of the Munich catastrophe, Slavík noted that the real reason for these attacks on Beneš was the fact that Czechoslovakia was more democratic than these "gentlemen" wished. There was no chance of conciliation with the Nazi regime, and Beneš could have been guilty only in the sense of having had faith in the democratic roots of the Western powers. The Czechoslovak Republic was a victim of the world economic crisis, which the government could not control. The prime cause of its fall was the Western affluent classes' dread of Bolshevik Russia, of social revolution. That is why the British and French diplomats preferred to hand Czechoslovakia over to Hitler. Czechoslovakia became a casualty of a contra-revolution directed against the social revolution through which Europe passed after the First World War.

Slavík refused to hear general complaints about modern democracy. The crisis of democracy does not lie in the errors of individuals or political structures, but in a failure to satisfy the growing demands of people, or even their basic requirements. In such situations, representatives of reaction promise bread and work for everybody. In a democratic state, public criticisms and systemic imperfections may gradually appear, but problems will become evident much more rapidly in a regime which depends primarily on blind faith in a charismatic and powerful figure. Parliamentary democracy has been under attack for a long time; nevertheless, people always return to it. The publication of *Pád první republiky* [Fall of the First Republic], which predicted the final collapse of Nazism, was stopped by post-Munich censorship.[26]

After Munich, Slavík continued his collaboration with *Národní osvobození*, which, under the editorship of Lev Sychrava, remained

[26] Only print preview of the text survived. See IDEM, "Pád první republiky," *Revue dějin socialismu* 8, no. 4 (1968): 549–579. This issue was not distributed after August 1968. Reprinted in *Slovanský přehled* 76, no. 3 (1990): 177–200.

fearlessly loyal to the legacy of the so-called First Republic.[27] Slavík defended its democratic values in *Sobota* and in the monthly *Slovanský přehled* [The Slavonic Review]. He stood up against a mean, politically--motivated, anti-Beneš campaign,[28] about which he wrote an pamphlet *Návod k přeorientování* [An Instruction for Reorientation].[29]

Called a "Castle faithful" and "a known Soviet lover", he became a target of the Fascist press.[30] He replied:

> As far as Soviet-loving, I must state that in all the Agrarian press, there were not nearly as many factual critiques as I wrote in the past twenty years. There was not anyone in the Agrarian Party who would criticize on Czechoslovak radio the seamy side of the Soviet Union – I have always acknowledged this – as I was doing throughout 1933. In the first years of our republic, when writings about the Russian revolution lacked elementary knowledge and the nation was offered wild fables, I raised my voice and demanded some critical discernment. When our state signed an alliance with the Soviet Union, and Czech intellectuals began jumping around, waving red flags, again I kept my critical stance toward the Soviet Union and reaped slurs from the Communist press every week. As far as the label "Castle faithful" goes, I will answer *Večer* [The Evening] shortly. If this label expressed my relations with Masaryk and Beneš as scholars and scholarly-oriented politicians, I have always professed admiration for them and would advocate their ideas. I would always honour their great and meritorious work for our independence. I would always advocate their democratism and would never run after Fascism.[31]

One example of a doctrine of the Party of National Unity, Slavík claimed, showed the hidden danger of the authoritarian right. This official doctrine proclaimed its aim "to concentrate and stream-line national forces into one party of authoritarian democracy". It called for "depoliticizing" politics and "the freeing of political life from ideology" ("The rule of ideological megalomaniacs is over, [...] there will be government and not philosophy", cleverly proclaimed the spiritual father

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[27] In a touching recollection on post-Munich republic Prokop Drtina remarked: "*Národní osvobození* was a shining example of principal journalism and personal bravery, in particular its editor-in-chief Dr. Lev Sychrava, who defended president Beneš in series of articles on foreign policy." Vojenský historický archiv (Military Historical Archives), Sb. vzpomínek, Odpovědi na otázky historiků 7 October 1965, Prokop Drtina: Politická situace v tzv. hradních kruzích za II. republiky, p. 24, manuscript. Comp. Prokop DRTINA, *Československo můj osud* (Prague: Melantrich, 1991), 1/1: 282–283.

[28] For instance: Jan SLAVÍK, "Jak se Edvard Beneš v cizině zajistil," *Sobota* 9, no. 40 (1938): 480.

[29] IDEM [pseud. Arij], "Návod k přeorientování," *Sobota* 9, no. 38 (1938): 453.

[30] See for example: "Pan Slavík zůstane věrný," *Večer*, 29 October 1938, 3.

[31] Jan SLAVÍK, "Novoslávie, Slavíkovo sovětofilství a agrární Večer," *Národní osvobození*, 28 October 1938, 2.

of Beran's speeches, the editor-in-chief of the Agrarian *Venkov* [The Country], Rudolf Halík). Slavík pointed out how the authoritarian right in reality goes against democratic ideology, and preaches a different ideology similar to the reactionary period. For example, the Alexander Bach regime intensified censorship and restricted freedom of the press.[32] One of Slavík's pamphlets, entitled *Pryč s ideologií* [Down with Ideology],[33] was about "freeing political life from ideology".

In the same issue of *Sobota*, Slavík rejected calls for one "national" party. He indicated the errors and imperfections of the old party system: "The problem of finding a way to create a situation where the parties could exist without the accompanying lobbyists is still here." The dilemma, however, cannot be solved by a one-party system, because one "national party" is a fraud; all autocratic systems sooner or later collapse.[34] Following up on this topic, he addressed those who airily claimed that an undemocratic regime in Czechoslovakia was unlikely, reminding them of the support which the extreme right got from Nazi Germany. The call for one political party just repeated the Communist or Fascist claim that parliamentary democracy was the veiled government of an oligarchic minority. This minority stood up openly against democracy, whereas the supporters of an authoritative regime tried to delude people by stating publicly that government by one political party would be a higher form of democracy. There can only be talk about political parties if there are at least two of them. He who wants just one political party advocates what the Fascists and Communists proclaim.[35]

In the spirit of the newly founded National Labour Party, which was trying to keep at least a minimum of political pluralism ("Drawing on the life wisdom of Masaryk, our Party would faithfully defend our freedom even if curtailed, and would educate people for a true freedom," stated its General Secretary Bohumil Laušman), Slavík wrote an editorial *Našim čtenářům!* [To our readers!] for the 41st issue of *Sobota*. He reminded them that the weekly was an organ of the National Socialist Party, which advocated the democratism of Havlíček, Palacký,

[32] IDEM, "Bez ideologie?," *Sobota* 9, no. 40 (1938): 473–474. Cf.: Jan RATAJ, *O autoritativní národní stát: ideologické proměny české politiky v druhé republice 1938–1939* (Prague: Karolinum, 1997), 32.

[33] Jan SLAVÍK [pseud. Warjak], "Pryč s ideologií," *Sobota* 9, no. 37 (1938): 444.

[34] IDEM, "Soumrak starých politických stran," *Sobota* 9, no. 40 (1938): 477.

[35] IDEM, "Řeči temných mužů o přežilé demokracii a jejich cíl," *Sobota* 9, no. 41 (1938): 491.

Tyrš and Masaryk. When the party discontinued its activities,[36] *Sobota* became an independent journal. He reacted to opinions about the failure of democracy by saying that democracy was an eternal struggle for a better society. He himself was certain that "the final resolution of the European crisis would lead to a triumph of a more effective democracy and so of our nation", and asked readers to support *Sobota* – "a journal which will be committed to democratism no matter what".[37]

Slavík severely criticized a programmatic article *Jak vybudovat II. republiku* [How to Build the Second Republic] published in the weekly *Brázda* [The Furrow], which was associated with young members of the Agrarian Party (at one point this journal was the organ of the Agrarians' "Castle" left). In this article, the editors embraced the foundation of an authoritative state, and for the first time after Munich, demanded the implementation of totalitarian and racial principles in Czech society. Slavík repudiated totalitarian and racial doctrines, and the transformation of Czech culture into a so-called "pure national culture". He stressed repeatedly that authoritative regimes were anachronistic and that the best government was a government which was subject to change, controllable and responsible.[38]

In a comment about the post-Munich press entitled *Zrada na Havlíčkovi* [The Betrayal of Havlíček], he expressed his confidence in the Czech nation, which had survived many calamities and would survive this one as well. These temporary hard times should not be made worse by local people who, with banners, freely betray everything that Havlíček stood for. Journalists think that people are dim-witted and will believe whatever slander is presented to them. Censors confiscated a part of the text where he expressed his concern

> that representatives of the new course would be those who confuse the journalistic profession with the work of a "cop" and denunciator, calling for the suffocation of a press that tries to limit their barbaric rampage.

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[36] A majority of National Socialists went over to the authoritarian National Unity Party; the minority, including Karel Moudrý, together with social democrats and former Communists founded the National Labour Party.

[37] Jan SLAVÍK, "Našim čtenářům!," *Sobota* 9, no. 41 (1938): 481. From November 11, 1938, its publisher was František Vavřina. On March 4, 1939, *Sobotay* was suspended by a decree of the Ministry of the Interior. (NA, PŘ-d, Tisk 202/103, b. 288.)

[38] IDEM, "Kritika programu týdeníku 'Brázdy' na vybudování druhé republiky," *Sobota* 9, no. 41 (1938): 482–483; no. 42, 498–499; no. 44, 520–521; no. 45, 530–531; no. 46, 547–548. Part of the text was confiscated by censors. Comp. RATAJ, *O autoritativní národní stát*, 62.

He also expressed his surprise that the National Unity Party, which had many decent individuals, was "represented by such a betrayal of Havlíček as is the Agrarian *Večer*".[39]

A fierce denunciation of Slavík was published in an article called *Doklokotá* [The Warbling Is Over].[40] His unequal fight with censorship led by Rudolf Halík ended at the beginning of 1939 when all publications with which Slavík collaborated – the daily *Národní osvobození*, the weekly *Sobota* and the monthly *Slovanský přehled* – were terminated.

In the period between September 30, 1938 and March 15, 1939, Slavík, an erudite scholar of Soviet foreign policy, did not accept the prevailing and proclaimed belief in speedy help from the Soviet Union for occupied Czechoslovakia. In a note on this subject – *SSSR a Československo v době krize* [USSR and Czechoslovakia in a Time of Crisis] – he related how little interest the Soviet press had shown in Czechoslovakia during the Munich days. Knowing Bolshevik strategy, he reasoned that the Soviet government still counted on a clash between the two capitalistic camps, which would then evolve into a proletarian revolution. Just as another historian and journalist, the former editor of *Rudé právo* [The Red Right], Záviš Kalandra, at the time writing under the pseudonym Jan Albert for Ferdinand Peroutka's *Přítomnost* [The Presence],[41] he also did not believe in the possible alliance of the USSR with England and France, and the German-Soviet pact did not surprise him.

It was vital for Slavík to comment on contemporary events, and, when he was silenced by censorship, he at least kept a diary during the war. He returned to it after he was silenced again in the 1950s by the Communist regime:

> During the Second World War, when the Nazis beheaded anyone who criticized the "Führer's" deeds, I wrote every day about the acts and speeches of the Nazi leaders. With no chance of being published, I scribbled down my

[39] Jan SLAVÍK [pseud. Wiking], "Zrada na Havlíčkovi," *Sobota* 9, no. 42 (1938): 495. Only a small part of the confiscated texts was found in the Ministry of the Interior collections deposited in the National Archives. (NA, PZÚ, b. 925.)

[40] -l-, "Doklokotá," *Pražský večerník*, 28 December 1938. Editor's note: Slavík means Nightingale in English.

[41] See Jaroslav BOUČEK, *27. 6. 1950 – Poprava Záviše Kalandry: česká kulturní avantgarda a KSČ* (Prague: Havran, 2006), 83–84.

> diagnosis of the end of this dreadful worldwide massacre. I felt it was my duty to myself as an historian to write as I saw things.[42]

He viewed the war, as did president Beneš in his London exile, through the eyes of a sociologist. He expected, as had happened after the First World War, that the war's aftermath would be accompanied by social uprisings, if not by a full-scale social revolution. After the war, he anticipated a reaction analogous to that represented by the Holy Alliance after the French revolution. In conformity with the prevalent feeling in Czech society, Slavík expressed his original disillusionment and aversion towards their perfidious allies England and France, but he changed his view after the fall of France thanks to the exemplary resistance of the British Empire. As a member of a nation traumatized by the Munich agreement, he expressed several times his fear that the Western powers would, in the end, make up with Germany at the expense of the Slavic nations.

Slavík appreciated the significance of Serbian resistance, which hampered the German progress ("On May 1 they wanted to be further then they were. That darned Yugoslavia!"). Before the German attack on the Soviet Union, he was uneasy about Stalin's about-face, the seeming alliance with Hitler, and feared that it would be calamitous for Russia, but after the actual attack on June 22, 1941, he changed his view, and predicted that Hitler would be defeated there.

Slavík's analysis of the Nazi regime is similar to the analysis of the foremost German historian of the first half of the 20th century, Friedrich Meinecke. Meinecke experienced both the proclamation of the German Kaiserdom at Versailles, and the unconditional capitulation of the Third Reich in Berlin. In his first book, published in 1907, he viewed confidently the accomplishment of German national efforts during the time of the "Iron" Chancellor Bismarck. In a book published in 1946 and entitled *Die deutsche Katastrophe* [The German Catastrophe], he found the reason for the total collapse of Germany in 1945 in the ideas on which the second Reich (1871–1918) was based. Since Bismarck's time, militarist and chauvinistic notions that were supported by German historians and other intellectuals ruled Germany. Slavík in his diary listed the following names: Leopold von Ranke, Heinrich von Sybel, Georg von Below, Heinrich von Tretschke and Oswald Spengler. These

[42] IDEM, *Jan Slavík: Příběh zakázaného historika*, 145.

notions were already established during the Napoleonic wars, and Slavík recalled a well-known speech by the philosopher Johan Gottlieb Fichte after the Prussian defeat near Jena in 1806.

Meinecke wrote about a catastrophe, which was not for him the catastrophe of the Jewish genocide, the occupied European nations, or, indeed, the whole world; it was first of all a German catastrophe. Slavík reached the same conclusion on the eve of the Prague uprising: "The springing of the Junker counterrevolution, masked by National Socialism, ended in the vilest fall of the German nation." He, like Meinecke, saw the main problem of the Third Reich as its craving for world supremacy, and this in the end ruined Germany.

The brave struggle of the Soviet Union nations, Nazi propaganda aimed at the USSR, the sieges of Moscow and Stalingrad where the Germans' luck turned, and from where liberation was coming, justified a growing enthusiasm for Slavic Russia and the USSR in Czech society. The public compared the slow progress of Western allies with the astounding vigour of the Soviets.

On October 11, 1943, the writer Čestmír Jeřábek wrote:

> The sympathies of the general public are with the Russians. [...] The Russians do not deliberate, do not talk, and do not complain about bad weather – and they hit the Germans with a mighty fist wherever they trap them. By contrast, the public somehow cannot "warm up" to the Anglo-American way of warfare.[43]

Likewise, in his diary, Slavík wrote, even after the invasion in Normandy, about the "snail's pace offensive" of the Anglo-American forces, a "trifle" compared to the great success of the Russians, who broke into the middle Visla.[44] This overall pro-Russian, pro-Soviet and even pro-Stalinist enthusiasm of Czech society in the spring of 1945 was reflected in Slavík's radio commentary *Hitlerův útok na Sovětský svaz* [Hitler's Attack on the Soviet Union].

In postwar publications, Slavík returned to his critical opinions on Soviet internal and foreign policies and soon came under attack by the Communist press. When, in July 1945, *Svobodné slovo* [The Free Word] published his editorial *Přimáznutí revolucionáři* [Fair-weather revolutionaries],[45] where he warned his readers that there were people

[43] Čestmír JEŘÁBEK, *V zajetí antikristově* (Olomouc: R. Promberger, 1945), 222.
[44] Jan SLAVÍK, *Válečný deník historika*, Jaroslav Bouček, ed., (Prague: Academia, 2008), 375.
[45] IDEM, "Přimáznutí revolucionáři," *Svobodné slovo*, 15 July 1945, 1.

who try to cover their past with empty radicalism and curry favour to get leading positions in the national councils, he was severely attacked in *Rudé právo* by a functionary of the National Front Party. Its editor-in-chief, Gustav Bareš, recommended that Slavík revise what he had written about the Soviet Union before the war.[46]

In his writings, Slavík stood for factual knowledge, and, against an uncritical glorification and duplication of Soviet reality in Czechoslovakia; he defended freedom of speech and democracy. As early as 1946, the Internal Security Department, Ministry of the Interior, summoned him to explain the motivation for, and preferences expressed in, one of his articles.[47]

Jan Slavík, one of the very few, defended Mikhail M. Zoshchenko and Anna Akhmatova in the well-known "Leningrad case".[48] In an article entitled *Theokracie není diskuse* [Theocracy is not a discussion], he made clear what he thought about the character of the Soviet political system. The problem was not the lack of social responsibility of the writer, but the attitude of state and party functionaries. There was a tradition of theocratic absolutism that, instead of allowing discussion, dictated what to believe.[49] He evoked his critical reservations about the Soviet system, but he defended himself with less cogent and evidential arguments because, already, he could not openly state the real ones. Therefore he wrote, for example, "about the differences between the Western and Soviet democracy" even though he considered the Stalinist system an oriental despotism.

Slavík pointed out several times the mere formality of Communist scholars' adherence to Marxism; their methodology had nothing in common with historical materialism. In his review of Arnošt Kolman's *Ideologie německého fašismu* [Ideology of German Fascism], he noted that Kolman interpreted the concept of Nazism as a seduction of the German nation by demons, and compared this outlook with the views of Karel Kramář, who once described the Russian revolution as a result of the bad influence of several disreputable writers. He opposed Kolman's

[46] G. B. [Gustav Bareš], "O čistotu politických stran," *Rudé právo*, 17 July 1945, 2. See also: *Tři roky: přehledy a dokumenty k československé politice v letech 1945–1948* (Prague: Melantrich, 1991), 1: 32–33.

[47] Jan SLAVÍK, "Po špičkách kolem halíkovštiny," *Svobodný zítřek* 2, no. 33 (1946): 3.

[48] IDEM, "Případ sovětského satirika," *Svobodný zítřek* 2, no. 36 (1946): 4.

[49] IDEM, "Theokracie není diskuse," *Svobodný zítřek* 2, no. 37 (1946): 2.

explanation that Hitler captured the population because of the betrayal of German social democratic leaders. He also posed to Kolman the question of how Nazism could win in a country that was a traditional bulwark of Marxism and where Communism enjoyed great success after the First World War. He reminded Kolman that Emanuel Rádl, in his work *O německé revoluci* [On German Revolution] (1933), revealed that several Marxist theses broke the ground for Nazism.[50]

Through his journalism, Slavík stirred up a storm against himself in the Communist press in 1947. The Soviet media joined in.[51] As of September 1947, Slavík was prohibited from publishing in the Czech periodical press. The chief of the National Socialists, Petr Zenkl, obliged the departing Soviet ambassador Valerian A. Zorin by stopping "this Trotskyist Slavík" from publishing in the National Socialist press. Zenkl did not like Slavík, who had refused to write his political speeches. Moreover, Zenkl knew that a new president was going to be elected soon, and he mistakenly hoped that he, a leader of the largest non-Communist party, had a chance and wanted to be *persona grata* in Moscow at whatever cost. The executive committee of the party even discussed Slavík's expulsion from the party because he was disturbing the peace in the National Front, and it was only by chance that this suggestion did not pass.[52] Until February 1948, Slavík could contribute to the Slovak *Nové prúdy* [New Currents]. In a series of articles, *Skoky a obraty ruské revoluce* [Twists and Turns of the Russian Revolution], he could, for the last time, repeat his opinion on developments in the Soviet Union.[53]

[50] IDEM, "Nemarxistická kniha marxisty," *Svobodný zítřek* 2, no. 21 (1946): 3.

[51] See "Moskevský list o protisovětském štvaní Jana Slavíka," *Rudé právo*, 1 April 1947, 1.

[52] Jan SLAVÍK, "Jak mne problém ruské revoluce přiblížil ke třem presidentům republiky," Jaroslav Bouček, ed., in *Paginae historiae: Sborník Státního ústředního archivu v Praze* (Prague: Státní ústřední archiv v Praze, 2001), 9: 335–355.

[53] IDEM, "Skoky a obraty ruské revoluce," *Nové prúdy* 3, no. 24 (1947): 523–524; no. 25, 553–555; no. 26, 585–586; no. 27, 608–609; 4, no. 1 (1948): 6–7.

JAN SLAVÍK AND *THE GENESIS OF THE CZECH NATION*: BETWEEN METHODOLOGY, POLITICS, AND IDEOLOGY

Martin NODL

The first months after the end of the Second World War were a strange period for Czech society. On the one hand, after the liberation, people had great hope, but on the other, the impact of the Košice government's programme and its wilful restrictions of pre-war democracy created fears for the future. Enthusiasm and hope might soon become something that would leave a bitter and lasting aftertaste.

Historians felt more or less the same as did the majority of the people. Re-opening the universities did not automatically bring a return to free scholarship. Some historians were released from jails or concentration camps, but some had survived the German occupation as journalists and writers who tried to use history as a "safety belt", and whose ideologically inspired writings played an important role in national self-preservation during the threat to the very existence of the Czech nation. This post-war situation created severe tensions, and any objective evaluation of the previous six years gave way to ideological labelling. The survivors were well aware of this tendency; they could very easily have been discredited by well-targeted propaganda, and accused of collaboration with the Germans. It was nearly impossible to remove this stigma, because the public was constantly bombarded by powerful press propaganda. Some, like Josef Šusta, chose a voluntary demise from this superficially happy but realistically grim world; others, like Zdeněk Kalista, chose to fight back. Many other professors of history at the Charles University were also full of anxiety. They were afraid that the radicals would see them as disciples of Josef Pekař, and therefore also subscribers to his historical thought which was being labelled short-sighted, elitist and reactionary.[1]

[1] How difficult it was to cope with Pekař's legacy comp. Antonín KOSTLÁN, *Druhý sjezd československých historiků (5.–11. října 1947) a jeho místo ve vývoji českého*

Prague Perspectives III (Prague, 2009), 43–52.

The most dangerous adversaries of the interwar historiography, with which most of the historians were identified, were young, combative Marxists. Even before the war, they had tried in vain to undermine the established academicians.[2] Even if the historians of the so-called Historical Group[3] had no innovative or scholarly work to their credit, they could still hinder the legitimacy of continuity of post-war historiography, which was represented primarily by Goll students.[4] In those turbulent times, it was not clear how the historians of Masaryk's "Castle" group would respond to Pekař's followers, but the situation did allow some scholars to once again bask in the sunlight of debate. Prominent among them was Jan Slavík, a long-time representative of those historians who had lost their crusade against the supposed anarchist or non-conceptual historiography in the 1930s.[5] The second congress of Czechoslovak historians, in October 1947, clearly revealed that, in new circumstances, formerly antagonistic camps could easily find a common language. Pekař was vindicated primarily by the formerly fanatical ideologue Jaroslav Werstadt against the vehement opposition of power-hungry Marxists, and somehow posthumously reconciled with Masaryk.[6]

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dějepisectví v letech 1935–1948 (Prague: Archiv Akademie věd ČR, 1993), esp. 158–163. Comp. also a survey of Josef HANZAL, "Čeští historici před únorem 1948," *Český časopis historický* 91, no. 2 (1993): 268–285. Vacillations of Chaloupecký's relation towards Pekař subjectively described in his memoirs Zdeněk KALISTA, *Po proudu života* (Brno: Atlantis, 1996), 2: 628–632.

[2] About the efforts of young Marxists to have their own way in organizing the second congress of Czechoslovak historians, comp. KOSTLÁN, *Druhý sjezd československých historiků*, 48–78.

[3] For Historical Group, see a study marked by the time of its origin: Josef PETRÁŇ, "Historická skupina. Komentář k vzpomínkám jejích členů," in Jaroslav Pátek and Věra Šádová, eds., *Studie z obecných dějin. Sborník historických prací k sedmdesátým narozeninám prof. dr. Jaroslava Charváta* (Prague: Univerzita Karlova, 1975), 11–47.

[4] For continuity of Marxist historiography with interwar historiography, see the case of the research on the Hussite revolution: Martin NODL, "Die Hussitische Revolution. Zur Genese eines Forschungsparadigmas in der tschechischen Historiographie der 1950er und 1960er Jahre," *Bohemia: Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kultur der böhmischen Länder* 47, no. 1 (2006–2007): 151–171.

[5] Martin NODL, *Dějepisectví mezi vědou a politikou: úvahy o historiografii 19. a 20. století* (Brno: Centrum pro studium demokracie a kultury, 2007), 96–97.

[6] Werstadt's speech *Pekařův myšlenkový odkaz po deseti letech* [Pekař's Intellectual Legacy After Ten Years] was published in: KOSTLÁN, *Druhý sjezd československých historiků*, 268–271.

The re-opening of the universities, the establishment of new institutions of higher learning, such as the School of Politics, and the restoration of high-school education offered historians many opportunities that would have been unheard of in the First Republic. After the war, surveys revealed a real hunger for history, so publishers could afford to publish various synthesizing texts, whose authors were often rooted in interwar historiography.[7] The fourth and fifth editions of *Nástin československých dějin* [A Syllabus of Czechoslovak History] by Otakar Odložilík[8] (who had returned from the United States) were published after May 1945. Historical works were coming out quickly. A new posthumous edition of Krofta's *Dějiny selského stavu* [A History of a Peasant Class] and his *Malé dějiny československé* [A Short Czechoslovak History] newly edited by Josef Klik and renamed *Československé dějiny* [A Czechoslovak History] were published. There were Kalista's *Stručné dějiny československé* [A Brief Czechoslovak History], Hosák's *Nové československé dějiny* [A New Czechoslovak History] and Roubík's *Přehled českých dějin* [A Survey of Czech History]. Miloš V. Kratochíl wrote an essayistic work *Tisíciletou stopou* [A Thousand Years Old Trail]. Bohdan Chudoba wrote his *Jindy a nyní* [Another Time and Now] in the same style. There were also surveys of Czech or Czechoslovak legal history: *Povšechné právní dějiny československé* [A General Legal Czechoslovak History] by František Čáda and *Malé dějiny státu a práva v Československu* [A Short History of the State and Law in Czechoslovakia] by the nationalistic Václav Vaněček and his other work *Počátky státu a práva v Československu* [Beginnings of State and Law in Czechoslovakia]. Works on art history were also beginning to appear, for example *Dějiny našeho umění* [A History of Our Art] by Jakub Pavel. Among these books intended for teachers and the public, only two were different. They were programmatically written works – *Sociální a politické dějiny československé v hlavních obrysech* [A Main Outline of Czechoslovak Social and Political History] by Miloslav Volf, which was based on his lectures at the newly-founded School of Politics, and the hitherto highest

[7] This atmosphere was captured by: KALISTA, *Po proudu života*, 2: 610–617.

[8] In a broad context perceived this publication: Otakar ODLOŽILÍK, *Deníky z let 1924–1948*, Milada Sekyrková, ed., Vol. 2. 1939–1948 (Prague: Výzkumné centrum pro dějiny vědy, 2003). It also contains a remarkable reflection of the university life after May 1945.

pinnacle of Marxist efforts *Epochy českých dějin* [Epochs of Czech History] by Václav Husa.

Volf's *Sociální a politické dějiny československé v hlavních obrysech*, published on February 14, 1948 was an innovative text because the author tried to explain the basic socioeconomic features of the historical evolution of the Czechs and Slovaks. As with the majority of survey works published after May 1945, Wolf's book accentuated national development, although with the reservation that

> the history of nations is primarily the history of a state through whose instrumentality a nation was formed and where they developed. The nation did not create the state; it was the other way around. [...] The creator of the Czech nation was the Premyslid state which was instituted in the 10th century; thus, the Czech nation has been, for more than a thousand years, an historical national state, just as the other big independent European nations.[9]

Nevertheless, if we compare Volf's *Sociální a politické dějiny československé v hlavních obrysech* to other historical surveys published around the same time, we would find out that he differs from them only in a certain underlying emphasis on economic and social history as a framing device, and not in fashionably Marxist vocabulary as a basis for historical development. Volf could have been inspired by Krofta's *Dějiny selského stavu* [A History of a Peasant Class], which was construed *de facto* by a method similar to Volf's, albeit with the emphasis on rural economic history.

Volf did not intend to go against the trend of constructing state and national histories that became common after 1945. In contrast to that stood the ambitious project of that critic of the First Republic historiography, Jan Slavík. His *Vznik českého národa* [Genesis of the Czech Nation] was more intuitive than analytical; his three-volume work presented "an interpretation of national social formations evolving toward democracy".[10] Unlike many texts published after May 1945, Slavík's *Vznik českého národa* was not produced in postwar enthusiasm; it contained within it the results of his earlier examination of the Second Republic and the protectorate. Slavík had published, in 1940, three pamphlets: (*Počátky českého národa* [Beginnings of the Czech Nation], *Český národ v starším středověku* [The Czech Nation in the Early

[9] Miloslav VOLF, *Sociální a politické dějiny československé v hlavních obrysech* (Prague: Dělnické nakladatelství, 1948), 8.

[10] Jan SLAVÍK, *Vznik českého národa* (Prague: Pokrok, 1946), 1 (Národ v době družinné): 5.

Middle Ages] and *Český národ za květu feudalismu* [The Czech Nation in the Blooming Feudalism]). He intended these to be the basis for his "introduction to Czech history" which was to span Czech history from the beginning to the present day, but as was frequently the unfortunate fate of such ambitious projects, his aim was never accomplished. By August 1947, Slavík had to admit that the proposed second volume would have to be issued in three parts. The first one (and also unfortunately the last) entitled *Národ a města* [The Nation and the Towns], covered the period up to the Hussite revolution.

Surprisingly, it was only in *Národ a města* that Slavík outlined, as he had done at the second congress of Czechoslovak historians in October 1947,[11] the design of his work. According to Slavík, existing historiography considered the Czech nation to be historically completed with the amalgamation of the Slavic tribes of Bohemia and Moravia under the rule of the Premyslid dynasty. Slavík, as was often his custom, did not criticize any one historian directly, but rather put forward his own theories of "how the contemporary Czech nation had originated and how it had evolved to its current state."[12] In addition to this declaration, he said that he was not going to provide a short outline or a commentary on Czech history, as some others had recently attempted. On the contrary, his stated purpose was "to purge modern ideas of 'nation' or 'state' from historical interpretations of the distant past",[13] and to show that these basic notions were constantly changing. Slavík indirectly decried existing historiography as anachronistic,[14] as it applied modern terminology to historical events when the terms had a totally different meaning. Slavík was correct in this, but was not the first to point it out; critics at the turn of the century had made the same accusation of the historical science of their day.[15] One prominent member of this group was Georg von

[11] Slavík's paper *Historické pojmosloví* [Historical Terminology] was published in: KOSTLÁN, *Druhý sjezd československých historiků*, 219–228.

[12] Jan SLAVÍK, *Vznik českého národa* (Prague: Pokrok, 1948), 2 (Národ a města): 5.

[13] *Ibid.*

[14] SLAVÍK, *Vznik českého národa*, 1: 11.

[15] For German historicism, see: Annette WITTKAU-HORGBY, *Historismus: Zur Geschichte des Begriffs und des Problems* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994); Otto Gerhard OEXLE, *Geschichtswissenschaft im Zeichen des Historismus. Studien zur Problemgeschichten der Moderne* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996); Otto Gerhard OEXLE and Jörn RÜSEN, eds., *Historismus in den Kulturwissenschaften. Geschichtskonzepte, historische Einschätzungen, Grundlagenprobleme* (Köln – Weimar –

Bulow,[16] who warned – as did Slavík fifty years later – of the danger of applying contemporary ideas and terminology to historical events. In pre-war Czechoslovakia, Bedřich Mendl also adopted this idea, and criticized Slavík for his adoption of "sociological Marxism" and his application of modern terms to historical periods.[17] Paradoxically, František Graus also attacked Slavík in the preface to his *Dějiny venkovského lidu* [A History of the Peasantry] which was full of ideological insults. According to him, Slavík's method was full of "flat and inept comparisons" and applied concepts "from the capitalist era to study early feudalism"[18] – thus, Slavík's was no different from bourgeois historiography or Goll's School.

Graus's attack on Slavík was, as we will see later, an important factor in the reception of Slavík's *Vznik českého národa*, both immediately after its publication in February 1948, and later. The first volume, a collection of Protectorate essays entitled *Národ v době družinné* [The Nation in the Retinue Period], published in 1946, was very well received. This may have been due to a revived interest in early Czech history during the post-war years. The underlying debate was still centered on the heritage of Josef Pekař. In one of the most biting postwar polemics, Václav Chaloupecký wrote for *Český časopis historický* [The Czech Historical Review] his reaction to a major work by Rudolf Urbánek, *Legenda t. zv. Kristiána ve vývoji předhusitských legend ludmilských a václavských a její autor* [The Legend of the So-called Christian and Its Influence on the pre-Hussite Ludmila and Wenceslas Legends, and its Author].[19] There Chaloupecký took advantage of *Český časopis historický* to promote his own views (as did Josef Pekař before him, and František Graus later in the 1950s; even today *Český časopis historický* is not immune from such behaviour). Chaloupecký was angered because Urbánek dared to challenge his, and Pekař's, opinion

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Wien: Böhlau, 1996); Wolfgang KÜTTGLER, Jörn RÜSEN and Ernst SCHULIN, eds., *Geschichtsdiskurs*, Vol. 3. Die Epoche der Historisierung (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1997).

[16] For Below, see for instance: Otto Gerhard OEXLE, "Ein politischer Historiker: Georg von Below," in Rüdiger von Bruch et al., eds., *Deutsche Geschichtswissenschaft um 1900* (Stuttgart: Steiner Verlag Wiesbaden, 1988), 283–312.

[17] For more details, see: NODL, *Dějepisectví mezi vědou a politikou*, 99–100.

[18] František GRAUS, *Dějiny venkovského lidu v Čechách v době předhusitské* (Prague: Státní nakladatelství politické literatury, 1953), 1 (Dějiny venkovského lidu od 10. století do 1. poloviny 13. století): 44.

[19] Rudolf URBÁNEK, *Legenda t. zv. Kristiána ve vývoji předhusitských legend ludmilských i václavských a její autor*, 4 vols. (Prague: Česká akademie věd a umění, 1947–1948).

on the inter-relationship of the oldest legends and chronicles.[20] Kalandra's *České pohanství* [Czech Paganism][21] also received much interest because of the post-war preoccupation with the early Middle Ages as a key period in the development of national history, although it had been more or less ignored when it was first published. Amongst other works published then on the subject was Vaněček's propagandistic and highly anti-German pamphlet *Stát Přemyslovců a středověká říše* [The Premyslid State and Medieval Empire],[22] and also a number of archaeological and literary-historical studies. The Middle Ages then became the most frequently studied historical period.

Chaloupecký wrote extensively about Slavík's *Národ v době družinné* in *Český časopis historický*. His review concentrated on factual problems, and he had several reservations, but Chaloupecký nevertheless welcomed Slavík's adoption of Pekař's periodization of Czech economic history, and called him "a grateful follower of his teacher and Master".[23] According to Chaloupecký, Slavík resembled Pekař in his emphasis on the subjective and exploratory nature of their outlook on Czech history. For this reason, Chaloupecký was not disturbed by the fact that Slavík often differed from the master, and accepted the first volume of *Vznik českého národa* unambiguously as a valuable contribution "to our historical literature".[24] His review of the second volume was noticeably restrained,[25] but he still positively endorsed Slavík's subjectivism and welcomed him back to *Český časopis historický*. Chaloupecký's approach to Slavík was pragmatic. He anticipated, as he did at the second congress of Czechoslovak historians, that Slavík's former Marxist inclination could be used in future conflicts with the ambitious members of the Historical Group. In the post-war

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[20] This review was published in *Český časopis historický* 48–49, no. 1 (1947–1948): 287–303. Chaloupecký should be credited for the publication of Urbánek's extensive reply in: Rudolf URBÁNEK, "O Kristiána (Ke statím V. Chaloupeckého a Záv. Kalandry v ČČH. 1947–48)," *Český časopis historický* 48–49, no. 2 (1947–1948): 337–344.

[21] Most cogently on Kalandra comp. a preface of Jiří Brabec in: Záviš KALANDRA, *České pohanství* (Prague: Dauphin, 2002), 1 (Nejstarší prameny): 10–20.

[22] For Vaněček ideological and chauvinistic nationalism, see: Martin WIHODA, *Zlatá bula sicilská: Podivuhodný příběh ve vrstvách paměti* (Prague: Argo, 2005): 23–25.

[23] Comp. Václav CHALOUPECKÝ, "Jan Slavík, Vznik českého národa," *Český časopis historický* 47, no. 1 (1946): 159.

[24] *Ibid*., 182.

[25] Review of the second volume of *Vznik českého národa* was published in *Český časopis historický* by Miloslav VOLF: *Český časopis historický* 48–49, no. 1 (1947–1948): 449–451.

period, they had distanced themselves from Slavík because of his sharp criticism of Leninist and Stalinist Russia during the 1930s, but they did not break with him completely, and were eloquently silent about his works. Slavík could have been used as a sociologist and Marxist historian who had strongly criticized the main current of Czech historiography before the war. Slavík's subjectivism could also represent a welcome antithesis to Marxist collectivism, with its inevitability and class determination of historical evolution.

What the main chorus of post-war historians welcomed was "a poke in the eye" to the post-February bellicose ideologues, in spite of or because so many of them were pure individualists. Perhaps because of basic human decency, or a fear of being identified in the future with him, Slavík's young admirers did not attack him. František Graus, previously mentioned, did. According to contemporaries, he had clashed with Slavík before the February putsch. His harshest attack came in the 1950s when Czech historiography went through a strict Stalinization, and Slavík was not allowed to defend himself. Graus advocated an uncompromising removal of previous historiographic tradition. With respect to *Vznik českého národa*, and with his habitual callousness, he rebuked Slavík for pomposity and self-conceit:

> Even though he did not discover anything new in historiography and was consistent [...] in all main points with Goll's School, he nevertheless pointed out the methodological deficiencies of this school. He considered himself to be the only historian-scientist. In several works noted for their smugness and haughtiness, he declared that he – J. Slavík – discovered the only scientific method for historiography: sociologizing history.[26]

Graus maintained that Slavík misunderstood the concept of the "state", which meanwhile became for the new rulers far more important notion than "nation". Slavík insisted that a "state" began with conquest, and therefore has predatory roots: a lord, in this concept, was separated from other feudal landed gentry, and the "state" is seen as being above the classes. Graus called Slavík's conclusions here spurious, as was his theory, which not only applied to Czech history, that "the evolution of a subordinate to a citizen is the main historical reality".[27]

We could agree with Graus on one point. Following the example of Václav Chaloupecký, he put Slavík in the mainstream of sociological

[26] GRAUS, *Dějiny venkovského lidu v době předhusitské*, 1: 43.
[27] *Ibid.*, 35.

historiography, in which he also placed František Vacek, Julius Lippert and the Russian historian Anton N. Iasinskii in their writings on early Czech history. Even though Slavík himself endorsed sociologizing history, and had criticized Czech historiography before the war for its lack of sociological analysis and its comparative approach, he never considered himself as successor to Bedřich Mendl, who had also expressed these views.[28] We must add that Slavík's emphasis on two periods in the Middle Ages – the "retinue" period and the feudal – which represented, to him, the evolution of the state and nation into two different worlds had much in common with Lippert's theory of a break-point in Czech history in the mid 13th century.[29] In contrast to Lippert, Slavík did not see this break in colonization and acceptance of German legal customs primarily in the reception of the German municipal laws, but rather in the formation of the aristocracy as an independent political power, i.e., a political nation, and in socially-conditioned changes in the relationship between the sovereign and the representatives of political powers, i.e., an independent clergy and a newly-empowered aristocracy.

The principal question nevertheless remains: was Slavík's *Vznik českého národa* an original work which provided a fundamentally new approach to Czech medieval history? Despite some significant observations, we have to answer "no". Not because it was written, as Graus claimed, through his class-distorted viewpoint, in the style "of a fairground conjurer", but because Slavík did not deliver any new research or analysis of the early Middle Ages and 13th and 14th centuries which would replace existing interpretations. Slavík's emphasis on ideas and their historical conditionality were certainly desirable, but in many ways just reflected a tendency that had been present in Czech medieval historiography for some time. When Slavík spoke about the dangers of applying current historical evaluative criteria to the past, he was again correct. We have to stress, however, that even his perception of the evolution of the Czech nation from the Middle Ages to democratization, expressed in *Vznik českého národa*, was based on criteria from a period marked by a limited success in the attempt to bring about a socially-just democracy.

The reduction of political history to a minimum in both volumes of *Vznik českého národa* could be seen as an attempt to differentiate his work from others being published at the same time. By discarding

[28] NODL, *Dějepisectví mezi vědou a politikou*, 95–96.
[29] *Ibid.*, 69.

political history, Slavík could then play down any emphasis on the history of the state. However, his explanation of Czech history through the intrinsic interpretation of an idea became what he categorically did not want it to be – a commentary on Czech history. Needless to say, it was a cogent commentary chiefly in regard to the genesis of Czech aristocracy, the influence of the clergy on the formation of the concept of a political nation, the voluntary acceptance of serfdom, etc.; these themes were broadly developed in later years, without crediting Slavík. The explanatory notes in his texts were most valuable – they revealed the strengths of an historian who thought in categories. We see the greatest value of *Vznik českého národa* not in the attempt to present a new interpretation of the origins and evolution of the Czech nation, but in his many pertinent comments on the role of the clergy, the aristocracy, the towns and the burghers in this process, which culminated in the Hussite revolution. At this point, while figuratively at the Hussite gates, Slavík stopped, and does not seem to have written on anything further. We can speculate that Slavík, getting older and influenced by his own experiences and the behaviour of the Czech people during the war, might have revised the view of the Hussite revolution that he had held in the 1930s,[30] but that remains speculative. We can only suppose that, because of his interwar, protectorate and post-war attitudes, his interpretation of the Hussite revolution would perhaps have been re-evaluated. Jan Slavík was an historian who felt the pulse of his times, but did not let it influence him unduly. The events he had lived through resonated in his thinking, and their echo occasionally could be seen in his writings, when the historical past reflected the living present.

[30] About Slavík's perception of the Hussite revolution and his disputes with Pekař comp. Jaroslav BOUČEK, *Jan Slavík: Příběh zakázaného historika* (Jinočany: H+H, 2002), 81–99. Their clashes would deserve a deeper analysis in regard to position of František M. Bartoš and Josef Pekař's contemporaries and students from the point of their methodological outcomes and social ties among participants in these polemics.

JAN SLAVÍK IN THE CONTEXT OF CZECH HUSSITE STUDIES IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE 20TH CENTURY[1]

Petr ČORNEJ

Motto:
Understanding the past is as much
understanding the sources that shaped it.
Jan Slavík

Let me start with a personal reminiscence. On Monday April 22, 1986, Prof. Josef Kočí, in the course of a dissertation defense, asked me whether I preferred Pekař's or Slavík's concept of Hussitism. After a moment of soundless cursing, I calmly answered that I preferred neither because I had my own. Now, after more than 23 years, it is possible to discuss this problem more extensively. During my studies, I read the works of both these two historians and became impressed by the lucidity of thought, and the brilliance and alacrity of expression. I am close to Pekař in his inherent human anguish and historical pessimism. Slavík attracts me by his unruly character, by his criticism of the academic atmosphere and by his unwillingness to be quiet for tactical reasons, be it a political interest or a smooth professional progress.

Slavík's nature was fully displayed during 1928 when he abruptly broke with his teacher Josef Pekař, whom in his youth he had sincerely admired. Pekař first thought that Slavík's invective strengthened by a decision not to contribute any more to *Český časopis historický* [The Czech Historical Review] was caused by a deliberate holding back his habilitation at the university in Bratislava.[2] The real reasons were, alas,

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[1] This text has been published as a part of the research project MSM 0021620827 *The Czech Lands in the Midst of Europe in the Past and Today* at the Faculty of Arts, Charles University, Prague.

[2] On June 12, 1928, he noted: "Slavík refuses to contribute to ČČH any more. What happed? Has it to do with his habilitation?" See Josef HANZAL, ed., *Deníky Josefa Pekaře: 1916–1933* (Prague: Vyšehrad, 2000), 127.

Prague Perspectives III (Prague, 2009), 53–77.

deeper. Slavík withdrew his request for habilitation several months after he had published a series of articles in *Národní osvobození* [The National Liberation],[3] where he uncompromisingly criticized Pekař's conception of the historian's task, and his first two volumes of the work *Žižka a jeho doba* [Žižka and His Time].[4] Slavík admitted the vehemence of his criticism was in reaction to an admiring review of the first volume of *Žižka a jeho doba* by Václav Chaloupecký, who had described Pekař's book as wholly changing the perspective on the Hussite epoch, and indeed Czech history as whole.[5] Slavík decided to confront these views, which diminished the historical importance of Hussitism and rejected the philosophical-historical reflections of František Palacký and Tomáš G. Masaryk. Even though it meant a firmly-closed door to the prestigious historical journal, and, because of Chaloupecký's position at the Bratislava Comenius University, to an academic career (already compromised by Jaroslav Bidlo), Slavík voluntarily accepted the situation. It was greatly outweighed, for him, by the freedom to express himself frankly about controversial areas of Czech historical science and the historical community, and to remove Pekař's authoritative views from their pedestal. Slavík did not risk too much with his ostentatiously rebellious conduct, as he did not depend on the academic world for his livelihood, and as it had become fashionable in progressive and left wing circles to attack Pekař's conservative views.[6] What's more, Slavík had the quiet backing of Kamil Krofta and Tomáš G. Masaryk himself.[7] Both politicians welcomed the fact that someone else disagreed with a

[3] Slavík retracted his request for the habilitation in a letter dated October 4, 1928. See Jaroslav BOUČEK, *Jan Slavík: Příběh zakázaného historika* (Jinočany: H+H, 2002), 215–216 (Footnote no. 6). Slavík's articles against Pekař were published in *Národní osvobození* between June 10 and September 30, 1928. Shortly afterwards they were published in a collection entitled *Nový názor na husitství: (Palacký či Pekař)* (Prague: Svaz národního osvobození, 1928).

[4] Josef PEKAŘ, *Žižka a jeho doba*, Vol. 1. Doba se zvláštním zřetelem k Táboru (Prague: Vesmír, 1927); Vol. 2. Jan Žižka (Prague: Vesmír, 1928).

[5] Václav CHALOUPECKÝ, "Nový názor na husitskou revoluci," *Bratislava* 1, no. 2 (1927): 291–297.

[6] In 1924 Slavík already admitted: "In the last years, Pekař became, in progressive circles and largely with people who did not know him, very unpopular, even considered reactionary, as a result of his actions (a defense of John of Nepomuk)." Jan SLAVÍK, "Pekařova obrana E. Sylvia a Bartošův útok," *Národní osvobození*, 24 December 1924, 3.

[7] A certain concurrency between Masaryk and Slavík indicated Miloš Havelka in: Miloš HAVELKA, *Dějiny a smysl: Obsahy, akcenty a posuny "české otázky" 1895–1989* (Prague: NLN, 2001), 111.

leading figure of Czech historiography, even if from a somewhat too radical point of view.

The year 1928 was for Slavík a turning point, or at least a crossroads. Even if experts may correct the author's judgment, they might at least agree with the fact that Slavík brought the so-called discourse on the meaning of Czech history into a new phase,[8] and that the forty-three year old scholar, well known for his interest in Russia and the Russian Bolshevik revolution, turned for a time being to Hussitism, which he had originally wanted to explore himself.[9]

In the last years of his gymnasium studies, Slavík had hoped to write a biography of Prokop Holý, but this dream had been reduced to a smallish article published in *Český časopis historický,* and a newspaper piece, both from 1911.[10] Other works on the subject of Hussitism were also simply commemorative or descriptive in character, for example an essay, requested by Pekař, on the anniversary of Decree of Kutná Hora,[11] or a treatise about John Hus.[12] In the essay written for Žižka's anniversary, we may see hints of Slavík's later distinctive conception of Hus, Žižka and Hussitism.[13] No less interesting was a small skirmish between Slavík and František Michálek Bartoš at the end of 1911, the cause

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[8] *Ibid.*, 109–123.

[9] Apt scholarly profile written prior to the above-mentioned book by Bouček was penned by František KUTNAR and Jaroslav MAREK, *Přehledné dějiny českého a slovenského dějepisectví* (Prague: NLN, 1997), 739–746. The text of Slavík's portrait is identical with the 1st ed. (František KUTNAR, *Přehledné dějiny českého a slovenského dějepisectví* (Prague: SPN, 1978), 2 (Od počátků pozitivistického dějepisectví na práh historiografie marxistické): 284–290.) This passage was published for the very first time as an occasional publication of Historický klub (František KUTNAR, *PhDr. Janu Slavíkovi k devadesátinám* (Prague: Historický klub, 1975).

[10] About a youthful interest in Prokop Holý: BOUČEK, *Jan Slavík: Příběh zakázaného historika*, 28. See also Jan SLAVÍK, "Prokop Holý v kronice Bartoška z Drahonic," *Český časopis historický* 17, no. 1 (1911): 75; IDEM, "Prokop Holý," *Národní listy*, 27 April 1911, 1.

[11] IDEM, "Dekret kutnohorský," *Den*, 17 January 1909, 1. For background about the article, see: IDEM, *Z mých styků s prof. Pekařem* (Prague: self edited, 1937), 22.

[12] IDEM, *Jan Hus v boji za přesvědčení* (Kladno: Josef Šolc, 1919).

[13] IDEM, "Hus a Žižka," *Národní osvobození*, 6 July 1924, 1–2. The author comprehends Jan Hus in the same way as in his future book *Husitská revoluce*. He rightly explains the Hussite understanding of war with the crusaders as a form of the Last Judgment where it is decided on whose side is the truth, and appreciates Žižka's organizational skill without which "the movement would have fallen to the level of other medieval religious sects…" Reprint in Jan SLAVÍK, *Iluze a skutečnost*, Jaroslav Bouček, ed. (Prague: Academia, 2000), 159–162.

of which was the interpretation of Pekař's essay on the portrayal of Žižka's in the renowned work *Historia Bohemica* by the Roman Catholic cardinal Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini.[14] Slavík defended the rules of scholarly polemic against Bartoš' misreading of Pekař,[15] and demanded from his opponent that he: "withhold any criticism until the author has had his last word."[16] Ironically, Slavík deliberately ignored his own advice in his later clashes with Pekař.

The basis for scholarly polemic on Hussitism with Pekař, which Slavík began in the spring of 1928, was quite thin. Slavík did not attempt to compete with his teacher in detailed knowledge of the sources for the Hussite epoch; his aim was different. For Slavík, Hussitism served as an example through which he demonstrated methodological problems of historiography, and his own thoughts on the rationale of an historian's work. It is not necessary to elaborate on something that has already been described many times. Briefly, Slavík compared Palacký's and Pekař's understanding of Hussitism because he wanted to show that the interpretation of an historical event is not solely dependent on knowledge and the critical analysis of historical sources, but also on the scholar's evaluative criteria (and value judgments)[17] that are conditioned by subjectivity and anchored in a specific time. This is the reason why the liberal and philosophically erudite romantic Palacký saw Hussitism differently from the conservative and romantic Pekař – "lacking even an average philosophical knowledge"[18] who, incidentally, took up Hussitism

[14] See Josef PEKAŘ, "Jan Žižka. I. Žižka u Eneáše Silvia," *Český časopis historický* 30, no. 3 (1924): 413–432 (for the genesis of this essay see the footnote no. 20). Slavík was provoked to this discussion by Bartoš, who inaccurately insisted that Pekař almost always agreed with Silvius' depiction of Hussitism and pathetically exclaimed: "Whose heart was charmed by this wicked book, only one and that of Pekař [...] How can Pekař's Czech heart possibly stand and even praise this? Where, for God's sake, will Czechism, so maimed, end up?" See František M. BARTOŠ, "Pekařova obrana Žižkova hanobitele E. Silvia," *Národní osvobození*, 21 December 1924, 5.

[15] SLAVÍK, "Pekařova obrana E. Sylvia," 3. The author reproached Bartoš for confusing uninitiated readers of the "Castle-oriented" daily. Bartoš, seeing himself as the only true scholarly opponent of Pekař, reacted immediately: "I am the only one who perhaps may keep Pekař from new and further infatuations, to which his tragic peasant mulishness drags him. This character trace after all described his good pupil. It is evident I must be able to take this struggle, upon any terms, to its very end." František M. BARTOŠ, "Odpověď J. Slavíkovi," *Národní osvobození*, 28 December 1924, 5.

[16] Jan SLAVÍK, "K Bartošově replice," *Národní osvobození*, 30 December 1924, 4.

[17] See also Jan HORSKÝ, *Noetika kulturních věd Maxe Webera a české dějepisectví* (Ústí nad Labem: Albis international, 1994), 24–26; HAVELKA, *Dějiny a smysl*, 112–116.

[18] SLAVÍK, *Nový názor na husitství*, 31.

for reasons of prestige. This obstinate defender of Austro-Hungary never reconciled himself to the defeat suffered in a contest with Masaryk, who was building an independent Czechoslovakia on the basis of his philosophical-historical concepts and his democratic convictions. Though we can see the beginning of Pekař's negative assessment of the Hussite epoch long before the war, the revolutionary changes brought about by the war (and Slavík included here the downfall of monarchist regimes as well), and Masaryk's success reinforced his negative views on Hussitism, and especially Taborism. While the first Czechoslovak president appreciated Tábor and adopted the motto "Tábor is our programme", to Pekař it made no sense, as, in his view, Hussitism was completely medieval.[19]

Slavík's psychologizing thoughts are legitimate even though the details[20] need clarification. It is necessary to add that the fervent battle

[19] Here I summarize Slavík's ideas and viewpoints contained in his texts: "Nový názor na české dějiny," *Národní osvobození*, 10 June 1928, 4; 14 June 1928, 2; 17 June 1928, 4; 21 June 1928, 2; 24 June 1928, 4; 28 June 1928, 2; *Pekař contra Masaryk. Ke sporu o smysl českých dějin* (Prague: Čin, 1929); *Dějiny a přítomnost. Víra v Rakousko a věda historická* (Prague: Svaz národního osvobození, 1931); *Básnická perioda českého dějepisectví: poznámky k rektorské řeči univ. prof. dra Josefa Pekaře* (Prague: vl. nákl., 1932). I cite the last three works from an accessible edition by: Miloš HAVELKA, ed., *Spor o smysl českých dějin 1895–1938* (Prague: Torst, 1995), 599–621, 622–672, 739–747. We cannot omit Slavík's fundamental work *Husitská revoluce. Studie historicko--sociologická.* (Prague: Orbis, 1934). On this subject, he wrote numerous articles: "Pekařův výklad husitské revoluce a dnešní krise," *Národní osvobození*, 15 October 1933, 11; 19 October 1933, 5; 22 October 1933, 13; 26 October 1933, 5; "Kniha o Žižkovi a naše věda (Doslov k referátu)," *Národní osvobození*, 2 November 1933, 5; "Husitství a Pekařova kritika jeho kritiků," *Národní osvobození*, 20 January 1935, 5; 24 January 1935, 7; "Revoluce husitská a světová," *Sobota* 6, no. 14 (1935): 310–311; no. 15: 317–318, no. 16: 347–348; "Ještě k chápání revoluce husitské a revoluce vůbec," *Sobota* 6, no. 31 (1935): 653–656. We cannot forget his basic work *Husitská revoluce. Studie historicko-sociologická* (Prague: Orbis, 1934). Numerous articles in *Národní osvobození* are connected with, or based on, this work. On the content and change of the statement "Tábor is our programme" see: HAVELKA, *Dějiny a smysl*, 111. On the essence of the argument between Slavík and Pekař pertinently: Martin KUČERA, *Pekař proti Masarykovi: Historik a politika* (Prague: Ústav T. G. Masaryka, 1995) 49–58.

[20] An impulse for Pekař's monumental work on Žižka was trivial. Pekař asked Kamil Krofta and Josef Šusta for an essay on the 500th anniversary of Žižka's death, to be published in *Český časopis historický*. Neither of them delivered. See: Jaroslav ČECHURA and Jana ČECHUROVÁ, eds., *Korespondence Josefa Pekaře a Kamila Krofty* (Prague: Karolinum, 1999), 68–76. Consequently, Pekař wrote the essay himself and followed it with several more large studies. They served as a nucleus for the first volume of *Žižka*. See PEKAŘ, "Jan Žižka. I. Žižka u Eneáše Silvia," and Josef PEKAŘ, "Jan Žižka. II. Žižkovo prostředí zejména táborské v lícni vrstevníků," *Český časopis*

with Pekař sometimes blinkered him. In Slavík's reflections and polemic from 1928–1936, Pekař personified the worst faults of Czech academic historiography. Slavík taxed him with a totally outdated methodology that showed an obsolete empirical-critical approach; with an absence of theoretical analysis, ignoring logic and noetics; free usage of terms, with overlooking philosophy and especially sociology; with living in an ivory tower, and with a negative attitude toward revolutions, which aerate historical progression. Much of what was listed above was shared between Slavík and Masaryk. Slavík's comprehension of a revolution, namely the Russian one, is of a phenomenon moving toward self-awareness and the advancement of the general population, which brought him close to the left-oriented part of society. This group linked its hopes for predictable change to the spirit of a poem about Lenin by Karel Toman: "Who shed blood? Did he murder? Yes. But he breathed in the faith / and breathed in life to millions of millions / and to people returned a joy of listening."[21] Pekař, contrary to his respected professional qualities, symbolized for

historický 31, no. 1 (1925): 1–112; "Jan Žižka. III. Žižka v podání vrstevníků a pamětníků," *Český časopis historický* 31, no. 2 (1925): 271–336.

Pekař's ideas, expressed in his letters to Krofta, point to the perspicacity of Slavík's remarks. Here Pekař did not fail to jab that he was not sure if there was a chance to write "freely" about Hussitism when the public only allowed its "tendentious and celebratory" interpretation. He came up with a thesis already absolutized in 1928 by V. Chaloupecký: "When we were in the clutches of Austria, historiography unwittingly, but willingly, celebrated a revolt against the state (and also against society); in the depth of our soul it was about (also for us) a miracle of liberation. I doubt that Czech history today could look like it appeared in the last century". He immediately adds, though, that we cannot "proclaim a fallacy what we upheld…" ČECHURA and ČECHUROVÁ, eds., *Korespondence Josefa Pekaře a Kamila Krofty*, 71, 75. On the complicated relationship between Pekař and Krofta who nevertheless respected each other, Karel KUČERA, *Historie & historici* (Prague: Karolinum, 1992), 63–89 (for Hussitism and particularly for Žižka, see: 76–78, 85–86).

[21] Karel TOMAN, *Básně. Dílo* (Prague: Československý spisovatel, 1956), 1: 180. On the milieu and atmosphere of sometimes almost naïve revolutionism at the beginning of the 1920s' and Toman's personality also Zdeněk KALISTA, *Tváře ve stínu (Medailóny)* (České Budějovice: Růže, 1969), 46–48, 54–72, 159–163; IDEM, *Po proudu života* (Brno: Atlantis, 1997), 1: 485–675. Pekař, in his letter to Zdeněk Nejedlý dated May 7, 1920, expressed sentiments entirely opposite: "I am an individualist, and therefore I wish for a development where everybody all of a sudden would come near to being *a gent*, and I fear a development that will lead to the equality of *slaves*". This religion of slaves is for him bolshevism, which threatens civilization and science that is in its essence aristocratic. Petr ČORNEJ, Josef HANZAL and Blanka SVADBOVÁ, eds., *Korespondence Zdeňka Nejedlého s historiky Gollovy školy* (Praha: Univerzita Karlova, 1989), 90.

Slavík a political and scientific past, with which it is necessary to reckon.[22] In reality, Slavík was harshly unjust to Pekař and his contribution to Hussite studies.

Reading the polemics and diatribes of these two historians from a distance of eighty years is rather sad; it is almost like a dialogue of the deaf.[23] As always happens in heated arguments, their reservation became quirks, and labels tend to stick in historical circles even though the reality may be infinitely more complicated.[24] No historian who studies the venerated work *Žižka a jeho doba* can take seriously Slavík's claims about Pekař's disdain for philosophy and the noetic elements of historical research. Pekař protested, in vain, that the first two volumes represented only critical material,[25] and that he had not yet formulated any conclusions. He who does not want to listen does not hear! Slavík, who upbraided Bartoš for his hasty criticism of Pekař, did not hear – but did not keep silent.

Pekař's work on Žižka is without doubt an expression of noetic skepticism, arguing the fact that a historian creates a subjective picture of the past. Pekař carried it out in the third volume of his monumental oeuvre[26]. In the first two volumes he "only" sorted, analyzed and characterized the sources. Such a base would then permit another scholar to come up with a different evaluation and enable a learned reader "to ponder" over the author's conclusions.[27] Pekař's approach corresponded remarkably with a noetic trilogy of Karel Čapek, specifically with the novel *Obyčejný život* [An Ordinary Life] (and in addition with

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[22] "Pekař's book will charm reactionaries who think that an 'energetic government' would bring order to society. Those who believe that a lasting order could only be brought about by energetic changes to the world's anarchic economy indulged by a minority would not be pleased." SLAVÍK, "Kniha o Žižkovi a naše věda".

[23] For a survey of the polemics between Pekař and Slavík: Jaroslav MAREK, *O historismu a dějepisectví* (Praha: Academia, 1992), 167–169 (with emphasis on the methodological extent of the dispute); Jaroslav BOUČEK, "Slavíkova kritika Pekařova pojetí husitství," in Ivo Navrátil, ed., *Josef Pekař a české dějiny 15.–18. století* (Bystrá nad Jizerou: Státní okresní archiv Semily, 1994), 67–74; IDEM, *Jan Slavík: Příběh zakázaného historika*, 81–99; Miloš HAVELKA, "Spor o smysl českých dějin 1895–1938," in Havelka, ed., *Spor o smysl českých dějin*, 33–41.

[24] One of the most important of Pekař's works, where he reacts to Slavík's conclusions (not only about Hussitism), is *Smysl českých dějin (O nový názor na české dějiny)*, 2nd edition (Prague: Historický klub, 1929). New edition in: HAVELKA, ed., *Spor o smysl českých dějin*, 499–560.

[25] *Ibid.*, 530.

[26] Josef PEKAŘ, *Žižka a jeho doba*, Vol. 3. Žižka vůdce revoluce (Prague: Vesmír, 1930).

[27] HAVELKA, ed., *Spor o smysl českých dějin*, 530.

some works of prose by Egon Hostovský),[28] as Jaroslav Marek observed. Pekař understood well relativity and by necessity, incompleteness of historical cognition[29] and an insoluble clash between an authentic and unique historical experience and the situation of a researcher who lacks this direct experience.[30] One of Pekař's diaries from February 1929 bears a note: "About Žižka we lack useful details: his walk, manner of speaking, voice, habits, physiognomy. And the smallest things are often the most interesting."[31]

Another of Slavík's reservations, which shows his growing interest in imminent structuralism, is Pekař's misuse of current terms[32] and his paying no attention, as we would say today, to the changes in their semantic spectrum. Pekař's attempt to analyze the attributes with which Vavřinec of Březová endowed Žižka, and his interpretation of Žižka's letters, show that Pekař took the correct path in his evaluation, even though the results were not immediately evident. He was well aware that for the evocation and reconstruction of historical reality, he had only one tool, and it was language.[33] Slavík himself started more systematically to analyze medieval thought only at the end of the 1930s.[34] To say that Pekař was not a theoretical historian is a misconception.[35]

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[28] Jaroslav MAREK, "Pekařovo dílo v proměnách dobového dějepisectví," in Eva Kantůrková, ed., *Pekařovské studie* (Prague: Academia, 1995), 175–178.

[29] "It is, however, a fate of scientific work; it must suffice that each age would defend its truth against the times past." HAVELKA, ed., *Spor o smysl českých dějin*, 543.

[30] From newer, hardly reviewable, literature see for example: Paul VEYNE, *Ako písať o dejinách* (Bratislava: Chronos, 1998), 8–9; Jaroslav MAREK, "Historické dílo jako text," in Miloslav Polívka and František Šmahel, eds., *In memoriam Josefa Macka (1922–1991)* (Prague: Historický ústav, 1996), esp. 324; Josef VÁLKA, "Historiografie před koncem tisíciletí," *Časopis Matice moravské* 119, no. 2 (2000): esp. 456–457; Petr ČORNEJ, "Věčný problém: jak psát dějiny?," in Kateřina Bláhová and Ondřej Sládek, eds., *O psaní dějin. Teoretické a metodologické problémy literární historiografie* (Prague: Academia, 2007), esp. 18–19.

[31] *Deníky Josefa Pekaře 1916–1933*, 131 (note of 27 February 1929).

[32] For example: HAVELKA, ed., *Spor o smysl českých dějin*, 607–609.

[33] See PEKAŘ, *Žižka a jeho doba*, 2: 61, 165–174, 229, 272–276. For details, see: Petr ČORNEJ, "Jan Žižka (Pokus o charakteristiku)," in *Od Jana Žižky k Poděbradům*, Acta Universitatis Reginaehradecensis. Facultas studiorum humanorum. Historica I. (Hradec Králové: Lupus, 2006), 21–22; Josef VÁLKA, "Změny paradigmat v moderní husitologii: Pekař a Šmahel," in Martin Nodl and Petr Sommer, eds., *Verba in imaginibus. Františku Šmahelovi k 70. narozeninám* (Prague: Argo, 2004), esp. 25.

[34] Jan SLAVÍK, *Český národ ve starším středověku* (Prague: Pokrok, 1940), passim.

[35] MAREK, "Pekařovo dílo," 167–174. Similar views were published by: František ŠMAHEL, "Josef Pekař, husitství a smysl českých dějin," in Josef Pekař, *Žižka a jeho doba* (Prague: Odeon, 1992), esp. XXI–XXV; VÁLKA, "Změny paradigmat," esp. 21–30.

Pekař was less accomplished in his thinking described by the postmodernist adjective "counterfactual". We read these thoughts in his large book on Wallenstein and in a substantial treatise on the causes and fallout of the Battle of the White Mountain. The author asked himself what would have Czech history been like if the Protestant armies (and thus Protestant-Germanic culture)[36] had been victorious, and if Wallenstein had been elected a Czech king.[37] The answers were dictated by a fear of the Czech nation being swallowed by Germanic might, and a tempting image of undoing the White Mountain catastrophe. In contrast, his speculations about a possible concord among Hussite Prague, Sigismund, and Papal diplomats in May and June of 1420 reveal more than sorrow over the confessional split in the Czech nation, causing the extensive reforms of the 16th century;[38] they reveal his aversion to revolution. Slavík and Krofta discerned this very well.[39] Here we can easily prove that behind all the statements and propositions of a passionate guardian of Czech statehood lay the tragic ghost of the White Mountain, just as behind the old and ancient thinking of many Czech historians, writers and journalists was the thought that from Lipany the road led directly and uncontrollably to the White Mountain plain.

> A descendant [Pekař said] couldn't but think that the Prague decision sealed the future of our national history for centuries to come, and that, be as it may, has a bearing on the shadows of White Mountain and all that followed…[40]

For style and composition of Pekař's Žižka (and other works), see Milan JELÍNEK, "O jazykovém stylu Pekařových historických prací," in Kantůrková, ed., *Pekařovské studie*, 146–162; Milan ŘEPA, *Poetika českého dějepisectví* (Brno: Host, 2006), passim.

[36] Josef PEKAŘ, *Bílá hora: Její příčiny a následky* (Prague: Vesmír, 1921), 34, 69–72, 85–86, 156–157.

[37] "He died as a traitor who could have died as the Czech king." IDEM, *Valdštejn 1630–1634 (Dějiny valdštejnského spiknutí)* (Prague: Melantrich, 1933), 1: IX. See also *Ibid.* (Prague: Melatrich, 1934), 2: 329–330.

[38] PEKAŘ, *Žižka a jeho doba*, 3: 69–75, 321–328.

[39] Slavík writes outright: "Do you feel that a thought about the possibility of untimely conciliation could have been caused by Prof. Pekař's disregard for revolution […] Again a proof that for the interpretation of contemporary sources present-day criteria are used." SLAVÍK, *Husitská revoluce*, 71. Krofta denied the usefulness of musings "about what was, what would have happened if…" and concluded that there could have been no reconciliation between the Hussites and Sigismund in 1420 and declared Pekař's notion an "incomprehensible lapse". See Kamil KROFTA, *Žižka a husitská revoluce* (Prague: Jan Laichter, 1936), 121, 125.

[40] PEKAŘ, *Žižka a jeho doba*, 3: 46. Krofta commented aptly, but unfavorably, on these and other of Pekař's notions. (KROFTA, *Žižka a husitská revoluce*, 121–140.) Among younger historians commenting on this problem are namely: Jaroslav MEZNÍK, "Josef

The author (together with Ernest Denis!) merely moved the onset of the fateful development fourteen years earlier expressing his doubts about the democratic character of revolutionary Hussitism.

The name of Kamil Krofta is not mentioned accidentally. A renowned scholar and politician, he was the only one of Goll's students who gave Slavík some satisfaction by his attitudes. In his 1936 work *Žižka a husitská revoluce* [Žižka and the Hussite Revolution],[41] he rejected Pekař's evaluation of Hussitism. Slavík did not expect that the skilful diplomat Krofta, "always modest and refined in expression", would be "a determined Pekař opponent", and that his book would become "a true defence of Hussitism".[42] However, he would not be Slavík if he had agreed with Krofta without reservation. He disapproved of Krofta's support of Pekař's idea of Žižka as that of a fanatic warrior[43] and that this respected authority on the history of Czech peasantry rejected a thesis about an overall improvement in the situation of the Czech peasant in the post-revolutionary era.[44]

He understandably welcomed Krofta's work with delight. Slavík was specifically afraid that high school teachers would be swayed by Pekař's charisma and would teach Hussitism in conformity with his interpretation and adversely influence the historical consciousness of Czech society.[45] He put great responsibility on Czech historians and expected them to make themselves heard in disagreement with Pekař and to address the public at large. He was alas disappointed by the reaction of

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Pekař a historické mýty," in Kantůrková, ed., *Pekařovské studie*, 76–93; VÁLKA, "Změny paradigmat," 27–28. About the myth of White Mountain see Miloslav HÝSEK, "Bílá hora v české literatuře," in *Na Bílé Hoře. 8. XI. 1620* (Prague: A. B. Černý, 1921), esp. 125–145; Josef PETRÁŇ, "Na téma mýtu Bílá hora," in Zdeňka Hledíková, ed., *Traditio et Cultus. Miscellanea historica Bohemica: Miloslao Vlk archiepiscopo Pragensi ab eius collegis amicisque ad annum sexagesimum dedicata* (Prague: Karolinum, 1993), esp. 153–154; Petr ČORNEJ, *Lipanské ozvěny* (Jinočany: H+H, 1995), 86–93; Vít VLNAS, "'Médea to česká s dítek vraždou': Mýtus Bílé hory," *Dějiny a současnost* 29, no. 11 (2007): 14–16.

[41] Here Krofta elaborated on and gave reasons for his disapproval, which he already indicated in his correspondence with Pekař and in an elegantly written anniversary essay: "Josef Pekař – Rozšířený otisk přednášky, kterou proslovil Kamil Krofta dne 21. května 1930," supplement to *Český časopis historický* 36, 1930, esp. 30–32.

[42] Jan SLAVÍK, "Kroftova obrana husitské revoluce," *Národní osvobození*, 28 June 1936, 5.

[43] *Ibid.*

[44] *Ibid*, 2 July 1936, 8.

[45] *Ibid.*, 5 July 1936, 14.

Václav Novotný, František M. Bartoš and Rudolf Urbánek,[46] as well as philosopher Emanuel Rádl.[47] In Urbánek's substantial book *Lipany a konec polních vojsk* (1934) [Lipany and the End of Field Armies], Slavík missed "the theoretical view of revolution". He rebuked him about his method:

> Maybe Urbánek basically agrees with Palacký's evaluation of the Hussite revolution and is then on the side opposite to Pekař; his judgments, however, disclose the same kind of old-fashioned criticism.[48]

He was even angrier with Zdeněk Nejedlý who kept "a grave silence [...] And kicked only the dead lion".[49] F. M. Bartoš complained about this fellow-traveller of Czechoslovak communists in the same fashion.[50] There was an armistice between Pekař and Nejedlý, which was prolonged further when, in December 1932, Nejedlý was elected a full member of the Czech Academy of Sciences and Arts.[51]

In this situation, Slavík considered himself the only combatant against Pekař's assessment of Hussitism. He ignored Bartoš' self-centred opinion of himself in a similar role, and felt that he should write an explanatory book which would present the Hussite epoch in accordance with newest historical trends, defend its historical worth and, at the same time, bring it within the context of the great revolutionary movements which had opened the gates to the modern era. His small but lively work *Husitská revoluce* [The Hussite Revolution] was published in 1934,

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[46] See SLAVÍK, "Soumrak anarchického období československého dějepisectví?," *Dějiny a přítomnost* 1, no. 1 (1937): 8.

[47] "Rádl repeats after many others that our world has a cold heart and that it is materialistic, he ought to have recognized those who today and a long time before him spoke thusly. They are the powerful, the keepers of material possessions. They are supporters of the old social and economic orders." IDEM, "Hus, Chelčický, ani Palacký nemohou nám dnes nic říci?," *Národní osvobození*, 6 July 1935, 4.

[48] IDEM, "Urbánkovy 'Lipany' a studium revoluce," *Národní osvobození*, 30 September 1934, 5. The continuation of the review also dealt with Urbánek's study: *Národní osvobození*, 4 October 1934, 5; 11 Ostober 1934, 5. He does not spare at all a foremost Hussite specialist: "Urbánek by and large 'swerves'. This scholarly standpoint brings him a comfortable coexistence, but science has never benefited from it."

[49] IDEM, "K mé diskusi s profesorem Pekařem o husitské revoluci a historii revolucí vůbec," in Slavík, *Iluze a skutečnost*, 215.

[50] Nejedlý "in his entire life and particularly during the drawn-out battle about Žižka and the Hussite revolution not even once spoke against Pekař". František M. BARTOŠ, *Vzpomínky husitského pracovníka* (Prague: Ústřední církevní nakladatelství, 1970), 114.

[51] See Nejedlý's letter dated December 20, 1932 in: ČORNEJ, HANZAL and SVADBOVÁ, eds., *Korespondence Zdeňka Nejedlého*, 99–100.

the 500th anniversary of the Battle of Lipany, and had also other purposes. Slavík consolidated his ideas on Hussitism, which were scattered in a variety of articles and papers,[52] and represented a decisive answer to Pekař's and Chaloupecký's provocative thesis on Lipany as a fortunate day in Czech history that provided the purifying cut that relieved the nation of an ugly growth…[53]

Slavík often labelled his book as "programmatic",[54] an attack on the "slack waters of our historiography",[55] thus explaining its aggressive tone. In reality, Slavík's book truly represents a turning point in modern Czech historiography. It is the first conceptual work about Hussitism that rigorously adheres to the position of historical materialism (despite the inspiration of Weber and Wundt) written by a professional historian. It is fundamentally different from pamphlets written by social democrats or communist journalists;[56] they drew mostly on Karel Kautsky's *Die Vorläufer des neueren Sozialismus* [Forerunners of Modern Socialism]. In this work, Kautsky found precedents for communist aspirations in European

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[52] On the other hand, the author advertised his forthcoming, or rather just published, book by publishing extracts, or by paraphrasing theses he considered important to present to the public at large, in *Národní osvobození* and in the weekly *Sobota*: Jan SLAVÍK, "Úvahy o Lipanech: I. Lipany belgické," *Národní osvobození*, 12 April 1934, 3; "II. Thermidor husitské revoluce," *Ibid.*, 15 April 1934, 3; "III. Středověká revoluce sociální," *Ibid.*, 19 April 1934, 3; "IV. Proletariát v době husitské," *Ibid.*, 22 April 1934, 3; "V. K otázce demokratismu v táborství," *Ibid.*, 26 April 1934, 3; "VI. Hlavní příčina pádu revoluce," *Ibid.*, 29 April 1934, 3; "VII. Vítězové," *Ibid.*, 3 May 1934, 3; "VIII. Hodnocení revoluce," *Ibid.*, 10 May 1934, 3. IDEM, "K lipanskému jubileu," *Sobota* 5, no. 19 (1934): 393–394; no. 20: 413–416. Other articles published in *Národní osvobození* ("Slavit Valdštejna, nebo Prokopa Holého?"; "Lipany výstrahou, ale komu?") were reprinted by Jaroslav Bouček in: SLAVÍK, *Iluze a skutečnost*, 186–190.

[53] Josef Pekař speaks of a fortunate day in: Josef PEKAŘ, "K výročí Lipan," *Národní politika*, 27 May 1934, 1. Even earlier, in the first volume of *Žižka a jeho doba* (p. 283), Pekař spoke about a "purifying cut" and Chaloupecký took this witticism further: CHALOUPECKÝ, "Nový názor na husitskou revoluci," 291.

[54] SLAVÍK, "Husitství a Pekařova kritika jeho kritiků," 20 January 1935, 5.

[55] *Ibid.*, 24 January 1935, 7.

[56] See Jaroslav VRBATA and Jiří KOŘALKA, "K tradici husitského Tábora v dělnickém revolučním hnutí," in *Husitský Tábor* (Tábor: Muzeum husitského revolučního hnutí, 1979), 2: esp. 136–141; Rostislav NOVÝ, "Kurt Konrad a počátky československé marxistické historiografie," in *Kurt Konrad – Ohlas Velkého října v ibero-americkém světě*, (Prague: Univerzita Karlova, 1982), AUC – Philosphica et historica 2: 57–58; Martin NECHVÁTAL, "Počátky marxistické historiografie (1921–1938)," in *Sborník k dějinám 19. a 20. století* (Prague: Ústav československých a světových dějin ČSAV, 1986), 10: 305–332.

history.[57] People in the know pussy-footed around these indubitable facts because Slavík, although standing on the far left of Czech historiography, was not a Communist. He admired Masaryk, but he did not hide his objections to the Stalinist regime in the Soviet Union, and he followed neither Lenin's nor Stalin's indoctrination. He pointed out that Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels expressed their thoughts in a specific era,[58] and he did not see Marxism as a collection of permanently valid and closed dogmas.[59] The Historical Group influenced by Slavík adopted this last maxim several years later. They were open to many various

[57] Karl KAUTSKY, *Die Vorläufer des neueren Sozialismus*, 2 vols. (Stuttgart: J. H. W. Dietz, 1895). Second edition: *Vorläufer des neueren Sozialismus*, Vol 1. Kommunistische Bewegungen im Mittelalter; Vol. 2. Der Kommunismus in der deutschen Reformation (Stuttgart: D. H. W. Dietz aufl., 1909).

[58] "Marx and Engels suffered from errors, of which I said that they inflicted on those who breathlessly await the birth of change. They went wrong several times, for example about the place and time of coming social revolution. This, however, has not jolted [...] either the foundations of their historical perception or the method used for investigation of the capitalist era." Jan SLAVÍK, "Marxistické pojetí dějin a historická věda," *Dějiny a přítomnost* 2, no. 2 (1937): 147.

[59] This is very clearly expressed in his programmatic treatises. See: SLAVÍK, "Soumrak anarchického období československého dějepisectví?," 10, 13; IDEM, "Marxistické pojetí dějin a historická věda," 137–155. Here he defends the Marxist view of history so far unsurpassed even though he admits that "Marx and Engels announced their views about historical development in the past" and linked them up with "prognosis of the immediate future. They themselves waited for confirmation or refutation of their theories in view of a future development of the society." (p. 137) He defends Marx against Sombart i.a. by using Engels' observation in: *The Condition of the Working Class in England* from 1844 (p. 145). Many historians (František M. Bartoš, Josef Dostál) and philosophers (Zdeněk Smetáček) publishing in the interwar years took Slavík for a Marxist, a historical materialist, or a person very close to Marxism. Slavík's Marxist outlook was noted and appreciated even by Tomáš Vojtěch. (Tomáš VOJTĚCH, *Česká historiografie a pozitivismus. Světonázorové a metodologické aspekty* (Prague: Academia, 1984), 122–123.) Before long though, he recoiled as may be seen in a not very apt formulation: "He used certain Marxist terms (revolution, class, etc.), although mostly in a non-Marxist sense." Not even Vojtěch's contemporary could keep quiet about the fact that Slavík "was deeply familiar with the Marxist method of historical materialism", but quickly added: "he was never a Marxist", but more like a bourgeois Marxist scholar. See Jiří ŠTAIF, "Problematika metodologie historiografie v českém dějepisectví po roce 1945," *Československý časopis historický* 29, no. 4 (1981): 549. Similarly: Maxmilián STRMISKA, "K otázkám české nemarxistické historiografie a filozofie dějin v letech 1918–1939," in *Problémy dějin historiografie* (Prague: Karolinum, 1988), 4, AUC – Philosophica et historica 1: 13, 22–23. All mentioned authors, as may be seen, quietly accepted a premise conditional on the time of their writing that only Communists could be true Marxists.

inspirations, including Freudianism.[60] Slavík's whole book was characterized by a defence of revolutions; neither Hussitism nor history as such can be explained without knowledge of them. Academic historians most likely saw this postulate as a provocation. Moreover this comprehensive view on Hussitism came from an authority on Russian history, rather than an expert on the period. Slavík was convinced that cognition of the past did not evolve so much from a detailed study of sources as from a comprehension of the laws of historical evolution.

The Hussite revolution, in Slavík's conclusion, was a social one, even though religiously motivated. It was a class struggle caused by social crisis and manifesting itself in a civil war. It was a revolution executed on behalf of towns and carrying within it a germ of an imminent new era[61] because it turned against "feudal theocratic apparatus".[62] Nothing could change this, not even the fact that Hus, interpreted as "a revolutionary agitator",[63] and the Hussites dreams of an ideal shaped on a distant past. The author does not see the revolution itself as limited by time, i.e. as a forceful quick outburst, but understands it (incidentally agreeing with Lenin) as a long-term process whose results may often take effect only after a considerable period.[64] When we read today the deliberations of Robert Kalivoda "on the lengthy

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[60] During the totalitarian Communist regime, historians wrote about this problem and about Slavík's relationship to Marxism rather carefully. See Josef PETRÁŇ, "Spor o smysl dějin a dějepisu," in *Václav Husa (Velké osobnosti filozofické fakulty Univerzity Karlovy)* (Prague: Univerzita Karlova, 1989), AUC – Philosophica et Historica 5: 32–50. Eduard Maur was more direct: Eduard MAUR, "Václav Husa – historik," in *Ibid.*, 87.

[61] SLAVÍK, *Husitská revoluce*, 5, 6, 28, 29, 31, 35, 37–39, 47, 50, 56, 58–60, 68, 77, 83, 98, 103, 110, 116, 122 (here and on p. 43 is the thesis that the main agent of the revolution was the townfolk). Somewhere else he writes: "Also at Lipany the parties were separated not by faith, but by different political and social interests. If Prof. Pekař did not flinch from Marx and Engels, he could have learned from them (Troeltsch admitted that he learned a lot from them) that a religious movement is a form of social unrest that grows from very mundane reasons and ends in very mundane social changes." IDEM, "Husitství a Pekařova kritika jeho kritiků," 20 January 1935, 5. On implementation of the term "social crisis" in Czech historiography (Bedřich Mendl had an important role here) for example: HORSKÝ, *Noetika kulturních věd*, 32–33.

[62] SLAVÍK, *Husitská revoluce*, 104.

[63] *Ibid.*, 41.

[64] See Slavík's large article: "Revoluce," *Ottův slovník naučný nové doby* (Prague: Novina, 1938), 5: 598–602. On Vladimir I. Lenin's thoughts on revolution further in a onceptually broader comparison Miroslav HROCH, *Buržoazní revoluce v Evropě* (Prague: Svoboda, 1981), 33–36.

continuation" of Hussitism, we know where their roots may lie.[65] Slavík sees causes for a revolutionary outburst differently from Lenin (but in the same way as Pekař!). The reason was not unbearable poverty and increasing exploitation but, on the contrary, growing self-confidence and progressive emancipation of the lower classes.[66] In the case of Hussitism, the stimulus was where in a large "number of churches people were taught to think and reason [...] It was crucial to have people mentally able to understand revolutionary ideas."[67] This is, after all, still a valuable and valid remark.

Slavík's thorough knowledge of the Marxist (and not only Marxist) theory of revolution and a wide-ranging formulation of the term, or more precisely, the category of "revolution", had its logical consequences. They demonstrated themselves especially in his comparison of the Hussite revolution with the French Revolution, which was quite common at the turn of the century, and in many parallels with the Russian Bolshevik one.[68] This approach was logically enough criticized for its a priori generalizations that were contradictory to uniqueness and to non-recurring historical momentum.[69] Slavík insisted that his approach was methodologically correct. The singularity of the fact does not mean that "facts do not resemble each other. Who really knows history of revolutions feels what is similar and almost identical."[70] Conversely, it would not be possible to seek inherent historical laws and patterns and use sociological scrutiny in historical research.

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[65] Robert KALIVODA, "Husitství a jeho vyústění v době předbělohorské a pobělohorské," *Studia Comeniana et historica* 13, no. 25 (1983): 3–44. (Reprinted in a collection of the author's essays: *Husitská epocha a J. A. Komenský* (Prague: Odeon, 1992), 9–60.)

[66] SLAVÍK, *Husitská revoluce*, 28, 37, 56, 67.

[67] *Ibid.*, 59, 60. Slavík is, interestingly enough, in agreement with a Taborite Elder, Mikuláš of Pelhřimov. He, however, does not refer to him. See Konstantin HÖFLER, ed., *Geschichtschreiber der husitischen Bewegung in Böhmen* (Wien: Kaiserl. königl. Hof - und Staatsdruckerei, 1865), 2: 476.

[68] SLAVÍK, *Husitská revoluce*, 53, 57, 73, 103, 105, 111, 112, 116, 117. See also IDEM, "Ještě k chápání revoluce husitské," 654.

[69] Josef ŠMÍDA, "Jan Slavík: Husitská revoluce," *Naše věda* 16, no. 1 (1935): 18; Josef DOSTÁL, "Dvě knihy o Lipanech," *Akord* 7, no. 9–10 (1934): 17. Slavík's old opponent was very stern: "...and I am holding my tongue about a fact, for I don't want to go too far, that S.-ks [Slavík's] sociological schema, as he presents it, is about laws in the sense of historical materialism that does not recognize and does not acknowledge dissimilarities between the natural sciences and the humanities, and therefore is about a perception with which only orthodox Marxists may agree." František M BARTOŠ, "Jan Slavík: Husitská revoluce," *Jihočeský sborník historický* 7, no. 3 (1934): 119.

[70] SLAVÍK, "Ještě k chápání husitské revoluce," 656.

If Kautsky was at pains to substantiate a political struggle of working classes and discovered pioneers of socialistic and communist ideas in antiquity, in early Christian monasteries, and in the mysticism of heretical sects, Slavík was more prudent. He put Hussitism at the end of a chain of late medieval revolts and revolutions where he also put uprisings in Flanders towns, Jacquerie and the Wat Tyler mutiny, learned of through the works of Henri Pirenne and Russian scholars Maksim M. Kovalevskii and Dmitrii M. Petrushevskii.[71] At the same time, Hussitism anticipated large European reformations that in Slavík's view were nothing else but revolutions.[72] Here, a Marxist concept of the role of Hussitism in the disintegration of feudal systems is already discernible. His concept of nationality as an economic problem is purely Marxist.[73] In addition, Marxist is his accentuation of the international cooperation of revolutionary malcontents,[74] and his use of a terminology serving to describe the revolutionary mechanisms (allies from "above" and from "below",[75] "Bonapartism" as a form of a military dictatorship that ensures survival and spread of a revolution[76]) and its separate phases. Slavík benefited from knowing Marx, Engels and Lenin. The "Thermidor" of the Hussite revolution is for him without doubt the Battle of Lipany,[77] where Hussite towns were defeated by an alliance of gentry, aristocracy, and the "patrician element" represented by Prague Old Town.[78]

Slavík's vocabulary is Marxist, and revolutionary as well. It tends towards the journalistic and actualizing plasticity. Slavík, just as Kautsky, speaks anachronistically, in the context of the 14th and 15th centuries, of the "workers" and "proletariat",[79] "the poor" (when the medieval meaning

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[71] IDEM, *Husitská revoluce*, 28–35.
[72] IDEM, "Revoluce husitská a světová," 311.
[73] IDEM, *Husitská revoluce*, 60.
[74] *Ibid.*, 79.
[75] *Ibid.*, 45, 50–52, 96.
[76] SLAVÍK, "Revoluce," 600.
[77] IDEM, *Husitská revoluce*, 95; IDEM, "Úvahy o Lipanech: II. Thermidor husitské revoluce," 3.
[78] IDEM, *Husitská revoluce*, 103.
[79] *Ibid.*, 36 ("At first sight it is obvious that it concerns a working class, [...] proletariat in the modern sense of the word..."), 37, 43, 45, 46, 51, 69, 86, 88. See also SLAVÍK, "Úvahy o Lipanech: IV. Proletariát v době husitské," 3. ("The question, if in the Hussite revolution the proletariat had a role, has to be answered affirmatively. Even here the proletariat was an element that reacted most sensitively and most radically.")

was not only social, but chiefly legal)[80] and of "peoples" and "progress".[81] The unmistakable stamp of Marxism and pre-war progressivism is revealed by the author's approach to the question of religion. For Slavík, just as for Engels, religious movements were a form of social process. He, entrapped by the notion that the Church and religion were being superseded, could not acknowledge the fact that God and Faith were the highest principle for a man of the 15th century. His portrayal of Hussitism thus unavoidably appeared to other historians as rather flat. He saw the lay chalice only as a dogmatic deviation, and did not even bother to mention that, for Hussites, the Communion of Both Kinds was a foremost prerequisite for redemption, and a principal goal and meaning of life of every Christian.[82]

Slavík's book continues the trend already set in motion by the Enlightenment's evident weakening interest in questions of religion, where progressives of any hue did not choose to hear "the rustle of angelic wings".[83] Historical materialistic method, born at the time of the industrial revolution, broadened even more a space for the anachronistic transfer of the viewpoints and conditions of a modern man to the distant

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[80] SLAVÍK, *Husitská revoluce*, s. 40, 41, 68, 77, 87 (here with inevitable Vítek of the House of Red Bells who was calling together followers of the executed Jan Želivský). For the meaning of the substantive *chudina* (the poor) in the Czech language of the 13th to 15th centuries see: Petr ČORNEJ and Marie KLÍMKOVÁ, "Pojmy *chudý* a *bohatý* ve středověké češtině," in Petr Nejedlý and Miloslava Vajdlová, eds., *Verba et historia. Igoru Němcovi k 80. narozeninám* (Prague: Ústav pro jazyk český AV ČR, 2005), 49–57.

[81] SLAVÍK, *Husitská revoluce*, 40, 41, 48, 74, 87, 89, 90 (the category *lid* – peoples), 15, 19, 24, 29, 38, 48 (the category *pokrok* – progress). Slavík worked at length on the category of *progress* earlier. See HAVELKA, ed., *Spor o smysl českých dějin*, 641, 642, 644–646.

[82] Pekař immediately picked up on it in his review of *Husitská revoluce* where he said that Slavík did not mention the problem of the chalice, as was perceived by Hussite theologians (without the chalice, as without baptism, there is no salvation)…" Josef PEKAŘ, "Jan Slavík: Husitská revoluce," *Český časopis historický* 40, no. 3 (1934): 634–635. Similarly, Josef Dostál wrote: "The chalice was not just a symbol. It was a passionate belief about the chosen nation that would bring cleansed Christianity to the whole world…" DOSTÁL, "Dvě knihy o Lipanech," 18. Only Jaroslav Charvát praised *Husitská revoluce*: ch.- [Jaroslav Charvát], "Kniha o husitské revoluci a Lipanech," *Ranní noviny*, 24 May 1934, 4. The thirty-year-old historian, later a member of the Historical Group, found the significance in this book, among the Czech Hussite writings, in its emphasis on the class, social, political and national differences from which the revolution arose.

[83] Petr ČORNEJ, "Zrození husitského mýtu: problém optiky," in Milan Řepa, ed., *19. století v nás: modely, instituce a reprezentace, které přetrvaly* (Prague: Historický ústav, 2008), esp. 88, 102.

past.[84] Even if such danger were always present, and it is often difficult to avoid because historical research is always a dialogue between the past and the present, a wise historian should be able to detect the line beyond which obvious anachronism begins. Marxism as an ideology centred on a change of social system, focused on a vision of an harmonious future and explained the past in terms of the present, no doubt multiplying the risk of anachronistic historical interpretation. When Slavík ignored the significance of the lay chalice, he was only a step away from the absurd opinion of the Communist journalist Kurt Konrad who maintained that the Communion *sub utraque* was a result of the egalitarian role of money.[85]

Slavík was carried away in his fight against Pekař and academic historiography; in the pages of *Husitská revoluce*, and even more in Slavík's articles, he used expressions that today make one's hair stand on end. In his interpretation of the Hussite epoch, he frequently used words like "treason" and "traitor",[86] or more precisely, "reaction" and "reactionary". After each revolution, Slavík claimed, "reaction" always wins.[87] As we already know, the conservative Pekař was to him reactionary (using "conservative" in the sense of "retrogressive"), as was the historical science nurtured at the Czechoslovak universities.[88] It is not necessary to

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[84] Slavík's reviewers strongly expressed their exasperation over his downgrading of religion. For example, F. M. Bartoš wrote: "I do not want to believe, and S.[Slavík] avoided saying, even though there are signs of him being so inclined, that he would dismiss the religious nature of the Huss[ite] revolution." BARTOŠ, "Jan Slavík: Husitská revoluce," 118. Dostál then detected the way the wind was blowing: "Taking the principal features of the Hussite revolt lightly takes us too close to historical materialism; those interpretations have here a depressing notoriety." DOSTÁL, "Dvě knihy o Lipanech," 18. Slavík answered these rebukes in an essays: "Revoluce husitská a světová," 310; and "Husitská revoluce a časopis 'Naše věda'," *Národní osvobození*, 29 January 1935, 5.

[85] Kurt KONRAD, *Dějiny husitské revoluce* (Prague: Nakladatelství politické literatury, 1964), 34.

[86] In 1418, the Hussite academic intelligentsia were already committing "treason against revolution"; this "treason of moderates" reinforces radicalism, Čeněk of Vartenberk is naturally a traitor, Želivský's revolutionary terror turns towards anticipated "treason". SLAVÍK, *Husitská revoluce*, 72, 73, 77, 79.

[87] *Ibid*., 104. Further use of the word *reaction* see pages 51, 73.

[88] "It is a science intentionally or unintentionally reactionary, a spineless trade. Today it contributes by purely 'objective' lectures about Wallenstein, tomorrow it would, with the same proficiency, decant emptiness to emptiness from books on Eugene of Savoy, Laudon or Radecký. Why not? They are heroes also belonging to history!" Jan SLAVÍK, "Ještě valdštejnské oslavy," *Sobota* 5, no. 9 (1934): 180.

show how these terms were used in the nationalistic journalism and literature of the 19th century and first half of the 20th, in progressivist pamphlets, or in Czech working-class, or rather Communist, periodicals. Slavík took his terminology from them, but also drew on Marxist literature written in Russian, and in Soviet newspapers and journals, unwittingly putting himself in the same camp with communist journalists. He did not imagine, at that time, the sinister overtones the terms "treason" and "reaction" acquired after the Communist takeover in 1948, and how they would infect scholarly and literary texts,[89] although his awareness of Soviet reality should have given him some warning.

In spite of this penchant, springing from his choleric character, Slavík never accepted the Communist view of the world and was immune to vulgar Marxism. As an inveterate democrat, admirer of Palacký and Masaryk, authority on Soviet Russia and above all a critically thinking scholar, he never identified with the idea of a proletarian dictatorship or with the thesis that objective cognizance of the past is achievable only from the position of the working class. That is why the communists never rated him as Marxist and the communist press called him a poseur who just played with revolutionary terminology.

Amongst Slavík's harsh critics was the erudite communist essayist Záviš Kalandra,[90] who in the anniversary year 1934 published a pamphlet *Znamení Lipan* [The Omen of Lipany] that made an interesting companion piece to Slavík's *Husitská revoluce*.[91] In many instances, the texts show a similar approach to the subject, given an historical materialistic starting point. Kalandra wrote his work as a confirmed communist. However, he presented a well-defined conception of the Hussite revolution, but also had in mind the real political situation, such as criticism of conditions in contemporary Czechoslovakia. Both

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[89] Further Petr ČORNEJ, "Poúnorová aktuálnost vzdálené husitské minulosti," in Jiří Pokorný, Luboš Velek and Alice Velková, eds., *Nacionalismus, společnost a kultura ve střední Evropě 19. a 20. století: Pocta Jiřímu Kořalkovi k 75. narozeninám – Nationalismus, Gesellschaft und Kultur in Mitteleuropa im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert: Festschrift für Jiří Kořalka zum 75. Geburtstag* (Prague: Karolinum, 2007), 432.

[90] zk [Záviš KALANDRA], "Slavíkova 'Husitská revoluce'," *Haló noviny*, 6 June 1934, 4.

[91] The publication gained Kalandra more prestige in the Communist Party and opened an access to key positions in the Communist press. Further Jaroslav BOUČEK, *27. 6. 1950 – Poprava Záviše Kalandry: česká kulturní avantgarda a KSČ* (Prague: Havran, 2006), 35. Kalandra's other articles on Hussite topics, published during the anniversary year of the Battle of Lipany, were collected by: Jiří BRABEC, "Bibliografie díla Záviše Kalandry," in Záviš Kalandra, *České pohanství* (Prague: Dauphin, 2002), 2 (Osudy bohů): 547.

Slavík and Kalandra recognized Hussitism as a social revolution, placed somewhere between great class struggles of the 14th century (Wat Tyler mutiny) and the Lutheran Reformation, or let us say, the German Peasants' War.[92] They both perceived the national question as a result of social discontent,[93] both were for the utilization of the Marxist view of revolution,[94] both regarded Jan Želivský highly[95], had an aversion to academic historiography[96] and both suppressed the religious component of the Hussite struggle, or (if you like) its interpretation as a veil covering class interests.[97]

Differences are, however, obvious. Kalandra, for example, followed Engels' pamphlet *The Peasant War in Germany* in finding the causes of social crisis and revolutionary outbreak in increasing exploitation.[98] Even though he saw the principal strength of the revolution in the towns, he explicitly refused to use modern terms such as "working classes" and "proletariat" for medieval reality.[99] He spoke, more accurately, of town tradesmen and a pre-proletarian element, which he acclaimed as the most progressive revolutionary force.[100] For this reason, he did not see "Thermidor" in the Battle of Lipany, but rather in the death of an ideological leader of Prague tradesmen and the poor, Jan Želivský, who was executed March 9, 1422 at the hands of "white murderers". Kalandra indeed compared Želivský to Jean Paul Marat. The term "Thermidor" itself and the sympathy shown for "dictatorship" of this Prague New Town tribune refers to the bloody Jacobite terror that was, for the Bolsheviks, an archetype of the revolutionary dictatorship of the

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[92] Záviš KALANDRA, *Znamení Lipan* (Prague: Jarmila Prokopová, 1934), 5, 45, 26, 77.
[93] *Ibid.*, 12.
[94] *Ibid.*, 39.
[95] *Ibid.*, 60–61; SLAVÍK, *Husitská revoluce*, 79, 85 (he was a "genius of revolution"), 87. Both were the first ones who followed Zdeněk Nejedlý in this direction (Slavík in part followed Palacký as well) and showed the way to Kurt Konrad. See: KONRAD, *Dějiny husitské revoluce*, 35–40, 267–271, 290–291. For an evaluation of Želivský in Czech Hussite studies: Petr ČORNEJ, "Pád Jana Želivského," *Český časopis historický* 101, no 2 (2003): 261–262.
[96] Kalandra finds some excuse for Jaroslav Prokeš, but Pekař is, for him, "the most outspoken reactionary of Czech historical science…" KALANDRA, *Znamení Lipan*, 10–11.
[97] "…it is just enough to put one's ear to all manifestations of religious ideology and hear below their class and revolutionary contents." *Ibid.*, 19.
[98] *Ibid.*, 24–35.
[99] *Ibid.*, 50.
[100] *Ibid.*, 45.

proletariat.[101] Kalandra's view on the role of peasants in Hussitism is interesting as well. According to him, the towns were unable to recruit the peasantry to support them because of the backward nature of the "rural masses".[102] It would seem that Stalin's recent drive against the kulaks at that time influenced Kalandra's theories.

His biggest (if debatable) contribution was the coinage of a new term, "the general crisis of feudalism", to describe the situation in Europe in the 14th to 15th centuries. It was clearly derived from Lenin's phrase "the general crisis of capitalism".[103] Kurt Konrad, and through him in the early 1950s Josef Macek,[104] took up Kalandra's phrase "the general crisis of feudalism" immediately. On a list of Konrad's "loans" from Kalandra is for example the term "Thermidor" used for Želivský's downfall, and quite a few others.

For his forthcoming but not yet completed conceptual book on the Hussite revolution, Kurt Konrad drew not only on the pamphlet *Znamení Lipan*, but also on Slavík's texts.[105] Had he not known Slavík's studies, he would not have been competent enough to place the Hussite movement amongst the great world revolutions (English, American, French and Russian),[106] even though the concept itself goes back to

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[101] *Ibid.*, 61. For reasons of Bolshevik interest in Jacobins see for example: Albert Z. MANFRED, *Tři podobizny z doby Velké francouzské revoluce* (Prague: Mladá fronta, 1982), 320; Josef VÁLKA, "Starý režim – revoluce – restaurace (Úvahy o změnách historiografického pohledu)," in *Acta historica et museologica Universitatis Silesianae Opaviensis* (Opava: Slezská univerzita, 2007), 7 (Sborník k 70. narozeninám prof. PhDr. Dušana Uhlíře, CSc.): 19.

[102] KALANDRA, *Znamení Lipan*, 56.

[103] *Ibid.*, 35, 36 (here the author used by mistake "general crisis of capitalism" instead of feudalism), 76.

[104] KONRAD, *Dějiny husitské revoluce*, 182 (the pertinent passage was already contained in proof sheets of Konrad's unpublished and, in editorial practice, a non-standard book *Husitská revoluce* [1950], 117).

It was first brought to attention by: Petr ČORNEJ, "Kořeny husitologického díla Kurta Konrada," in *Kurt Konrad – Spolutvůrce pokrokové kulturní politiky a literární kritika na Moravě v letech 1918–1938* (Brno: Státní vědecká knihovna, 1989), esp. 67. For the phrase "general crisis of feudalism" as used by Konrad see Robert KALIVODA, *Husitská ideologie* (Prague: ČSAV, 1961), 27. See also František ŠMAHEL, "Prvá krize feudalismu," in Alice Teichová et al., *Dějiny středověku* (Prague: Státní pedagogické nakladatelství, 1968), 2: 171; IDEM, *Husitská revoluce* (Prague: Historický ústav AV ČR, 1993), 1 (Doba vymknutá z kloubů): 36–40.

[105] KONRAD, *Dějiny husitské revoluce*, 95–97, 187, 196, 222, 262–264, 268 (substantial excerpts from Slavík's texts).

[106] IDEM, *Svoboda a zbraně. Kapitoly z dějin revolučních válek: Z literární pozůstalosti popraveného historika a publicisty* (Prague: Naše vojsko, 1949). A preface for this book

Palacký. A disciplined communist journalist found himself in a sort of schizophrenic situation. Záviš Kalandra was expelled from the Communist Party because he did not agree with the Moscow trials, and Slavík was an outspoken adversary of Stalin's political practices. Konrad therefore criticized both of them uncompromisingly in the party press and at public lectures, even though he found both their texts very stimulating.[107] From the viewpoint of a loyal party member, full of admiration for the Soviet Union, neither of them could have been right (or must not have been); neither a communist dissenter nor an historian refusing a dogma of proletarian dictatorship, and moreover a critical expert on Stalinism. Nevertheless, it was natural that Konrad and Kalandra found their way to the newly founded Historical Group that was close to Jan Slavík.[108]

With no regard to the absurdities and convolutions of the time, there was one indubitable reassurance. Jan Slavík and Záviš Kalandra were authors of a specific conception of an historical materialistic, let us say Marxist, cognizance of Hussitism. Only after them came Kurt Konrad who published only sketches and newspaper articles on the history of Hussite era. His voluminous excerpts on Hussitism remained unpublished until 1964. For obvious reasons, the post-February Czechoslovak Communist regime preferred only Konrad, who till the very end was faithful to Stalinist politics; for a time he was employed at the Soviet Embassy in Prague.[109]

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that was supposed to, in a radically changed political circumstances, introduce Konrad as a true Marxist whom not only the Czech historiography should follow, was written Ladislav Štoll (p. 5–8), and his profile *O Kurtu Konradovi* by Jaroslav Charvát (p. 9–24). Re-edition of the original text was published as late as 1982 in: *Kurt Konrad – Ohlas Velkého října v ibero-americkém světě*, 23–33.

[107] KONRAD, *Dějiny husitské revoluce*, 22, 23, 44. Here he used a phrase that Slavík only frightens with "Marxist terminology behind which a logical disorder is hiding." On Konrad's vituperative utterances about his former friend Kalandra see: BOUČEK, *27. 6. 1950 – Poprava Záviše Kalandry*, 46.

[108] Záviš KALANDRA, "'Dějiny a přítomnost', sborník nejmladší české historiografie," *Světozor* 37, no. 19 (1937): 317; Jaroslav VÁVRA, "Ke genezi a místu Historické skupiny," in Jaroslav Pátek and Věra Šádová, eds., *Studie z obecných dějin. Sborník historických prací k sedmdesátým narozeninám prof. dr. Jaroslava Charváta* (Prague: Univerzita Karlova, 1977), 60.

[109] Jiří HOLÝ, *Novinář Kurt Konrad* (Prague: Novinář, 1985), 30, 31. Only marginally, I wish to add that Konrad's intellectual position between 1939 and 1941 was analogous to Fučík's. Whereas Fučík with his essays on Božena Němcová and Karel Sabina tried to "mobilize the Czech nation for a united fight with an example of the noble ancestors", Konrad chose, in those days, as his big subject Hussitism. Like Fučík, he abode by

After February 1948, the road towards a Marxist viewpoint on Hussitism became tricky. In 1950, when Josef Macek, accommodating Party directives, worked on a Marxist draft of the history of the Hussite epoch, Jan Slavík was silenced;[110] Záviš Kalandra, after spending six years in a concentration camp,[111] was on his way to the gallows, and Kurt Konrad was dead; he hanged himself in 1941 in a German prison.[112] His book *Husitská revoluce* [The Hussite Revolution] was put together from Konrad's notes and newspaper articles by Rudolf Beck, but remained in proofs due to the editor's emigration; Konrad's brother Fritz Beer, who at one time saw "in the Communist idea [...] a paradise", emigrated to England.[113]

When the dust settled, a Marxist picture of Hussitism emerged, still well remembered by the then school children, and for which Josef Macek received the Klement Gottwald State Prize.[114] The works of the historians who led the way towards a Marxist understanding of Hussitism, and without which he would have been unable to write his

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instructions issued by "the supreme chiefs-of-staff of the world Communist movement". For Fučík, see still unappreciated because brilliant Jan TESAŘ, *Traktát o "záchraně národa": Texty z let 1967–1969 o začátku německé okupace* (Prague: Triáda, 2006), 253–259.

[110] Slavík's newspaper articles published between 1937 to 1939 and between 1945 to 1946 on Hussite topics were collected by Jaroslav BOUČEK, *Jan Slavík: 1885–1978: Bibliografie* (Prague: Národní knihovna ČR – Slovanská knihovna, 1994), esp. 61–83. He also reprinted an article originally published July 7, 1945 in *Svobodné slovo*: "Hus Palackého a Hus Pekařův," in SLAVÍK, *Iluze a skutečnost*, 207–210.

[111] Just before deportation to a concentration camp, Kalandra, under the pseudonym Jan Albert, contributed an essay „Husitství a evropská společnost" to a well known memorial volume: Vilém Mathesius, ed., *Co daly naše země Evropě a lidstvu* (Prague: Evropský literární klub, 1939), 1 (Od slovanských věrozvěstů k národnímu obrození): 81–87. Even here he did not deny being a supporter of historical materialistic methodology. Kalandra's profile was pertinently written by Jiří BRABEC, "Záviš Kalandra," *Orientace: literatura – umění – kritika* 4, no. 4 (1969): 70–91 (on page 76, see discussion of *Znamení Lipan*); IDEM, "Doslov," in Záviš Kalandra, *Intelektuál a revoluce*, Jiří Brabec, ed. (Prague: Český spisovatel, 1994), 369–407; Petr ŠÁMAL, "Smrt talentovaného marxisty," in Petr Čornej et al., *Záhady českých dějin: Co se skrývá pod povrchem historických událostí* (Prague: Reader's Digest Výběr, 2005), 302–307.

[112] HOLÝ, *Novinář Kurt Konrad*, 33.

[113] The interview with Fritz Beer was published by František CINGER, "Nejvíc vzpomínám na Milenu Jesenskou," *Právo*, 6 June 1997, 10. Fritz Beer presented here a somewhat idealized portrait of Konrad: "My brother had taken life, writing, party, all thoughts about life very seriously. Even though it may sound strange, I should be thankful to the German hangmen for his murder because in the Slánský process he would have been executed. I think, anyway, that he was not a happy man. He was too bright not to see things as they were..."

[114] Josef MACEK, *Husitské revoluční hnutí* (Praha: Rovnost, 1952).

own texts, Macek did not mention (Kalandra) and slandered (Slavík).[115] The only exception was Kurt Konrad. God-forsaken Jan Slavík lived almost thirty years more in his inner exile, forced to sell off his library because of his dire financial circumstances, but still interested in, and privately commenting on, the post-February Marxist historiography. As he admitted in his correspondence,

> Macek's *Tábor* and *Přehled československých dějin* [A Survey of Czechoslovak History], which Macek edited, as well as Kalivoda's *Husitská ideologie* [The Hussite Ideology] caused me utter agony…[116]

The new political order neutralized old squabbles, and so an elderly historian praised the two-volume monograph *Husitská revoluce* [The Hussite Revolution] send to him by his contemporary F. M. Bartoš.[117] There is no end of paradoxes. Shortly after Slavík's death, one of his principal works was vindicated. During the so-called normalization, Robert Kalivoda, whose name would not cross Slavík's mind, did not hesitate to write:

> Slavík, who as the first one developed a European, international and comparative perception and absorbed Marxist stimuli, inspired by his work *Husitská revoluce* (1934) the beginning of a Marxist concept of the general crisis of feudalism and early bourgeois revolution (frühbürgerliche Revolution), which shortly before the Second World War drafted a young Czech Marxist Kurt Konrad after he had begun to study Hussitism.[118]

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[115] According to him, Slavík "stayed a malevolent slanderer of the Soviet Union. His book is full of abstract, sociological schemes lacking evidence based on sources and thorough analysis of facts." In addition, it is written by "a dubious method…" Josef MACEK, *Tábor v husitském revolučním hnutí* (Prague: ČSAV, 1956), 1: 31.

[116] Slavík's letter to Karel Kazbunda, dated April 24, 1966, published in: BOUČEK, *Jan Slavík: Příběh zakázaného historika*, 192. In the same vein he wrote on September 21, 1966 to Josef Macůrek: "…I am very sorry that I cannot show at least a fragment of absurdities and ignorance of Latin in Kalivoda's *Husitská ideologie*. This book fell rightly in threesome of laureates' books: Nejedlý, *Dějiny českého národa*, Macek, *Tábor v husitské revoluci*, Kalivoda, *Husitská ideologie*. Why waste words about the obvious." *Ibid.*, 195.

[117] *Ibid.*, 192.

[118] Robert KALIVODA, "Nový přístup k pohusitskému vývoji husitství," *Studia Comeniana et historica* 15, no. 29 (1985): 105–120. I cite from a published collection of the author's essays: *Husitská epocha*, 124. Likewise, on p. 184 where the author accepted this line of thought in Czech Hussite studies.

Nobody is perfect. Not even the State Prize laureate Kalivoda[119] who passed over Záviš Kalandra. He knew, however, how indebted he was to Slavík. Kalivoda's conception of "lengthy" Hussitism moving towards a bourgeois revolution, his recognition of Taborite Hussite radicalism, which "showed and prepared a road leading to revolutionary emancipation",[120] was to a large extent due to reading Slavík's works. The unconventional historian impressed the unconventional philosopher with the courage with which, in the 1930s, he coalesced Marxism with new ideas. Kalivoda who worked himself up to see Marxism as an open system[121] rightly saw in Slavík his forerunner.

It is impossible to judge what Slavík, whom I met only once, would have had said about these ruminations. One thing though is certain. Most of scholars who now are concerned with his work and thought would not escape his sharp tongue.

[119] On the circumstance of its conferment see: František ŠMAHEL, "Husitský věk v pojetí Roberta Kalivody," in *Historicko-filozofické dílo Roberta Kalivody* (Olomouc: Katedra bohemistiky FF UP, 2000), 24–25.

[120] Robert KALIVODA, *Husitské myšlení* (Prague: Filosofia, 1997), 322.

[121] IDEM, *Moderní duchovní skutečnost a marxismus* (Prague: Československý spisovatel, 1968).

JAN SLAVÍK AND "ANTI-GUILD" DISCOURSE. SOCIAL HISTORY BETWEEN HISTORICAL THOUGHT AND HISTORIAN'S PRACTICE[1]

Jiří ŠTAIF

During the 19th century, European historiography, for a fairly long time, enjoyed a certain self-satisfaction because it was established as a highly respected university discipline. Its reputation rested on the ability to verify factual discoveries and chronological findings, and thus the apparent underlying continuity of historical events. This branch of historical thought had been created by a "guild" of historians who were well versed in both external and internal criticisms of historical sources and who wrote their accounts of the past on these grounds. Their ideal was an impartial science, but even though they declared that they were distanced from societal pressures, they could not hide their own world outlook or value systems in their approach to history. This system shaped their platform for historical writing and their social stance; the good manners of this "guild" allowed them to confidently proclaim the purity of their writings as untouched by individual value preferences.

They were not unlike English gentlemen who considered it highly improper to discuss their personal means without which, of course, they would not have been regarded as gentlemen. The basic working model of the "guild" was that of the relation between a master and an apprentice who, after passing the required exams, was promoted to the status of "journeyman". In the case of bright young fellows, this relationship might develop, and in time, after further exams, become collegial, i.e., an affinity between the older masters (i.e., university professors) and the younger "masters", who would become professors as well. Authoritative rituals and professorial procedures were established by self-governing

[1] This text has been published as a part of the research project MSM 0021620827 *The Czech Lands in the Midst of Europe in the Past and Today* at the Faculty of Arts, Charles University, Prague.

Prague Perspectives III (Prague, 2009), 79–88.

university bodies to determine the desired abilities and dispositions of future masters.

Briefly, the existing masters decided about future masters. It was undoubtedly the case that there were more who wanted to enter the charmed circle than were chosen. It is important to recognize that these rituals were the one and only way to become a master, i.e., an historian at a university, who had symbolic powers over young students and enjoyed greater prestige in his field. After 1900, one discipline began to erode this long-established paradigm of an historian's progress through the ranks – social history. Social history adhered conceptually to the reconstruction of society and to modern social problems, which together with modern nationalism were the axes of social development at that time.[2]

Due to its particular field of inquiry, social history put a growing demand on the theoretical and methodological apparatus of the historian. Social history was concerned with collective social events where even singular and privileged individuals did not have decisive roles in the formation of networks of social relations, whose complexity grew with the narrowing time gap between past and present. Therefore, these networks could not have been measured by individual intentions, but rather by common interactions within the networks. They involved more abstract social relations then had been the case in examining individual actions. It became necessary, then, to apply to them a terminology which would reflect the typological differences of the semantic fields used to organize diverse facts into significant entities, e.g., social group or a class, social partnership, social conflict, social revolution, capitalist economic order, economic depression, legitimacy of power, stability of social order, or a reversed perspective of social change.[3]

This type of historiography, logically enough, increased the need for a methodological element in an historian's work, and for a new conceptualization and organization of historical inquiry. The "guild" historians, by and large, did not like to acknowledge these stimuli. Their reason was simple: their concept of history was one of a neat chronological order of factual, and at the same time unspecific, miscellaneous events

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[2] See Arthur MARWICK, *The New Nature of History: Knowledge, Evidence, Language* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), 88 ff.

[3] See Lutz RAPHAEL, *Geschichtswissenschaft im Zeitalter der Extreme: Theorie, Methoden, Tendenzen von 1900 bis zur Gegenwart* (München: C. H. Beck, 2003), esp. 26 ff., 66 ff.

that they researched critically in their sources. Many of them were quite understandably worried about this invasion of contemporary problems, and feared that a new approach to the past could push them aside and destroy the exclusivity and autonomy of the university positions they had achieved in the 19th century.

Only the most far-sighted among them were able to imagine that the social sciences would be compelled, in the future, to become not only objective, but also more methodologically open and engaged to respond actively to the existing state of society. It was even more difficult to imagine that this active response would have to be tied to some vision of the future with which the historian would identify himself (even if it were the "greyest" of expectations, a continuation of the *status quo*). In other words, their symbolic influence on society, through the scholarly interpretation of the past, would diminish if they were unwilling to undertake civic, moral and gnoseological risks attached to conceptual innovations.[4]

Czech university historians, typified by Jaroslav Goll and his school, were particularly resistant to new trends. Their representatives felt strongly that they did not need to reflect social challenge nor the competitive mood among social scientists, nor act upon their own inclinations and take the above-mentioned risks to the same extent as their American, English, French and, up to a point, German, Italian colleagues as well as some members of the Russian exile. Even the origin of the sovereign Czechoslovak Republic did not change this mind-set; historical disciplines at the universities were still ruled by proven "guild" masters and their journeymen, although their circles began to shrink during the 1920s.

A spokesman for those outside the university who were either democrats or left wing emerged – Jan Slavík. He was one of the Czech historians who best mastered the methodological and theoretical innovations introduced as means of social analysis by Max Weber in the first two decades of the 20th century. The half-generation younger Zdeněk Kalista worked in the same typological manner, but from the opposite worldview and civic outlook. He was a student of Josef Pekař, catholically oriented, and inclined toward German Geistwissenschaft. He presented

[4] Comp. author's review of: Pavel KOLÁŘ, *Geschichtswissenschaft an der Deutschen Universität in Prag 1882–1938 im mitteleuropäischen Vergleich (mit den Universitäten Wien und Berlin.) Eine wissenschaftshistorische Untersuchung.* Ph.D. Theses, Department of World History, Faculty of Arts, Charles University, Prague, 2002.

a dissertation on the Czech baroque aristocrat Humprecht Jan Černín of Chudenice at the Charles University Faculty of Arts in 1933.[5]

Unlike Kalista, Jan Slavík did not succeed in joining the "guild" of historians between the wars, even though he belonged to a group of historians who, due to their social status and employment, were closely connected to an influential group around Tomáš G. Masaryk. Because of this connection, Slavík, who was a left-oriented intellectual, self-confident, given to polemics, sarcastic and succinct, was only too happy to conduct himself as an "outsider" of the university establishment. He was convinced that, in the field of social history, he could easily demonstrate his theoretical and methodological superiority to the academicians.[6]

An imaginative intellectual booster of Czech historiography between the wars, Slavík recognized that social history was the coming trend in historical inquiry. The Bolshevik revolution and the following sovietization of Russia, the worldwide economic crash of 1929, as well as Italian and later German fascism, opened the gates for large-scale investigations. Further stimuli that influenced his thinking on social history included the post-war opinions on Jan Žižka and the whole Hussite movement led by the conservative Josef Pekař, a major power in official Czech historiography. A critical part of Slavík's position in respect to the academic historical science was his own lack of a tenured position in any university (although he always denied this).[7]

His attitude is noticeable in his 1929 booklet entitled *Pekař contra Masaryk. Ke sporu o smysl českých dějin* [Pekař contra Masaryk. Dispute on Meaning of Czech History], written in a tone of suppressed sarcasm, and aimed at Josef Pekař.[8] Slavík's methodological, or more

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[5] In his further comments the author relies on his essay: "Tři pokusy o karikaturu, resp. karikování Gollovy školy (Václav Řezníček, Jan Herben a Jan Slavík)," in Bohumil Jiroušek, Josef Blüml and Dagmar Blümlová, eds., *Jaroslav Goll a jeho žáci* (České Budějovice: Jihočeská univerzita, Historický ústav ve spolupráci s NTP Pelhřimov, 2005), 293–307.

[6] Zdeněk KALISTA, *Po proudu života* (Brno: Atlantis, 1996), 2: 69, 125, 136 ff., 184 f., 629. Comp. Jaroslav BOUČEK, *Jan Slavík: Příběh zakázaného historika* (Jinočany: H+H, 2002), 78 ff.

[7] Jan SLAVÍK, "Když minulo let padesát. Příhody a nehody historikovy v letech 1902–1952," in Václav Veber et al., *Ruská a ukrajinská emigrace v ČSR v letech 1918–1945* (Prague: Seminář pro dějiny východní Evropy při Ústavu světových dějin FF UK v Praze, 1995), 3: 108 ff., 116 ff.

[8] Jan SLAVÍK, *Pekař contra Masaryk. Ke sporu o smysl českých dějin* (Prague: Čin, 1929). Reprint in: Miloš HAVELKA, ed., *Spor o smysl českých dějin 1895–1938* (Prague: Torst, 1995), 599–621.

precisely noetic, reservations about Pekař's "naively realistic" observation of history were more substantial. Slavík regarded as naïve the fact that Pekař and his followers were not able to come to terms with the new, contemporary noetics and axiology of the social sciences that were first brought forward by the Baden Neo-Kantian school, and later by Max Weber. Let us note how remarkable it was for Slavík, in a Czech context, to be capable of deriving a new methodological impetus from the thoughts of this original sociologist. At the same time, it is clear that he could not fully identify with Weber's "objectivist" cognitive nominalism, or, if you like, the requirement of ethical neutrality in social sciences, to which a democratic vision of the future order was indeed alien.[9]

Slavík knew Pekař personally from his student days, so he was delighted to point to the growing methodological conservatism of his former ally. He maintained that Pekař was no longer suitable for a time of modern revolutions, on which he considered himself an expert. In his reminiscences on Josef Pekař, published only weeks after his death, Slavík went even further. He stressed the personal conservatism of the one who had been, until recently, the primary authority on Czech historical sciences. At one key point in this memoir, he stated that Pekař was a man who had entertained "class hatred", having witnessed, in 1907, Pekař's fury when he learned about the adoption of general suffrage in the Cisleithanian Parliament. Pekař had insisted that the social democrats would undermine Czech "national positions on which so many generations had worked!"; in this social democratisation he even saw "a triumph of the uneducated", who would devalue politics through their lack of moral strength.[10]

In his 1931, essay *Dějiny a přítomnost. Víra v Rakousko a věda historická* [The Past and the Present. Faith in Austria and Historical Science],[11] Slavík attacked Pekař's conservative "Austrianism" during the First World War in an almost denunciatory manner, and again the following year in *Básnická perioda českého dějepisectví* [Poetic Period

[9] Comp. author's review of Max Weber *K metodológii sociálnych vied* (Bratislava: Pravda, 1983) published in: *Československý časopis historický* 32, no. 2 (1984): 273–278.

[10] Jan SLAVÍK, *Z mých styků s prof. Pekařem* (Prague: self published, 1937), 24–25.

[11] IDEM, *Dějiny a přítomnost. Víra v Rakousko a věda historická* (Prague: Svaz národního osvobození, 1931). Reprint in: HAVELKA, ed., *Spor o smysl českých dějin*, 622–672.

of Czech Historiography].[12] In this context, it is interesting that Slavík's understanding of the Neo-Kantian and Max Weber's concept of the social sciences is used mainly to punish Pekař and others from Jaroslav Goll's school. Slavík's opinion that Pekař was totally wrong about the outcome of the First World War (contrary to T. G. Masaryk) was almost an attack on his personal reputation on the grounds of an incorrect world view and a one-sided interpretation of social science methodology. He felt that Pekař disregarded the methodological ideas of pre-war sociology that manifestly showed modern militarism and its destructive potential as a cause – "at least in defeated countries" – of the fall of the governing powers.[13]

We can find more than a few such caustic opinions in Slavík's thoughts at this time. They do, however, contain valuable criticisms of Goll's school, which is still influential today. Slavík saw it as a methodologically and organizationally conservative assembly of university scholars, still based on the previously mentioned teacher-pupil model. This patriarchal set-up prevented progress that would have fostered a more democratic relationship in the historian community. Slavík thought that Goll's school, with its closed structure and methodological sterility, thwarted the development of conceptual alternatives in the field of historical inquiry and in the organization of research itself; that was the reason that Czech historiography fell more and more behind developments elsewhere.[14]

Slavík's next essay followed the same line of attack. In it, he argued against Pekař's designation of the periods of Czech history on the basis of artistic styles, which Pekař had presented in his Rectorial lecture in 1932. He principally belittled Pekař's understanding of the Gothic period and the Czech national awakening, which he did not consider scholarly, but at best as a shift from science to poetry, and at worst a proof of Pekař's methodological arbitrariness. This trait of Pekař led to a subjective "scholarly anarchism" and distanced him from Goll's ideas of an historical science based on verifiable facts. Nevertheless, Slavík could not deny that it was Pekař who taught him how to use scholarly

[12] Jan SLAVÍK, *Básnická perioda českého dějepisectví: poznámky k rektorské řeči univ. prof. dra Josefa Pekaře* (Prague: self published, 1932). Reprint in: HAVELKA, ed., *Spor o smysl českých dějin*, 739–747.

[13] HAVELKA, ed., *Spor o smysl českých dějin*, 603 ff., 615, 624 ff., 649 f., 658 f. See also Martin KUČERA, *Rakouský občan Josef Pekař: kapitoly z kulturně politických dějin* (Prague: Karolinum, 2005), 156 ff., 171 ff., 208 ff., 310 ff.

[14] See reprint in: HAVELKA, ed., *Spor o smysl českých dějin*, 654.

polemics as a useful tool in building and reinforcing one's own authority in professional circles, and in society in general. He also had to admit that this university professor was a charismatic personality, adept at charming his listeners and readers, particularly with his explications of the unique role of the peasantry in Czech history.[15]

Slavík's criticism of Goll's school culminated in his essay published in the first issue of *Dějiny a přítomnost* [The Past and the Present], a new journal founded by left-oriented historians. The editors did not choose this title at random, and they appreciated the fact that Slavík's name "was securely connected to the new orientation of our younger historiographers". On the other hand, the editors may have been apprehensive that Slavík might have a greater say in the journal's policy than its founders, who were the foremost members of the so-called Historical Group – Václav Čejchan, Václav Husa, Jaroslav Charvát and Jan Pachta, who were all a generation younger than Slavík. The aforementioned article was not called *Soumrak anarchického období československého dějepisectví?* [Twilight of the Anarchist Era of Czechoslovak Historiography?] by accident. According to his memoirs, the essay was written very critically in order to force a fundamental change in the understanding of the tasks of historical science in Czechoslovakia, to bring about a more democratic organization, better planning, and an urgent change of personnel.[16]

It is interesting that this essay was written before the first congress of Czechoslovak historians, held in Prague May 3–5, 1937. It is apparent that the official representatives of the "guild" historians were forced to acknowledge the validity of at least some of Slavík's former reservations, as may be seen in the lectures of Josef Šusta and Karel Stloukal. Nevertheless, Slavík's remarks were not as well received as, for example, the lecture of Václav Chaloupecký on methodological problems in the interpretation of Czechoslovak history, or Jaroslav Werstadt's talk on the philosophy of Czech history, or the lecture by Slovak historian Branislav Varsik on the unity of Czechoslovak history.[17]

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[15] *Ibid.*, esp. 741ann.. Comp.: SLAVÍK, *Z mých styků s prof. Pekařem*, 11ann., 19.

[16] Jan SLAVÍK, "Soumrak anarchického období československého dějepisectví?," *Dějiny a přítomnost* 1, no. 1 (1937): 5–16. Comp. Josef PETRÁŇ, "Historická skupina," in Jaroslav Pátek and Věra Šádová, eds., *Studie z obecných dějin. Sborník k sedmdesátým narozeninám prof. dr. Jaroslava Charváta* (Prague: Univerzita Karlova, 1977), 11–47.

[17] SLAVÍK, "Když minulo let padesát," 119 f. Comp. reprints of individual lectures in: František KUTNAR, ed., *První sjezd československých historiků 1937: přednášky a debaty* (Prague: Československá společnost historická, 1938). See also "Co očekáváme

Slavík's pre-congress thesis on the chaos in Czechoslovak historiography was backed by the Marxist formulation that "production of historiography is a true reflection of capitalist anarchic production". He tied it to another of his theses on Czech historical science – that it "smells of decay in the old guild", where to succeed meant to be circumspect. According to him, this kind of historical science was worn out because it had not been capable of completing some prestigious editorial ventures, and necessary synthesis of researches initiated under the leadership of the "guild". In addition, it did not create the demanding and open intellectual milieu where healthy scholarly criticism could thrive. Its professional achievements were well below those appearing abroad. Slavík, with his usual sarcasm, stressed that it was a type of "science" embarrassingly lagging in a methodological system.

On this occasion, Slavík compared Czechoslovak academic historiography not only with the Neo-Kantians and Max Weber, but also suggested that it would have to come to terms with the influence of Marxism on the theory of history. He did so because he assumed that this version of historical inquiry was able to come closest to the ideal of predicting future social developments, which was much needed in those uncertain times. He documented the inability of academic historians to systematically evaluate Marxism in his comments on Goll's review of Masaryk's *Otázka sociální* [Social Question] that was published in 1900 in *Český časopis historický* [The Czech Historical Review].[18] He again saw Masaryk as superior to Goll, not to mention foreign historians such as Ernst Troeltsch, Eduard Meyer, Alfons Dopsch, Henri Pirenne, Francois Alphonse Aulard, Henri Sée, Pavel G. Vinogradov, Maksim M. Kovalevskii, etc.[19]

For Slavík, predicative capability was also a welcomed mean to evaluate the influence of historical materialism on the development of historical inquiry into society. He rejected a dogmatic version of Soviet Marxism, as it represented, for him, just a "power tool" for the interpretation of the past. Nevertheless, under the threat of war, he shifted his position farther to the left then he had done in the past. He found

od I. sjezdu čsl. historiků v Praze?," *Dějiny a přítomnost* 1, no. 1 (1937): 86–90; "Po I. sjezdu čsl. historiků," *Dějiny a přítomnost* 1, no. 2 (1937): 211–214.

[18] Jaroslav GOLL, "T. G. Masaryk, Otázka Sociální," *Český časopis historický* 6, no. 2 (1900): 143–156.

[19] SLAVÍK, "Soumrak anarchického období," 12 ff.

examples of an historical prognosis of the tendency of modern history to move to a new (i.e., non-capitalist) social order, not only in Marx and Engels, but also in the intellectual and political representatives of the Russian Mensheviks Iulius O. Martov and Georgii V. Plekhanov. Slavík, leaning on Karl Marx and Tomáš G. Masaryk, understood historical materialism as a macro-historical, prognostic sociology.

At the same time, he considered the materialistic basis of dialectical materialism to be outdated because, he insisted, we can no longer consider "material" as fundamental. Werner Sombart's approach to capitalism, who moved under the influence of current societal conditions, from its original Marxist inspiration to an attempt to scientifically defend the German National Socialism, he regarded as shaky both in prognosis and methodology. Slavík also maintained that the influential Russian sociologist Pitirim A. Sorokin, who immigrated to the United States and taught at Harvard University, was even more mistaken in his interpretation of the sociology of revolution than Lenin: his biography Slavík wrote in 1934.

It is rather interesting that Slavík, in his ruminations on the relationship between Marxist understanding of history and contemporary historical investigation, did not pay any attention, either positive or critical, to Hilferding's analysis of so-called "organized capitalism" or to Lenin's theory of imperialism as a later stage of capitalism. He would certainly have been familiar with them, as he thought of himself as a Marxist historian – to such an extent that he agreed with Lenin's views, and wrote that

> bourgeois scholars run away from socio-economic laws that are disagreeable to them, and take solace in religion. Should we look at the state of affairs in science (and also in politics), could we insist that Lenin was wrong?[20]

Slavík even adopted the Marxist concept of class nature of historical inquiry. He sympathized with this view because this method did not hide its social role, as did the attempts at impartiality of those of bourgeois historians who were able

> to unconsciously mobilize the weapons of scientific scepticism if they wanted to discredit a historical theory about the collapse of the contemporary social order, i.e., domination of the bourgeois class.[21]

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[20] See IDEM, "Marxistické pojetí dějin a historická věda," *Dějiny a přítomnost* 1, no. 2 (1937): 137–155.

[21] *Ibid.*, 154.

It cannot be said, however, that Slavík maintained his Marxist shift completely after 1945 when ambitious associates of the former review *Dějiny a přítomnost* openly approved Soviet Marxism and adopted the Soviet social model as their ideal. Not even Soviet victory in the Second World War, and growing pro-soviet sympathies in post-war Czechoslovakia could persuade him to accept the Bolshevik worldview.[22]

As the purpose of this text is not to track the further development of Slavík's historical thought, I could now conclude by stating that he considered modern social history to be a course of historical investigation and an historiographical concept that anticipate the fruitful interaction between historical science and a modernizing society. Historians in the second half of the 20th century accepted this concept, although in a slightly different form. Here, in particular, we can see Slavík's importance for Czech historiography and beyond, even though we may not agree with all his ideas. His contrary frame of mind made this ingenious and flamboyant intellectual the first to sympathize with Marxism as a predictive social theory in the late 1930s, but after the *coup d'état* in February 1948 brought him into direct conflict with the Czechoslovak Communist Party.

[22] Comp. BOUČEK, *Jan Slavík. Příběh zakázaného historika*, 136 ff.

Max Weber and the Dispute on the Meaning of Czech History or Slavík's Readings of Neo-Kantian Methodology in Cultural Science[1]

Miloš Havelka

The title of this contribution is somewhat curious. Apart from attention to Slavík's work, I want it to be also a polemic against a younger colleague who recently confidently asserted that Max Weber, due to his *non-evolutionary and nonfunctional* scholarly method, couldn't *significantly influence historical thought.*[2] He thus rejected the achievements, not only of European historians (Ernst H. Kantorowicz, Aleksandr I. Neusykhin, Werner Conze, Hans-Ulrich Wehler, Jürgen Kocka, Paul Veyne, Marcel Gauchet, Peter Burke, Michael Mitterauer, etc.), but also those of several Czechs (Bedřich Mendl, Josef Válka, Jaroslav Kudrna, Otto Urban, etc.), not to mention the influence on Josef Pekař and Jan Slavík.

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Discussions on "the meaning of Czech history" and the multitude of elucidations given on this subject by Josef Pekař and Tomáš G. Masaryk received (in the second half of the 1920s) new impetus. **(1)** – By the publication of an introductory volume of a monumental work of Josef Pekař *Žižka a jeho doba* [Žižka and His Time] entitled *Doba se zvláštním zřetelem k Táboru* [An Epoch with a Particular Regard to Tabor],[3] and **(2)** – by a cycle of lectures in the Masaryk' Popular Educational Institute in 1928 on the meaning of history.

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[1] This text has been published as a part of the research project MSM 0021620827 *The Czech Lands in the Midst of Europe in the Past and Today* at the Faculty of Arts, Charles University, Prague.

[2] Martin KUČERA, *Rakouský občan Josef Pekař. (Kapitola z kulturně politických dějin)* (Prague: Karolinum, 2005).

[3] Josef PEKAŘ, *Žižka a jeho doba*, 4 vols. (Prague: Vesmír, 1927–1933).

(Ad 1) In the 14th chapter of *Žižka a jeho doba* entitled *O sociálně politickém obsahu táborství* [On the Social and Political Gist of Taborism], Josef Pekař opposed František Palacký's then prevailing and dominating concept of Hussitism and, in a way, Masaryk's view of the Reformation as the prime mover of Czech history and also popular interpretations of the modern meaning of these concepts. Pekař described the religious, social, and nationalistic propensities of the Hussite revolution as a decline of state and cultural development in the Czech state, leading to the Battle of White Mountain. He stressed the medieval nature of Hussitism and challenged a belief that Hussitism could be understood as the beginning of the democratic modern era and a fight for freedom of conscience, and hence the origin of modern thought. Pekař described Jan Žižka as a religious fanatic and the Battle of Lipany as the clean break needed for the salvation of the country. This, of course, stirred up conflicting reactions. Pekař's pupil Václav Chaloupecký[4] was enthusiastic. He wrote that this work fundamentally changed all previous views of Hussitism. Prior to Pekař, the Hussite movement was considered as the most significant moment in Czech history. Now, according to Chaloupecký, it would be looked on only with censure.

František Michálek Bartoš,[5] Emanuel Chalupný[6] and Kamil Krofta[7] were, among others, very critical of *Žižka a jeho doba*. Their reasons (apart from Chalupný's) were mostly factual. Jan Slavík, a former student of Bidlo and Pekař and a follower of Masaryk, and later also Masaryk himself, began to link the current discussion with an older "dispute over the meaning of Czech history" as Zdeněk Nejedlý[8] called this controversy in 1913.

Slavík expressed his criticisms of Pekař (and of Chaloupecký's review), in a methodologically informed and on the Baden Neo-Kantianism based treatise entitled *Nový názor na husitství. Palacký či Pekař?* [New Outlook

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[4] Václav CHALOUPECKÝ, "Nový názor na husitskou revoluci," *Bratislava* 1, no. 2 (1927): 291–297.

[5] František Michálek BARTOŠ, "O Masarykovu filosofii našich dějin," in Vasil K. Škrach, ed., *Vůdce generací* (Prague: Čin, 1932), 1 (Masarykův sborník, vol. V, 1930–1931): 256–282.

[6] Emanuel CHALUPNÝ, *Husitství, Táboři a prof. Pekař. V Masarykově sociologické společnosti přednesl Emanuel Chalupný* (Prague: Melantrich, 1928).

[7] Kamil KROFTA, "Josef Pekař – Rozšířený otisk přednášky, kterou proslovil Kamil Krofta dne 21. května 1930," supplement to *Český časopis historický* 36 (1930).

[8] Zdeněk NEJEDLÝ, "Spor o smysl českých dějin [1913]," in Miloš Havelka, ed., *Spor o smysl českých dějin 1895–1938* (Prague: Torst, 1995), 321–360.

on Hussitism. Palacký or Pekař?].[9] There, he also reacted to Pekař's lecture delivered in the cycle *Smysl českých dějin (O nový názor na české dějiny)* [The Meaning of Czech history (On a New Perspective of Czech History)] at the Masaryk' Popular Educational Institute.[10] A new revised and enlarged edition of this lecture was published in 1929 jointly with a re-edition of Pekař's major text that originated in discussions from after 1910 and entitled *Masarykova česká filosofie* [Masaryk's Czech Philosophy].[11] (This text was enlarged and published in 1927 as a companion to Pekař's *Žižka a jeho doba*.)

(Ad 2) In the above-mentioned cycle lectured other well known people: Emanuel Rádl (his text *Smysl dějin* [A Meaning of History] was soon published in a collection of his works *Národnost jako vědecký problém* [Nationality as a Scientific Problem]),[12] Zdeněk Nejedlý (the text of his lecture is lost) and František Xaver Šalda, who spoke about *Dvojí dějepisectví* [A Dual Historiography].[13] Šalda's contribution is still interesting for his attempt to identify the foundations of two intellectual – and still existing – contradictory positions in Czech historiography. This tension between outlooks on Czech history is represented by these two positions – a "catholic-conservative" one (Václav Vladivoj Tomek, Antonín Gindely, Jaroslav Goll, Josef Pekař, Josef Šusta, Josef Hanuš, Zdeněk Kalista, Bohdan Chudoba, to say nothing of Josef Miklík, Blažej Ráček, et al.) and an "protestant-democratic" view (František Palacký, Tomáš G. Masaryk, Jan Herben, Kamil Krofta, Karel Stloukal, František M. Bartoš, Otakar Odložilík, Mirko Novák, Božena Komárková, etc.). From the latter emerged a "socio-progressive", or, let us say, Marxist, position (Zdeněk Nejedlý, Václav Husa, Jaroslav Charvát, Jiřina Popelová, Josef Macůrek, Josef Macek) as a subgroup. Jan Slavík thus would fit in the "protestant-democratic" group and "socio-progressive" subgroup.

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[9] Jan SLAVÍK, *Nový názor na husitství: (Palacký či Pekař)* (Prague: Svaz národního osvobození, 1928).

[10] Josef PEKAŘ, "Smysl českých dějin (O nový názor na české dějiny) [1929]," in Havelka, ed., *Spor o smysl českých dějin*, 499–560.

[11] IDEM, "Masarykova česká filosofie [1912]," in *Ibid.*, 265–302.

[12] Emanuel RÁDL, "Smysl dějin," in Emanuel Rádl, *Národnost jako vědecký problém* (Prague: O. Girgal, 1929), 7–40.

[13] František Xaver ŠALDA, "Dvojí dějepisectví. Prosloveno v cyklu 'O smyslu českých dějin'," in *Šaldův zápisník* (Prague: O. Girgal, 1928–1929), 1: 54–63, 90–103.

The above-mentioned Pekař lecture was by no measure a simple repetition of old arguments and well known positions from before the First World War, or even an attempt to neutralise the debate by academic discourse. Its subject was not only Masaryk himself, but even more, Masaryk's most important post-war philosophical follower Emanuel Rádl. The reason for Pekař's attention was Rádl's essay *O smysl našich dějin (Předpoklady k diskusi o této otázce)* [On the Meaning of Our History (A Presupposition for a Debate)][14] that appeared before the publication of *Žižka a jeho doba.* There Rádl reacted, in a broad philosophical and methodological sweep, first to Pekař's older argument, and second, to the extensive work of an archivist of the National Museum, Josef Hanuš, entitled *Národní museum a naše obrození* [The National Museum and Our Awakening],[15] in which Hanuš stressed the role of local landed gentry in the national awakening. Rádl saw in Hanuš's position a systematic, if not direct, attack on Masaryk's interpretation of the idea of humanity as a foundation of the continuity of Czech history. Rádl's appraisal is still interesting today for its *anti-induction* method reminiscent of Karl R. Popper, and in particular for its emphasis on the role of theories in an empirical and source-based investigation.

In the second part of the lecture, Pekař talked about his own methodological deliberations. He differentiated among a variety of interpretations of the word "meaning" in historiography, primarily specifying his own understanding of "national axis of Czech history" (if we do not want to say directly "national meaning"). He underlined it by a formulation of its crucial force, i.e. thought whose pragmatic power still shows itself over and over again in catchphrases like "a return to Europe", "to catch up with Europe" and "an opening of windows". No longer just "meeting and clashing" with the German element (Palacký), and not even Masaryk's (national) brotherly humanity, but – as Pekař emphasized – "…to continue to absorb, yield to, feed on examples of life and thought of our more advanced neighbours, on a world Germanic and Romanic, is the most powerful and far most important factor in our history".[16]

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[14] Emanuel RÁDL, "O smysl našich dějin (Předpoklady k diskusi o této otázce) [1925]," in Havelka, ed., *Spor o smysl českých dějin*, 433–469.

[15] Josef HANUŠ, *Národní museum a naše obrození*, part 1 (Prague: nákladem Národního musea, 1921).

[16] PEKAŘ, "Smysl českých dějin," 504.

In a publication following the lecture, Pekař broadened his sophistic historical methodological reasoning with the inclusion of polemical articles directed against another advocate of Masaryk's perspective on Czech history, Jan Slavík. Slavík, on the contrary, saw weakness in Pekař's methodology. Pekař was familiar with later discussions on methodology, most likely from surveys and compendia, e.g., Troeltsch's book *Der Historismus and seine Probleme*,[17] to which Slavík, and among others Masaryk, often alluded. Slavík thus came somewhat close to Rádl's view, first in an assessment of Hussitism and second in an emphasis on theoretical and methodological questions. He knew very well that an assessment of the significance of Hussitism in Czech as well as European history is linked with Pekař's emphasis on its medieval nature. Compared to Rádl, who to some extent respected the more theoretical and empirical perspective of the natural sciences, even if tempered by his *neovitalism*, Slavík outlook was shaped decisively by the *Neo-Kantian methodology* of cultural sciences, which Rádl categorically refused. Moreover, Slavík's explanation of it was strongly constructivist and oriented towards a worldview (*Weltanschauung*) theory.

It is in the context of Slavík's, and partly Rádl's methodological clarifications, that we should see a later work by Masaryk entitled *Masarykova česká filosofie. Odpověď Pekařovi* [Masaryk's Czech Philosophy. An Answer to Pekař].[18] Using the impersonal style of his reply to Pekař published in *Naše doba* [Our Time] during an earlier phase of the controversy about meaning of Czech history[19], Masaryk now evidently intended to reopen a polemic with Pekař on his own old field of interest "in the progression of common cultural life of nations, in the search for principal ideas of various epochs and persons who epitomize them, in the search for a meaning of our own and world history and in the philosophy of history, and that [...] from a sociological point of view." From this position, Masaryk and Slavík both commented critically on Pekař's *Žižka a jeho doba* and on his lecture *Smysl českých dějin*.[20]

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[17] Ernst TROELTSCH, *Der Historismus und seine Probleme* (Tübingen: J. C. Mohr, 1922).

[18] Tomáš G. MASARYK, "Masarykova česká filosofie [1928–1929, published in 1993]," in Havelka, ed., *Spor o smysl českých dějin*, 575–598.

[19] IDEM, "Ke sporu o smysl českých dějin [1911]," in *Ibid.*, 305–316.

[20] Perhaps most important here was Masaryk's explanation of his own motto "Tábor is our programme", around which even later arose many misunderstandings: for Masaryk, Tábor was not only a religious concept, "but also a political and social one; in Tábor" according to Masaryk "...even communism came into existence". The motto "Tábor is

I should perhaps mention that F. M. Bartoš talked President Masaryk out of publishing this text, as it was very emotional.

It is possible that Slavík knew the manuscript, because he, with references to Kurt Breysig, Max Weber, Wilhelm Wundt, Ernst Troeltsch and Wilhelm Dilthey, tried, along with Masaryk, to expand his criticism of Pekař to the whole methodological base on which Pekař's examination of historical reality rested. We cannot, however, overlook Masaryk's endeavour to bring his own pragmatic concept of the meaning of history closer to the positions of transcendentalism (Troeltsch and also partly Weber), of a philosophy of life (Dilthey) and a psychology of history (Breysig). His attempt was philosophically and systematically problematic, not only for incompatibility of the above-mentioned schools of thought, but also incongruent with his own Platonism.

Slavík collected and expanded most of the thoughts discussed in the debate with Pekař in the treatise *Pekař contra Masaryk. Ke sporu o smysl českých dějin* [Pekař contra Masaryk. On the Controversy About Meaning of Czech History],[21] and further in his fundamental and extensive work *Dějiny a přítomnost* [The Past and the Present].[22] Slavík identified the core of the problem as a question of the relationship between objectivity of cognition and the constitutive significance of the values that are important for formation of historical interest, and in a possibility of a transition from the experience and critique of sources to a theoretical explanation and understanding of historical reality.[23]

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our programme" meant to Masaryk that "we have to try to find a solution, in the spirit of the modern era and its valid demands, to all questions proposed by Tábor. It is the meaning and substance of his [Masaryk's] Czech philosophy, his continuation in our reformation ideas […] Narrow-minded party members, either Catholic or Protestant, cannot comprehend that. Prof. Pekař did not grasp it and neither did the preacher Karafiát when he suggested an expulsion of then Prof. Masaryk from the Reformed Church…" (MASARYK, "Masarykova česká filosofie," 587.)

[21] Jan SLAVÍK, "Pekař contra Masaryk (Ke sporu o smysl českých dějin) [1929]," in Havelka, ed., *Spor o smysl českých dějin*, 599–621.

[22] IDEM, "Dějiny a přítomnost. Víra v Rakousko a věda historická [1931]," in *Ibid.*, 622–672.

[23] František Kutnar drew attention to the fact that Slavík got himself into a controversy with Pekař at a time when he concerned himself with the evolution in Soviet Russia, analyzed the Bolshevik overthrow and "drew up his monograph on Lenin". The question though remains. Was it for Slavík a lasting influence or only a casual constellation, as Kutnar further defines: "The Russian reality, as well as elements of Marxist-historical thought whose terminology Slavík used, influence his viewpoint in his assessment of the Hussite revolution and cause the shift of discourse from a debate on a single event in Czech history to a gnoseological and methodological level." (František KUTNAR, *Přehledné dějiny českého a slovenského dějepisectví* (Prague: SPN, 1978), 2 (Od počátků

Slavík characterized Pekař's understanding of historical reality as "a naturalistic notion of an unchanging picture of times past" and tried to prove that between Pekař and Masaryk there is "an essential difference in imagining how a person creates a picture of the past", and in the question of "what truly is that objective reality in history". According to Slavík, in the spirit of Baden Neo-Kantianism, the picture of the past and the approach to it changes "correspondingly with new cultural ideals of humanity" and via "new evaluating ideas" "a discovery of new facts in the equal quantity of historical material takes place".[24] The question of the meaning of history is, according to Slavík, valid, just as "any other philosophical-historical subject contributes to the progress of historical science" and because it facilitates *overrunning* an existing file of interpretations. Today, we could say that it facilitates *loosening* of the historical discourse of the time. The meaning of history was for Slavík those "moments that had an enormous influence on the evolution of national life, and quite often it was ideas which in the past were professed and disseminated by the whole nation".[25] The meaning of history marks, in Slavík's view, a sort of *a range of ideas* in the flow of historical time.

These *ranges* cannot be just *distilled* from historical sources and compressed *directly from the matter*. A more important role in their ascertaining is our view, our evaluation of matters worthy of inquiry, i.e., our approach and appreciation of questions in which the concept of

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pozitivistického dějepisectví na práh historiografie marxistické): 288.) Kutnar did not quite understand that for Slavík the Hussite revolution was social, even if motivated by a religious belief, and its basis, according to him, was economic: it was a revolution of towns against feudal rule. Slavík most likely knew Weber's stimulating historic-sociological study *Die Stadt* (Max WEBER, "Die Stadt. Eine soziologische Untersuchung," *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik* 47, no. 3 (1921): 621–772.), which was included as the 8th chapter in Weber's *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* (IDEM, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft (Grundriss der Sozialökonomik. III. Abteilung)* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1922), 513–600.) Weber's text was known and used for an analysis of a medieval town by a Russian medievalist A. I. Neusykhin. He, like Slavík, linked Neo-Kantian noetics with sociologically based Marx' historical materialism. It cannot yet be proven whether it was the Neusykhin influence on Slavík, who was well acquainted with Russian literature, or just a structural analogy. (Compare with: Aleksandr Iosifovich NEUSYKHIN, "'Empiricheskaia sotsiologiia' Maksa Vebera i logika istoricheskoi nauki," *Pod znamenem marksizma* 6, no. 9 (1927): 113–143; no. 12: 111–137.)

[24] SLAVÍK, "Pekař contra Masaryk," 603.

[25] *Ibid.*, 600.

history merges largely with their evaluation. New values and new viewpoints, which spring from the needs of the present and which keep "historical objectivity" in "motion" (so that past "might not ever be possible to capture…" in one "single perpetual scheme"),[26] are supplied, as Slavík said, by philosophy and by sociology. We cannot naturalistically imagine the past "like a film that disappeared in the darkness of the past and left its traces in material relics and written records from which a historian tries to construct 'a picture of times past'."[27]

Slavík saw the question of the meaning of history as needing exploration and as an opportunity to find one of the new viewpoints that would open another insight into history. In the case of Hussitism these, for example, were – according to Slavík – laws of internal dynamics of revolutionary movements found by comparing a variety of revolutions, including the Russian. For the process of "opening" historical reality, he used the term *value-relation* (*Wertbeziehung*) taken from Heinrich Rickert and further developed into a principal methodological procedure by Max Weber.[28] When Slavík later stressed that Weber "…explained

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[26] Jan SLAVÍK, *Pekař contra Masaryk. Ke sporu o smysl českých dějin* (Prague: Čin, 1929), 15.

[27] *Ibid.*

[28] In particular, according to Weber, the sciences of history, society and politics show that reality is not comprehensible in the absolute sense, nor in actuality and not even potentially, but only as a construct. All elements and parts of reality, all events, and all processes are grouped together in an infinite and nontransparent mutual relationship; they create extensive (quantitative) and intensive (qualitative) varieties of reality.

According to Weber (in parallel with Neo-Kantianism), *values* are the only possible and at the same time rational devices to seize the infinity of the subject in these sciences. The appropriation of the subject of social perception happens as *relating* (always invariably chaotic) the reality to *values (Wertbeziehung)*. Weber did not link this term, as Rickert did, with an idea of some supra-historical or even an absolutely valid system of values, but with knowledge of their historical alteration), which we and our times profess: "Order is brought into this chaos *only* on the condition that in every case only a *part* of concrete reality is interesting and *significant* to us, because only it is related to the *cultural values* with which we approach reality" (Max WEBER, "The 'Objectivity' of Knowledge in Social Science and Social Policy," cited from: http://www.molsci.org/research/publications_pdf ; p. 34.) It is just then a sort of *scholarly gesture* which was supposed to solve a dual problem, such as – firstly – what should be viewed as scientifically relevant reality – in our context: as an anthological representative text – and secondly – according to what principles, what procedures should this scientifically relevant reality be filtered from an infinite and nontransparent flow of historical events. The principle was a (cultural) significance that some event (original text) had for an exact (following) period.

Stress on values was important for overcoming a simplified image of the unambiguous continuation of an historical process depending on an impression of universal historical causality, as well as an illusion of possible unequivocal evaluation. Consequently,

how cognition of the past merged inseparably with the evaluation of phenomena picked out from an infinite flow of history and always from a certain aspect,"[29] he mentioned only a fraction of Weber's outstanding methodological procedure, and he simplified it. For Weber, "historical standpoints", which Slavík resorted to, could not be considered the basis for an external evaluation of events, be it for their actuality or their morale, but were only a component of the scholarly structure of a queried subject (in the Kantian sense) that comes from certain cultural, a priori presumptions. Weber's *Wertbeziehung* was thus not concerned so much with "a possibility of another evaluation of an epoch",[30] as Slavík supposed. It had to do more with reconstruction and comprehension of the significance assigned to an historical event, historical phenomena or even to a historical value in the course of history and eventually to the present, which makes it to be of scholarly interest.

Not only did Slavík miss the subtle, but nevertheless crucial, difference between Weber's nominalistic – constructivist *value-relation* (*Wertbeziehung*) and a complementary communicative *ethical neutrality* (*Wertfreiheit*), but he also went in large measure against Weber's general intention. That is, Weber strictly distinguished the above-mentioned selective and value-dependent character of a choice (i.e. construction) of the subject of cognition. There the historical reality is only a product of our scholarly interest led by a certain values of the present and not an authentic field that can be impartially measured, walked on and cultivated, from the process of cognition itself and from following presentations of found evidence in the historians' community. A presupposition for both is, according to Weber, the previously mentioned *objectivity* or *ethical neutrality* (*Wertfreiheit*), where the values are at most a subject of analysis and not a leading and orienting factor. In fact, the concern was to stress another basis for the non-evaluative character of cognition in the process of finding facts (than positivistic). Weber's critics did not always

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reconciliation with an essential plurality of all potential historical or (if you like) sociological questions is indispensable. Alternatively: unitary comprehension of science and unitary cognition of the world striving for a uniform interpretation is not possible and is not admissible. In science, the goal is not a continuous and gradual approach to (absolute) historical truth, it is "only" a selective investigation, a research that composes its topics from varied suppositions and comprehends them in different contexts. Here we may talk about a democratic potential of Weber's nominalistic, pluralistic perception of social sciences.

[29] SLAVÍK, "Pekař contra Masaryk," 604.

[30] SLAVÍK, *Pekař contra Masaryk*, 45.

understand that. Only non-evaluative cognitional objectivity guarantees productivity (and actually even the possibility) of intersubjective demonstration of scholarly work resulting in the public and unprejudiced control of theoretical perception by the scientific community. Put simply, the choice of a subject *historically important* and, according to Weber, scientifically "valuable", can in no case justify its political or ideological "evaluation" or even exploitation in the name of "a good cause".

Even though Slavík understood Weber's emphasis on the non--obviousness of historical and socio-scientific cognition well, he did not reproduce it precisely and did not make use of a conceptual difference in Weber's vocabulary. We can say that he did not fully understand few Weber's notions. It was an important distinction between *value-relation* (*Wertbeziehung*) (as a structure of a subject of cognition) and *ethical neutrality* (*Wertfreiheit*) (as a precondition for communication amongst historians and for a historical discourse as such). The other was the dependent concept of *ideal types* (as specially construed historical notions) and, finally, the connected problem of *meaning,* either as *subjectively perceived* or *objectified* (which were for Weber further methodological means to understand events and actions through their interpretation – *deutendes Verstehen*). Slavík yielded to the spirit of Baden Neo-Kantianism just as he yielded to the sociological conception of history supported by historical materialism; he was silent about the fact that Weber himself called his own cognition of social sciences *a science of reality* i.e. of human creations and not of meanings and values.

Slavík tried to use Weber against Pekař's alleged "naturalism"[31], which was rather an historical realism (i.e. against Pekař's considerable ontic perspective where the past had a real objective reality), and for a defense of Masaryk's concept where people now – as in other times – were more important than problems. Slavík's methodological attempts remained, in his time and even later, misunderstood, as was – in the Czech environment – Slavík's source of ideas, Max Weber (with an exception

[31] Slavík also adjusted a little Weber's concept of naturalism. Originally, it was not important for criticism of historical dogmatism (conviction about imminent connectedness of experience and concept), or for criticism of somewhat more cultured realism, but for a stimulation of methodology in the natural sciences. Furthermore, it was important for a conviction that humanities have a similar aim – to formulate historical and social principles that are still limited by temporary incompleteness of empirical groundwork. After its quantitative completion and total qualitative sum it would be possible to formulate those principles inductively.

of Bedřich Mendl).[32] At first sight, it might have appeared that Pekař was closer to Weber. A constitutive quality (in the sense of *value-relation* (*Wertbeziehung*)) was for him the Czech nation and the evolutionary changes in its historical life. *Ethical neutrality* (*Wertfreiheit*) was to be ensured by unambiguous results of the examination of sources; "collective concepts" were for him a result of "typical processes".[33] "The meaning" was the only thing with which Pekař did not quite cope. In addition, all of this was imperceptibly covered with Pekař's historical realism and a conviction that historical universality – as Slavík mocked – is hidden in sources "like sugar in a fruit".[34] Here, Pekař's historicism came into an unconsidered conflict with his own spontaneous dogmatism, which would not allow him to intellectually scrutinize and historically differentiate the ideas (which was for him crucial) of a "nation" and "Czechness".

In spite of all that, with Pekař it was, in the end, a narrative historiography, and intuitive historical noetics. Their final effect was to "scientifically explore and make past attractive" as he set out in his programme. In this context, to call Pekař "a dry scholar", as F. X. Šalda characterized him in his previously mentioned lecture on dual historiography, was definitely a misnomer.

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[32] In the Czech milieu of those days, incomprehension of Slavík's reasoning had doubtlessly wider reasons. A part of the historical community to date still considers the old Goll's essay *Dějiny a dějepis* published in 1888–1889 in *Atheneum* (See also Jaroslav GOLL, "Dějiny a dějepis," in *Jaroslava Golla Vybrané spisy drobné* (Prague: Historický klub, 1928), 1: 5–28.) an authoritative basis of methodology. Amongst sociologists of interwar period, especially among those from the "Prague school", yearning just to note the acquired facts (See further Jan MACKŮ, "Sociologie česká do roku 1948," in *Velký sociologický slovník* (Prague: Karolinum, 1996), 1043.) reigned the same "naturalism", for which Slavík tried to criticize Pekař. For example, Jan Hertl, whose programme stance was based on "social realism", demonstrated in his criticism of Slavík that he understood neither Weber's concept of objectivity nor his criticism of "naturalism" (seeking laws similar to the natural sciences). He explained them only narrowly as positivistic "empirical-inductive" methodology and necessary orientation on the facts and their "accumulation". (Jan HERTL, "Dr. Jan Slavík: Dějiny a přítomnost," *Sociální problémy* 1, no. 2 (1931): 151.)

[33] As Pekař wrote in his treatise on collectivistic historiography, collectivist concepts only intercept and express "a conception of regular typical process, which, by any means, does not exclude that the evolution may surprisingly take another road…" (Josef PEKAŘ, "Spor o individualismus a kollektivismus v dějepisectví," *Český časopis historický* 3, no. 3 (1897): 147.)

[34] SLAVÍK, "Dějiny a přítomnost," 632.

What both Slavík and Pekař missed in their dispute and what, according to the author of this article, is valid for most participants in the dispute on the meaning of Czech history was already formulated by Weber – a certitude about *productivity of plurality* of the historical approach (expounded in thesis on the indispensable variety of *ideal types* and the actual and historical variance in possible approaches to the subject matter), that each philosophy of history tends to negate by its orientation toward the substantial (i.e., the Czech nation), the essential (i.e., general humanity), *telos* (i.e., meaning, or the cognizance of freedom), or the secularized *eschaton* (i.e., elimination of private property). Only by recognizing each one-sided and incomplete explanation of history is it possible to advance and promote the pluralistic, democratizing potential of historical cognition, and historiography as such. Perhaps this is where Slavík was the most advanced of his colleagues, although he was not able to use this pluralism towards Pekař…

Glosses on Jan Slavík's Theory of History

Martin KUČERA

In this paper we will concern ourselves with the late notes of historian Jan Slavík dealing with the theory of historical progress and its interpretation. Due to the nature of these notes, the text is not going to be systematic. It will be our glosses on the author's glosses, of which there are roughly fifty texts of varied quality and states of preservation. We will not refer to them individually. We will offer a synopsis – a summary of one of the possible points of view. In any case, Jan Slavík between the ages of 65 and 90, when he withdrew to self-exile, in protest to the sovietization of Czechoslovakia, gave striking proof of the victory of spirit over matter. Spirit is not a Holy Spirit, nor a soul nor a geist; spirit is what is inner to a human being and what should be of interest to us as historians. Through it, we can better understand our own individuality, which according to Jan Patočka proceeds through corporality or something that was ascribed to us and with which we rush to the world:

> Our rushing to the world is also a movement with which we embody ourselves into something other than ourselves, we engage ourselves, we objectify ourselves. This engagement in something that we were not originally, but which we are nevertheless becoming, discloses to us our possibilities…[1]

He who feels now that these references to the thoughts of philosophers are inappropriate does not have to read them. He could possibly be aware that they may help to unveil the other side of an historian's thought, which should not adhere just to the ground and surface of the world with all its crude and vulgar effects, but should aim into the world and above it. By such arousal the human being becomes a historical entity, and Slavík became one of the ever-valid examples of Czech historical thought.

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[1] Jan PATOČKA, *Tělo, společenství, jazyk, svět* (Prague: ISE, 1995), 40.

Prague Perspectives III (Prague, 2009), 101–114.

It is well know that Slavík occupied himself with the theory of history systematically and on a long-term basis, even though the beginning of his theoretical interest was quite spontaneous and lacked a more involved and systematic grounding. After the First World War, he became acutely aware of the crisis in Czech historical thought, which drew on ideals of the 19th century; he gradually perfected his theoretical viewpoints in arguments with Czech academic historical science, especially with Josef Pekař and Jaroslav Bidlo. These conflicts had fatal implications for him. He saw the tragic climax of Czech academic historiography, which had begun with the unfortunate external circumstances of Jaroslav Goll and Antonín Rezek, in the tragic death of Josef Šusta, as he explained in Šusta's obituary.[2] Jan Slavík had planned to publish his systematic theoretical deliberations in multivolume publications, but he was twice prevented from realizing this by external powers – the Nazis during the protectorate and the Communists after February 1948. Apparently, he had an outline of a study of the theory of historical cognition ready, and, after that, he planned to publish a thesis on the theory of historical process.

In 1950, according to his own written note and to a word-of-mouth imparted message, a six-member commando team of secret policemen, accompanied by two historians, for whom shortly before this event Slavík had represented a civic and scholarly model of behaviour, entered Slavík's study and confiscated a large amount of his writings, manuscripts, books with marginal notes, and correspondence. In the archives of the State Security, these materials have so far not been found, and it is likely that they will not be. Slavík tried to reconstruct from the scraps at least the initial ideas of his lost treatises. He returned to them several times and left a few versions, which we now have at our disposal, but seldom in full. Losing his sight and aging, the scholar either did not finish them or he was not able to preserve them well. In his personal papers deposited in the National Museum Archives (the files entitled Epilogues, Postscripts and Fragments, as Slavík haphazardly called them), are three interpenetrative dossiers: **(1)** Texts on the theory of historical cognition; **(2)** Essays on the theory of the Russian revolution; **(3)** Writings on the

[2] Jan SLAVÍK, "Josef Šusta dobrovolně odešel," *Svobodné slovo*, 3 June 1945, 2. For Goll's School, dependence on German historiography had, according to the author, a tragic dimension: "Disbelief led at the end to a tragedy, which – as I feel it – is a last act of the Goll's School tragedy, which began in the First World War."

subject of anachronisms in the interpretation of the medieval and early modern ages. We will concentrate on the first subject.

If we try to approximately define Slavík's basic ideas, he understood an historical process as a process of social-historical development reduced to a history of formations. This functional and ascendingly-perceived development is determined by factors of objective necessity and factors in the centre, or by factors partly or purely random (including such important ones as the participation of individuals). For explication, it is necessary to eliminate the most random factors. Change in the movement of social forces during historical development happens due to only one provision; that is, when circumstances or conditions change radically. Slavík called these paradigmatic changes revolutions. He also reflected on, but did not elaborate, a thesis of perpetual tension between object and subject as one of the stimuli of the historical process. Slavík did not developed properly his characterization of historical process, even less attention he paid to the notion of historical cognition. From the sum of his surviving papers, we may deduce that Slavík reduced historical cognition to a conceptual problem. He pointed out that testimonies about the past have various levels of certainty, just as no absolute certainty exists in any science. With other scientific disciplines – he was convinced of the possibilities of an exact historiography – Slavík shared noetic relativity. The historian's relativity is greater because a historian does not learn about the past directly, but through a mediated message, which must undergo an analysis (today we would add analysis of the semiotic situation of the mediator, semantic analysis and a special historical analysis). To illustrate the difficulties with historical cognition, Slavík used the example of Newton: Newton perceived time and space as constant absolute principles. Similarly, historians use the testimony of unchangeable sources thinking that they could have evoked the past in its totality only if the testimonies about the past were complete and fully preserved. Moreover, historians choose their sources subjectively, and anachronistically impose contemporary terminology onto the past.

Slavík's formulations ensued naturally from a different construct of an epistemological field than exists today. Despite the fact that, even after the Second World War, the development of historical science did not stop, the main reservations of Jan Slavík about the poor theoretical base of Czech historians are still somewhat valid. Postmodern philosophy throws away old observations, old ways and old experiences

as unnecessary to their general detriment, because such negativism deepens the gulfs of (self) destructive discontinuities. How much better was Slavík's perception that human culture is based on memory than a recent regretful piece, by Vladimír Borecký, that unpublished editorial notes and other remarks of dead scholars and thinkers are foredoomed to be non-communicable because their episteme had changed and legacies of the past are of no interest to anyone.[3] This would have meant, though, that the scientific past is dead. Mental activity creates the principal content and purpose of human cultural development, which, saved by cognition, carries on. For good reason, we have in mind specifically the dissemination of works by humanities scholars and philosophers. Likewise, the work of Jan Slavík, in whole and in its elementary parts, speaks and would speak to the perceptive and to the fair-minded, and could face criticism.

Without compromise, as was his habit, Slavík refuted two sources of "Babel" in Czech historiography, at least in its conceptual apparatus: the first was a tradition of the German Ranke's and post-Ranke historiography, a paradigm for Goll's school and "schools" of his pupils. The second one, derived from the methodological insufficiency of these schools, was the conceptual schematism and the misleading post-war historical Marxism, symbolized specifically by Zdeněk Nejedlý, author of an unfinished *Dějiny českého národa* [History of the Czech Nation], and Václav Husa, the writer of standard Czechoslovak history textbooks. Slavík also brought attention to the fact that attempts to define history and historiography were chaotic and altogether erroneous, or at least one-sided, and that it would be proper to spend time on delimitation of the subject of historical sciences. Czech, so-called Marxist, historiography was characterized by continuing in a positivist vein, ignoring post-Hegelian German, French, Russian, Polish and Italian philosophy, some of whose representatives enriched thoughts about history and historiography itself.

Slavík made demands on historical sciences similar to the demands of Brno structuralist Oleg Sus on scholarship in general. According to Sus,

> the system of science brings conceptions into context and proceeds to higher generalizations (even to categories) and their connectedness, because it wants to grasp not only individual moments of its object, but also all aspects, both in their entirety and their mutual relationships.

[3] Vladimír BORECKÝ, "Šalba svobody," in Bohuslav Brouk, *Zde trapno existovat* (Brno: Host, 2008), 44.

A science of society reconstructs a direction and summary of movement while its

> certain "dwell-time" cannot be separated from notional cognition, in effect, from no cognition, only its levels will be different [...] Lively dialectics of real things, the flow and the course of the world we cannot grasp without breaking the unbreakable, which means notions, definitions, and higher entities, i.e., systems as well.[4]

In this correlation, Sus rightly mentioned Hegel's enormous contribution to the dialectics of scientific cognition. It is very interesting that Jan Slavík in his later deliberations never mentioned Hegel's name. We presume that Slavík did not used him, even though he was otherwise familiar with older German philosophy. He read classics like Immanuel Kant and Arthur Schopenhauer. From Kant's criticism, he adopted the impulse for conceptual organization of science, but not for a philosophy of negation, which led him to one-dimensional conceptual positivism and to an unawareness of the ontological status of used concepts. It was symptomatic that he did not recognize the category of historical being, and thus history was, and stayed, for him "a phenomenal science". For Slavík, Schopenhauer's predication, that historiography cannot generalize because it cannot formulate laws, was important. This led him to find specifics of historical factuality as experimentally unprovable and to the delimitation of "law" as a conception automatically ensuing from natural sciences and technology in the period after the French Revolution and during the industrial revolution. He thus made a decisive step toward the study of works by Wilhelm Windelband, Heinrich Rickert and Max Weber.

From the Baden Neo-Kantian School, where he mistakenly included also Wilhelm Dilthey, Jan Slavík adopted partly a concept of "historical reality" as something that is accessible to us only as the sum of facts which we are able to recognize, and which is, as far as testimonial value, relative. He also adopted a differentiation between nomothetic and ideographic sciences, i.e., the area of science of laws, which generalize relationships and states of "natural" objects and the area of unique phenomena testifying about the course of events of "cultural" objects. When he thought where to put the historical sciences, Slavík endorsed (inconsistently) Dilthey's term *Geisteswissenschaften*, or human or

[4] Oleg SUS, *Estetické problémy pod napětím: meziválečná avantgarda: surrealismus – levice* (Prague: Hrnčířství a nakl. Michal Jůza a Eva Jůzová, 1992), 4.

spiritual sciences, which is a remarkable and valid finding. As in other instances, even here Slavík broke off right at the inception; he did not inquire into the methodological foundations of human sciences. The interwar polemics of Jan Slavík and Josef Pekař lead Marek Loužek, a biographer of Max Weber, to say that Slavík's interpretation of Weber's legacy was only partial because it absolutized Weber's conclusion about historical reality perceived through a specific scholar's angle, through his evaluative viewpoint. Jan Horský[5], and after him Marek Loužek,[6] called this view an "aprioristic perception". They, however, did not mention the validity of such a stance because a historian always approaches interpretation of the past "with something" – with his moral codex on one side and evaluative criteria and interpretational postulates[7], of which he formulates only a part during his research, on the other side.

Disregarding that, we presume that Jan Slavík perceived Max Weber in depth, and almost to the end of his life, he returned to his key inspiration. He knew Weber's historical and partly sociological works, and from them he deduced: **(a)** concepts develop as everything around us develops; there is no common entity that would not yield to developmental motion and permanent changes; imprecise usage of concepts directs historians to grave anachronistic errors; **(b)** these developmental motions and connected changes must be reflected in a choice of adequate methods; they are not singular notions, but tendencies of social development, which run parallel to each other, but not equally; a historian is obliged to always think through the methodology of his research to justify historical tendencies and their respective presentation; **(c)** uniqueness of historical notions is conditional because a number of them may repeat under different circumstances, and therefore their singularity is generally capable of replication within a certain framework; **(d)** a historian must strive for value neutrality in relation to the past events.

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[5] Jan HORSKÝ, *Noetika kulturních věd Maxe Webera a české dějepisectví* (Ústí nad Labem: Albis international, 1994), 29.

[6] Marek LOUŽEK, *Max Weber: Život a dílo. Weberovské interpretace* (Prague: Karolinum, 2005), 258.

[7] Jan Slavík did not find the concept of "interpretation" apt in regard to the matter of a historian's interest.

What Slavík missed in the extensive work of Max Weber was his breakthrough theory of historical value and that of its meta-methodological and narrower axiological level. Jan Slavík identified himself very early as a historian with sociological leanings. Together with Victor Espinas, he professed the maxim that a good historian should be a good sociologist and *vice versa*. We do not have to agree unconditionally, but nevertheless it is a precondition for our receptiveness to the fact that, congruent with later testimony of Aron I. Gurevich,[8] Slavík realized the significance of Weber's ideal types defined on the grounds of knowledge of repeatable notions as suitable apparatus for a historian's conceptual generalization. A decisive assessment for him, it seems, was Weber's following statement:

> All representations of the "nature" of Christianity, for instance, are ideal types, of necessarily limited and problematic validity if they are to be viewed as historical representations of the empirically given; but they have on the other hand a high heuristic value for research, and a high systematizing value for exposition, if they are taken to be solely conceptual means for the *comparison* and *calibration* of reality.[9]

Unfortunately, we have to say that Jan Slavík overlooked the consequences resulting from differentiating civilizations and cultures found in Max's younger brother Alfred Weber. If he accused Alfred Weber of interpreting history as just a change of "cultures" adumbrating the image of Spengler's circuitous course, then he, by eliminating a concept of "civilization", unforgivably weakened his teachings.

Other ideas provided major impetuses for Jan Slavík. There were the historical teachings of Benedetto Croce, Lombroso's theory of continuity as an outline of social history, Mach's relativism, and Karl Lamprecht's question: "Wie ist es geworden?". Rightly, he put it well above Ranke's familiar question. He rejected Ranke-ism, Treitschke's Prussian philosophy of history and discarded metaphysical "spirits of history". More often, he referred to Alexis de Tocqueville and Louis Bourdeau, a fiery opponent of Carlyle's conception of history as the acts of great individuals. Slavík drew substantially on Russian historical thought, namely Nikolai I. Kareev, Sergei M. Solovev, Nikolai K. Mikhailovskii et al, and on Tomáš G. Masaryk. He explained, rather interestingly, the

[8] Aron I. GUREVICH, *Istoriia istorika* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2004).

[9] Max WEBER, "The 'objectivity' of knowledge in social science and social policy," in Sam Whimster, ed. *The Essential Weber* (London: Routledge, 2004), 393.

scepticism of Lev N. Tolstoy toward historicism as paying too much tribute to the period's cult of the natural sciences and to so-called exact cognition. He analyzed critically Karl Marx and Friedrich. Engels. In connection with his return to a concept of "progress", Slavík wittily remarked that Marx reversed the original Jacobin notion, that exploitation of the people lead to a new social order, to its opposite: socialism would be a result of social progress. He appreciated Engels' warning not to bring about socialism in a culturally backward country because it would inevitably lead to despotism. A very circumspect (even if not, due to personal circumstance, thoroughly worked out) application of methodology based on ideal types and on the evaluation of the contributions or importance of detectable facts from the past, either general or individual, according to their "lasting value", i.e., their evolutionary value, led Slavík to an evaluation of Soviet society as state-capitalist. He reached the same opinion, as did Josef Ludvík Fischer between the wars,[10] without referring to him directly. While Fischer differentiated between two types of state capitalism, fascist corporative and Soviet, Slavík used the then-prevailing typology and defined the Soviet revolution as vertical and the German Nazi "revolution" as horizontal.

Slavík made many commendable observations. For example, he established a role for unscientific influences on the construction of historical works. He did not mean just an ideological or political influence, but also a psychological influence, of varied temporal, local, and social pressures, etc. Even though these manifestations prevent a historian from achieving maximum objectivity in his explications, they are indisputably a component, creating their substratum, and, in analyzing historical texts, a historian has to make allowances for these unscientific influences. Slavík further observed that a history of historiography should be, together with a theory of historical process, acknowledged as an integral part of multifaceted historical sciences and not set apart. According to him, the history of historiography is wrongly perceived as a history of historical literature, not seen in its internal logic, in a national and international context as the history of historical thought.

Slavík's third premise concerned a historical fact. Even before the war, he had learned that most historians think in a vicious circle of naïve realism: what a source describes must be a historical fact in itself; it

[10] Josef Ludvík FISCHER, *Zrcadlo doby. Abeceda skoro filosofická* (Prague: Orbis, 1932), 177 f.

must be true. This observation is still valid today. Seldom does a historian become aware of a fact that he does not issue definite judgments about the past because he cannot grasp it in its totality. He grasps only parts about which, if we are lucky, some testimony exists in the sources; and even these sources he does not penetrate fully. Even where these testimonies are incontestable and are about incontestable things, the source informs us from its perspective and we modify this information from our own views. It means that we always interpret the facts – and interpretation is always an explication, an explication always of only one side, and one aspect of the absolute totality in front of us. Distance in time makes contours sharper, but also it relativizes them and averages them out. After us, others may come who, from the same sources, might arrive at different conclusions and elucidate other aspects, sides and characteristics of the same past event.

Slavík spoke explicitly about the inability of a historian to grasp the intentions and motivations of individual history-makers. He diametrically differed from the Marxist negation of individual roles in history; he, however, thought that biographies are more literature than historiography. A historian can, according to Max Weber's teachings, construct a typology of social evolution and try within its framework to elucidate the role of social-human subjects and attempt analyses of individual acts, and not only of the great and powerful, but also of the small and powerless. He can define the relation between the masses and an individual; to determine the contemporary status of individual classes and professions, etc., but not even in sociological research can he do so without psychology, for he would never be able to reconstruct the private life of an individual without fabrications and inventions. Even stronger was Slavík's rejection of the ordinary term "evolution" taken by historians as something linear, continuous, apt to be schematically and descriptively reconstructed. They assume that evolution is a sort of *status quo ante*, while a social evolution (said Weber-like) "flows" without interruption and may be understood only as a flow; a historian would subjugate to his explanation only what would filter to him through historical sources out of this objectively-given current. He has to stabilize this captured vestige of the flowing current, to be able to analyze it. Many questions spring to mind: how is it possible that the thing we are watching is the same in the changing flow; what outside influences are touching it; what vibrations it itself causes; where is it integrated; what is its position in regard to

other things that move and function concurrently in the observed time; etc.? Here, we would like to remember Masaryk's words: "The evolution of each thing must be joined with a study of the thing itself [...] He who knows not the thing itself cannot understand its evolution."[11]

The historian Slavík borrowed the notion of "flow" from Max Weber. Weber adopted it from Hegel, as Hegel in his dialectical evolutionary thought drew on Heracleitus. Slavík missed these nuances, but let us remember his isolation and his age that were obstacles when he was developing his thesis. Slavík did not accept the idea of "motionless evolution" for the same reason he did not accept "mechanical" causality. In history, which he perceived as a social-historical development, nothing runs according to the scheme of cause and effect. The flow of history has many currents; hence, it is not possible to establish causality exactly. One current runs faster than the other, another one drags behind, another might disappear. History runs in several parallel lines (successions) with an uneven equivalent of speed and on an uneven level. The causality of positivists, Ranke-ists and a large number of Marxists is a principle external to historical sciences, a principle transposed from the natural science disciplines. Slavík was just a few steps away from freeing himself from the canon of historicism, which Hegel expounded philosophically, and historians much revered by Slavík, such as Edward Gibbon, Jules Michelet and Barthold Georg Niebuhr, applied in their historical practice. He did not realize – and in this stance his generational position and his close involvement in Czech historiography were reflected – that even historicism in its epitome answers to some of the constitutive elements of Newtonian physics. The idea of evolution is, after all, transposed to history from the natural sciences, and he himself, following the example of Max Weber, must confront the limits of historicism with its emphasis on the conceptual aspect of historical cognition.

In his theory of revolution, as we can see, Slavík was for the most part subject to the results of historicism, which during his life were being progressively surpassed. With a certain respect, he recognized the Marxists' hypothetical principle of revolution as an accumulated radical change of the material conditions of social evolution. He linked revolution with a category of social progress: the more developed a vehicle of social change, the more fundamental a revolutionary breakthrough was.

[11] Tomáš G. MASARYK, *Základové konkrétné logiky* (Prague: Bursík & Kohout, Hustopeče: L. Masaryk, 1885).

On the other hand, he distanced himself sharply from the reservations of Italian anthropologist and psychiatrist Cesare Lombroso about excessive accentuation of revolutionary discontinuation and from Neo-Kantian Benedetto Croce who stressed the material, physical and existential aspect of social changes. He detached himself from both thinkers with his characteristic rebuke of their conservatism. He was more welcoming to interpretations of Hermann Lotze, who tried to reconcile materialism with idealism and in philosophy placed revolution in the centre of theoretical interest. He was just doing the same thing. Jan Slavík did not doubt that Hussitism and the German Peasant Wars were "social revolutions", and he overestimated the collapse of Russia at the end of the First World War as a singular, indisputable revolutionary process. Just the phrase "revolutionary process" speaks of something else, about the fact that this is not a question of an impulsive act, but of a transformation of the existing society in a given time and given region, which comes out of the former, *in continuo*, continuously changeable movements, from deep inner societal premises. In this view, even the French Revolution – the only modern one – is not a revolution in the sense of the natural sciences, biological-genetic; it is a climax of previous tendencies within the *ancien regime*.

In Slavík's time, Martin Heidegger, whom this Czech historian ignored as distinct from J. Pekař, asserted the role of essentiality and mental processes in their impact on their possibilities. Speculation about Heidegger's ontological propositions as applied to historical consequences leads to a conclusion that only in the area of the mind could we speak of revolutionary movements, even if they undoubtedly arise from previous premises. They, however, happen mostly at once, sometimes even on individual level. In a complex and multiple interlacing within society, these divergences usually do not take place. Because: are mass rebellions revolutions? Are the overthrow of power relationships and changes of property structures revolutions? In a revolution and after it, something should crystallize, something that would deeply mark the ensuing evolutionary social chain by its lasting consequences. Incidentally, the French Revolution resolved very little, and took almost a century before it brought around what was its (then not sufficiently recognized) aim.

Expecting disagreement with use of the construct "essentiality", we feel a need to elucidate that we do not mean to revive some outdated expository models of society on the basis of "essentia", "substantia", and "quidditas".

NÁRODNÍ KNIHOVNA ČESKÉ REPUBLIKY UKF

We are concerned with the recollection of Heidegger's antinomy derived from the Scholastic tradition: essence – existence, being – Being-there (but also mind – body, phenomena – noumena…). According to Heidegger, "Being-there" (Dasein) is always and essentially the possibility of existence, which for an historian is an invaluable discovery:

> The being-possible, which Dasein always is existentially, is also distinguished from empty, logical possibility and from the contingency of something objectively present, where this or that can "happen" to it…[12]

Now, perhaps from a different angle in the words of Jan Patočka (a phenomenologist relevant for historians):

> A human being in his physical state is in the interface between being indifferent to himself and to others and his sense of being immersed in a greater universe.[13]

We feel that for a spiritual interpretative plan or horizon it is necessary to differentiate more radically between the spiritual and material sides of historical movements and to move away from the century-old clasp of material conditions with empirical data, etc. We have to move away from what, for human beings, is external and concentrate on the spiritual side, on creation, without determining what is primary and what is derived because both occur in parallel, are mutually conditioned and dependent on each other. Is it difficult? Certainly, but that cannot serve as an argument against a spiritual advancement and the experiments without which it is impossible to interpret cultural auto-humanizing processes that extend in human history as one of its axes.

From the fragments of Slavík's applications of theoretical bases on specific historical material, let us, for illustration, present two considerations. First, Jan Slavík formulated a particular logical process of social movement when he wrote that after each social upheaval comes a change in power and economic structures, and new rulers repeat the mistakes of their overthrown predecessors. He inferred the character of the so-called Russian revolution from its muzhik basis and from the agrarian nature of Russian history, which did not experience the urbanization undergone elsewhere in Europe.

Second, Slavík pointed to the circumstance that Christianity is an urban Church organization, which matured in conditions of the Roman

[12] Martin HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time* (New York: State University of New York, 1996), 144.
[13] PATOČKA, *Tělo, společenství, jazyk, svět*, 125.

metropolis, and its infiltration into the pagan world took a long time and was not without its troubles. "Pagan" is a derivation from the Latin noun "paganus", or country dweller, which means that "pagans" were usually inhabitants of rural areas against whom violent measures were often permitted. Despite Tertullian and St Athanasius, who inveighed against the violent spread of Christianity, at the end of antiquity and after the consolidation of papal superiority over the Christian community, the opinion prevailed that violence was permissible. Souls for the Church of Christ were brought in not only *per amorem* but also *per timorem et per dolorem.*[14] The Church substantiated these methods by referring to the Gospels, especially to Luke: "And the Lord said unto the servant, Go out unto the highways and hedges, and compel *them* to come in, that my house may be filled."[15] From this Slavík inferred that the spread of Christianity throughout the Middle Ages was cruel, and moreover long--lasting, because the old animistic and other icons of folk mythologies linger on in etymological residues even today. Jan Slavík's interpretation of the history of Christianity was incomplete. He emphasized that, at the onset of the 17th century, the Czech population was generally illiterate, and therefore the anti-Reformation burning of books was felt minimally. He forgot to add that the book burning concerned solely the Protestant minority, an enclave in the population that was almost entirely literate.

If we are interested in his relationship to God and god creation, we must add that it is nowhere fully explicated, as if the historian was avoiding it. Slavík was doubtless a liberal democrat with a left orientation; he was well versed in theological issues. The legacy of Max Weber as historian and sociologist validated his feeling about their importance. Nevertheless, we suspect that Slavík was an atheist who kept the same distance from both the Eastern and Western rite, and from religious reformation as from let us say the history of the Russian revolution. In this attitude, he was not Masaryk's follower.

Jan Slavík is a singular example of an historian who came from the academic school of Jaroslav Goll (he considered himself as its youngest member). He fed on the sources of Czech and European historiography from the end of the 18th and entire 19th century, and was among the first historians who exposed the crisis of so-called positivist or pragmatic and genetic history, its constriction, inadequacy and anachronistic fallibility.

[14] Not only by love, but also by fear and pain.
[15] *Holy Bible*, King James Version, Luke 14, 23.

We leave aside Slavík's inspiration by Weber. There we do not wish to judge to what extent he was an epigone or authentic, and if we leave aside also the fact that his theoretical contributions are not by any means all he had to offer, because he is an internationally respected historian of the Russian revolution, we can reach the following conclusion: As a theoretician of history, Slavík did rise above the borders of historicism whose relative validity was as clear to him as was the relative validity of scientific cognition generally and particularly. In various things, he stood in the shadow of the romantic approach of František Palacký and his contemporaries, which is evident in his definition of historiography as preserving memory of the past for the sake of current life. A sociological outline of his historical thought lead to the term "sociologist reformer" as one who actively joins public life and aims to influence it by elucidation of the bond between the future, the present and the past. Slavík understood the past as a diversified, multi-directional, polyvalent process happening in past time and space. Should he have walked out through the gate of historicism, Jan Slavík would have touched a dialectical and hermeneutic methodology, semiotic communication situations, theory of interpretation and categories of historicity and structure. That he did not do so is not in his case the failure of a theoretician, but of his external conditions, which were deplorable. The fact that his methods and ideology are somewhat obsolete is fully balanced by Slavík's emphasis on a scientific ethic and the consistence of his life-long public commitment.

Phenomenon of Revolution in Jan Slavík's Historical Thought

Petr STŘEDA

The phenomenon of revolution has a privileged position in Slavík's historical thought. His life interests were revolutions, namely the Bolshevik and the Hussite. He did not perceive revolution as historical excess, interplay of coincidences, or the result of some actions of an individual; he understood it as a part of historical regularity. He perceived the historical process itself as regular. Even though he categorically rejected the application of a natural sciences concept of laws to social sciences and philosophy, and sought laws of human development in history,[1] he nevertheless maintained that history is not a succession of accidental events, but a chain of causally-linked processes proceeding according to certain social laws.[2] Here emerged Slavík's plea for a scientific historical methodology that could be achieved through the interconnection of history and sociology.

In Slavík's conception, history has a regular direction and design to which the flow of historical events is channelled by "historical necessity", which, in his view, is economic necessity.[3] He saw the material needs of

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[1] "Professional historians conquered this one very easily. They simply pointed out that history cannot seek laws like chemistry or biology can." Jan SLAVÍK, "Dějiny a přítomnost. Víra v Rakousko a věda historická [1931]," in Miloš Havelka, ed., *Spor o smysl českých dějin 1895–1938* (Prague: Torst, 1995), 624.

[2] "The problem of accidentality and the influence of individuals is the hardest nut to crack in science, and particularly in history. It is a question so difficult that some historians wanted to give up seeking a deeper causality in historical events. Historians, though, know many instances where similar situations had nearly the same effect. Nobody today is going to be put out of balance by Pascal's malicious statement that the world would be different if only Cleopatra had a slightly longer nose." IDEM, "Pekař contra Masaryk. Ke sporu o smysl českých dějin [1929]," in *Ibid.*, 613.

[3] See for example Slavík's explanation of the cause leading to the rise of states: "It was an economic progress, which 'necessarily' led to the rise of larger political entities. […] Specialization of trades led to the disintegration of kinship, as they needed a larger trading space […]. Only the 'economic necessity' could assure a lasting coalition of the tribes, the necessity of trading on larger territory." IDEM, *Vznik českého národa* (Prague: Pokrok, 1946), 1 (Národ v době družinné): 156.

Prague Perspectives III (Prague, 2009), 115–131.

individuals as a key agent of change. A number of individuals whose material interest is satiated are limited by the economic situation in a given moment of society's development. These economic limits lead to an unequal distribution of wealth in the society, to the establishment of privileged and underprivileged classes. The natural desire of the underprivileged for an equal position in society, that is a realization of complete economic and social equality towards which history with regularity progresses is what Slavík terms "humanity". He perceived human history as "a process of convergence":

> People do not only converge horizontally (internationally), but also vertically (socially). Class and rank differences disappear in every nation and the whole world would be driven by a monumental effort to dispose of economic inequality.[4]

* * *

In his perception of history as a linear process with ascending tendencies and progressing to bring to fruition a certain idea, and by usage of the term "humanity", Slavík came close to the historical-philosophical concept of Tomáš G. Masaryk. Masaryk's concept of the flow of history is that of a guided "Providential" plan, heading for the realization of a transcendental "idea of humanity". There are substantial differences between these concepts. Slavík's universal idea, "humanity", is not a transcendental idea and its realization is not an act of "Providence". History is directed by economic necessity on its path to fulfilment:

> And again, it would be a mistake if we argued that in the development of international socialism, the connecting link is an abstract idea of humanity. There is an economic moment, a striving for the betterment of large masses, i.e., a majority of people, which calls for international brotherhood amongst the working classes.[5]

Historical evolution within each nation happens according to a specific scheme:

> The most important thread of internal development winding through the history of every European nation from the very beginning to the 19th century proceeds in the same way: stratum after stratum changes from serfs into citizens [...], citizens who participate in governing. [...] It is an almost inevitable

[4] IDEM, "K otázce možnosti dějin Slovanstva," *Slovanský přehled* 27, no. 8 (1935): 334.
[5] *Ibid.*, no. 9 (1935): 374.

> consequence of cultural and predominantly economic development that it gradually raises the self-confidence and requirements of individual ranks.[6]

The first individual whose economic interest was fully satiated was the sovereign. The medium of achievement was for him a first distinctive social turning point – the acceptance of Christianity.

> Christian monotheism – faith in one lord and ruler of the world – considerably supported the evolution of medieval monarchies. Christianity was quickly followed by tribal unification and the consolidator was the chieftain who first accepted the new faith.[7]

As time passed, members of his retinue developed into a ruling class, an aristocracy. The cause of this development was, besides the economic interest of the entourage, the inability of the central power to supply people with the basic necessities of life, to defend their lives and property. New administrative organization in the state leads to a growth of confidence of its representatives and to seeking equality:

> The place of the retinue is taken over by squires who embark on distinguishing between the interests of the sovereign and the interests of the country, which surely are their own interests as landowners and masters of the inhabitants.[8]

The separation of the first estate from the humble masses ruled by the sovereign was, according to Slavík, the first step towards democratization, to "humanity".

The next move was the emancipation of towns, the disengagement of the bourgeoisie from a subservient class, caused by the economic power of the towns, and the ensuing dissatisfaction with their subordination to the aristocracy. To move such a large class as the bourgeoisie, it was necessary that its members be converted to some common idea. In the history of European nations, this role was played by religion. All religious wars in the 14th–16th centuries were, Slavík maintains, nothing but a manifestation of the progressive emancipation of the towns. Religious ideals only had a mobilizing function:

> No social mutiny against the current social orders would have had an enduring success if it had not been supported by religious reasons. At a time when all political and social arrangements were built on an idea indoctrinated by Christianity [...] the struggle for further progress of society could only

[6] SLAVÍK, *Vznik českého národa*, 1: 124.
[7] *Ibid.*, 22.
[8] *Ibid.*, 92.

> have happened with a battle cry to reform a society which had ceased to obey God's commands, and not simply with a declaration of a desire for change.[9]

The last two classes that had raised their economic and political demands were the most numerous: salaried townspeople and peasants. Slavík writes that the self-confidence of these classes had grown because of their rising living standards during the industrial revolution of the 19th century. Just as in the case of the bourgeoisie, the idea that mobilized this numerous mass was the idea of socialism:

> As in this age a vibrant industrial expansion furnished an economic base for a powerful social movement, so in the 14th century the evolving town culture caused tremors in the feudal system.[10]

Two basic eras crystallized in Slavík's perception of history. They differed greatly in their central, supporting and mobilizing international idea:

> In the history of Europe as a matter of fact I recognize two great periods – the epochs of Christian internationalism and democratic internationalism [...] In the first period, prevailed so-called religious reformations and revolutions [...] that, at their core, are but an effort to improve social systems. At the core of the second epoch are also democratically-based social movements, manifested either by the pen (mind) or the sword (revolution).[11]

According to Slavík's historical-sociological scheme, the idea of equality spread gradually from the highest to the lowest ranks. Analogous to his perception, inspired by works of the Russian historian and sociologist Pavel N. Miliukov,[12] there was also a spread of national consciousness:

> The first exponents of national consciousness are the chieftains and their entourages, later the nobility with their chivalric culture, then the burghers, and finally the national consciousness penetrates the masses.[13]

National consciousness and the awareness of the right to equal political and social conditions in society spread simultaneously, through the same steps. Both processes Slavík observed as inseparable from each other, and he perceived them as two signs of society's development

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[9] *Ibid.*, 38.
[10] *Ibid.*
[11] IDEM, "K otázce možnosti dějin Slovanstva," 374.
[12] Pavel N. MILJUKOV, *Národnost, její vznik a vývoj se zvláštním zřetelem k poměrům slovanským* (Prague: Orbis, 1930).
[13] Jan SLAVÍK, "Vývoj národního vědomí (Od nacionalismu k internacionalismu)," in *Tři přednášky o nacionalismu: Jan Slavík, Vývoj národního vědomí; Zdeněk Nejedlý, Nacionalismus a národnost; J. B. Kozák, Národ jako úkol* (Prague: Svaz národního osvobození, 1932), 12–13.

toward the same ideal, toward "humanity". The result of historical evolution was for him a "modern nation" whose basic characteristics are "an awareness of belonging to a specific human collective, and predominantly an awareness of civic equality in this collective".[14]

A period of transition and the spread of these two ideas from one social level to another and another following closely on the social ladder is an era of immense social uprisings, or revolutions. Slavík also considered as a revolution the process of evangelization,[15] Hussitism and the Reformation. Revolutions are, in his historical concept, a natural and regular feature and, despite their violence, have an unambiguously positive character. In the development toward "humanity", toward "vertical and horizontal equality", they are positive even when unsuccessful:

> Each revolution brings a new idea and sweeps people to action; it is an intense fermentation of spirit. The importance of revolution cannot be measured by the value of the ideas by which the masses were inspired or by the level that the programme achieved. Its importance is the fact that the nation experienced it.[16]

A historian like Jan Slavík who committed a lot of his intellectual capacity to the scientification and methodological development of historiography could not possibly omit seeking a method for studying revolutions, his central scholarly theme. He criticized the *a priori* denial of the idea of revolutions that was advocated by some scholars, for example Josef Pekař in history and Pitirim A. Sorokin in sociology, and even more their assertion that they arrived at it by a detailed study of history. He saw the reason for their aversion in their conservative world outlook. He further underlined that revolutions cannot be studied like isolated events, but that it is necessary to interpret them in their entire historical context. He considered any précis of assets and liabilities of a revolution during or shortly after the event as erroneous:

> Revolution is a fight for a new idea, which, when its path is being violently broken, bears little real fruit. It does not have assets, but its liabilities are visible right away. In time, the ratio would reverse. While the damage is not

[14] IDEM, *Vznik českého národa*, 1: 172.

[15] "It was truly a grand revolution where the exchange of paganism for Christian monotheism was not that important at the inception." IDEM, "K otázce možnosti dějin Slovanstva," 373.

[16] IDEM, *Husitská revoluce. Studie historicko-sociologická* (Prague: Orbis, 1934), 112.

> increasing, the fruit of the winning idea proliferates. Arguments about revolution cannot be settled today. Years must pass for it to show its meaning.[17]

Slavík assumes that the merit of a revolution could be determined only by the state of the nation after it. For this reason, a historian must work critically with contemporary reports and not base his evaluation on opinions of their authors; as, for example, Josef Pekař did, using a method of historical questionnaire for his work *Žižka a jeho doba* [Žižka and His Time].[18] A very useful historical aid, according to Slavík, would be for the historian a "comparative study of revolutions" because a revolution cannot be explained just in itself:

> It is not possible for a historian to rely on information provided by the contemporaries of the course of the revolution. Knowledge of these accounts is a prerequisite, but how contemporaries of other revolutions wrote about them in a similar situation would also provide great help with critical analysis. A comparative study of revolutions shows how different sides perceive revolutionary events, and what reasons they have for their judgments.[19]

Just as in the whole historical process, revolutions are not the result of accidental circumstances or the work of a few individuals. Their onset, course, and conclusion are natural.

Jan Slavík refuted the interpretations of historians who were seeking the cause of revolutions in worsening social conditions, wrongdoings of government or in revolutionary activities. Revolutions are not a final consequence of a decline. He considered such observations to be survivals of a medieval world outlook:

> This notion has its roots in a medieval view of social conditions. The struggle for progress would have been rationalized by a hinting at a society that had become corrupted from its original state. Some of this ideology still exists in historiography, entrapped by the thought that real poverty leads to revolution.[20]

Slavík saw the true cause of revolutionary process in the economic development of human society. At a certain stage of this evolution, thanks to economic and cultural progress, the self-confidence of a certain social group would grow so much that it would no longer put up with dependence on a ruling class:

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[17] IDEM, *Smysl ruské revoluce. Úvahy a kritiky* (Praha: Svaz národního osvobození, 1927), 137–138.

[18] Josef PEKAŘ, *Žižka a jeho doba*, 4 vols. (Prague: Vesmír, 1927–1933).

[19] SLAVÍK, *Husitská revoluce*, 111.

[20] *Ibid.*, 43.

> ...social unrest happens at a time of economic and political progress when large masses begin to feel self-confident and aware that it is possible to change the existing class system by joint action.[21]

The root of this movement is economic and from it ensue political demands. The fiery outburst of revolution occurs naturally, and no governmental measure can put it out.[22]

A general improvement in economic conditions leads, Slavík deduces, to a social crisis and in it, not in economic or political crises, we have to look for the roots of a revolution. Revolutionary overthrow is not a temporary deviation from the usual state of the society or some abnormality, but the "fruit of an abnormal, i.e., untenable, situation".[23] The villain of this untenable state is not a feckless and corrupt government; the abnormality of a pre-revolutionary society lies in the survival of old social forms and orders in a changed economic and social reality: "Progress rendered the old society abnormal, and it became impossible in a changed economic and cultural situation."[24]

The prosperity of Czech towns in the 14th century made the old feudal society anomalous; the economically strongest class had no say in the politics of the country. The same thing happened in Russia at the turn of the century. Improving living standards and mounting economic and political demands rendered the existing Czarist system indefensible where the land, the only source of livelihood for the absolute majority in a population of many millions belonged to only tens of thousands "pomeshchiks" (feudal landowners). Slavík perceived the Russian Bolshevik revolution as a violent solution to the agrarian question, which was a chronic economic problem of the Czarist empire. On one hand, there were muzhiks wanting land,[25] and on the other, there was a torpid state

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[21] *Ibid.*, 28.

[22] "A well developed economic life cannot be manacled by a command or violence [...] of a government." *Ibid.*, 37.

[23] Jan SLAVÍK, "Představa abnormálnosti v pojetí historiků," manuscript, Archiv Národního muzea (National Museum Archives – further only ANM), fund (further only f.). Jan Slavík (1885–1978), box (further only b.) 1, inventory number (further only ivn. n.) 1.

[24] IDEM, *Husitská revoluce*, 56.

[25] "Under the influence of quickly changing economic conditions there ripens a blind biological process, in which the constrained organism of nations frees itself regardless of spilled blood and loss of strength." (IDEM, *Co jsem viděl v sovětském Rusku* (Prague: Svaz národního osvobození, 1926), 5.) This biological parallel was inspired by the French natural scientist Elysée Recluse. See: IDEM, "Revoluce," in *Ottův slovník naučný nové doby* (Prague: Novina, 1938), 5: 601; IDEM, "Reclusova předpověď ruské revoluce," *Národní osvobození*, 15 June 1926, 1–2.

system, which in its essence was unreformable. The only available solution to the social crisis, Slavík estimated, was the abolition of absolutism, the expropriation of landholdings belonging to the ruling class, and transference of the ownership to the civilian population.

Slavík assumed that the revolutionary fire is not ignited by the whole nation, but only by one of its classes, which, in a certain phase of historical development, had become so strong that the existing state of society was incompatible with its matured self-confidence and its intent to make a radical change. The vehicle of the revolution is not just any class; it has to be a group in the social hierarchy, which is one below the class whose economic interest and resulting social and political demands have already been satisfied. First, there is a bourgeois revolution, and only then a socialistic revolution. Slavík defined this law as "the progress of revolutions according to the maturity of the classes".[26] Even the Russian revolution of 1917 is not an exception to this rule. Its specifics were an acceleration of the whole historical process due to modern communications.

The class that initiated the revolution cannot succeed by itself. Yet, by attacking a "weak link of society", it recruits allies in lower and higher classes, allies from below and from above. The "leading class", more specifically its leaders, see as the only way out of social crisis the expropriation of the means of production from another class whose status in society has already been diminished, such that keeping these means of production in its hands would be unjustified. In the early Middle Ages, Slavík estimated that the Church played an important role in the creation of feudal states. It had an irreplaceable function in the state administration because the clergy were the only literate people in the land. It had just as important a role in the state economy. The foundation of monasteries was just as momentous for the economic development of feudal states as the founding of the towns was later.[27] At the beginning of the 15th century, the Church even with its vast landholdings became powerless because the aristocracy took over administration, and the towns took over the economic share. The Church thus became the "weaker link in society". Therefore the programme agreed on by the aristocratic, bourgeois and subordinated classes was the expropriation of Church assets:

[26] IDEM, *Husitská revoluce*, 56.
[27] IDEM, *Vznik českého národa*, 1: 107.

> At the end of the Middle Ages, a social crisis arises and[28] the society turns against ecclesiastical properties and revenues in the same way as in the modern age workers' movements bear down on capitalism.

It is, according to Slavík, the true cause for the fervour of the majority of Czechs for the teachings of John Hus. He, among other things, declared the necessity for reform of the Church, consisting in the expropriation of its wealth.[29] This fervour had spread across all classes and castes of society. Similarly, in the Russian Bolshevik revolution, the vehicle of the revolution was the proletariat. To gain victory, its leaders tended to get powerful allies in the peasantry. It was the main reason for the radical agricultural reform executed by the Bolsheviks,[30] and for the many concessions at the beginning of the 1920s, such as the largest one, the New Economic Policy.[31] Terms for the onset of revolution are set up unobtrusively, over a long period. The revolutionary outburst is, however, caused by some concrete immediate reason. Slavík distinguished two types of such catalysts.[32] The first are material factors, usually a temporary worsening of the economic situation caused, for example, by a war (that was the case of Russia during the First World War), or it was an attempt by government to restrict the rights attained earlier by the revolting classes:

> If such an effort, which ignores a new self-confidence, is made during such a psychological situation, it results in a conflict; a revolution, substantiated by oppression and blunders of the rulers, would start. The factual roots are, however, the increasing demands of insurgents who revolt in economic and political conditions which their ancestors never had.[33]

Ideals could be just as motivating as material inducements. Typical of the ideals inspiring the revolutions of the 18th to 20th centuries was the

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[28] IDEM, *Husitská revoluce*, 66.

[29] Jan Hus' treatise *O svatokupectví* [On Simony] Slavík proclaimed "one of the most revolutionary political and social writings ever written. […] It is an open challenge to break the power of the Church, to expropriate its wealth and to get rid of its temporal powers." *Ibid.*, 39.

[30] "To save the revolution, the Bolsheviks bent to the Germans at Brest-Litevsk. According to Bukharin, the workers have a similar peace with the Russian peasants. They must have backed off from the muzhiks and made friends with them." SLAVÍK, *Co jsem viděl v sovětském Rusku*, 55–56.

[31] "Muzhik must be won otherwise he will send us all to hell, said Lenin in 1921 defending his New Economic Policy." *Ibid.*, 53.

[32] See SLAVÍK, "Revoluce," 600.

[33] IDEM, *Husitská revoluce*, 37.

"idea of progress". Thanks to it, the classes in question call for their right to a better social, economic and political position.[34] By contrast, revolutions at the end of the Middle Ages invoked the "idea of return":

> People who were not aware of human rights or the idea of progress had no other choice. The source of their worldview was the Gospels. That is why each revolution, even simple peasant rebellions, invoked the Scriptures, and demanded that orders be returned to their original state.[35]

Religion was not, in a revolution like Hussitism or in the Reformation, an aim, but a means to achieve its purpose. It is best substantiated by the fact that

> after so-called religious revolutions we see a rapid decline of religious interest and spiritual life. The religious aspect of life is at the ebb and is limited to sects, which really are a protest against the secularization of society.[36]

These flare-ups were not religious revolutions where economic, political, and social outcomes would grow from a religious base. Such affirmation would be, Slavík says, "a replacement of the social tendencies of the period with an idealistic rationale".[37] They were always social revolutions, where religious appeals had provided only an excuse, which stirred the masses:

> ...at the end of the Middle Ages, a social crisis had awoken aversion for the secular powers of the Church. It is the first precondition of a revolution. It is justified by an allusion to the original state. This allusion to the simple state of the Church logically leads to other demands. [...] All these demands are, however, secondary.[38]

It does not mean, though, that a religious idea has no role in these revolutions. Its importance lies, as in the case of the idea of progress, in stirring the masses:

> Only these revolutionaries that manage to get the masses on their side in towns, and in the country, can win. These simple throngs are easily swayed and most selflessly sacrifice their lives in a fight for the idea from which they gain little or nothing. Each revolution proves that the common masses start to move first because they are possessed with emotion, and because they have nothing to lose.[39]

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[34] IDEM, "Revoluce," 600.
[35] IDEM, *Husitská revoluce*, 29.
[36] *Ibid.*, 39.
[37] *Ibid.*, 66.
[38] *Ibid.*, 66–67.
[39] *Ibid.*, 51.

Even though only a few individuals may direct the stages of a revolutionary movement, the revolutions are not only a result of their actions. In Slavík's concept of history, an individual is not the sole history maker and his chances to influence its flow are limited. If an individual comprehends the principles of "historical necessity", then he can have some bearing on current events, but he can never change the course of history because it is determined by "historical necessity". That is why the historical personalities cannot be wholly responsible for events that they could only have influenced in a limited measure.[40] Slavík thus presumes that for Lenin's victory in 1917, Aleksandr F. Kerenskii cannot be made responsible because he could not stop the progress of the Bolshevik revolution, which swept through Russia, a corollary of "historical necessity". By contrast, Lenin, knowing revolutionary laws well, could regulate its natural progress according to his vision. Whenever he tried to override the sociological laws of history, he met with failure.[41] Revolutionaries do not make revolutions; revolutions make revolutionaries, claimed Slavík.[42]

"The comparative study of revolutions" brought Slavík to specify their main characteristics:

> Demands with which a revolution starts are relatively moderate. After a victory, revolutionary maximalists, who at first won the masses with their radicalism, escalate these demands; very soon, though, their maximalist programme shows itself to be unrealizable and the radicals succumb to the moderates; enduring achievements are those gained in the first wave.[43]

After the revolutionary outburst, the ruling class finds itself in a deadlock. Whatever "attempt of the ruling class to prevent, with police help, the further progress of events caused by social conditions"[44] is pointless because "historical necessities" cannot be brought to an end. Even concessions to the revolutionary class would not protect its

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[40] Jan SLAVÍK, "Pád první republiky," Zdeněk Sládek, ed., *Slovanský přehled* 76, no. 3 (1990): 195.

[41] IDEM, *Smysl ruské revoluce*, s. 34–38.

[42] "The portrait of this man drawn by Professor Pekař has a crucial fault; it is based on the presumption that Želivský made the revolution and not that the revolution made Želivský." IDEM, *Husitská revoluce*, s. 79.

[43] IDEM, "Revoluce," 600.

[44] IDEM, *Husitská revoluce*, 46.

exclusive stance because concessions cannot stop the surging wave of revolution; they only make it more powerful.[45]

Slavík was of the opinion that, shortly after the onset of a revolution, "a process of differentiation" begins, i.e., a process of allies' falling away. Allies from "above" fall away fairly soon because they grasp the fact that the revolution would eventually turn against their class.[46] The first level of schism is a split in the ranks between "radicals" and "moderates":

> The basic signs of the differences between these two factions are doubtless social and economic. There has not been a revolution yet where the poor and oppressed classes would form a "moderate" party, and where people better situated socially and economically would be radical advocates of a social change. Only very exceptionally do individuals break this rule.[47]

Moderates try to damp down the revolution because it begins to turn against them:

> It is an economic element and in thought very close to the class beleaguered by the revolution. It is only natural and psychologically explainable that these revolutionaries move away very quickly from the revolution when they feel the spray of that radical wave on their skin. They very quickly recognize that their interests are closer to those of the victimized class. They then seek reconciliation with the old authority.[48]

Reconciliation is, however, very difficult because this class provided the "ideological guides" for revolutionary action. Radicals, on the other hand, perceive any attempt at reconciliation as treason. Since from the beginning the radicals have been the prime movers, any reconciliation attempts by moderates with the old regime lead to an escalation of revolutionary radicalism and terror.

Revolution is, according to Slavík, a battle on two fronts:

> It is always a civil war, a struggle between two or more segments of the nation, and because a social movement always has international tendencies, it is also a fight with a foreign enemy.[49]

If there were a danger of international intervention or a chance of joint action by foreign and internal enemies against the revolution imperiling the revolution, or deadly danger threatening the revolutionary class, a "revolutionary terror surfaces and turns against all adversaries,

[45] *Ibid.*, 86.
[46] *Ibid.*, 51.
[47] *Ibid.*, 68.
[48] *Ibid.*, 73.
[49] *Ibid.*, 50.

including those where treason is felt or presumed". Revolutionary terror is then not an expression of the brutal nature of a revolutionary class, or a result of demagogues' activities, but the revolutionaries' answer to reactionary practices and, as well, a manifestation of their predicament and fears:

> Revolutionary terror is in essence an answer to brutality on the adversary's side. The less aware revolutionaries are of their own strength, the more ferocious terror becomes. When they become convinced that the danger has passed, terror slowly abates and its perpetrators lose ground.[50]

A second factor determining the degree of revolutionary violence is the readiness of the society to accept revolutionary changes: "If carrying out a revolutionary programme is more difficult, i.e., if the time is not fully ripe to accept new principles, then the revolutionary brutality increases."[51]

The struggle of the revolutionary classes with foreign countries begins as a defence of the revolution against external enemies. After successfully deterring intervention, the revolutionaries continue to export the revolution by military means and strive to spread their truth abroad. An integral constituent of their thinking is explicit following international aims.[52] For Slavík, a typical example was Lenin's revolutionary strategy. Lenin perceived the Russian revolution as a prologue to a worldwide socialist revolution:

> The weakness of Russian capitalism and the bourgeoisie would make the "tiger's pounce" of the Russian proletariat easy. It would set a revolution in motion throughout Western Europe. European states would become socialist and help Russia out of its economic backwardness.[53]

On home ground, the revolution must fight with an additional enemy – tradition. Slavík stressed that revolution is

> the struggle of a small group of innovators with the immense strength of tradition. This proportion will change little even if revolutionaries get the majority on their side. Getting people to come over to the revolutionary side is made easy by an attack on the old regime and old authorities. Revolutionaries overthrow them with ease, but the difficulties begin when the old order must be replaced with a new one. Here it becomes obvious how hard it is to fit the old society into new structures. Old views on society and

[50] *Ibid.*, 79.
[51] *Ibid.*, 50.
[52] SLAVÍK, "Pád první republiky," 180.
[53] IDEM, *Co jsem viděl v sovětském Rusku*, 54–55.

> the old habits of its administration are so deep-rooted that they infiltrate into the revolutionary camp.[54]

The methods of those whom the revolution fights creep unnoticeably into revolutionary methods. Slavík calls this occurrence "the regular absorption of elements of previous thinking".[55] The awareness that the revolutionary regime includes elements of the pre-revolutionary regime Slavík gained from Tocqueville's analysis of the French revolution *Ancien Regime and the Revolution*.[56]

Another common trait of revolutions is, according to Slavík, the fact that they usually ended in the military dictatorship of an individual. He saw several reasons for this occurrence:

> A new revolutionary government, not sanctified by tradition, defends its conquered position with difficulty. At first, when it feels threatened, it resorts to terror because it does not have a well-organized military and police apparatus. Fully-armed power gains more and more influence and, at the end, the master of the revolutionary state is the one who has the army behind him.[57]

Just as revolutions become predictably more radical, their end is also predictable. If there is no more external danger, the revolutionary terror and its representatives lose their *raison d'être*. They find themselves in the same situation as the members of the ruling class that the revolution had swept away: they are defending a system that is no longer appropriate. Little by little, the moderates gain more ground. Lastly, allies "from below" abandon the revolutionary class:

> Eventually the "ally from below", the majority of the people, falls away. It becomes apparent that the revolutionary class looks out for its own interests and is not willing to endanger itself by adopting a programme for the lower class. The result is that former allies from above join the camp of adversaries (where they in fact belong by their social and political standing), and the lower masses are disappointed by the revolutionaries and become indifferent.[58]

The explanation for the population's gradual passivity Slavík found in a psychological study by Gustav Le Bon:

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[54] IDEM, *Husitská revoluce*, 112.

[55] IDEM, *Po druhé v sovětském Rusku* (Prague: Svaz národního osvobození, 1927), 42.

[56] Alexis de TOCQUEVILLE, *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution* (Paris: Michel Lévy frères, 1856); See also: Jan SLAVÍK, "Tocqueville a československá historiografie," manuscript, ANM, f. Jan Slavík (1885–1978), b. 1, inv. n. 1.

[57] IDEM, "Revoluce," 600.

[58] IDEM, *Husitská revoluce*, 51.

> A nation is excited and enthusiastic; it leads to gigantic exploits and optimistic illusions, especially if the revolution is social. With time, though, the revolutionary spirit evaporates and mental fatigue and disappointment set in. The representatives of reaction have an open path to victory and often install a pre-revolutionary regime.[59]

The fall of "revolutionary maximalists" is caused by yet another factor besides fatigue from fighting and diminishing fervour. They are not able to estimate to what extent the time is ready to accept social change. Usually, they want changes more radical than the society at that time is able to absorb.[60] Often, they establish institutions that they are not able to finance and develop. Such institutions were, for example, the numerous standing armies created by the Hussite revolution. The state at its then-economic level was not able to support them permanently. These units had to perish, and with them their makers.[61]

Through this regular process, revolutions peter out to their "Thermidor", which Slavík defined as

> a phase of each revolution when, due to a number of circumstances, the radical side loses ground while the moderate revolutionaries gain the upper hand. They are helped by two closely related moments – psychological and economic.[62]

The final victory of reaction does not at all mean a return to the original state because the psychological change in a nation that went through revolutionary fermentation is deep and irreversible:

> In 1814 in France the Bourbon monarchy came to power again. Was the only change the fact that Louis XVIII had to reign constitutionally while before the revolution Louis XVI reigned absolutely? That was the least difference; the bigger dissimilarity lies in the fact that Louis XVIII governed a nation completely different from the pre-revolutionary one. It was a nation full of new energy and with a greatly awakened interest in public affairs. They were no longer minions, but citizens of the state.[63]

Slavík is of the opinion that revolution, despite the vigorous efforts of reaction, does not disappear into oblivion without social consequences. The only changes enacted by the revolutionary government to remain would be those achieved during the first stages of revolution, before the moderates defected from the revolutionary class. These changes were of interest to the

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[59] IDEM, "Revoluce," 601.
[60] IDEM, *Husitská revoluce*, 56.
[61] *Ibid.*, 107.
[62] *Ibid.*, 95.
[63] *Ibid.*, 117.

moderates. If the revolution ends in a victory for reaction, it is generally because the reaction swayed the moderates to its side, and in deference to the interest of its allies, it must keep these changes alive and valid.

Society would not undergo a complete change in the case of victory of the revolutionary class either. The development of forms of government cannot go through major shifts because a permanent government will act to reflect the standards of society. The democratic government in Russia in 1917, explains Slavík, had no fundamental prerequisite for its existence, i.e., civic-minded citizens. The efforts to establish it fell flat because it is sociologically impossible to skip over the regular development of governmental forms. This development is continuous; therefore the post-revolution government is close to the pre-revolutionary one.[64] Slavík considered the Bolshevik regime as a "natural link in Russian development, reflecting slave morality in its despotic methods, which the centuries of the Czarist regime had created in the masses".[65] He found striking similarities between Bolshevik ideas and the ideas of Russian religious sects,[66] and in the same way he saw that the "cult of Lenin's embalmed corpse grows out of idolatrous Orthodoxy and not from Marxism".[67]

A victorious revolution, just as a victorious reaction, begins after time to favour national interests at the expense of the ideas for which it was fought:

> Not even the Russian Revolution avoided the development of all great revolutions: from messianic slogans, which were supposed to bring salvation to all humanity, it moves on to caring only for the lot of its own nation.[68]

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[64] Jan SLAVÍK, "Masarykovo dílo 'Rusko a Evropa' a bolševická revoluce," *Slovanský přehled* 22, no. 2 (1930): 102. Lenin unwittingly captured the affinity between the Bolshevik form of government and the Czarist one in a question: "why could governing Russia not be in the hands of several hundred thousand politically-conscious workers instead of a few hundred thousand pomeschiks?" IDEM, *Smysl ruské revoluce*, 141.

[65] *Ibid.*, 67.

[66] "If you read the protocols of Soviet congresses and conferences and if you knew a little of the treatises of Russian Raskolniks, you would be surprised how amazingly alike the thinking is. Priestly appeals to authority are the same, while the logic of fanatic wags can easily bypass any statements of a revered teacher, if the statement does not fit their purpose. With such a sectarian logic the Bolsheviks linked khan methods inherited from Czarism with Marx's teaching on proletarian dictatorship, which the founder of scientific socialism meant no doubt much differently." SLAVÍK, *Po druhé v sovětském Rusku*, 27–28.

[67] IDEM, *Co jsem viděl v sovětském Rusku*, 7.

[68] IDEM, *Národnostní politika ve SSSR: V. I. Lenin a J. V. Stalin o národnostní otázce*, 2nd ed. (Prague: Česká grafická unie, 1945), 51.

In revolutions, according to Slavík, a new regularity asserts itself in so-called "heterogeneous aims". The aims proclaimed by the revolutionary leaders and the aims attained are diametrically opposed. Although most of the proclaimed aims may not be attained, the revolution on the other hand may achieve other unexpected ends that are just as important.[69] Slavík points out that to evaluate the contribution of a revolution we must consider what the revolution actually achieved, and not to what extent the programme of its leaders was fulfilled.

Lastly, we should remark that Slavík sees the general contribution of all revolutions first in the activation of large masses, in awakening their civic and national self-confidence.[70] In a concrete example, he perceives Hussitism as a process, which inflamed the population with a religious idea and notably helped people to become aware of their role as Czechs. Then, because of this awakened national identity, the Czech nation was able to resist Germanization after the Battle of White Mountain when it was forcibly stripped of the intellectual, political and economic elites.[71] The Hussite contribution to the development of Europe Slavík saw in the breakup of the medieval Church universalism that, up to that time, excluded any dissenting thought, and further in the progress of freedom of thought.[72] The importance of the Russian Bolshevik revolution was in the realization of agrarian reform, the awakening of civic self-confidence, education, training Russians to work harder, and in solving the question of non-Russian ethnicities. From the international point of view, he saw its role as inspiring social reforms in Western Europe and stirring national emancipation movements in the European colonies.[73] He viewed the emancipation of colonies as an example of "heterogeneity of aims". The aim of the Bolsheviks was to provoke a worldwide revolution caused by the crisis of capitalism, which in turn was to be provoked by the destruction of a colonial system.[74]

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[69] "Acts of historical personalities have positive consequences, which this personality did not have in mind and did not anticipate." IDEM, "Dějiny a přítomnost. Víra v Rakousko a věda historická [1931]," 642.

[70] IDEM, "Revoluce," 601.

[71] IDEM, *Husitská revoluce*, 117.

[72] *Ibid.*, 20.

[73] SLAVÍK, *Smysl ruské revoluce*, 64–69.

[74] IDEM, *Po druhé v sovětském Rusku*, 4.

JAN SLAVÍK A MARXIST?[1]

Jakub RÁKOSNÍK

In his time, Marxist-oriented intellectuals either disowned Jan Slavík or distanced themselves. On the other hand, the historical circles that had nothing in common with Marxism often called him a Marxist. It is important, then, to distinguish individual periods of Slavík's life. While between the wars, especially in the 1930s, he was close to the ideals of Marxism, after the Second World War (for personal reasons as well) his sympathies cooled off. A rough orientation in Slavík's approach to theoretical and methodological questions in historiography is provided in creditable measure by secondary literature. Apart from general statements about his temporary penchant for Marxism, nobody really investigated this "penchant" in depth. In this paper, we centre our attention on the key period of the 1930s and will try, on the basis of contemporary texts, to thoroughly investigate his relation to Marxist interpretations of historiography. The authors quoted below based their judgments about Slavík's Marxism on his key scholarly texts. Here, we are going to try using, for the same purpose, mainly his journalism, which has been, so far, outside the range of scholarly attention (except for Jaroslav Bouček)[2], and which holds valuable information on the subject.

Historians writing between 1948 and 1989 maintained the same restrained stance toward Jan Slavík as was held by the pro-Communist intellectuals in the interwar period. Principal historical works, however, even if critical of his person, mostly accorded him originality and an exceptional position in the historiography of the First Republic. The refusal to acknowledge Slavík as a protagonist of the Historical Group, a society of left-oriented younger historians, grew after the war and culminated in the 1950s. It was sufficiently explained by Jaroslav Bouček.[3] Among historical works written during the normalization, we should

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[1] This text has been published in the framework of the research project GAČR no. 409/08/1621 *The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and Bolshevism.*

[2] Jaroslav BOUČEK, *Jan Slavík: Příběh zakázaného historika* (Jinočany: H+H, 2002).

[3] *Ibid.*, 139 f.

mention, besides František Kutnar[4], a work on Czech historiography by Tomáš Vojtěch.[5] Kutnar indicates,

> Slavík, after the war, was on the far left wing of Czech historiography. He was intensely interested in the Marxist theory of historical and dialectical materialism. He adopted many of its concepts and defended it against the criticism ensuing from the empirical-positivist camp. As well, he embraced the methods and outcomes of modern sociology.

Kutnar does not consider him a Marxist, but calls him a critical and dialectic eclectic.[6] Even though Tomáš Vojtěch calls him by the nebulous term "an advocate of non-traditional objectivism",[7] he pinpoints the main lines of his historical thought. He emphasized that Slavík drew the attention of official historiography to the significance of historical materialism, but also pointed out that Slavík "was not a Marxist". He obviously liked Bedřich Mendl's sympathetic judgment of Jan Slavík from 1928 in which he said that even despite his closeness to materialism, his basis was always idealistic.[8]

In 1989, Ivana Holzbachová published an article (unjustly neglected today) on Slavík's methodology.[9] It is one of the most thorough elaborations of his theoretical and methodological processes. As opposed to Tomáš Vojtěch, she is more accommodating and places more stress on Slavík's Marxist bent in some periods of his life. She valued his support for a Marxist conception of history, namely certain authentic elements of Marxism in his works. She deduced:

> Even if Slavík himself was not a Marxist, his appreciation of this school and his attempts to conform his interpretations to it in some instances should be recognized as positive in the circumstance of the First Republic.[10]

Since 1989, interest in Slavík's personality has naturally grown. Josef Hanzal in his commemorative article writes, "he perceived Marxism as just one of the philosophies of history and in his work supplements the principles

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[4] František KUTNAR, *Přehledné dějiny českého a slovenského dějepisectví* (Prague: SPN, 1978), 2 (Od počátků pozitivistického dějepisectví na práh historiografie marxistické): 284–290.

[5] Tomáš VOJTĚCH, *Česká historiografie a pozitivismus. Světonázorové a metodologické aspekty* (Prague: Academia, 1984).

[6] KUTNAR, *Přehledné dějiny českého a slovenského dějepisectví*, 2: 284, 287.

[7] VOJTĚCH, *Česká historiografie a pozitivismus*, 80.

[8] *Ibid.*, 112, 121, 122.

[9] Ivana HOLZBACHOVÁ, "K metodologickým východiskům Jana Slavíka," in *Sborník historický* (Prague: Academia, 1989), 36: 213–229.

[10] *Ibid.*, 226.

of historical and dialectical materialism with other specifically sociological procedures."[11] He points out that Slavík always had rejected the principle of class struggle.[12] Other authors accentuate the greater influence of Max Weber than Karl Marx and Marxism.[13] Zbyněk A. B. Zeman, in Slavík's biographical sketch compiled from Slavík's memoirs, does not discuss his Marxist aspirations at all. He stresses Weber's influence and speculates that "[Slavík] would have felt at home among French historians of the Annales School."[14]

What then was Marxist about Slavík? Can we look on him as one of the pioneers of Marxist historiography? We must first define the criteria for such a judgment. There exists ample literature on various branches of Marxism, and even in historiography we must discriminate between individual authors who are labelled as Marxists, but whose views are diametrically opposed.[15] To find a common denominator for Marxist historiography, we will use the catalogue of attributes compiled by Lutz Raphael,[16] which can be considered as representative: **(1)** The perception of history as a class struggle and as a teleological progressive process of emancipation.[17] **(2)** Tension between productive forces and relations of

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[11] Josef HANZAL, "Jan Slavík, historik myslitel. Ke 110. výročí narození," *Český časopis historický* 93, no. 4 (1995): 667.

[12] *Ibid.*, 668.

[13] See Miloš HAVELKA, ed., *Spor o smysl českých dějin 1895–1938* (Prague: Torst, 1995), 33–38.

[14] Zbyněk A. B. ZEMAN, "Paměti Jana Slavíka," *Český časopis historický* 88, no. 4 (1990): 560.

[15] On differentiation of Marxism in social historiography with an example of the concept of "working class" see Michal PULLMANN and Jakub RÁKOSNÍK, "'Dělnická třída' v moderní sociální historiografii," *Dějiny-teorie-kritika* 4, no. 2 (2007): 271–288.

[16] Lutz RAPHAEL, *Geschichtswissenschaft im Zeitalter der Extreme – Theorien, Methoden, Tendenzen von 1900 bis zur Gegenwart* (München: C. H. Beck, 2003), 119–120. Comp. Matt PERRY, *Marxism and History* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 3. Perry sets out the main attributes: (1) Work is the basis of human exceptionality, and production implies a certain level of productive forces and certain social relationships; (2) These productive forces and relations of production allow for differentiation among various epochs of human history and an understanding of them in progressive succession. A tension between forces and relations leads to revolution. (3) The material basis of a society determines its superstructure. (4) Class struggle is a product of exploitive social relations issuing from production; it's endemic in human history and plays a determining role in the outcome of the struggle, especially in cases of revolutionary crisis.

[17] To it, Raphael adds that this concept could either legitimize socialistic dictatorships (in an instance of emphasis of teleology) or understand it as a scientific interest in the history of resistance of the subordinated classes and class conflicts. He attributed the second view to Gramsci and the historical tradition based on it.

production generates the motor of history.[18] **(3)** The idea of economic determination of political, social and cultural phenomena, based on a model of basis and superstructure. **(4)** The requirement for a universalist interpretation of human history, i.e., setting all human cultures into one historical scheme.

If we look at Slavík's most important theoretical-methodological work, *Dějiny a přítomnost* [The Past and the Present],[19] we will find much Marxism in it. Slavík was chiefly interested in the problem of historical fact and the determinants of its evaluation. He scorned the naïve empiricism that asserted that to know the past, it is enough to let the sources speak for themselves. We find there, however, some statements compatible with Marxism, especially in the closing sections of the book where (as many times both before and after) he appreciates Marxist analyses of the war as resulting in a social evolution. Likewise, as appreciated by I. Holzbachová in her above-mentioned text, Slavík here indicated his conviction about a class-determined historiography, i.e., about class-specific political determinants of historical interpretations, which on the surface look objective.[20]

In his 1937 key text on Marxist historiography, entitled *Marxistické pojetí dějin a historická věda* [Marxist Interpretation of History and Historical Science], Slavík openly declared it necessary to respect the Marxist theory of history.[21] About the author and his own positions, we learn very little in this article because Slavík interpreted the opinions of others. Explaining Marx, he differentiated between "philosophical materialism" and "historical materialism". While he rejected the first theory as metaphysics, he fully accepted the second as "the Marxists' historical perception". He identified historical materialism as

> a sociological theory, which did not leave the ground of scientific reality and which brilliantly showed that, to interpret the past, we must know the formation and changes in the social elements which an historian talks about.

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[18] Raphael used this tradition to deduce a broadly-considered "history of society" (Gesellschaftsgeschichte), which would encompass legal, economic, social history, not just a history of technology.

[19] Jan SLAVÍK, *Dějiny a přítomnost. Víra v Rakousko a věda historická* (Prague: Svaz národního osvobození, 1931).

[20] *Ibid.*, 69.

[21] Jan SLAVÍK, "Marxistické pojetí dějin a historická věda," *Dějiny a přítomnost* 1, no. 2 (1937): 147. The whole sentence reads: "While we on the contrary see at present economic crises accompanied by wars and war tension, then a respect for Marxist historical perception must grow within us."

He continued:

> A history of historiography records, before and after Marx, various theories on historical development. All of them suffer from being constructed without a knowledge of sociological concepts; only with their help can a historian present the past.[22]

As evidence of the practical usefulness of Marxism in historiography, he compared evaluations of the First World War from its outbreak and considered Marxist analysis as the most successful in interpreting its causes, its course, and outcomes. In this essay, his approach to Marxism was pragmatic. For him, it was not the only theory, but one of many. It did not deserve appreciation for its "truthfulness", but rather for its timely "usefulness"; i.e., it proved to be best able to explain the determinants of the author's problems. In this sense he wrote:

> …in historical science there is a methodological rule that "the scientist adheres to a theory, which more or less satisfactorily answers questions that interest humanity." […] A historical science that does not want to acknowledge any theories cannot say anything about recent situations, and not even about the present and the future. It would always find itself in a quandary when required to interpret the origin of a great contemporary event […] The basic and broadest thesis of the Marxist perception of history proved right: a historian could correctly explain the past only if he understood the present.[23]

We can certainly speculate that Slavík did not read much of the philosophical pragmatists, but he was close to them in his approach to science.[24] A similar supposition is also in Zeman's biographical sketch where he writes that "his [Slavík's] pragmatism is common in Anglophone historiography. It rests on a conviction that the quality of an historian's work depends on the quality of the questions he asks himself."[25]

For Slavík, Marxism was not a system of theses that reveals the final truth to people, but a theory, which stresses the economic determinants in the development of humanity. Some of Slavík's works might make us think that this interest in the economy is perhaps what he considers as the essential contribution of Marxism. It would be, however, a serious

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[22] *Ibid.*, 151.

[23] *Ibid.*, 139.

[24] Comp. biographical entry in: *Masarykův slovník naučný* (Prague: Československý kompas, 1932), 6: 684. Here we find, without any further explanation, the sentence: "He tried to establish a historical methodology and mark the difference between the older positivist historical school and a younger neo-pragmatic trend."

[25] ZEMAN, "Paměti Jana Slavíka," 560.

simplification because he wanted to achieve more – a wide application of the materialistic theory of history and a respect for it on home ground.[26] In this sense, Holzbachová is wrong when she claims, "he reduced historical materialism to a verbal approval of economic development in the development of social structures".[27]

As an analyst of the Russian revolution, Slavík was naturally aware of individually various trends in Marxism. Very roughly, we can discern two main Marxists currents in the pre-war and interwar periods. One is a "Bolshevik" (revolutionary) line, and the other is "deterministic" (evolutionary). This division found, after the First World War, a political reflection in the split of the socialist movement into reform and revolutionary parties. Slavík's texts do not let us doubt that his sympathies are fully with the evolutionist reformers. His criticism of Bolshevism is well known and therefore it is not necessary to repeat it here. He closely and critically watched the dictatorial ambitions of Russian Bolsheviks and their impact on Russian historical science, and warned before of the tragic influence of Stalinism, which had almost nothing in common with authentic Marxism.[28] In a review of Šusta's *Dějepisectví* [Historiography], he expressed his view in a terse parallel: "The fact that the Bolsheviks made a new religious orthodoxy from Marxism cannot eclipse the great influence which Marx's theories had on the perception of historical development."[29]

He dedicated several popularizing texts to explaining individual Marxists lines. He was rather fond of the German social democrat Eduard Bernstein, founder of Marxist revisionism. In 1932, Slavík said "developments proved him right in many things". According to him, Bernstein demonstrated that Marxism had gone, and was going, through the same process as any other scientific theory. He valued his critical mind that "was not afraid to acknowledge that Marx's teaching is not dogma which cannot be revised".[30] He acknowledged that he pointed out an inner contradiction in Marx's *Capital*; on one hand it was supposed to be a scientific analysis and, at the same time, it was to prove the thesis

[26] Comp. Jan SLAVÍK, "Soumrak anarchického období československého dějepisectví?," *Dějiny a přítomnost* 1, no. 1 (1937): 5–16.
[27] HOLZBACHOVÁ, "K metodologickým východiskům Jana Slavíka," 216.
[28] Comp. Jan SLAVÍK, "Reforma dějepisných učebnic ve SSSR," *Národní osvobození*, 4 September 1935, 4.
[29] IDEM, "Šustovy dějiny dějepisectví," *Národní osvobození*, 28 May 1933, 11.
[30] IDEM, "Bernstein, Kautský, Lenin," *Národní osvobození*, 25 December 1932, 4–5.

set out formerly in the *Communist Manifesto*. He noted that even Engels was aware of the necessity to have an economic prerequisite for a successful revolution because a coup of a small group like the one executed by the Bolsheviks, shielding themselves with a one-sided interpretation of the proletarian dictatorship, leads by necessity to oligarchy or to a strong individual dictatorship.[31]

Slavík's sympathies for the determinist line of Marxism, which stressed the necessity for ripening economic prerequisites for a successful proletarian revolution, also showed up in historical inquiries. They were noticeable in his perception of the Bolshevik revolution and in his views on the role of personality in history. Long-existing developmental tendencies of an economic or intellectual nature in Russian history predetermined the character of Russian Bolshevism. Many times, Slavík pointed to parallels between pre-revolutionary Russian and Bolshevik practices. Stalin attained a position stronger than the Czars enjoyed, and Marxism became a substitute for Russian orthodoxy.[32] At another point Slavík added:

> The Russian sectarian mind and despotic mentality caused Lenin to ignominiously turn Marxism into Bolshevism, i.e., into a crossbreed of Marxism and Russian brutish conditions [...] It is Marxism adapted to today's governmental and administrative methods. It is a Czarist and Khan-like socialism.[33]

Especially in his newspaper articles, Slavík was able convincingly to downplay the role of specific historical individuals. He expressed this thought in emphatic form in an article from 1936, *Kořeny síly našeho národa* [Roots of Strength of our Nation], where he wrote "Žižka and Napoleon could have become military geniuses at the head of armies more nationally and socially awakened".[34] By this statement, he tried to emphasize that it was not Žižka's or Napoleon's genius that led the revolutionary armies to victory; it was quite the opposite. The forces of an awakened nation mobilized themselves and assembled into armies,

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[31] IDEM, "Eduard Bernstein a diktatura proletariátu," *Sobota* 3, no. 48 (1932): 949–950.
[32] IDEM, "Návyk ani revoluční metlou nevyženeš," *Sobota* 2, no. 34 (1931): 660–661.
[33] IDEM, "Marx a marxismus v ruské revoluci (K 50. výročí Marxovy smrti)," *Sobota* 4, no. 10 (1933): 189–191. In a similar sense, he writes elsewhere "a history of Russian socialist groups is at heart the last phase of orthodox sectarianism. Bolshevik god-seeking and god-making is only a process which also chose the old orthodox terminology and thus exposed the religious and church-oriented nature of Russian socialism..." See: IDEM, "Lenin theokratický filosof," *Sobota* 5, no. 2 (1934): 29–30.
[34] IDEM, "Kořeny síly našeho národa," *Sobota* 7, no. 1 (1936): 2.

which by their quality and resolve overpowered their adversaries. In another work, he similarly pointed out that the determining factors are social processes, which give birth to this "maker of history" who, if he died or lost his leading position, was replaceable and would soon be replaced. Slavík saw this as a normal progression. In 1935, he in this sense aptly noted:

> It is an old historical philosophy to see in history the work of strong individuals, those history "makers". In reality, the opposite is true. A general social wave heaves to the forefront individuals who become representative of the tendencies of that particular time. If the wave surges, getting rid of a leading individual does not have much effect…[35]

Slavík often made fun of historians who explained big historical events as the result of diplomatic and political dealings (for example the Great War as a diplomatic failure, or Napoleon's debacle in Russia caused by his having a cold in one of the key battles). In 1938, he pertinently observed:

> A historical development is not something that could be changed by the casual cold of an individual. Today, we can see that human society develops according to specific laws and progresses in a specific direction. It is undeniable that large masses claim their right for a better life, and that this will influence a reorganization of human society. It is going to be linked with the downfall of a class that so far keeps power in its own hands.[36]

Slavík spoke often about the need for a transformation of society and even about an outbreak of social revolution in the near future. He was, however, taciturn about the shape of the emerging society, just as Marx was non-committal when asked to describe a future Communist state.

If we look at individual points on Raphael's above-mentioned list, we can find many parts in Slavík's writings that would not fit. The concept of class struggle was not too far from his thought. It was apparent in his *Husitská revoluce* [The Hussite Revolution], a work showing the strongest influence of Marxism. If we look more closely at this "class struggle", we would find that in some of Slavík's texts it resembled more strongly the Hegelian struggle for recognition[37] than the force resulting from tension between productive forces and relations in

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[35] IDEM, "Dračí setba," *Sobota* 6, no. 39 (1935): 816–817.

[36] IDEM, "Bez ideologie?," *Sobota* 9, no. 40 (1938): 473–474.

[37] Michal PULLMANN, *Revoluce a utváření nového: Vídeň, Praha a Berlín kolem r. 1918 – K hodnotovým aspektům tří revolucí ve střední Evropě*. Ph.D. Theses, Faculty of Arts, Charles University, Prague, 2002, 14 f.

production. He indeed wrote in *Husitská revoluce* that the roots of revolutionary violence were economic, and that political demands then grew from them. He actually spoke about the occurrence of class struggle in Prague boroughs.[38] If we put this statement in the context of his other texts, we then could not view it as an unconditional assent to Marxist economic monism, as we will try to show in the following paragraphs. Slavík himself, even though he often praised Marxist theory, admitted that it was the case of "an ingenious but obviously much too one-sided theory of historical materialism."[39]

Slavík did not see revolution as the outcome of oppression and impoverishment of the people. In this sense, he criticized Marx and Engels, saying that their description of the impoverishment of the English working class was exaggerated. The worsening social situation of a subordinated class did not cause a revolutionary eruption. Slavík saw its incentive in the fact that, while people had a relatively good life, they yearned for a better one. In one of his articles from 1933 he offered the following thought:

> The main component that plays a role in change is not poverty, or a cruel and tyrannical government, but the further progress of humanity and its individual classes. […] The theory that nations and social classes lived in misery before a revolution which they carried out is a romantic fable.[40]

In the article *Existuje již Panevropa?* [Does Pan-Europe Exist Yet?], we can trace an already weakened economic determinism.[41] This article was a manifest defence of idealism in history; Slavík emphasized ideas that, even though utopian, in the long run mobilize the population and revolutionize the given state of society. In another article, *Nemoc nebo porodní bolesti měnící se společnosti?* [The Disease or Birth Pains of a Changing Society?], he even said

> the means that spread the image of a better life are improving much faster than the social organization which is supposed to gratify requests that have grown from these new images […] In reality, social, political and economic orders that have existed since the times when the state was instituted only for a small privileged group, since the times when nobody guessed that large masses of people would want to have an education, health and disability

[38] Jan SLAVÍK, *Husitská revoluce. Studie historicko-sociologická* (Prague: Orbis, 1934), 42 f., 86 f.
[39] IDEM, "Marx a marxismus v ruské revoluci," 189.
[40] IDEM, "Nemoc nebo porodní bolesti měnící se společnosti?," *Sobota* 4, no. 42 (1933): 835.
[41] IDEM, " Existuje již Panevropa?," *Sobota* 1, no. 13 (1930): 245–246.

> insurance, and public transport for all, are abnormal today [...] If many go hungry during rationalization, it is yet again a confirmation that these economic orders are outmoded. [...] Social changes are further pushed forward by yet another factor: the dissatisfaction of those who do not necessarily die of hunger, but who today wish (and wish rightly) for a better life. More than real poverty, so-called "psychological poverty" revolutionizes much more.[42]

Though Slavík noted the importance of structural economic prerequisites for revolutionary change in society, he also added the necessity of "ideals". Economic motivation might be strong, but it was not exclusive.[43]

He had problems with a teleological perception of history similar to those he had with Marxist methodology. Slavík's understanding of history was essentially progressivist, as proven by the title of one of his articles from 1938, *Řeka dějin neteče zpět* [The River of History Never Flows Back].[44] He had never hidden it, either in his scholarly works or in periodical articles. This progressivism was very different from that of Marxist historians. Bolshevism, i.e., the establishment of a proletarian dictatorship, did not correspond to the *telos* of human history, but was only a long-term radical form of the emancipation process. In 1938, when he analyzed the consequences of the Munich Agreement for the Czechs and Slovaks, he wrote in the same vein:

> We are victims of the struggle between two social movements in Europe. One strives toward the change of the social order using the hypothesis that Europeans cannot live in the old way. An extreme example of this is Russian Bolshevism.

("Democratism and socialism are nothing more than a striving for a better organization of human society..."; in 1938, he repeated his conviction about the common denominator of both currents.[45]) "The second movement tries as hard as it can to keep the old, capitalist-bourgeois systems. The extreme expression of this effort is racist fascism."[46]

Even though he was familiar with the explanatory scheme of "basis and superstructure", he did not use it in the sense of a one-sided determinism, where the superstructure only reflects the base. We can

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[42] IDEM, "Nemoc nebo porodní bolesti měnící se společnosti?," *Sobota* 4, no. 43 (1933): 853.
[43] It must not be overlooked that he took his interpretation of social change to be in Marx's spirit. See IDEM, "O tom, jak pozdě si lidstvo uvědomuje změnu své situace," *Sobota* 6, no. 35 (1935): 709–710.
[44] IDEM, "Řeka dějin neteče zpět," *Sobota* 9, no. 47 (1938): 555–557.
[45] IDEM, "Výbojnost fašismu jako znak reakce," *Sobota* 9, no. 21 (1938): 242–243.
[46] IDEM, "Kapitoly o naší pohromě," *Sobota* 9, no. 36 (1938): 422.

discern this viewpoint, for which he was later called an idealist, in his text *Historie a revoluce* [History and Revolution], where he investigated the modernization activities of the Russian Czar Peter the Great. Here he emphasized the intellectual basis of English and Dutch economic success, to which this great Czar paid no attention, and was interested only in technological advances.[47]

Now we come to Slavík's above-mentioned relativism, which is linked to his progressivism. Here in his interwar texts we find his two extreme positions. On the one hand, democratization is a current ideal, on the other a historical regularity. The first view is stated in his treatise *Dějiny a přítomnost*, in which he says

> the foremost objective of history is to observe the development of the achievement of human ideals [...] If an ideal of our time is democratism, then we should not be surprised that these factors are valued in Hussitism. It is not a violation of historical reality, not introducing something that was not there. It is an evaluation in the sense formerly explained.[48]

As may be seen, there was no reference to historical necessity or at least to historical regularity in regard to democratic development. Democracy was defined only as a norm and nothing else. Jan Hertl pointed out this flaw in Slavík's reasoning in a contentious review of *Dějiny a přítomnost*, which provoked Slavík's angry reaction. Hertl wrote:

> He [Slavík] became an advocate of one "changeable idea", democratism [...] The evolution becomes detached from ideological optimism and one can fish from this current whatever one wants, even a negligible bit, as Slavík says. Prof. Pekař has the right, in this interpretation, to have the opinion that he has; he can be as antidemocratic as he is, and nothing in Slavík's deductions explains why he could not be.[49]

Despite his fuzzy deductions, the reviewer raised a point here that *Dějiny a přítomnost* does not answer. In the text, Slavík brought out the historical position of historians who write by necessity from the perspective of their time, current needs and ideals. Democratic idealism can be found in his other texts. For example, he explained in a 1932 article the transformation of a republic into a monarchy; it happens because of a decline in the moral and cultural status of the population, to which he added: "The monarchy and republic do not alternate like even

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[47] IDEM, "Historie a revoluce," *Národní osvobození*, 15 June 1934, 5.
[48] IDEM, *Dějiny a přítomnost*, 31.
[49] Jan HERTL, "Dr. Jan Slavík: Dějiny a přítomnost," *Sociální problémy* 1, no. 2 (1931): 151–152.

and odd numbers; these forms of government are an expression of the advancement and status of the population."[50]

In his works we can also find, however, a perception of the democratization of society as, in a certain sense, a historical necessity. Slavík, it can be seen, always refused to acknowledge the formation of an independent Czechoslovak state as some "benign chance", i.e., an historical accident. On the contrary, he saw in it a demonstration of long-lasting trends in European history. These aspects of his thinking showed clearly in his stance on the so-called argument about the meaning of Czech history. Slavík saw Masaryk's activities during the war as actions of a "scientist who saw that democratism was progressing", and he added sarcastically:

> Nobody doubts Pekař's intentions to help this nation were good, but he would not admit that the route he wanted to choose was unfortunate, and that it failed because it was based on a conservative and backward-looking (and therefore incorrect) perception of European history.[51]

Gaining independence was, in Slavík's eyes, the product of a democratic process that was happening in the 19th and 20th centuries all over the world, and which resulted in the creation of many national states. He, in this instance, even used terms like "the logic of historical evolution".[52] Slavík viewed the progressive course of human history as inevitable. In 1938, at the time of the growing German threat, he asked himself which would be the greater danger for the Czech nation – Bolshevism or Nazism. His answer was straightforward. While Bolshevism would bring only redistribution of property within the nation, Nazism would confiscate it for the benefit of Germans, and threaten physical annihilation. In the same article, he stated, "human development does not take a straight route, but never goes back".[53] That is why he never doubted even for a minute the final defeat of Hitler's Fascism. In his analyses of Fascism he was close to the evaluation made by many current Marxists (and not only them) that Fascism is essentially a reactionary movement, which aims to destroy the democratization process. In his view, it was nothing more than a defence of the existing economically privileged classes against post-war reforming trends.

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[50] Jan SLAVÍK, "Změněná učebnice, nezměněný duch," *Sobota* 3, no. 36 (1932): 710–712.
[51] IDEM, "Víra v Rakousko jako plod české vědy historické," *Sobota* 2, no. 2–3 (1932): 23.
[52] IDEM, "Hlavní záruka budoucnosti státu," *Sobota* 4, no. 39 (1933): 769–770.
[53] IDEM, "Henleinova víra a Slované," *Sobota* 9, no. 17 (1938): 193–194.

As we have already run across Slavík's "non-Marxist" usage of the term "class struggle", his progressivist teleology, and his ambiguous relation to "basis and superstructure", there is an ensuing problem of "class" which fits in with other concepts of a Marxist vocabulary. Slavík spoke often about classes, but even here we can discern a somewhat different interpretation of the concept. When he defined class and status in his *Vznik českého národa* [Genesis of the Czech Nation], he did not leave us in doubt:

> A class is an aggregate of people living in the same economic conditions, having more or less the same property and more or less the same employment. Class is an economic category. An estate is a class with the right of inheritance and commitment. The estate is foremost a legal category.[54]

What bothered Marxist interpreters was the notion that in this sense of class Slavík neglected the importance of the relationship to production, and straightforwardly made a distinction between possession and employment.[55] To tell the truth, Slavík's perception of "class", if we take into account the above-stated formulation, was much closer to Max Weber than to the Marxists.[56]

While considering Slavík's attitudes, we should not underestimate his personal history. His sympathies toward Marxism might have been conditioned by his sceptical view of the then-existing situation in academic historiography. In 1937, he found his allies in the so-called Historical Group. Even thought many of its members became in the 1950s cheer leaders of Marxist-Leninist historical science (for example Jan Pachta, Václav Husa and Václav Čejchan), the group as such is not considered a truly Marxist organization, even though it mostly supported Marxist methodology.[57] Its members were, as Slavík said in their defence, for him welcome associates in his disputes with academic historians; he was their patron. He himself explained this "marriage of convenience":

> I had nothing in common with this historical group. They met, talked things over, and finally decided to dare to publish collected essays. When they put everything together, they asked me for an article. When the typesetting was done, the editors showed me the leading stories to let me know where my

[54] Comp. IDEM, "*Vznik českého národa* (Prague: Pokrok, 1948), 2 (Národ a města): 181. Quoted according to: HOLZBACHOVÁ, "K metodologickým východiskům Jana Slavíka," 217.
[55] *Ibid.*, 217.
[56] Comp. Weber's essay on "estates", "classes" and "political parties". Max WEBER, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft: Grundriss der verstehenden Soziologie* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1972).
[57] Comp. VOJTĚCH, *Česká historiografie a pozitivismus*, 80.

> article was placed. They did not change a thing. What surprised me was their idealistic and unselfish fervour for progress in historical science. I was impressed by their will to move our historical science onto a different track…[58]

Slavík always welcomed any means that provided him with the possibility of disturbing the stagnant waters of Czech historiography. Just as he was pleased about the Historical Group, he welcomed the earlier inception of the Historical Society. Its foundation was for him "an irrevocable step toward the democratization of historical science status, after a few individuals had dictated its lot for decades."[59]

From the above analysis one can see that some of the theses of Marxist historiography were totally foreign to Slavík. If we return for the last time to Raphael's points as set out at the beginning of this article, we can draw the following conclusions. Slavík never reduced history to class struggle and did not concentrate only on the economic motivation of the protagonists. Even if he perceived history as an emancipatory process, the communist revolution was not for him the end of history, as set out by Marxist teleology. He was well aware of certain determinism between the basis and superstructure, to use Marxist lingo, but he never fell into the trap of one-sided interpretation where superstructure is just a reflection of the basis. Obviously, he was willing to give to cultural, i.e., intellectual, moments more autonomy than was assumed in Marxist economic monism. The final point of Raphael's typology, i.e., the requirement for universalistic interpretation of human history, is in Slavík's case somewhat unclear. In his works, he showed little interest in non-European cultures, and in many of his discourses a Eurocentric perception of historical development was obvious. Universalism was not, however, restricted to Marxism; it was shared by many current social theories. Slavík's democratization process was without doubt a global and universal one.

Slavík certainly was an intellectual with intense left-wing sympathies, and his analyses, especially of current society, were in many points similar to Marxist ones. From the above findings, however, we can conclude that even in the 1930s, when Slavík was closest to Marxism, his thoughts showed so many deviations from the "Marxist canon" that to label him a methodological Marxist would be excessive.

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[58] Jan SLAVÍK, "Hlásí se nová generace historiků," *Národní osvobození*, 10 September 1937, 6.
[59] IDEM, "Vznikla celostátní organisace čs. historiků," *Národní osvobození*, 26 November 1935, 5.

PART II

JAN SLAVÍK'S VIEW ON RUSSIA AND RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

JAN SLAVÍK'S VIEW OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION AND SOVIET RUSSIA

Václav VEBER

In 1950, Jan Slavík wrote in his diary, which for a decade he had been depositing in his desk drawer, among other things the following: "I spent my life studying and watching the progress of the Russian revolution".[1] It was only a partial truth. At times, he devoted his full attention to the situation in Russia and to a study of Russian history and its present. There were, however, times when, due to his broad range of interests, he was inclined to follow other, more remote historical topics. Perhaps it was in his nature – he was a rigorous historian, but at the same time a passionate commentator ready to speak and write on a number of problems presented by Czech historiography.

Of course, his deductions were not always right, but in each case he was at least interesting and substantiated his views well. His thoughts were always novel and provoked either assent or a severe disapproval, and often endless discussions. He was original in thought and profound in learning. We can put him ex-post in a sort of a minority group of historians, the so-called "Castle" group, in which, among key people, were Kamil Krofta and Jaroslav Werstadt. Slavík was not a favourite in official historical circles. There were times when he was literally at war with them. His principal backer was Tomáš G. Masaryk. Because of obviously unfair delays and protractions, he withdrew his application for a docent habilitation and never reapplied. Even though he spent his professional years as a gymnasium professor, he totally overshadowed his university colleagues in the field of Russian and Soviet history. No wonder that his life was far from ordinary. In the First Republic, he was permanently employed by the Ministry of Education. From 1925 through 1928, he was in charge of the Russian Foreign Historical Archives, which, after a short period of uncertainty, ended up in 1928 under the administration of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The end of the First

[1] Jan SLAVÍK, *Iluze a skutečnost*, Jaroslav Bouček, ed. (Prague: Academia, 2000), 135.

Prague Perspectives III (Prague, 2009), 149–157.

Republic was the end of his professional career. During 1938, he was released from his teaching post. Because the Ministry of Foreign Affairs did not employ him (the Russian Foreign Historical Archives was transferred to the Ministry of the Interior and Slavík was dismissed early in 1939), there was nothing left for him but to request a vacation owing to poor health. He was, however, definitely pensioned off at the age of 55.

After the war, his situation did not get any better. He actively contributed to the National Socialist Party press (mainly to the daily *Svobodné slovo* [The Free Word] and to the weekly *Svobodný zítřek* [The Free Tomorrow]). After several campaigns by Soviet and Czech Communists, and after a manifestly forced decision of the leaders of the National Socialist Party, his work for these periodicals ended in September 1947. The editor-in-chief Ivan Herben apprised him of this political decision. February 1948 was for him the definite end.[2] He characteristically entitled his notes and contemplations. He was forced to write for "the drawer" as *Do vykotlané vrby* [For a Hollow Willow].[3] In 1968, he appeared very briefly in public, but after that he lived again in austere seclusion and oblivion. Even though he lived to the ripe old age of 93, he is not to be envied. He spent the thirty-eight years of his retirement in poverty and mandatory idleness, under political pressure, forgotten and isolated.

Historians of modern Russia owe him a great deal. His work is not generally known, and furthermore it is unavailable in many libraries, due to the "cleansing" of their collections. From time to time, his name is heard at conferences and in public lectures. Thanks to Jaroslav Bouček, we have now at our disposal his fairly detailed biography,

[2] Jan Slavík was one of the eighty-two representatives of Czech culture and science who in February 1948 signed an anti-Communist "Proclamation of political and cultural representatives to the Czechoslovak public". (For details, see Václav VEBER, *Osudové únorové dny 1948* (Prague: NLN, 2008), 263–264.) Nevertheless, Arnošt Kolman mentioned in his memoirs that he received a Party assignment "to win" Slavík's cooperation. They allegedly met in Prague at the Café Savarin, but the conversation "brought no affirmative result". (Allegedly, Jan Bělehrádek resisted his offers as well. He succeeded, as he said himself, with Jan B. Kozák.) Arnošt KOLMAN, *Zaslepená generace – paměti starého bolševika* (Brno: Host, 2005), 254.

[3] Editor's note: In Czech, revealing one's troubles to a "hollow willow", or secret diary, ensures that nobody will hear them, and that they will be safe.

abstracts of his works and a personal bibliography.[4] The authors of the popular Czech language *Dějiny Ruska* [History of Russia], at Milan Švankmajer's urging, dedicated this work to Jan Slavík and thus declared themselves followers of his thought.[5] It is not enough, however, and a re-editing or re-issue of at least some his works is still far away.

I.

Slavík was interested in Russia right from the beginning of his professional career, even while he was a university student. He published his first article in *Český časopis historický* [The Czech Historical Review] in 1906. Its subject was *Habsburkové a Rusko v 16. století* [Habsburgs and Russia in the 16th Century Russia].[6] Let us list at least the key titles of his historical works:

- *Základy carismu* (Kladno, 1927). [The Background of Czarism]
- *Smysl ruské revoluce. Úvahy a kritika* (Prague, 1927). [Meaning of the Russian Revolution. Ideas and Criticism]
- "Za světové války a revoluce," [The Great War and Revolution] in Tomáš G. Masaryk, *Rusko a Evropa. Studie o duchovních proudech v Rusku* (Prague, 1930), 1: 279–336. [Russia and Europe. A Study of Spiritual Currents in Russia]
- *Bolševismus v přerodu. Historicko-sociologická studie* (Prague, 1932). [Bolshevism in Rebirth. A Historio-Sociological Study]
- "Dějiny Ruska ve XX. století," [History of Russia in the 20th Century] in *Dvacáté století: Co dalo lidstvu (Výsledky práce lidstva XX. věku)* (Prague, 1933), 6: 249–320. [The Twentieth Century: What it Gave to Humanity (Fruits of Labour of the Humanity of the 20th Century)]
- *Lenin* (Prague, 1934). [Lenin]
- *Leninova vláda 1917–1924* (Prague, 1935). [Lenin's Rule 1917–1924]
- *Národnostní politika ve SSSR* (Prague, 1937). [The Nationality Policy in the USSR]

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[4] Jaroslav BOUČEK, *Jan Slavík: Příběh zakázaného historika* (Jinočany: H+H, 2002); SLAVÍK, *Iluze a skutečnost*; Jaroslav BOUČEK, ed., *Jan Slavík: 1885–1978: bibliografie* (Prague: Národní knihovna v Praze – Slovanská knihovna, 1994).

[5] Milan ŠVANKMAJER, Václav VEBER, Zdeněk SLÁDEK and Vladislav MOULIS, *Dějiny Ruska* (Prague: NLN, 1995). In 2004 the 4th augmented and revised edition was published, with a new author, Libor Dvořák, joining the team.

[6] Jan SLAVÍK, "Habsburkové a Rusko v 16. století," *Český časopis historický* 12, no. 2 (1906): 169–177; no. 3, 312–334; no. 4, 447–467.

• "Stalin," in *Státníci dneška* (Prague, 1937). [Statesmen of Today]
• *Národnostní politika ve SSSR: V. I. Lenin a J. V. Stalin o národnostní otázce.* 2nd revised edition (Prague, 1945). [The Nationality Policy in the USSR: V. I. Lenin and I. V. Stalin on the Nationality Question]

Here we have to stress that Slavík facilitated the availability of basic documents to Czech readers. He edited the series:

• *Ruská revoluce březnová ve vzpomínkách účastníků* (Prague, 1930). [The Russian March Revolution as Remembered by its Participants]
• *Ruská revoluce listopadová ve vzpomínkách účastníků. Vítězství Leninovo* (Prague, 1931). [The Russian November Revolution as Remembered by its Participants. Lenin's Victory]
• *Listy carských manželů z let válečných* (Prague, 1933). [Letters of the Czarist Couple from the War Years]

Even though Bouček's bibliography was selective, it is clear that Slavík left behind an enormous amount of work. It is somewhat surprising that he was not happy with it. He wished it to become a synthetic work, which would capture the development of the Soviet Union during the interwar period. Unfortunately, this did not happen. The reason was partly Slavík's manifold journalistic interests (he regularly wrote for the daily *Národní osvobození* [The National Liberation]; in 1930, he became a part owner of the weekly *Sobota* [Saturday], of which he was editor-in-chief; and, in 1933, he wrote 20-minute reports, broadcast by Czechoslovak Radio every Friday in Russian), and partly the fact that he was professionally ready at a time when such a work would not have been welcomed. He did not finish an anticipated tetralogy on Soviet Russia either. After the publication of Lenin and *Leninova vláda* [Lenin's Rule], a further two volumes, *Pád Trockého* [The Fall of Trotsky] and *Stalinův vzestup* [Stalin's Rise], which he was preparing were never published. Toward the end of the 1930s, his superior and a close acquaintance, Minister of Foreign Affairs Prof. Kamil Krofta, not only did not recommend another work on such subjects, but in fact, because of "reasons of State" (i.e., respect for the Soviet Russia and its interests), he forbade it. Slavík conformed to this request reluctantly; he continued to write his articles, but never again wrote a large work.

His studies on modern Russia were excellent, unusually well informed and richly documented. He was in a good position to get top-quality information, as he had at his disposal an ever-growing library of books,

periodicals, newspapers and documents from the collections of the Russian Foreign Historical Archives, and he had direct contacts with Russian emigrants, Russian culture and society. At the outset of the 1930s it was already well known amongst European and overseas scholars of Russian history that in Prague – thanks to Slavík and his associates – an extraordinary collection of resources existed, and that writing a good, well-argued work on modern Russian history was practically impossible without going to Prague. Slavík was also well equipped professionally. He perceived history in Masaryk's spirit, i.e., as a tool facilitating the comprehension of the present. He did not avoid modern history, as many of his colleagues did; he favoured it. It is possible to say that Slavík's studies on Russia were unparalleled in European historiography (especially his fundamental works *Lenin* and *Leninova vláda*). Because Slavík wrote only in Czech, international readership was very limited. It is surprising, as well, that we find only a negligible number of references to secondary European historiography, be it to German, French or English language works. He relied principally on Russian sources and just sought help with methodological problems in European historiography. The reason for such a limited use of European works might be the fact that high-quality works did not yet exist in Europe. (In a preface to *Leninova vláda*, he wrote that all literature on Lenin not published in Russia "suffers from a limited use of sources").[7] Slavík's pioneer work is therefore of even greater significance.

II.

It is generally known that, during Slavík's relatively short professional life, he was regarded by one half of the public as a Soviet admirer and by the other as a Soviet hater. Both views were expressed often, and both were unfair. Slavík defended in essence just one standpoint, and that was the qualified view of a sociologizing historian who had no hidden political agenda. First, he did not see Soviet Russia in black and white. He was well aware that Russia was not only big, but full of contrasts and that in the 20th century there were two basic divergent

[7] IDEM, *Leninova vláda 1917–1924* (Prague: Melantrich, 1935), 11. The author further explains: "Broadly speaking, I had no examples or models for my work. I always went *ad fontes* – shorthand records from the Bolshevik party, Communist International, pamphlets, leaflets, Bolshevik and anti-Bolshevik sources. The fact that I blazed a trail may serve as an excuse for the inadequacy of my work." (*Ibid.*, 13.)

lines: on the one hand there was a politically mature intelligentsia and perhaps a politically-aware segment of the working class and on the other a mass of illiterate peasants. He concluded that the first group tried to build a modern state called socialist, and the other made it impossible. The result was, "merely logically" the dictatorship of a small group, which, as far as political organization was concerned, was inferior to European democratic republics. He concluded his deliberations: "The seventeen years' existence of the Soviet state confirmed it more than sufficiently."[8] Slavík was always looking for positive aspects, but pointed out the negative ones as well. He organized them in regard to their worth and according to his own subjective evaluation. It was always interesting and stimulating, and, as far as possible, objective. Of course, there were slips and oversights. For example, Slavík mistrusted documents about so-called German money, which the Bolsheviks had at their disposal. (He presumed that "they were never taken seriously" because they were published by the Americans.) He also somewhat mistakenly regarded the November Bolshevik overthrow as "a bit of revolutionary technique" organized by Lenin.[9]

He welcomed the Russian revolutionary year of 1917. He knew that it was expected by generations of Russian progressivists who were, however, afraid that receding chances of the fulfilment of their dream – as they saw it – would increase the probable brutality of the predicted social upheaval. Slavík by and large agreed with them, and preferred the democratic phase of the Russian revolution. He, rightly, did not trust the ability of its leaders to get all existing danger zones under control. He saw in practice that the Bolsheviks, who threw away democracy as undesirable ballast and followed consistently the Czarist methods, had in their hands a more effective means to master the Russian situation. He estimated their aims precisely – to stir up a revolution in the whole of Europe and, when that failed, to use their power to overcome Russian cultural and economic backwardness. This was, in his view, positive. He even thought that the successful accomplishment of this goal, i.e.,

[8] *Ibid.*, 7.

[9] He wrote that in an article "Prozatímní vláda v agonii" [The Provisional Government in Agony] included in Slavík's collected essays: *Smysl revoluce – úvahy a kritika* (Prague: Svaz národního osvobození, 1927), 35. Originally the text was published as a serial: "Miljukovovy Dějiny ruské revoluce (Svazek třetí: Vláda v agonii)," *Národní osvobození*, 28 August 1924, appendix, 2; 4 September 1924, appendix, 2–3.

catching up with Europe, could make Russia a normal state of the European type, and put it on equal footing with European countries. He, however, was not sure that it would happen.

What the Bolsheviks took for socialism was not, in Slavík's perception, a "true" socialism of the Marxist type, but "some socialist feudalism, a crossbreed between socialism and Czarism". He considered their demand that the means with which "socialism" in Russia was achieved were to serve as a universal example for the Communist movement around the world a crime. He sensed in it a danger for democracy. He explained that Communists – Stalinist-type Bolsheviks – pushed forward not socialism in the true sense of the word, but "a new form of Czarist and oriental despotism", masked by some socialist devices in the economic field.[10] After the Second World War, when the above-mentioned politics became a reality and Slavík lost a chance to speak publicly, he spoke about the development as "a horrific crisis".[11] No wonder the Communists hated him and destroyed any references to him.

As for the positives of the Russian revolution, and therefore of the Bolshevik contribution, Slavík assumed that Russia "under a red flag" – said metaphorically – successfully freed itself from the Middle Ages. He often took pleasure in comparing Lenin to Peter the Great (he claimed on several occasions that Lenin advanced Russia more than Peter).[12] He did not brush aside the economic and cultural advancement of Russia under Communist rule; though the instruments used for their implementation horrified him. Even for such methods he had an explanation. He expected that the Russian Bolsheviks would influence European conditions for the better. He assumed that their example would improve the situation of the poor, and European democracies would develop for the better. Slavík's illusions, and rather tolerant stance toward Lenin, were formed under the influence of a particular moment in time. It is very interesting that, while Stalin's rise was commented on with understanding and great expectations in Europe, Slavík did not share these views. In his writings in the 1930s, a negative

[10] In a report from his third journey to the Soviet Union, he *inter alia* wrote: "In a country where there is so much fear and bending of known truths when the despot menacingly cracks his whip, socialism may be only a slogan under whose mask a Czarism was exchanged for a new kind of despotism." Jan SLAVÍK, *Po třetí v sovětském Rusku* (Prague: Svaz národního osvobození, 1932), 41.

[11] IDEM, *Iluze a skutečnost*, 136–137.

[12] IDEM, *Po třetí v sovětském Rusku*, 67.

view of the practices of Russian Bolshevik politics, both internal and foreign, prevailed. At some point during the war (more exactly during Stalin's and Hitler's cooperation), he believed that the war would hasten the fall of Stalin's regime. (On June 21, 1941, a day before the German attack on the Soviet Union, he wrote in his war diary: "The war brought it [the Bolshevik Party] up, the war would flush it away.")[13]

Slavík correctly recognized that each revolutionary movement dies away and that each revolution ends. He saw that in the middle of the 1920s. He knew that professional revolutionaries do not retire of their own accord (they forever believe that their finest hour will still come), but that the general masses that "for many months and years could be inflamed their own inner heat, will eventually" get tired, cool off and change "into a solidified mass" that did not burn even when ignited with a powerful torch. There he saw great change in the Russian situation and saw dissatisfaction within the people around him. He well understood that, because of the new situation, the Bolsheviks, should they want to continue their revolutionary practices, would have to realize their revolutions or revolutionary attempts elsewhere. Without a revolutionary mood in the masses, they would have to depend on small conspiratorial groups. That, of course, would be an explicit collapse of theory and practice, he said.

III.

To sum up in brief, we may say that Slavík, at the time when the Russian revolution "blazed high", defended its inception as a reaction to the existing situation, and sought its positive elements, which, if they did not deviate, could be beneficial for social development. At that time he became a target of various right-wing groups, which presented themselves as rigorous opponents of any revolution; for some time he was, as a potential radical, under police surveillance.

When the revolution began inevitably to wither, the political situation, evolutionary theory, programme and methods started to change. (In the 1930s, the slogan "world revolution" was replaced by the insincere "defence of democracy".) Despotism was burdened with Byzantine practices, individual leaders reached the peak of their power and consequently started to fall. Dogmas became heresies, and Slavík's analysis became dangerous for Bolsheviks, Communists and their

[13] IDEM, *Iluze a skutečnost*, 65.

defenders. Slavík himself did not change at all; he therefore fell into the category of "treacherous enemies".[14] Sometimes his severe criticism of Soviet communism was too strong, even for democrats.

It is true that Bolshevism stayed in power for an unexpectedly long time. Slavík himself had to admit that, after fifty years, he surely had not counted on it lasting so long. It was necessary to prove that what works is not automatically correct. Jan Slavík is for us an example of a responsible and brave person with strong convictions who had the will and determination to stand up for them, despite the consequences. His example showed that the revolutionaries and their partisans and fellow travellers couldn't write a history of their revolution while in power, because it developed in a different manner than their instigators and protagonists may have expected.

In conclusion, I wish to plead for a re-issue of Slavík's fundamental works on Russian and Soviet topics. It could appear as a collection or a textbook of selected texts. It would be even better if some of his works could appear in English, so that the outstanding quality of Czech pre-war Soviet studies, as represented by Slavík's *Leninova vláda*, could be offered, even though belatedly, to scholars around the world.

[14] It is surprising that George Orwell arrived at similar conclusion. In 1940, he published in Britain an essay *Inside the Whale*. He wrote there: "The Communist movement in Western Europe began, as a movement for the violent overthrow of capitalism, and degenerated within a few years into an instrument of Russian foreign policy. This was probably inevitable when this revolutionary ferment that followed the Great War had died down." George ORWELL, *Inside the Whale, and Other Essays* (London: V. Gollancz ltd., 1940), 164.

JAN SLAVÍK'S VIEW OF V. I. LENIN

Ľubica HARBUĽOVÁ

Jan Slavík was always interested in political development in Russia at the turn of the century and the resulting October revolution. While researching this subject in a broader historical context, he could not have avoided its main protagonist, Vladimir Iľich Ulianov-Lenin.

Slavík's first thoughts about Lenin appeared in newspaper articles published in Kladno *Stráž svobody* [Freedom Watch] in 1920. Slavík compared him to Peter the Great.[1] On the occasion of the 6th anniversary of the Russian revolution, in the article *Leninova lokomotiva* [Lenin's Locomotive], Slavík assumed that Lenin's personality should be perceived as a function of his revolutionary activities and as one who intended to realize a world revolution.

> Lenin gave a concrete and dreadful form to foggy Slavophile theories about a messianic message, which Russia would tell the world. All his life he worked and waited for the Russian overthrow as the most suitable prelude to world revolution.[2]

On Lenin's death in January 1924, Slavík reacted by writing a series of articles for *Čas* [The Time] and *Československá samostatnost* [Czechoslovak Independence].[3] In the same year, Slavík published a pamphlet *Kapitoly o Leninovi* [Chapters about Lenin].[4] In the introduction, he repeated that Lenin's activities and personality should be perceived only in the framework of the realization of his world-shattering plan, i.e., a plan, which Lenin based on the premise that Russia had the ideal conditions for the realization of this tumultuous phase and could, by its example,

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[1] Jan SLAVÍK, "Lenin a Petr Veliký (Z poznámek k ruské revoluci)," *Stráž Svobody*, 11 February 1920, 2; 14 February 1920, 1–2; 18 February 1920, 2.

[2] IDEM, "Leninova lokomotiva (K 6. výročí bolševické revoluce)," *Čas*, 27 October 1923, 1–2.

[3] Jan SLAVÍK, "Lenin zemřel," *Čas*, 26 January 1924, 1; IDEM, "Kapitoly o Leninovy," *Československá samostatnost*, 10 February 1924, 8; 17 February 1924, 8–9; 24 February 1924, 6–7; 2 March 1924, 7; 9 March 1924, 6–7.

[4] IDEM, *Kapitoly o Leninovi* (Prague: Pokrok, 1924).

Prague Perspectives III (Prague, 2009), 159–168.

incite a revolution in industrial Western Europe.[5] Slavík said that Lenin's personality had a surprisingly large number of purely Russian traits, and he could feel "wafts of Russian sectarian spirit and the genuineness of Russian literature."[6] According to Slavík, even the determination with which Lenin declared his rigid ideas is symptomatic of Russian peoples who, with identical obstinacy, affirm and defend their faith.

At the beginning of the 1930s, Slavík sporadically returned to the subject of Lenin in periodical articles.[7] He presented his view of Lenin more complexly and fundamentally in his works *Lenin*, published in 1934, and *Leninova vláda* [Lenin's Rule] (1935).[8] In *Lenin* Slavík discussed the intraparty development in the Russian social democracy and described the victory of Bolshevik wing lead by Lenin. In *Leninova vláda* he concentrated on intraparty development from 1917 to 1924, and characterized the circumstances which caused the Soviets to forfeit power and its transfer to the hands of the Bolsheviks. In both works, Slavík primarily focused on intraparty and general political development in Russia, but even here we can follow the development of Lenin's personality and Slavík's perception of the changes.

In the preface to *Lenin*, Slavík wrote that Lenin was a great type of professional revolutionary whose only vocation was the preparation and realization of a revolution.[9] Slavík also mentioned that Lenin was something more than a professional revolutionary – he was a teacher of professional revolutionaries. Lenin, according to Slavík, found his calling in building a squad of skilled revolutionaries who would bring about a social overthrow in Russia.[10]

Many authors who concerned themselves with Lenin emphasized that even in his youth Lenin was single-minded and dominating. Slavík accentuated these features as well, and underlined that Lenin was

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[5] *Ibid.*, 4.

[6] *Ibid.*, 58.

[7] Jan SLAVÍK, "Masaryk a Lenin," *Národní osvobození*, 7 March 1930, 6; IDEM, "Leninem glosovaný Hegel," *Sobota* 2, no. 43 (1931): 846–847; IDEM, "Bernstein, Kautský, Lenin," *Národní osvobození*, 25 December 1932, 4–5; IDEM, "Lenin a hodnocení jeho historického významu (K desátému výročí smrti Leninovy)," *Národní osvobození*, 21 January 1934, 3.

[8] IDEM, *Lenin* (Prague: Melantrich, 1934); IDEM, *Leninova vláda 1917–1924* (Prague: Melantrich, 1935).

[9] Slavík rejected the attempt to compare V. I. Lenin and Maximilien de Robespierre, because he felt that Robespierre, in comparison to Lenin, was an amateur.

[10] SLAVÍK, *Lenin*, 11.

domineering in his family, and later on strived for a position of authority in any collective with which he was involved – school, political clubs, party, etc. At the beginning of his political carrier, he caught the eye of prominent representatives of the Russian Social Democratic Party living in exile. Many of them (for example, Pavel B. Akselʹrod, Georgii V. Plekhanov, Iulius O. Martov) remarked in their memoirs that he captured their attention with his savvy, debating ability and organizational talent. Slavík picked out another distinctive quality of Lenin that he noted in Martov's memoirs. Martov wrote that when Lenin was together with people of the same standing he behaved as the first among equals.[11] Slavík noted, supporting his thesis with those memoirs, that Lenin was a passionate and excellent chess player, and his nature would not let him be a pawn on the revolutionary chessboard, but only a high-powered and dominant piece.[12] His temperament broadly influenced his political activities. They reflected his stubbornness, consistency, and the perseverance with which he followed his objectives. Slavík brought to particular attention the flexibility with which he changed his tactics, stepped back, and adapted to the situation. His strategy and tactics were never straightforward, and changed in an almost Machiavellian manner.[13]

In this work, Slavík mentioned several times Lenin's relation to Marxism, and took exception to Lenin's knowledge of Marx' and Engels' works. He suggested that Lenin's scholarship was poor and erratic. Lenin most likely studied Marx' *Capital* without a broader knowledge of philosophy and sociology. This was most likely the reason for Lenin's sectarian acceptance of Marx' teaching. Slavík wrote in this context: "Marx' *Capital* is his icon. In the whole of his writings, we would not find one sentence where Lenin would admit that the founders of Marxism could have been wrong like any other mortal."[14]

For Soviet interwar historiographers, Lenin was already a great philosopher. Slavík did not agree with these statements, and argued that Lenin concerned himself very little with philosophy, and often not systematically.

> Lenin is worshiped as an infallible authority. It is not possible to write about him as a person who would change his opinions through his learning.

[11] *Ibid.*, 42.
[12] *Ibid.*, 81.
[13] *Ibid.*, 135.
[14] *Ibid.*, 24.

> It was implausible because Lenin did not change his teleological perception of philosophy.[15]

Slavík described the fact that Lenin, when he had to proceed contrary to Marx' and Engels' theories of a proletarian revolution, did not hesitate to exercise his political pragmatism. "He was able," Slavík wrote, "to find the most flexible Marxist definitions. Marxism is not a dogma but an instruction for activity. Lenin's view of Marx' and Engels' scientific theory is sectarian and dogmatic."[16] Slavík observed that Lenin chose only what suited him, or what was in keeping with his vision of a world revolution, in Marx' and Engels' works.

Jan Slavík was familiar with Lenin's works as can be seen in footnotes and references in his monographic studies. There he evaluated Lenin's individual works and wrote critical notes on key chapters. Already in *Kapitoly o Leninovi*, and later in the larger monograph *Lenin*, Slavík thought of Lenin's *Razvitiia kapitalizma v Rossii* [The Development of Capitalism in Russia] as his most scientific work. He was very critical of *Shag vpered. Dva shaga nazad* [One Step Forward, Two Steps Back], and considered it an example of "Lenin's unscrupulous talent for agitation". He pointed out that in this work Lenin was not embarrassed to use with great flexibility any principle, which he either adopted or refuted according to which interpretation suited him at the moment.[17]

Slavík considered the articles that Lenin published after the Bloody Sunday of 1905 as excellent material for learning about Lenin's psychology. He recommended mainly the article *Nachalo revoliutsii v Rossii* [The Beginning of the Revolution in Russia] and an essay *Revoliutsionnye dni* [Revolutionary Days] or *Pop Gapon* [Father Gapon]. The most offensive of Lenin's work for the choice of language, expressions, and style, according to Slavík, is *Materializm i empiriokrititsizm* [Materialism and Empirio-critism]. Slavík quoted widely to show that the whole work is full of vituperation and nasty attributes applied to nearly all 19th century philosophers. He called university professors scholastics and officials reactionaries, graduated flunkeys, idiots who dull the nation. Concluding his notes about this work Slavík remarked: "His materialism is pure

[15] *Ibid.*, 216.
[16] *Ibid.*, 217.
[17] *Ibid.*, 147.

orthodoxy. The spirit is of an obstinate and narrow-minded raskolnik who has sunk his teeth into his simple dogmas."[18]

Slavík was aware of the fact that while evaluating Lenin and his activities he had to differentiate between Lenin the theoretician and Lenin the agitator. The agitator activities of Lenin and his collaborators reflected their efforts to get to the forefront of the Russian Social Democratic Party and to stabilize Lenin's position as its leader. A systematic study of Party materials, chiefly records of plenary meetings of party committees and congresses of the Russian Social-Democratic Workers' Party that reported passionate discussions of Party leaders, led Slavík to the conclusion that Lenin gradually became a dictator; he began to use a more and more dictatorial tone during arguments and discussions. Slavík noted that Lenin stepped into a discussion usually as the last speaker, and his speech differed from the others in its dictatorial delivery. While most debates were held on a rational and theoretical level, Lenin always chose a categorical or imperative form.[19]

Slavík was of the opinion that Lenin achieved the dominant position in the Russian Social-Democratic Workers' Party after the 5th congress held in 1907. About that time, he changed his behaviour and the tone of his agitating speeches and communications with other Party members. Slavík supported this statement by quotes from a public appearance of Vera I. Zasulich and Leon D. Trotsky. They warned of Lenin's dictatorial behaviour. Slavík also quoted a part of a letter which Lenin sent to members of the Social Democratic Party in Russia, and which authoritatively announced his decisions, indifferent to opinions of the Russian Party organization.[20]

Vladimir I. Lenin was also arrogant and dictatorial towards his friends and closest associates. Slavík illustrates this demeanour by a letter Lenin sent to Maksim Gorky after Gorky published his opinion on the dramatization of the novel by Fedor M. Dostoevsky *Besy* [The Possessed]. In this letter, Lenin openly berated Gorky for his outlook and preached at him about the proper understanding of religion. Slavík implied that the manner in which the letter was written not only depicted Lenin's nature, but also his theocratic dictatorship. Slavík showed as well that the letter is an example of Lenin's hypocrisy. He also suggested

[18] *Ibid.*, 221.
[19] *Ibid.*, 111.
[20] *Ibid.*, 156.

duplicity in Lenin's approach to religion. In a private letter to Gorky, he condemned it, but in public, he softened his tone and recommended caution in anti-religious campaigns.[21] This letter to Gorky is a concrete case in point of Lenin's tactics and of his very ambiguous handling of moral and ethical categories.

With the consolidation of the Bolshevik wing within the Social Democratic Party, the position of Lenin was consolidated as well, and his self-importance as a leader grew. He did not see himself as an ordinary member of the party, but as a "chief of the revolution". When his plans did not work, as when for instance at the Zimmerwald conference in 1905 where he could not push through his intention to set up a new International, he began feverishly to agitate and manoeuvre. He did not restrict himself to criticizing his opponent, but used smear campaigns as a political weapon. Any means to unmask and defame his adversaries was acceptable for him. Whilst in the minority, Lenin stubbornly started another action to make a majority out of the minority.[22] According to Slavík, it was after the Zimmerwald conference that Lenin's rhetoric and agitation began to show an Asian motives. At this period, Lenin frequently proclaimed that revolutionary proceedings in Russia were only a vehicle to inflame a worldwide socialist revolution. Slavík, however, said it was no longer important for the Russian revolution to demonstrate its ability to bring social progress, but to impress by its brutality.[23]

Evaluating Lenin's development up to 1917, Slavík called him a Machiavellian strategist who chose an oligarchic form of leading the proletariat and gave an organization with an authoritarian executive committee to the Russian Social Democracy. Slavík also examined the methods Lenin used to achieve his goal: "History would not forget to list the medieval, truly evangelically aggressive methods with which Lenin, a direct successor to the Czars, blazed a trail to socialism."[24]

In the mid-1930s, when his monographs about Lenin were published, Slavík meticulously observed the political development in the Soviet Union already dominated by Iosif V. Stalin. Slavík, likely with a realistic view of conditions in the Soviet Union, speculated about Lenin's place

[21] *Ibid.*, 230.
[22] *Ibid.*, 280.
[23] *Ibid.*, 281.
[24] *Ibid.*, 357.

in Russian history and his effect on development in Russia at that time and in the future. He concluded his *Lenin*:

> If after the storm, destruction and forced building, a vigorous Russia would emerge, devoid of all that made the Czarist empire rigid, dark and weak, then Lenin would become the most magnificent person in Russian history. However, with the situation as it is now in Russia, there is no assurance that it will be so.[25]

Slavík recognized the problems of Russian political development:

> Development in Russia is unsure. The evaluation of Ulianov-Lenin will depend on the way it will develop. The future will show if he has cleared the road to socialism or if he, by his Czarist methods, has brought socialism into disrepute.[26]

In the second half of the 1930s Slavík returned to Lenin several times in articles published in *Sobota* [Saturday] and *Národní osvobození* [The National Liberation].[27] In a polemic in 1937–1938 with Zdeněk Nejedlý that was stirred by the publication of Nejedlý's work *Lenin*,[28] Slavík raised the question about a full portrayal of Lenin and a full evaluation of his significance for Russian history.[29] In reaction to Nejedlý's work, he wrote in *Slovanský přehled* [The Slavonic Review]:

> At the time when almost everybody believed fables about Lenin and the Bolsheviks, I was able to show, based on documents, who Lenin was and what he meant for Russian history. Already in 1921, I wrote what history would say about him: He advanced Russia more than Peter the Great. It is not, however, going to prevent me writing how Czarist despotism has been atavistically revitalized in the Soviet regime.[30]

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[25] *Ibid.*, 357–358.

[26] *Ibid.*, 359.

[27] Jan SLAVÍK, "Z úvodu knihy 'Leninova vláda'," *Sobota* 6, no. 13 (1935): 280–281; IDEM, "Leninův názor na válku," *Národní osvobození*, 4 May 1935, 3; IDEM, "Jak Lenin zemřel," *České slovo*, 7 May 1935, 6; IDEM, "Lenin," in *Tvůrcové dějin* (Prague: L. Mazáč, 1936), 5 (Čtyři tisíciletí světových dějin v obrazech dob a osobností): 397–410; IDEM, "Rozhovor Lenina s Wilsonem o věcech národních a sociálních," *Národní osvobození*, 28 October 1937, 4; IDEM, "Beseda s duchem Leninovým o situaci v Evropě," *Sobota* 9, no. 13 (1938): 148–149; IDEM, "Lenin jako kritik výbojného imperialismu," *Národní osvobození*, 5 June 1938, 11; IDEM, "Leninovy intimní poznámky o sebeurčení národů," *Národní osvobození*, 6 August 1938, 6.

[28] Zdeněk NEJEDLÝ, *Lenin*, 2 vols. (Prague: Odeon, 1937, 1938).

[29] Jan SLAVÍK, "Otevřený list prof. Zdeňku Nejedlému, jako autoru knihy 'Lenin'," *Národní osvobození*, 12 December 1937, 11; IDEM, "Nejedlého 'Lenin' a záchrana české vědy," *Národní osvobození*, 19 December 1937, 11; 23 December 1937, 8; 30 December 1937, 6.

[30] IDEM, "Ruská revoluce a 'Lenin' Zdeňka Nejedlého," *Slovanský přehled* 30, no. 1 (1938): 17.

Already after Lenin's death in 1924, Jan Slavík anticipated that divergent opinions would bring about an evaluation of Lenin's personality. In a preface to his *Kapitoly o Leninovi*, he wrote: "Lenin – mourned and celebrated as the greatest person of the 20th century, and then again condemned and cursed as a slaughterer and destroyer of Russia."[31] Slavík appealed for an objective summation of Lenin's share in the Russian evolution, and pointed out that it was very distressing to read criticisms and denigrations of Lenin, which are totally devoid of any knowledge of his person. He wrote that it was forgotten that one has to know the subject of one's antagonism.[32] Slavík's emphasis on the reading of Lenin's works as the best key to his personality did not loose its topicality. This fundamental source has been often overlooked (and still is). Therefore, Slavík words were well founded: "Both those who call him the greatest person of our century, and those who curse him, do not know Lenin at all."[33] His other conclusions are also timeless:

> Lenin deserves to be written about by those who have studied a lot and are brave enough to say what they think. It would be disrespectful of Lenin if those who do not have enough knowledge and are close to those who are for a moment in power, dare to write about him.[34]

Slavík's evaluations of Lenin's personality correspond fully with contemporary research, with the results of Lenin's personality analysis, and his place in the Russian 20th century history.

A period of intensified Lenin studies began toward the end of the 1980s. Russian scholars were only gradually succeeding in overcoming the mythologizing aspects associated with Lenin's personality. After the opening of the archives at the beginning of the 1990s, they could begin to work at a well-researched historical evaluation of the life and work of this Russian historical personality. One of the first syntheses using materials from newly accessible archives was a political portrayal of Lenin written by Dmitrii A. Volkogonov.[35] Even though he perceives Lenin and Leninism in a broader historical context as foreign elements in the Russian circumstance, we find in his work accounts very similar to Slavík's

[31] Idem, *Kapitoly o Leninovi*, s. 8.
[32] Idem, "Lenin zemřel."
[33] *Ibid.*
[34] Slavík, "Ruská revoluce a 'Lenin' Zdeňka Nejedlého," 18.
[35] Dmitrii A. Volkogonov, *Lenin. Politicheskii portret*, 2 vols. (Moscow: Novosti, 1994); In Czech: Dmitrij Volkogonov, *Lenin. Počátek teroru* (Liberec: Dialog, 1996).

evaluations. Dmitrii Volkogonov likewise points out Lenin's selective approach to Marxism and admits that Lenin saw in Marxism only what he wanted to see.[36] Akin to Slavík, he describes the manner in which Lenin participated in discussions and the fanaticism with which he defended his points: "…he crushed his adversary by his absolutely uncompromising attitude, or perhaps it was his firm conviction, one-dimensional and fanatical conduct."[37]

The thematic variety of works on Lenin's personality in Russian historiography broadened in the mid-90s of the last century. Scholars came up with previously unknown aspects of Lenin's personal life; new documents from 1891–1922 were published and works that characterized Lenin as a red dictator and spoke about his cult in Soviet Russia appeared.[38] One of the latest works dedicated to V. I. Lenin is a book by Vladimir A. Potseluev. It deals more with Leninism than with Lenin himself. The author conceded that Lenin was a genius, but thoroughly criticized his teachings.[39]

The end of the 1990s witnessed a growth in publications about Lenin by American and West European historians due to the new accessibility of documents in Russian archives. Authors differ greatly in their evaluation of Lenin. For instance, Richard Pipes depicts Lenin as a leader, almost a despot, who was interested only in command and power.[40] Robert Service placed him into the broader context of a Russian development,[41] and his conclusions are close to Slavík's evaluation of Lenin. Service, like Slavík, maintains that even though Lenin insisted on his theories, he was able and willing to change his strategy according to

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[36] VOLKOGONOV, *Lenin. Počátek teroru*, 33.

[37] *Ibid.*, 72.

[38] To list only few works of the Russian historiography: Aleksandr A. IVANOV, *Delo Lenina – smertno: neposil'nye soobrazheniia* (Moscow: s. n., 1994); Anatolii G. LATYSHEV, *Rassekrechennyi Lenin* (Moscow: Mart, 1996); Nina TUMARKIN, *Lenin zhiv! Kul't Lenina v Sovetskoi Rossii* (Moscow: Akademicheskii proekt, 1997); Vladimir E. MEL'NICHENKO, *Lichnaia zhizn' Lenina* (Moscow: Voskresen'e, 1998); *V. I. Lenin. Neizvestnye dokumenty: 1891–1922* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 1999); Georgii V. VERNADSKII, *Lenin – krasnyi diktator* (Moscow: Agraf, 1998); Lev E. KOLODNYI, *Lenin bez grima* (Moscow: Golos, 2000); Akim A. ARUTIUNOV, *Lenin: lichnostnaia i politicheskaia biografiia* (Moscow: Veche, 2002).

[39] Vladimir A. POTSELUEV, *Lenin* (Moscow: Eksmo, Algoritm–Kniga, 2003).

[40] Richard PIPES, *Russia under the Bolshevik Regime, 1919–1924* (London: Harvill, 1994); IDEM, ed., *The unknown Lenin: From the secret archive* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 34.

[41] Robert SERVICE, *Lenin: a biography* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000).

the situation.[42] Both of them say that he subordinated his perception of Marxism to his strategic interests. He dubbed himself as the only true Marxist interpreter, however, stating "his own version of Marxism, to an even greater extend, his practical policies changed a great deal over his long career".[43] In the same way, they describe Lenin's characteristic features: "He was so used to getting his way that, if balked in any fashion, he was altogether too likely to throw a fit of anger. He absolutely hated being thwarted."[44] Service, just as Slavík, noted that Lenin, even before 1917, had begun to communicate within his own Party authoritatively without seeking consent: "Lenin did not bother to consult with the other Bolshevik emigrants. More than that: he wrote without any detailed knowledge of what was happening in Russia."[45]

In the historiography of Lenin's personality, there are three basic groups. Authors who see Lenin as a positive element represent the first one; then there are works striving for a scholarly and objective evaluation within a broad social and historical context. To the third group belong authors who *a priori* evaluate Lenin only negatively. Slavík's works can be placed in the second group. His conclusions are wholly comparable with those of newer historical works.

Jan Slavík's works about Lenin and Russia, even at the time of their publication, and naturally later, stimulated varied reactions. For some, his view of Russia and Lenin was very critical; for others, it was too mild and almost uncritical. We could say that just this discord of opinions on Slavík's work was a proof that he, in his attempt for a scholarly evaluation of historical events in Russia and the participating personalities, set forth many years ago in the right direction.

[42] *Ibid.*, 9.
[43] *Ibid.*, 237.
[44] *Ibid.*, 84.
[45] *Ibid.*, 255.

JAN SLAVÍK AND CZARIST RUSSIA[1]

Vratislav DOUBEK

Throughout his professional life, Jan Slavík was interested in several subjects which he developed concurrently in his writings. Russia was one of them, but before we can evaluate his contribution, it is necessary to examine the development of this interest.

At the beginning of his career as a historian, he was not primarily interested in Russia. The attraction developed gradually through his reading of such authors as Vasilii O. Kliuchevskii, Mykhailo Hrushevskyi and Nikolai P. Pavlov-Silvanskii. He was mainly interested in the Eastern European Slavic studies, and his interest in Russia was simply an extension of that subject. Slavík was concerned with contemporary questions; he did not, as some fellow historians, regard them as not yet worthy of attention. He had not, however, paid much attention to pre-revolutionary events in Russia, as they did not fall under his contemporary interest – but he did not ignore them completely. His first attempt to investigate this period is worth noting for its method. He did not concentrate on politics or economics (his comparative study *Habsburkové a Rusko v 16. století* (1906) [Habsburgs and Russia in the 16th century][2] is an exception), but on culture, or rather socio-culture, as exemplified in his essay *Turgeněv a nihilismus* (1917) [Turgenev and Nihilism][3]. In its treatment we can detect Masaryk's influence in its observation of the problem and its utilization of an original sociological method to analyze the evolution of the subject (in this case, Russian society) by studying it through its literature, as in Masaryk's *O studiu děl básnických* [On the Study of Poetry][4]. In his works, Slavík combined

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[1] This text has been published in the framework of the research project GAČR no. 409/09/0900 *Immigration to Russia and its impact on Czech Politics*.

[2] Jan SLAVÍK, "Habsburkové a Rusko v 16. století," *Český časopis historický* 12, no. 2 (1906): 169–177; no. 3: 312–334; no. 4: 447–467.

[3] IDEM, "Turgeněv a nihilismus," *Národní listy (večerní vydání)*, 19 April 1917, 1–2; 14 May 1917, 1–2.

[4] Tomáš G. MASARYK, *O studiu děl básnických* (Prague: self published, 1884). It is a corrected text of a lecture originally published in *Lumír*: IDEM, "Jak studovati máme

this historical-literary approach with a literary-philosophical one. Masaryk used this method in the third volume of his *Rusko a Evropa* [Russia and Europe][5], which was then not yet published. We should remember that Turgenev's works were regarded as a turning point for the modernist view of the world that goes beyond an artistic realism and leads to the view that some segments of the society cannot last, cannot find within themselves any positive outlook or principles and therefore turn to self-destructive nihilism. Dostoevsky's major works were written in this vein, though Turgenev's *Ottsy i deti* [Fathers and Sons] might be regarded as the first wholly modern novel in Russian literature. This concept, however, may be seen from another point of view: that of a young historian who wrote his *Turgeněv a nihilismus* during the war, under the influence of a belief in the purifying catharsis of war. It was a concept of modernity and hope, of suppression of the old and faith in the new. This faith grew toward the end of the war and was combined with a view of the entire 19th century as a transition into a new era of humanity and humanism. Here we can again detect Masaryk's sociological view of the crises of modern man, from which a way out must be found. It could be done by steering towards a differently-imagined future, such as that sought out by Alexis de Tocqueville in the United States or through the gradual maturing of the progressive reforms of Western European political and economic administrative systems, as seen by Slavík.

Ivan S. Turgenev was the first wholly Russian subject that Slavík presented to a general Czech readership, indeed, up to the end of the war, his only one. Immediately after finishing his essay *Turgeněv a nihilismus*, he started to work on a politically oriented study in which he wanted to introduce Turgenev as a correspondent in the Franco-Prussian war. He presented an extract of this work the following year in the journal *Národ* [The Nation][6] as part of "a forthcoming monograph about Turgenev, which, if God allows me a few more years in Kladno, I might yet publish".[7] He never did publish this monograph, however, but turned his

básníky psychologicky a logicky," *Lumír* 12, no. 17 (1884): 266–268; no. 18: 280–282; no. 19: 298–301.

[5] The third volume of *Rusko a Evropa* was published for the first time only in 1996.

[6] Jan SLAVÍK, "Turgeněv a válka prusko-francouzská," *Národ* 2, no. 6 (1918): 81.

[7] Letter of Jan Slavík to Kamil Krofta, August 10, 1917, published in Jaroslav BOUČEK, *Jan Slavík: Příběh zakázaného historika* (Jinočany: H+H, 2002), 158.

interest to contemporary Russia and to the East, studying and interpreting the results of revolutionary changes in Soviet Russia. Further works of a historical-literary orientation were overlaid by this dominant political theme. His last effort in a cultural direction was a study published in *Slovanský přehled* [The Slavonic Review] in 1928 on Lev N. Tolstoy.[8]

Jan Slavík was an historian who firmly embraced the concept of a progressive philosophy of history, following a tradition initiated by František Palacký. Traces of this may be found in Slavík's studies on the Hussite movement, as well as those on Russia. His key focus there was on revolution, revolutionism and absolutism. An image of a collapse, intensified by the cataclysm of war and followed by uncertainty and destruction, was how the events of the Russian revolution were impressed upon his mind. Nonetheless, the revolution was for him an immense and stimulating contemporary issue. To explore Slavík's relationship with revolutionary and Bolshevik Russia is beyond the scope of this paper; nevertheless, it is necessary to acknowledge it in order to understand the loosening of his ties to the period of pre-revolutionary Russia. He understood it as an era that precedes a revolution and a new age. For Slavík, revolution and revolutionism were seen as a dynamic force in history and a sign of progress. From this attitude, we can deduce that he saw pre-revolutionary Russia as just a phase that makes a revolution possible by embodying the attributes to be opposed. It was a time of stagnation, of values so burdened by hundreds of years of detritus that they could not change, and thus were ripe for annihilation. This was a generally valid historical model for Slavík, as it can be seen in his comparative approach to the Hussite revolution in Czech history, and primarily to the French and the October revolutions. From this angle, Slavík saw Czarist Russia as analogous to the *Ancien Régime* in France. He considered both systems to be ripe for a revolution due to their indifference to their subjects, obsolete systems and resistance to change. We should realize that Slavík was a contemporary of critics of the philosophy of history such as Wilhelm Dilthey. In his objective thinking, Slavík tried to achieve a realistic evaluation of individual aspects of these epochs. Using his historical method, he consciously avoided a positivistic attitude; Leopold von Ranke was, for him, a symbol of an archaic historiography that was so preoccupied with finding a picture

[8] Jan SLAVÍK, "Filosoficko-historický materialismus Lva Nik. Tolstého," *Slovanský přehled* 20, no. 7 (1928): 511–516.

of reality that it could not advance beyond analyses of partial processes. Slavík made an effort to include in his analysis a large number of broad and varied arguments and influences, and to identify their positive contributions. He drew on a deep knowledge of historical life and institutions, and on a rich knowledge of a range of analyses, however, the influence of Buckle's interpretation of the cumulative development of civilization should not be overlooked.

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To describe Slavík's conception of the Bolshevik revolution as the inevitable breaking point is not accurate when we evaluate his connection with pre-revolutionary Russia. Slavík did not assess the Russian revolution as a short-term event, but tried to grasp revolutionism as a process. The French revolution became, in many respects, a paradigm for Slavík. Even though he did not analyze its many causes, or its course, in detail, he repeatedly referred to it as an antecedent to a logical development of Russia. Slavík saw the first Russian reaction to a Western revolutionary movement – "a by-product of the French contamination" – in the Dekabrist revolt.[9] The Dekabrist revolt was not the first, nor the last, sign of the weakness of the system. He perceived revolutionism in Russia as a permanent state of affairs, as a respons to the ongoing crises of the society.

Even though Slavík followed these processes through the relatively long period of 18th and 19th centuries, he inferred that it was impossible to expect or hope for inner reforms, which might have prevented a revolutionary outburst. If Slavík saw the Western tradition as a continuous process of the modernization of administration and the democratization of politics, then the Russian situation, for him, was characterized as a permanent crisis, ripe for a radical change. In the same fashion, he strove to define the Dekabrist uprising and other greater or lesser revolutionary outbreaks, not only as a manifestation of crisis, but also as a demonstration of certain inner mechanisms of revolution. Therefore, he paid much attention to Pavel I. Pestel,[10] a theoretician of Russian revolutionism, and other thinkers. Slavík saw the basis of such

[9] IDEM, "Děkabristé. K stému výročí povstání," *Slovanský přehled* 18, no. 1 (1926): 31–39.
[10] Comp. IDEM, "Počátky konstitučního hnutí v Rusku," *Národní listy*, 30 March 1917, 1–2; IDEM, "Leninský živel mezi Děkabristy," *Národní osvobození*, 25 December 1925, 18.

a permanent revolutionist force, referring also to other Russian critics (Kondratii F. Ryleev), as the willingness to sacrifice oneself in the name of revolutionary ideal

> …the first Russian revolutionaries were smitten with the ideas that had returned regularly in the course of the hundred years of revolutionary efforts: "It is necessary to sacrifice ourselves and with a great hue and cry against czarism 'wake up Russia'."[11]

Slavík saw this as the only possible goal, which was achieved with each successful revolutionary attempt. As the revolutionary groups changed, so too did the targeted groups. These revolutionary attempts were ineffective in changing the regime in 19th century Russia; but they did, as Slavík pointed out, gradually activate different segments of Russian society and stimulate acts that were more radical. The conclusion that may be drawn is that Russian society as such was getting ready for radical change and was undergoing "self-reflection". Slavík viewed Russian society of the 19th century, and its growing faith in revolution, as preparing for and moving in the direction of radical brake that was realised in 1917. Let us not for a moment think that Slavík was an uncritical advocate of the Bolshevik *coup d'état*. The form of the revolution and the events linked to the Bolshevik takeover followed directly from preceding developments.[12] These principles of historical development, which Slavík championed, were, according to him, well embedded in much older historical processes. Slavík's view of history came from his positive expectations of change. He was not, however, inclined to see positive examples of pre-revolutionary times that might have been regarded symbolically as chances for change. The important personalities of Russian history were seen as representatives of revolutionary awakening and not as reformers of their era. Therefore he applied himself more and more to negative models.

He chose a very diverse foursome – Nicholas II, Grigorii E. Rasputin, Konstantin P. Pobedonostsev, Peter the Great – for analysis. This foursome, in Slavík's view, represented a certain negative typology of the decay of Russian elites. The last Russian Czar, a vassal of the demonical muzhik Rasputin, presented, with him, a very depressing pair,

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[11] IDEM, "Děkabristé," 37.

[12] IDEM, "Ruské strany politické za světové války," *Slovanský přehled* 17, no. 1 (1925): 19–27; no. 2: 97–106; no. 3: 196–205; no. 4: 249–257; no. 5–6: 387–395; no. 7–8: 476–483; no. 9–10: 608–616.

and Slavík referred to them as symbols of the degradation of Russian power. Both are symptoms of decay – Rasputin symbolizing the collapse of a system and the calculating careerists and schemers who recognized it and exploited its weaknesses, but who did nothing to rectify it. And Nicholas as a prototype of fecklessness and weak-mindedness, the weak sovereign who displays "the lack of ruler's energy" and who adds only "a portion of degenerate phenomena out of which a revolution is born [...] Moral failure, hysteria, mysticism, superstition are phenomena which are ever present in the pre-revolution Russian society."[13] Slavík, however, did not present them as the fatal cause of the breakdown, but more as the final straw, the executors of unavoidable collapse that had been in preparation for decades. Slavík maintained that one of the makers of Russia's downfall was, without doubt, Pobedonostsev, the "malignant defender of absolutism". These evaluations can be regarded as standard now, but the author had no patience even for the traditional symbols of more-or-less painstaking reforms; we miss a clear appreciation of the "Czar-liberator" Alexander II or recognition to the reforms of Peter the Great. These older historical forays bear the signs of an analysis based on documentary sources, which were intended to support a general evaluation leading to foreseeable conclusions. Thus, we do not find anyone progressive amongst the Russian political elite, at best only a handful of foresighted individuals. In Slavík's view, the course of this era was self-evident and had significant consequences. It was characterized by powers representing a political decadence of the worst kind, or by a few harbingers of revolution who were unable to propose any sustainable notion of advancement. Peter the Great was a typical example: he had the right ideas, but tried to apply them in the same fashion as his degenerate forebears.

> He [Peter] wanted to give his empire better administration but the means he used were in direct conflict with the development of modern administration [...], in 18th century Russia [we can see] a direct contrast to its development in the West.[14]

Peter the Great, Nicholas II and even Rasputin and Pobedonostsev differed from each other only in the degree of their decay. They were, for

[13] IDEM, "Úvodem," in Jan Slavík, ed., *Listy carských manželů z let válečných* (Prague: Melantrich, 1933), 9.

[14] IDEM, *Základy carismu. Historicko-sociologický úvod do studia osvobozenských snah v Rusku* (Kladno: J. Šnajdr, 1927), 17–18.

Slavík, just varieties of the same stagnation, "a personification of an outworn system that could not be helped. It was not capable of development and had to be destroyed by revolution in order for Russia to go on."[15]

The Czarist era became an extraneous subject for Slavík, one in which he was only conditionally interested, given the emerging and more interesting topic of contemporary revolutionary Russia, with which he grew professionally. His facility in actualizing historical events did not stop him from facing contemporary issues, and making them equal in importance to traditional subjects. Indeed an inherent part of historical studies. In this sense, Slavík is one of first representatives of study of contemporary history. The study of contemporary events allowed him to trace and confirm universal human tendencies from the earliest times to the present.

I wish to add a few thoughts to which I was led by Slavík's personality. There is no disagreement that he was a disciple of Palacký's politicized history, seeking the actualization of a historical recognition of the present. Slavík is linked with this line of thinking not only by his professional orientation, but also by his belonging to intelligentsia, a political avant-garde of the middle class. In the past, the bourgeois intellectual stood at the forefront of an underdeveloped middle class, and led its struggle for social and political equality. This confrontation resulted in a politicization of history and language as a natural and necessary part of professional and civic activities. Slavík stood at the end of this process of self-realization and self-actualization of intellectuals as an independent part of the middle class. He was a member of the generation of intellectuals who disengaged themselves from their former "historical mission". At that time, the middle class, and indeed all society, was mature enough to allow a separation into individual segments. We really cannot talk about the middle class after the First World War as a single community, and this atomization was very much reflected in intellectual circles. In Slavík's case, we can follow this shift in his increasing interest in a social view of history, but not with implications for historicized politics. Slavík, a modern intellectual historian, did not crave, nor was called to, immediate political activity. On the contrary, he felt that each generation of intellectuals would be politically active and present itself as a self-contained group whose initiatives would not have a general social recognition.

[15] IDEM, "Zhoubný obránce samoděržaví (K 25. výročí smrti K. P. Pobědonosceva)," *Slovanský přehled* 24, no. 4 (1932): 207.

The Soviet Union in the Reports of Jan Slavík and Some Western Intellectuals in the 1920s and 1930s

Jiří VACEK

The great Austrian writer and humanist Stefan Zweig confided in his memoirs *The World of Yesterday* about being in a quandary between curiosity to see Soviet reality with his own eyes and an aversion to having to accept an imposed picture shaped after a short time in the country of the Bolshevik experiment. When he received, in the summer of 1928, an invitation to the commemorative celebrations for the 100th year anniversary of Lev N. Tolstoy's birth he accepted, because he saw it as lacking a political motive. He was excited by the spontaneous cordiality of the people he met, and he realized the danger, to which more than one foreign writer succumbed, of thinking that he must praise a country where he was read, loved and celebrated. Zweig admitted that he was not far from yielding to temptation. That it did not happen, he credits not his own resistance, but rather a seemingly small event after a festive meeting with students, when he found a letter that someone must have slipped into his pocket. The letter was in French and read as follows:

> "Don't believe everything one tells you. Don't forget that with all that they show you, there is much that is not shown you. Remember that most of the people who talk to you do not say what they wish to say but only what they may tell you. We all are watched and you yourself no less. Your interpreter reports every word, your telephone is tapped, every step is observed." He cited instances and details which I was unable to check. But I burned the letter as he directed – "don't just tear it up because they will piece it together from your wastebasket" – and began, for the first time, to think it all over. Was it not really a fact that amidst all this hearty warmth, this wonderful comradeship, I had not had a single opportunity to talk with anybody privately, face to face? My ignorance of the language had prevented close touch with the man in the street. And furthermore: how small a part of this endless country I had seen in these two weeks. If I wanted to be honest with myself and to others, I could not but admit that my impression, exciting and stimulating in many a detail as it was, could yet have no objective validity. This was the reason why, though almost all other European authors who returned from Russia promptly published a book of either enthusiastic affirmation or

Prague Perspectives III (Prague, 2009), 177–188.

> incensed negation, I wrote no more than a few articles. And I did well with this restraint; for already after three months, much was different from what I had seen, and after a year, due to the rapid transformations, every word would have been given the lie by the facts. In any event I felt the underlying currents of our time as keenly in Russia as ever in my life.[1]

Many Western intellectuals tried in the 1920s to visit the Soviet Union to see for themselves the reality of changes in the Bolshevik post-revolutionary regime. In the 1930s, a growing interest in the USSR was stirred up, on one hand by the worsening economic and political situation in the West during the Great Depression and the rise of Fascism, and on the other by celebratory proclamations of the first Soviet Five-Year Plan. To solidify the dictatorship, there was a need for moral support from diverse circles in the West. Meetings and talks of Soviet representatives, and Stalin himself, with high-ranking persons like George Bernard Shaw, Emil Ludwig, Herbert George Wells, Romain Rolland, Henri Barbusse and Lion Feuchtwanger strengthened, in the eyes of the general public and especially the intelligentsia, the authority of the Soviet system. First-hand observation reports written by eyewitnesses have a specific historical significance, much greater than later vicarious works, particularly if the writer possessed political acumen and an ability for social analysis; and even more if did not succumb to the ideological "manipulation" of the Soviet hosts.

Jan Slavík, as the author of reports from his three visits to the USSR, had an advantage over some of the authors that will be mentioned later (Panait Istrati, Theodore Dreiser, André Gide). He was not a guest of Soviet institutions as they and many others were. (His professional travels in 1926, 1927 and 1932 were "business" trips to buy literature for Czech Slavist studies.) Yet again, he as a professional historian and, at that, a rational historian who devoted himself to a systematic investigation of the Russian revolution and to the comparative history of European revolutions, was not to be exposed to inner conflicts and shocks. It should be said that this was the experience of many artists and writers who based their relations to the Soviet Union more on affection, and were disagreeably surprised when Soviet practice diverged from the ideals of the October revolution.

[1] Stefan ZWEIG, *The World of Yesterday: An Autobiography* (Lincoln, London: University of Nebraska Press, 1964), 337–338.

* * *

André Gide was by no means the first of the great western humanist writers who noticed the distorted form that socialism was taking in the USSR. Theodore Dreiser (1871–1945), one of the leading novelists of early 20th century American literature, a realistic observer of life and a critic of contemporary capitalist society, had seen a similar picture eight years earlier. He was invited to attend the celebrations of the 10th anniversary of the October revolution. He arrived in Russia a year after his journey through eight European countries (including Czechoslovakia) that was preceded by the worldwide success of his *American tragedy*.[2] The anniversary fell at a time when the so-called New Economic Policy was past its zenith, and the crusade against private enterprise was getting stronger with all its negative consequences for the people. In December 1927, the 15th Congress of the All-Union Communist Party solidified the victory of Stalin and Bucharin over the opposition led by Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev. Dreiser, who spent eleven weeks in the Soviet Union at the turn of 1927–1928, stipulated prior to his arrival that he would make his own programme and travel freely. He visited a number of cities and regions besides Moscow and Leningrad, such as Perm, Nizhny Novgorod, Novosibirsk, Kiev, Kharkov, Stalino, Rostov-on-Don, Tbilisi, Baku and the whole Black Sea coast between Baku and Odessa.

The book entitled *Dreiser Looks at Russia* resulted from this sojourn.[3] It is an ambiguous work, inconsistent in thought and, in many instances, naïve. On the one side, he uncritically stresses the positives of the Soviet system such as the abnegation of all rights to property, the attribution of great importance to human labour, be it physical or intellectual, great opportunities for individual leisure activities, education, and the political and economic emancipation of women. He ends the book with a description of his visit to the Lenin Mausoleum and endorses the perception of Lenin as a second Messiah. He, however, realizes that the Soviet Union is ruled in a dictatorial manner and that the people do not enjoy full freedom of speech. We can say that Dreiser's book is overall a critical testimonial to the Soviet Union in the historical era of the consolidation of the Stalinist regime, with all its basic characteristics: suppression of

[2] Theodore DREISER, *An American Tragedy* (New York: Boni & Liveright, 1925).
[3] IDEM, *Dreiser looks at Russia* (New York: H. Liveright, 1928).

personality, thickening atmosphere of fear, the obsession with betrayal as a tool for power, and the background for the political monster trials of the 1930s. The author did not fail to observe that he was unobtrusively watched. Dreiser's collected works were being published there, with the exclusion of his Soviet sketches. The conclusion of an entry on Dreiser in a Soviet encyclopaedia of literature (1930) speaks for itself:

> After his trip to the USSR, Dreiser published a book, *Dreiser Looks at Russia*, where, together with some incorrect perceptions and misinterpretations of Soviet reality, there are a number of positive thoughts, which provoked a frenzied campaign by the bourgeois press against the writer.[4]

* * *

Several days before Dreiser, another renowned writer, a member of an official French group of representatives, Panait Istrati, started his trip to the Soviet Union. He too headed for Moscow for a celebration of the 10th anniversary of the October revolution. Panait Istrati (1884–1935), a French writer of Romanian origin appeared on the literary scene in the mid-1920s as a literary autodidact, and immediately caught the interest of readers with his spontaneity, his impassioned defence of his views, and his poetic landscape descriptions that had a strong autobiographical undercurrent. As a tramp roaming the Balkans and the Mediterranean, he held numerous jobs; he was a thorough proletarian, a communist by conviction. In his work, there is a constant critical tone of social revolt. He welcomed the October revolution with enthusiasm, and when he left in 1927 for the Soviet Union, it was with the decision to stay there for good. His works were well liked in France as well as in the Soviet Union, where his books were published in large editions and where his novel *Kyra Kyralina*[5] was just being turned into a motion picture.

The content of his three-volume testimony about the Soviet Union, which the author entitled *Vers l'autre flame* [To the Other Flame][6] might be succinctly expressed in the following words: in the Soviet Union Istrati found a dead revolution: bureaucracy killed it. The conclusion of an entry on him in a Soviet encyclopaedia of literature (1930) again speaks for itself:

> Istrati arrived in Soviet Russia with tears in his eyes, choking with emotion and enthusiasm. He spent several months here and then returned to Paris, planning

[4] *Literaturnaia entsiklopediia* (Moscow: Chudozhestvennaia literatura, 1930), 3: 420.
[5] Panait ISTRATI, *Kyra Kyralina* (Paris: Rieder, 1923).
[6] IDEM, *Vers l'autre flamme*, 3 vols. (Paris: Rieder, 1929).

> to come back to stay for good. Very quickly, he turned into a shameless renegade, his interviews and later books were dull and cynical, a counterrevolutionary pasquinade. Istrati was always a juggler of empty phrases; his works had the glaring colour of bourgeois dishonesty, but he never revealed himself so much as in his "revolutionary episode". This without doubt was a complete artistic ruin! He was definitely convicted, his spinelessness was divulged – the road of a corrupt hack and an ink-slinger was the only one left to Istrati; he firmly took it, "he found himself".[7]

During his several months in the USSR, he traveled over 20 000 kilometres by railroad, boat, car, on horseback, and in a peasant cart, from the Northern sea to the Ukraine, Crimea and to the Southern Caucasus. On principle, he avoided all official occasions organized for collective visits and foreign delegations. Instead, he moved amongst the ordinary people on the streets and in their private lives; he became familiar with their lives and gradually began to see Soviet reality without "stars in his eyes" and without illusions.

Istrati's work is not only an authentic testimony, but also the confession of someone who had moved toward a Soviet reality with the glowing heart of a socialist idealist, but who now felt himself robbed of his holiest ideals by the Bolshevik bureaucracy. His passionate polemics stirred active interest of the European cultural world. After its publication, the French Left unleashed a huge press campaign against the book and its author. Many friends turned against him, and he felt forced to return to his native Romania, where he died in 1935. He always relied on his own conscience, and thus he did not miss the discrepancy between the grand words about the ultimate liberation of humankind, and the contempt for contemporary man. He refused to bend his ethics to some higher principle that is impersonal and, in the end, inhuman.

* * *

Istrati's book was rather unfairly overshadowed by the publications by André Gide (1869–1951), who was at his time one of the most popular French writers, an ultra-individualist, and an adversary of despotism and colonialism. He was well experienced in fighting against deception, against the push to call black white. His travelogues *Voyage au Congo* [Travels in the Congo][8] and *Le Retour de Chad* [Return from

[7] *Literaturnaia entsiklopediia*, 4: 646–647.
[8] André GIDE, *Voyage au Congo* (Paris: Gallimard, 1927).

Chad][9] from the latter half of the 1920s attest to that. These diaries played an exceptional role in his life and launched his social and political career. Gide was one of the writers well liked in the Soviet Union. In 1935, his four-volume collected works were published in Russian, and for which he had written a preface expressing the warmest affection for the USSR. Gide's arrival in Russia was preceded by a massive publicity drive centred on his work and himself personally, similar to the one nine years earlier for Istrati. It must be added that Gide arrived and stayed in Russia during the harshest Stalinist terror unleashed in December 1934 after Kirov's murder. Gide arrived in Moscow on June 17, 1936 and the following day Maksim Gorky died. For Gide, it was something of a personal tragedy; he had longed to meet him. At the memorial service, Gide spoke on behalf of the International Association of Writers; his oratory came across as a collection of abstract images, common to many western intellectuals, depicting the Soviet Union in the Stalinist era as the embodied ideal of positive social change.

Gide travelled around the country for two months. He visited Leningrad, Georgia and the Black Sea coast. He returned to Moscow at the onset of the trial of the so-called Trotsky-Zinoviev centre. On August 24, 1936, the day he was to return to France, Zinoviev, Kamenev and their comrades were sentenced to death. Those two months were enough for Gide to radically change his original picture of Soviet reality. While for Istrati his book was an outlet for his opposition to Soviet bureaucracy, Gide in his *Retour de l'U.R.S.S.* [Return from the U.S.S.R.][10] and a year later in *Retouches à mon Retour de l'U.R.S.S* [Afterthoughts on the U.S.S.R.],[11] criticized most strongly the general conformism of Soviet society which had become the only device for self-preservation. That was, as he saw it, the root of the Soviet way of thought and behaviour. He found fault with the tightly sealed borders and the consequent ignorance of the world, their superiority complex, and the cult of Stalin. In respect to their shunning of the outside world, Gide noticed:

> The Soviet citizen is in an extraordinary state of ignorance concerning foreign countries. More than this – he has been persuaded that everything abroad and in every department is far less prosperous than in the U.S.S.R.

[9] IDEM, *Le retour de Tchad: suite du Voyage au Congo, carnets de route* (Paris: Gallimard, 1928).
[10] IDEM, *Retour de l'U.R.S.S.* (Paris: Gallimard, 1936).
[11] IDEM, *Retouches à mon Retour de l'U.R.S.S.* (Paris: Gallimard, 1937).

> This illusion is cleverly fostered, for it is important that everyone, even those who are ill satisfied, should be thankful for the régime which preserves them from worse ills.[12]

Gide was not so much dismayed by the deficiencies present in ordinary life, as by the unimaginable gulf between the innumerable privileges of those in power and the woeful living conditions of the general populace. He, like Istrati, noticed that if Stalin accepted an idea, he first got rid of the originator in order to claim the authorship. Thus he would always be right because there would be no one left around him who thought for himself. Gide arrived at the conclusion that if everything in the USSR tried to show a cheerful façade, then everything and everyone less so evoked suspicion. To be disillusioned, and not hide it, was dangerous. He pondered Dostoevsky's reflection on the proclivity of the Russian people for happiness, and on their vitality, and did not doubt the fact that no other nation would have submitted with such willingness to a comparable tragic experiment. He admitted that, thanks to Dostoevsky, he had brotherly feelings for the Russian people.

To the end of his life in 1951, Gide (since 1947 the Nobel laureate) never veered from his principle to always tell the truth regardless of any unpleasantness. Just as he was criticized for the anti-imperialist orientation of his books on Africa by the right-wing press, after the publication of *Retour de l'U.R.S.S.*, he was attacked by the opposite camp for superficial analyses, hasty unfounded conclusions, and for paying too much attention to partial and negligible details. Gide replied by publishing *Retouches à mon Retour de l'U.R.S.S.*, where he relied on documents and the testimony of people who actually knew events in the USSR, not just from hearsay. While his adversaries maintained that what was happening in the USSR was a temporary and necessary evil for the sake of a future paradise, for Gide the only criterion was truth. He was convinced that evil either absolute or relative did not cease to be evil and must be called by its true name; it was required to see things for what they are and not as we wish them to be.

* * *

Slavík stood for the same principles. This sociologically erudite historian was spared, as Istrati and Gide were not, bitter feelings about

[12] IDEM, *Return from the U.S.S.R.* (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1937), 30.

vanished high ideals. Istrati and Gide realized only after personal experience that the dictatorship of the proletariat according to Marx was different from Soviet development. Slavík, on the contrary, just confirmed during his voyages to the Soviet Union the situation he had systematically studied for a long time.[13] Slavík considered the October revolution as a first and long-lasting experiment to change human society on the grounds of an intellectual movement referred to by the flexible term "socialism". He had no doubt about its strong impact on the Russian nation. The Soviet Union fully adopted the Czarist methods that had left people in servitude brought about by tyrannical despotism. The Soviet government not only adopted these methods but intensified them. Their brutishness and cruelty did not thus stem from socialism, but from Russian despotism. It is worth remembering that Slavík, like André Gide just four years earlier, expressed his admiration for the Russian people:

> Should we compare the chances of the Russian peoples competing with a foreign world, then we must take into consideration their enormous vitality and large numbers. Perhaps only they can withstand the experiments that cost so much in material possessions and in morality. Any other nation would have been shattered and broken long ago by Bolshevik revolutionary techniques.[14]

Slavík was an astute observer, as can be seen in his reports. He examined the exterior of buildings and shops, looked around the streets, and took notice of public transportation, travelling conditions and accommodations. He observed the bustle in cultural and educational institutions, stores, restaurants, and bazaars, billiard rooms, etc. He received his strongest impression of the country in the first hours of his two-month trip in 1926. He watched the surrounding landscape from a train window and became aware of peasant dwellings looking the same as they had a hundred years ago. In the West, country-dwellers were influenced by urban culture, but in Russia, all the wealth was concentrated in the cities, and the peasants were condemned to poverty. Slavík saw Moscow, as did Dreiser a year later, as a lively bustling city, and warned against accepting the image spread in the West, which insinuated that most people yearned to be released from the clutches of

[13] Details of Slavík's trip to the Soviet Union are analyzed in: Jaroslav BOUČEK, "Tři cesty Jana Slavíka do SSSR," *Slovanský přehled* 86, no. 4 (2000): 441–447.

[14] "Poměr českého člověka k Rusku (Rozhovor s drem. J. Slavíkem)," *Přítomnost* 9, no. 49 (1932): 772.

the Bolshevik government. He allowed that he was pleasantly surprised by the active interest in education and the preservation of historical landmarks. Information about pilfering, destruction, and the selling off of cultural heritage was no doubt true, but one could not overlook constructive actions in this area; the revolution intervened in the management of cultural heritage disturbingly but at the same time, creatively. Just like Dreiser, Slavík, too, after a visit to Lenin's tomb, was prompted to ponder about Lenin's importance. Slavík conceded Lenin his greatness. He did not, however, call him the second Messiah, but an "expediter" of progress. He even saw the cult of Lenin as a natural expression of a degree of religiosity in Russia, of which its designers were unaware:

> They play boyish pranks on the people of Moscow. They want to change the Orthodox soul by hanging up signs saying: "Religion is the opium of the people". They "support" a materialistic worldview by showing the earthly remains of the leader in the mystical twilight of a catacomb.[15]

As a witness of Feliks E. Dzerzhinskii's funeral, Slavík was well aware that this bloodiest man of the revolution had in fact saved it in the moment of its greatest danger. Later, when the mass terror turned on speculators, he was found powerless; his only way out was to proclaim that the communism of the war period was a temporary phenomenon. At the end of his reports from the first journey, Slavík wrote about the careless waste of human lives during the revolution, and in the war. He observed that, because of its goals, the revolution surely had more ethical roots for its beginning. He asked himself how the revolution would be judged by future generations:

> He who knows that a revolution is a creation hammered into shape in the hot excitement of the spirit of the masses, knows that it cannot last. All revolutions are short-lived; not even once in history were radical maximalists able to hold a government permanently.

Slavík would consequently be sceptical about any claim for a long life for the Soviet regime.

> Progress in Russia has its own pace; we could assume with a great probability that the revolution would not last longer than a single human life, and that a further development would show to today's generation the naivety of the thesis – a revolution dies only after it has fully reached its goal.[16]

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[15] Jan SLAVÍK, *Co jsem viděl v sovětském Rusku* (Prague: Svaz národního osvobození, 1926), 16.
[16] *Ibid.*, 66.

In 1926, Slavík visited Moscow and Leningrad. A year later, he divided his time between Moscow, Kiev and Kharkov. He arrived shortly after the Anglo-Russian incident when London policemen entered the building of the Anglo-Russian Joint-Stock Company, which caused a cessation of diplomatic relations between the two states. Upon seeing anti-British demonstrations in the streets, he detected the Machiavellianism of the Soviet government, which, when faced with opposition, claimed that the benefits the workers had gained from the revolution were under attack, and that they would lose them if they did not support the government. Slavík's stay was further marred by the murder of a Soviet plenipotentiary in Poland, Piotr L. Voikov, who was killed by a Russian émigré, and an assault on a Bolshevik club in Leningrad. Retribution for these two actions was instant. Twenty prisoners were executed. Angry exchanges between the Soviet press and indignant Western newspapers ensued. Slavík admitted that he wrote his commentaries under the direct influence of an official public notice about the multiple executions, and cynical discussions about the event:

> The Soviet government, even in the 10th year of its existence, is not strong enough not to use methods employed by weak governments quaking in their boots. Only time will tell what this ostentatious, cruel vengeance was symptomatic of, if it was a residue of revolutionary methods, an anachronistic blunder, or a precursor of the further terror with which unscrupulous dictators embellish their end. This end is brought upon them, not by capitalist England or some emigrant conspiracy, but by sociological inevitability.[17]

During his third, and last, visit in 1932, Slavík witnessed changes for the worse, due to the abandonment of the New Economic Policy, the forced agricultural collectivization, and Stalin's solidification of power. At every step he saw manifestations of a worsening economic situation and a neglected environment.

> No general has ever been confronted by such a broad array of enemies. The strongest are not the capitalistic imperialists or the émigré White Guard, but a lack of people taking responsibility for the ordinary things, without which no society can exist, least of all a socialist one.[18]

Gathering extensive data about the intentional isolation of the Soviet Union from the rest of the world, Slavík expressed the same thoughts that Gide would arrive at later.

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[17] Jan SLAVÍK, *Po druhé v sovětském Rusku* (Prague: Svaz národního osvobození, 1927), 26.
[18] IDEM, *Po třetí v sovětském Rusku* (Prague: Svaz národního osvobození, 1932), 23.

> The result is the warped ideas of the average Soviet citizen about today's Europe [...] It is almost fatal for a nation that has for years been accustomed to a slower pace of life to try to adapt to the accelerated rate brought about by bureaucratization and the scarcity of necessities [...] It is one of the major tenets of the revolution. Daily, we are urged to adopt a "Bolshevik" tempo, but daily circumstances for the past fifteen years have forced people to regard time as worthless [...] The Soviet press, monopolized, uncontrolled and above criticism, has managed to persuade many who might otherwise have complained that the proletariat in Czechoslovakia had it much worse.[19]

Slavík, like André Gide, commented on the existence of special privileged classes whose status was determined, in purely bourgeois fashion, by material amenities. He evaluated it as the effect of a shortage of basic necessities. He perceived the forced collectivization of agriculture that caused its collapse as a manoeuvre pursuing class goals:

> At the beginning, the revolutionaries sacrifice themselves for the good of the people. When they get into power, they want to keep it, even if the nation must be grossly victimized. I tend to think that the Bolshevik revolution is entering this stage. The rushed collectivization in the country bears traces of a manoeuvre of the Bolshevik party to save power. The liquidation of the kulaks was presented as another great step toward the socialization of Russian agriculture. Nothing of the kind though appeared in the five-year plan [...] The interest of the ruling class was greater. The kulaks were destroyed because they were dangerous for the leading party. The explanation that, during the five-year plan, the Soviet people became ready for collective farming was dreamed up later.[20]

Slavík was particularly disheartened by the change in the Soviet intelligentsia. In 1927, people who were not party members, but nevertheless loyal to the Soviet state, were not afraid to talk to him alone, but after five years Slavík was resigned to not visiting people after he met a palpable uneasiness with his acquaintances, and strangers' fear of provocation. Almost all the scholars he met during his previous trips, even though apolitical and devoted to scholarly quest in the old fashioned way, were removed from their position (if they did not die), accused of counterrevolutionary scheming, exiled or sent to a concentration camp. Let us notice that Slavík was the only one among the authors discussed who wrote, even if marginally, about the camps. In the last reports on his trips, Slavík remarked on the police surveillance of foreigners that was typical of Czarist Russia, and often mentioned in travel books of past centuries. Even in this, the Soviet government was the successor of

[19] *Ibid.*, 25–27.
[20] *Ibid.*, 70–71.

Czarism. He noticed only one positive change from his previous visits, and that was the turning of the Czarskoye Selo into a convalescent home for children. The time he spent there with children was the most pleasant adventure of the whole trip for him.

A substantial section of Slavík's historical work was a comparative study of past European revolutions. The distinguished Russian philosopher, historian, and writer Georgii P. Fedotov wrote in 1936:

> If we could from these past events extract some "law" or a pattern, it is the following observation: each "great" (i.e., marked by a brutal class struggle) revolution, culminates in a personal tyranny [...] That the Russian revolution culminated in its Stalin, it is for an historian to be expected.[21]

One more quote from Fedotov:

> The liquidation of communism now in progress in Russia is shrouded in a protective veil of lies. The Marxist symbolism of a revolution is not yet destroyed and thus prevents a proper understanding of the facts.[22]

At the beginning of the 1980s, the Russian dissident, publisher and political commentator of Georgian extraction, Valerii N. Chalidze, living in the United States since 1972, published his deliberations on Stalin and socialism in Russia entitled *Pobediteľ kommunizma* [The Conqueror of Communism]. He begins with following words:

> He deceived us all and the whole world. Almost everybody still believes that he created a socialistic state and that his goal was to build communism. Analysis however shows that Stalin conquered the socialist evolution, destroyed the Communist Party, and restored a Russian empire that was more despotic than before 1917. In doing so, he was forced to use Marxist phraseology and hide his true aims.[23]

It is almost impossible to express more succinctly the substance of the reality, which for Istrati and Gide meant a loss of their illusions, but which was known to Slavík from the outset.

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[21] Georgii P. FEDOTOV, "Stalinokratiia," *Sovremennye zapiski*, vol. 60 (1936): 375.
[22] *Ibid.*, 376–377.
[23] Valerii N. CHALIDZE, *Pobediteľ kommunizma: mysli o Staline, sotsializme i Rossii* (New York: Chalidze-Publications, 1981), 3.

JAN SLAVÍK AND THE RUSSIAN EMIGRATION TO CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Miluša BUBENÍKOVÁ

Jan Slavík was linked to Russian emigration by a deep and lasting interest in Russia. His concern was not, as it was for the Russian émigrés, personal. His interest was scholarly. He strived, conditioned by his personality, for a rational and objective approach to developments in Russia.

His practical work in his relation to Russian emigration, and its final effect on Russia, can be divided into several sections: **(1)** work for the Russian Foreign Historical Archives; **(2)** participation in scholarly and popular events carried out by Russian émigré organizations and Czech institutions (namely the Slavonic Institute and Czechoslovak Radio); and **(3)** wide publishing and editorial activities (books, pamphlets, journals, studies, articles, commentaries).

For Russian émigrés living in Czechoslovakia, Slavík's personal participation in colloquia and debates, as well his lectures, was the most important. His work for the Russian Foreign Historical Archives and his publications gained world wide significance, though they remained routed in personal contact with individual members of Russian exile.

We will not concern ourselves with Slavík's work in the Russian Foreign Historical Archives and concentrate on second and third areas of his activities as outlined above.

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Slavík's presence in the scholarly and cultural life of the Russian émigrés in Czechoslovakia is fairly and representatively, if not fully, listed in the publication *Kronika kulturního, vědeckého a společenského života ruské emigrace v Československu* [Chronicle of Cultural, Scholarly and Social Life of Russian Emigration in Czechoslovakia][1]. The name of Jan Slavík is mentioned 14 times:

[1] Ljubov BĚLOŠEVSKÁ, ed., *Kronika kulturního, vědeckého a společenského života ruské emigrace v Československé republice*, 1 (1919–1929), 2 (1930–1939) (Prague: Slovanský ústav AV ČR, 2000, 2001).

Prague Perspectives III (Prague, 2009), 189–201.

• January 16, 1920 – The Czech-Russian Union, a lecture by Jan Slavík *Děkabristé* [Decabrists] (unless otherwise stated, the author of a lecture is Jan Slavík);
• March 19, 1921 – same place, lecture on Aleksandr N. Radishchev;
• May 12, 1928 – Don Cossacks Ataman Afrikan P. Bogaevskii visited the Don Cossacks Archives held in the Russian Foreign Historical Archives, met Jan Slavík;
• November 12, 1931 – Slavonic Institute, lecture *Rozpad ruské monarchie* [The Disintegration of the Russian Monarchy];
• November 19, 1931, same place, lecture *Vítězství bolševické strany* [A Victory of the Bolshevik Party];
• October 21, 1932 – Slavonic Institute, a meeting of the Commission for Cooperation with Russian Academic Organizations (the Russian Foreign Historical Archives, the N. P. Kondakov Archeological Institute, the Economic Cabinet of S. N. Prokopovich, the Russian Free University, the Russian Institute). Topic: the possibility of financial support at a time of economic (financial) crisis. Present, beside Jan Slavík: Kamil Krofta (chair), Vladimir A. Frantsev, Aleksandr A. Kizevetter and Matija Murko;
• November 21, 1932 – Prague Metropolitan Library, lecture *Rusko na prahu druhé pětiletky* [Russia at the Outset of the Second Five-Year Plan] – discussion on the situation in the USSR;
• June 5, 1933 – Umělecká beseda [The Artistic Club], a meeting of the committee for organization of A Day of Russian Culture – participants in the discussion were Jan Slavík and Sofia V. Panina, salutations by Jiří Horák (Slavonic Institute) and Jaroslav Navrátil (Prague Town Council).
• October 25, 1933 – Slavonic Institute, lecture by Pavel N. Miliukov *Rozvoj SSSR od revoluce k dnešku* [Advancement of USSR from the Revolution until Today]; participants in the discussion were, among others: Sergei N. Prokopovich, Mstislav V. Shakhmatov, Vasilii G. Archangelskii, Jan Slavík, Piotr N. Savitskii, Dmitrii N. Ivantsov, Sergei I. Varshavskii;
• December 13, 1933 – Russian academic group, assembly dedicated to the memory of Boris A. Evreinov – participants were Evgenii F. Shmurlo, Sergei G. Pushkarev, Jan Slavík and Vasilii A. Kharlamov;
• June 13, 1934 – Russian Historical Society, Slavonic Institute – assembly dedicated to the memory of Evgenii F. Shmurlo – speaking about his life and work were: Jan Slavík, Aleksandr F. Iziumov and Vsevolod V. Sakhanev; introductory lecture by Jaroslav Bidlo;

• November 22, 1934 – Slavonic Institute, evening discussion on *Ruské akademické organizace a práce ruských přírodovědců v zahraničí* [Russian Academic Organizations and Work of Russian Natural Sciences Abroad] – paper: Mikhail M. Novikov, discussion: Zdeněk Bažant, Jan Slavík, Sergei I. Hessen, Vladimir I. Isaev, Vasilii S. Ilin, Piotr F. Milovidov, Ivan I. Lapshin;
• January 22, 1935 – Society for the Study of Dostoevsky, debate on the topic *Maxim Gorkij o Dostojevském* [Maksim Gorky on Dostoevsky] (about Gorky's address at a Soviet Writers Congress in Moscow) – chair: Jiří Horák, introductory speech: Emil Svoboda, other participants were Alfred L. Bem, Evgenii A. Liatskii, Bohumil Mathesius, Jan Slavík and Zdeněk Nejedlý;[2]
• May 6, 1935 – Russian Free University, discussion on the subject of *Evoluce, revoluce a kontrarevoluce* [Evolution, Revolution and Counter-revolution] – introductory remarks Sergei I. Varshavskii, opponents Jan Slavík, Dmitrii N. Ivantsov, Boris V. Sedakov, et al.

Among events not mentioned in *Kronika kulturního vědeckého a společenského života...*, there is one very important: a meeting commemorating the 50th anniversary of Fedor M. Dostoevsky's death. The Dostoevsky Society organized it at the Old Town Hall in Prague on February 9, 1931. The meeting was supported by representatives of the Slavonic Institute, the Prague Town Council, the Czechoslovak National Council, the Union of Russian Academic Organizations in the Czechoslovak Republic, the Union of Czech Writers, and Slavists from Czech and German universities. In a period photograph, Jan Slavík sits at the chairman's table side by side with professors Emil Svoboda, Jiří Horák, Jan Máchal, Bohumil Němec, writer Vladimir I. Nemirovich-Danchenko and poet Viktor Dyk.

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Jan Slavík's publishing and editorial activities were exceptionally numerous.[3] Besides his books, he wrote many articles on Russian affairs

[2] A report on the contents of the debate: -m [Alfred L. Bem], "Diskuse o poměru Gorkého k Dostojevskému," *České slovo*, 24 January 1935, 10.
[3] Jaroslav BOUČEK, *Jan Slavík: 1885–1978: Bibliografie* (Prague: Národní knihovna v Praze – Slovanská knihovna, 1994); cf. also the online version of the bibliography (http://dejiny.nln.cz/Bibl/JSlavik.html) and the attachment of the book.

including the issue of exile, particularly in scholarly journals such as *Český časopis historický* [The Czech Historical Review] and *Slavia,* and in periodicals like *Čas* [The Time], *Národní osvobození* [The National Liberation], *Sobota* [Saturday] and *Slovanský přehled* [The Slavonic Review]. Slavík wrote about the chief Russian émigré scientists and politicians and eventually initiated publication of their works, mainly those of the politician Pavel N. Miliukov and to some extent historians Nikolai V. Iastrebov, Aleksandr A. Kizevetter, Antonii V. Florovskii and a politician Sergei S. Maslov. Above all, A. V. Kizevetter was, for Slavík, "a pupil of the brilliant Kliuchevskii" who "had become an émigré against his own will".[4] For his critical review, Slavík chose Florovskii's study on the historical development of relations between Czechs and eastern Slavs.[5] Slavík praised the subject Florovskii selected since "it has called for an historian a long time". He was nevertheless critical of the fact that the author too often extolled "works that he pulled out from an abyss of oblivion and which were of no scientific importance" and that he did not arrange the data gathered "into basic developmental lines".[6] From Prokopovich's works, Slavík highly valued his journal *Biulleten ekonomicheskogo kabineta prof. Prokopovicha* [Bulletin of the Economic Cabinet of Prof. Prokopovich] and commented:

> In Russian émigré literature there is no periodical which would inform one better about Soviet Russia. […] many years of work make Prokopovich competent to analyze the first Soviet Five-Year Plan.[7]

To his readers, Slavík introduced S S. Maslov as one tried in the Moscow trials with participants in the so-called Trotsky-Bukharin conspiracy.[8] Slavík initiated and edited the publication of the diary of General Mikhail V. Alekseev, the collected memoirs of participants in the March and November revolutions, and a bibliographic listing of a part of the Russian Foreign Historical Archives catalogue.[9]

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[4] Jan SLAVÍK, "Ruský dějepisec Kizevetter zemřel," *Národní osvobození*, 10 January 1933, 5.
[5] IDEM, "Studium slovanské vzájemnosti a kniha A. V. Florovského 'Čechi i vostočnyje Slavjane'," *Slovanský přehled* 27, no. 6 (1935): 225–231.
[6] *Ibid.*, 229.
[7] Jan SLAVÍK, "Prokopovičova kniha o sovětské pětiletce," *Národní osvobození*, 28 June 1934, 5.
[8] IDEM, "Kdo je Sergěj Maslov?," *Národní osvobození*, 10 March 1938, 4.
[9] IDEM, ed., *Iz dnevnika generala M. V. Alekseeva* (Prague: RZHA, 1929); IDEM, ed., *Ruská revoluce březnová ve vzpomínkách účastníků* (Prague: Melantrich, 1930); IDEM, ed., *Ruská revoluce listopadová ve vzpomínkách účastníků. Vítězství Leninovo*

Slavík's interest in Pavel N. Miliukov (1859–1943) was not accidental. He, as well as two modern Czech statesmen, Tomáš G. Masaryk and Edvard Beneš, considered him one of the most realistic Russian émigré politicians.

Slavík and Miliukov shared, to a certain extent, a career as former scholars whom life circumstances forced to become politically active. Slavík, like Miliukov, was accused of supporting the Communists. The words that Slavík wrote on Miliukov's 70th birthday are valid for himself as well:

> Recently one of the Czech papers gaily announced that Miliukov, until very recently keeping his fingers crossed for the Bolsheviks, finally changed his mind. It is a fallacy. From the very beginning, Miliukov was fundamentally opposed to Bolshevism. What he changed was his opinion on the way "Bolshevism" would evolve…[10]

Slavík repeatedly stressed the difference between Miliukov and a considerable number of émigrés. In an epilogue to Miliukov's book *Národnost, její vznik a vývoj* [Nationality, Its Origins and Development], he wrote:

> While most of the Russian émigrés were mindlessly against the Bolshevik putsch, Miliukov, even though deeply opposed to Bolshevism, was able to face critically the question of how the Bolsheviks seized power and why they have kept it so long.[11]

Likewise, Slavík advised of this difference in a treatise on Miliukov's book *Zahraniční politika sovětů* [Soviet Foreign Policy]. If Miliukov writes,

> …the Soviet government works for peace and its own existence, it also works to keep Russia from disintegration and unfortunate partitioning, which is in agreement with the general wish of the Russian nation. In this case, the role (of the Bolsheviks) is positive.

He is, as Slavík stressed, "far from the opinion of many emigrants."[12] Miliukov's destiny was, according to Slavík, "to fight against the fantasies of both the far left and the far right".[13]

(Prague: Melantrich, 1931); Jan SLAVÍK and Sergei P. POSTNIKOV, eds., *Bibliografiia russkoi revoliutsii i grazhdanskoi voiny (1917–1921): Iz kataloga biblioteki R. Z. I. Arkhiva* (Prague: Russkii zagranichnyi istoricheskii arkhiv v Prage, 1938).

[10] Jan SLAVÍK, "Pavel Nikolajevič Miljukov (K sedmdesátým narozeninám)," *Národní osvobození*, 27 January 1929, 4; comp. also IDEM, "Západnictví Pavla Nik. Miljukova," *Slovanský přehled* 21, no. 1 (1929): 23–31.

[11] IDEM, "Doslov k českému vydání," in Pavel N. Miljukov, *Národnost, její vznik a vývoj se zvláštním zřetelem k poměrům slovanským* (Prague: Orbis, 1930), 173–176.

[12] IDEM, "Sovětská diplomacie," *Národní osvobození*, 20 September 1934, 3–4.

[13] Comp. IDEM, "Úvod (Osobnost a dílo P. N. Miljukova)," in Pavel N. Miljukov, *Masaryk a Beneš* (Prague: Fr. Borový, 1936), 11.

Slavík's contributions to journals and magazines constitute an important part of Slavík's legacy. There Slavík regularly analyzed and commented on the present political situation at home and abroad. He quite often evaluated the real situation of Russian emigration and its perspectives in the daily *Národní osvobození*[14] and in the weekly *Sobota*.[15] Some commentaries were short; the Russion emigration was mentioned briefly among other questions and problems of the day, while some were solely dedicated to Russian topics. Let us recall one short commentary from January 1932. Slavík tried to describe the politically complicated and sensitive situation in the monthly *Slovanský přehled* where he was an editor. He wrote:

> For adherents to Soviet Russia it is not enough that we take a critical view of the present-day Russian revolution. They want us to sing laudatory odes about it. On the other hand, for many a Russian emigrant, *Slovanský přehled* stinks of Bolshevism. Because we do not see all Bolsheviks as scoundrels or fanatical idiots, we are simpletons who do not understand Russia and never could. No, it is not rewarding to bring news about Slavic life.[16]

In the context of a threatened Russian-Japanese conflict, Slavík, in April 1932, foretold the fate of Russian emigration, which came true during the Second World War, except that Japan was replaced by Germany.

> By now it is apparent that the Russian emigration, in case of a Soviet-Japanese conflict, will divide into three camps: defeatists who would side with Japan, defenders going with the Soviets, and émigré neutrals.[17]

In June 1933, Slavík praised Russian émigré publishing activities abroad: "While there is a great depression, which is twice as hard on Russian emigrants, we must admire their publishing zeal. They publish several hundreds of periodicals." The best one was, in his opinion, *Sovremennye zapiski* [Contemporary Notes], published in Paris.[18]

One of the longer articles devoted to Russian emigration that we want to mention has a symptomatic title – *Tragedie ruské emigrace* [Tragedy of the Russian Emigration]. Slavík wrote it in 1928. He called attention to the fact that the Soviet press exploited any pretext to use the

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[14] *Národní osvobození* was a daily indirectly connected with *Čas*, a paper of Masaryk's realists. It was published in 1924–1938 and 1945–1948.

[15] *Sobota* was an independent weekly "for politics, the economy, social questions and culture", published from 1930 to 1938. J. Slavík was one of the founders and was on the editorial board.

[16] Jan SLAVÍK, "Co by si Slované měli uvědomiti," *Národní osvobození*, 1 January 1932, 3.

[17] IDEM, "Japonsko, Sověty a emigrace," *Národní osvobození*, 1 April 1932, 1.

[18] IDEM, "Z ruských časopisů emigrantských," *Národní osvobození*, 22 June 1933, 5.

Russian emigration as a bogey to frighten ordinary Russians. Here the ruse was a sale of art and luxury goods from Soviet Russia by the Berlin antique dealer Rudolph Lepke; a number of the emigrants recognized the objects as their own. Slavík points out that the rightful claims for confiscated articles were interpreted by the Soviet press as an example of a plot of landholders living abroad, who only wanted the restoration of the old Czarist regime, which "the majority of people in today's Russia do not wish for". The tragedy of Russian emigration was that

> nobody can prevent clever Bolshevik journalists from impressing large masses with an idea that the emigrants think only about the reinstatement of the old system, and about revenge for the wrongs inflicted on them during the revolution. They support this image by quotes from émigré papers.

Slavík concluded that:

> The situation of Russian emigration is awkward. Years pass by, the exile gets longer, and children grow up; grey-haired fathers realize with sorrow that the souls of their youngsters lack any picture of Russia, a picture of the homeland. The news from home indicates that nobody expects any salvation from the refugees; those yearning for the end of the Soviet era are afraid of them and are angry with them because their existence, and hope for a return, hinders the natural development. [...] It is impossible to challenge a perception, very common in Soviet Russia that the emigrants avoided all the wretchedness suffered by those who stayed at home. An image of the mental and physical anguish that exiles must go through is foggy and only a little touching for people in Soviet Russia. [...] The Soviet Russian intelligentsia is convinced that they suffered incomparably more than the emigrants. While the emigrants came to consider themselves as morally superior because they did not "bend before tyranny", the Russian non-Bolshevik intelligentsia looked upon them as an element that lost their courage and fled abroad when the times were at their worst. Such a point of view is not far from demanding that the emigrants behave with restraint, not annoying the masses at home with their programmes and congresses, and not giving more power to the Bolshevik elbow.[19]

In an article *Ruská emigrace při plodné práci* (1930) [Russian Emigration at Fruitful Work] Slavík reacted to criticism in the Czech press (*Přítomnost* and others), which claimed that the Russian émigrés had just been milking money from the Czechoslovak government to enjoy an easy life. Slavík did not deny that such people existed, but stressed that hard-working emigrants existed as well.

> The revolution expelled not just people, but also rich historical and cultural material. [...] The time of exile has been much longer than expected. The Soviet regime is anchored; years pass by, foreign countries swallow up the severed and drying

[19] IDEM, "Tragedie ruské emigrace," *Národní osvobození*, 30 November 1928, 3.

> branches of the Russian nation. Emigrants are dying and their former properties are losing their owners. Emigrants are getting into dire financial straits…

The difficult situation was resolved by "competent men"– Edvard Beneš, his deputy Václav Girsa, later Kamil Krofta – by founding and financing the Russian Foreign Historical Archives, and, in parallel, the "one of its kind" Slavonic Library. The Russian emigrants rightly played a very important role in the development of the library and the archives.[20] This article is supplemented by statistics of library acquisitions and expenditures (1925–1930) on books, periodicals, newspapers and manuscripts.

In May 1932, Slavík, in response to the assassination of the French president Paul Doumer committed by a Russian emigrant Pavel T. Gorgulov, wrote more about the Russian emigration. On May 13 of that year, he wrote an editorial entitled *Pařížský zločin a ruská emigrace* [The Parisian Crime and Russian Emigration] in *Národní obsvobození*, where he, among other things, said:

> The life of Russian émigrés gets more bitter every day. Most of them struggle for their livelihood. At a time of growing unemployment, strong voices are raised against emigrants stealing jobs. In addition, in France, there has been an anti-emigrant mood for several years. It has been shown in government regulations, which have made the life of emigrants harder.[21] The Gorgulov crime worsened this unpleasant situation. It is self-evident that the Russian emigration is not responsible for this mad and beastly deed […] he who would throw a stone at the Russian emigrants due to the Gorgulov crime would be unjust.

Slavík, however, had to ask himself why the assassin was a Russian emigrant. He tried to find an answer in certain parallels with the past, with previous emigration waves. He wrote:

> A history of older emigrations teaches us well enough that a long exile and dashed hopes of returning home often led people astray, to ravings, madness and crime. Even if the revolution had expelled only those of sound mind and high moral principles, not all of them, stricken by material and emotional misery, could escape from mental breakdown.

Hopes for an early return home "were thwarted". Moreover, Slavík goes on:

> Even the better groups of emigrants are penetrated by decayed Czarist elements, with which they are linked only by a hatred of the Bolsheviks. […]

[20] IDEM, "Ruská emigrace při plodné práci," *Sobota* 1, no. 22 (1930): 430–432.

[21] Similar measures were taken also in Czechoslovakia, see for instance: "Novoe rasporiazhenie politsii ob inostrantsakh," *Dnevnik. Informatsionnyi listok russkoi kolonii v Prage*, no. 29 (18 July 1932): 4.

> Liberating the nation means, for him, [Gorgulov], replacing the Bolsheviks at the seat of power. A serious emigrant believes that the Russian nation itself will form a new post-revolutionary government with people who have grown up at home. He cherishes a modest hope for a return to a different homeland where not much would be taken for granted.

Here, as in many other instances, Slavík calls for differentiation among emigrants.

> We are sorry that some of them were expelled from a nation desperate for intelligentsia and wish sincerely they would not be lost to their homeland, but looking at others, one begins to think that it would be socially detrimental should they get some position in Russia…[22]

His last commentary on the Russian emigration was published in 1936 in the weekly *Sobota*. He responded to a demand of Zdeněk Nejedlý published in a periodical *Praha–Moskva* [Prague–Moscow] that, at the celebration to honour Russian or rather Soviet scientists and artists, the Russian emigrants should not speak.[23] Slavík reproved Nejedlý and reminded him

> there are almost no people among the Russian emigrants who left Russia because they disapproved. These people saved their own lives. Among the rest are those who were expelled by the Soviet government. They are exiles living sometimes with a Soviet passport as their only document, and are still Soviet citizens. In both cases, they are despondent people who were forced to leave their home. […] There might be some "bad apples" among them, but most of them – emigrants in Czechoslovakia – are resilient and determined people who are respected by those who are capable of observing objectively. They have much more character than some of those Soviet scholars who kowtow to Stalin and bask in the sun.[24]

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The responses of the Russian émigré press to Slavík's reports from his three trips to Soviet Russia form an interesting chapter in the ongoing dialogue between Slavík and Russian exile. While accounts from the two trips in 1926 and 1927 did not cause any extraordinary commotion, the report from his last trip brought a flare-up of attention. The reason

[22] Jan SLAVÍK, "Pařížský zločin a ruská emigrace," *Národní osvobození*, 13 May 1932, 1. With opinions expressed in this article, Slavík joined polemics about the role of the Russian émigrés in the future Russia. His viewpoint was close to Edvard Beneš's in stressing the instrumentality of internal forces. Beneš was skeptical about the role of the émigrés.

[23] Zdeněk NEJEDLÝ, "My a emigrace," *Praha–Moskva* 1, no. 3 (1936): 73–75.

[24] Jan SLAVÍK, "Ruská emigrace, věda a prof. Zd. Nejedlý," *Sobota* 7, no. 28 (1936): 571–572.

might have been that Slavík was perceived by a majority of emigrants as an advocate of the first soviet Five-Year Plan, and his accounts of the 1926 and 1927 journeys did not relate anything much new. Conversely, his bleak and depressing picture of Russian reality in 1932 served the Russian émigré press, regardless of its political orientation, as proof of Slavík's former blunders and as confirmation of "their truth".

On February 17, 1927, Alfred L. Bem, a reporter for the Russian émigré paper *Poslednie novosti* [The Latest News] published by Pavel N. Miliukov, reviewed Slavík's book about his first journey to Russia in the summer of 1926 entitled *Co jsem viděl v sovětském Rusku* [What I Saw in Soviet Russia]. He wrote:

> Even if a Russian reader would not agree with most of his historical assessments, overall he would have to admit that the author chose his facts and interpreted them without prejudice. The fact that the author is an historian affects the nature of the book. Despite the title, the author does not write much about what he saw; rather he tries to understand what is happening. Naturally, the author made up his mind about Russian events beforehand through reading, and not through what he saw there. His attention was inevitably caught by events and actions, which agreed with his preconceptions and confirmed them. Slavík, like many others, has a tendency to criticize the Russian intelligentsia for not helping the Russian nation to get out of misery [...] and that it is not able to perform ordinary daily work; these are the reasons for the Russian catastrophe. [...] Slavík, again like many others, maintains that Bolsheviks do not stay in power by using violence, but because of the Russian mentality.

Even this generalizing statement originated, according to Bem, in Slavík's own convictions rather than from his Moscow and Petersburg observations. Personally, Bem thinks that Slavík's keen perception of the details of Russian reality, scattered all through the book, are more interesting. Slavík observed relative order in the streets and talked about flats, which people carefully turned into fortresses, alcoholism, and the burial of Feliks E. Dzerzhinskii with ordinary mourners pushed out into little side streets, the Museum of Revolution with no books written by emigrants, etc. Bem concludes that to understand Slavík's historical conception, the key chapter is the one on the role of the peasantry in contemporary development, because Slavík saw in the peasantry the most dangerous adversary of Soviet power.[25]

[25] A. OM[ELIANOV] [Alfred L. Bem], "Chto ia videl v sov. Rossii," *Poslednie novosti*, 17 February 1927, 3.

Russian émigré periodicals reacted to Slavík's reports in *Národní osvobození* and his lectures about the third journey to Russia in the summer of 1932 as follows. First, they reported in relative detail about his experiences, and second, Slavík's critical examination of developments in Russia was taken as his change from being a supporter of the Bolshevik experiment to being its critic. Many were affected by Slavík's forthright words about his excruciating experiences while visiting Moscow, Leningrad, Nizhny Novgorod, Kharkov and Kiev, which he could not write about immediately after his return. As early as July 18, 1932, the Prague Russian periodical *Dnevnik* [The Daily] published an answer to Slavík's first "impression" issued on July 14, 1932 in *Národní osvobození*. An unsigned article entitled *Hlas toho, kdo prozřel* [Voice of the one who cleared his eyes] gave a translation of Slavík's text, with a commentary. Slavík was wrongly introduced as a civil servant in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,[26] whose reports from his former journeys to Soviet Russia were "remarkable for certain sympathy to Soviet reality and for a conviction that the Bolsheviks will transform not only Russia, but the whole of Europe." Slavík's bleak view of Soviet Russia is captured in the following words:

> The article confirmed everything already written in émigré periodicals. It convinces us that even if a foreigner travels to Russia, he can, should he want to, see reality and truthfully inform those at home about the horrible conditions in which the Russian nation has lived for 15 years.[27]

A day later, on July 19, 1932, the well-known journalist and political activist Ekaterina D. Kuskova published in the Parisian Russian daily *Poslednie novosti* large segments from Slavík's text. Parts about a "crop failure caused, not by inclement weather, but by human incompetence", "government-caused poverty" and "shortages, which the Russian people, in contrast to the Czechs who are hypothetically in the same situation, bear with patience". In her commentary, Kuskova portrays Slavík as a sympathizer of the new Russia. To his confession that he had to interrupt publishing his accounts because he had not yet come to terms with an agonizing image of Russia, she replies: "We, the Russian readers of

[26] Jan Slavík was never employed in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

[27] "Golos prozrevshego," *Dnevnik. Informatsionnyi listok russkoi kolonii v Prage*, no. 29 (18 July 1932): 3.

Národní osvobození, would be grateful if Dr. Slavík would not interrupt his sad tale about what he had seen in our homeland."[28]

On July 30, 1932, Piotr B. Struve dedicated to Jan Slavík his regular commentary for the paper *Rossiia i Slavianstvo* [Russia and the Slavs] entitled *Dnevnik politika* [Diary of a Politician].

> It is particularly impressive that a person who had been taken in by illusions about the essence and meaning of Bolshevism, now has begun to see clearly. It is yet more impressive because Slavík is close to Czech influential, even governmental, circles.

At the end, Struve ironically says:

> Dr. Slavík returned from Soviet Russia scarred by an agonizing experience with which, as he said himself, he has not yet come to terms. They shook the soul of an observer who had previously been predisposed in favour of the Soviet regime.[29]

Even A. L. Bem welcomed Slavík's "disillusionment" when describing constructive achievements of the Soviet government. In an article entitled *"Lenivyi muzhik" i "vnimateľnyi" nabliudateľ* ["Lazy Muzhik" and "Vigilant" Observer] from early August 1932, he, however, sees fit to object to Slavík's repeated depiction of laziness (*len'*) as a typical trait of the Russian nation, which, as Slavík hopes, the Bolsheviks will re-educate. Bem says that any Russian historian could easily find signs of laziness in any nation and objects to such shallow generalizations. As another example of a cliché, Bem mentions a stereotype (*shtamp*) about the infinite patience of Russians (*vseterpenie*). Bem asks: "Why does Slavík blame 'negligent' farmers for unsown fields and poorly cultivated soil and not see that it is directly linked with governmental policies?" He evaluates Slavík's conclusion about the "tragedy of the government which, in its attempt at productivity, encounters the problem of 'Russian national laziness'" as a thought not founded on his own observations, but stemming from a prejudice, which has nothing in common with scholarship.[30]

On August 19, 1932, the Russian newspaper *Segodnia* [Today] published in Riga printed a report from its Prague correspondent Konstantin P. Beľgovskii. There we can read, inter alia:

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[28] E[katerina] K[USKOVA], "D-r. Ian Slavik o Rossii (Pis'mo iz Pragi)," *Poslednie novosti*, 19 July 1932, 2.

[29] Piotr B. STRUVE, "Dnevnik politika," *Rossiia i slavianstvo*, no. 192 (30 July 1932): 1.

[30] A. OMELIANOV [Alfred L. Bem], "'Lenivyi muzhik' i 'vnimateľnyi' nabliudateľ," *Molva*, 3 August 1932.

> A month ago, Czechoslovak historian Jan Slavík returned from his third trip to Soviet Russia. Jan Slavík is an authority on the Russian revolution and is interested in everything that is linked with contemporary Soviet history. His arrival was a kind of sensation. Formerly, he sympathized with the Five-Year Plan and after his return from the USSR in 1927 he preached in favour of the plan and the USSR. Now he is forced to admit that the fourth and decisive year of the Soviet experiment did not bring progress, but decline.

The Prague correspondent values Slavík's reports most for the fact that the historian

> acquaints us with details of life in the USSR that are usually lost on foreign travellers because they are overwhelmed by the construction of gigantic industrial enterprises and the tinsel of a huge Soviet propaganda campaign.[31]

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All areas of Jan Slavík's interaction with the Russian emigration are intellectually connected and cannot be understood and studied without knowing the context of his work. There, Slavík was engaged in questions on the Russian revolution, social, economic, and cultural development in Russia after the Bolshevik *coup d'état*, and on changes in Czechoslovak foreign policy including its Slavic dimension. Many questions that Slavík pondered were discussed daily inside émigré circles.[32] Slavík's common human priorities in his relations with the emigration can be read in his writing dedicated to the memory of T. G. Masaryk: "Nobody showed more realistically how Slavs can help each other and how they may differ from each other."[33]

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[31] Konst[antin P.] B[EĽGOVSKII], "Moskva v izvozchichem tempe (Ot prazhskogo korrespondenta 'Segodnia')," *Segodnia*, 19 August 1932, 3.

[32] As for cultural sphere, see for instance a series of articles about Maksim Gorky and about the position of writers in Soviet Russia: Jan SLAVÍK, "Co Maxim Gorkij vidí a co nevidí," *Národní osvobození*, 26 August 1934, 5; 30 August 1934, 3; 2 September 1934, 3; IDEM, "Sjezd sovětských spisovatelů," *Slovanský přehled* 26, no. 7 (1934): 196–200; IDEM, "Revoluční spisy M. Gorkého," *Národní osvobození*, 23 June 1936, 6, et al.

[33] IDEM, "Čech, který se nejvíc zasloužil o slovanské národy," *Národní osvobození*, 15 September 1937, 4.

Jan Slavík and the Fate of the Russian Foreign Historical Archives

Lukáš BABKA

In most of the texts describing the life and work of Jan Slavík, we learn that he was for a long time the Head of the Russian Foreign Historical Archives, an exclusive archival-documentary institution that existed in interwar Prague. In biographical studies more details about this engagement are missing, or rather stay on the level of general statements and hackneyed clichés. It is, however, an important coexistence. On the one hand, Slavík built his reputation as a Russian specialist and an expert on the question of the Russian revolution and contemporary Russia mostly on this archival collection. On the other hand, although he, due to his stubbornness, ensured the existence and development of the archive, his activities were not always looked upon kindly by the political representation. An in-depth search of the literature did not bring much light on this subject; it is, nevertheless, worth a summary. It would be also valuable to portray the institution itself and the fate of the collections.

On the History of the Russian Foreign Historical Archives

The Russian Foreign Historical Archives (Russkii zagranichnyi istoricheskii arkhiv – referred to below also as the RZIA) was founded on February 19, 1923 as a section of the so-called Zemgor (Ob'edinenie Rossiiskikh Zemskikh i Gorodskikh Deiatelei v Chekhoslovatskoi Respublike – Association of Russian Provincial and Municipal Functionaries in Czechoslovakia). Its first official name was Arkhiv russkoi emigratsii (The Archives of Russian Emigration).[1] Its original and rather limited subject scope was gradually enlarged into four main groups: revolutionary movements in Russia from the beginning of the 19th century to 1917, events in the revolutionary year of 1917, civil war and a development of the Soviet

[1] On the activities of Zemgor see in detail for example: Sergei P. POSTNIKOV, *Russkie v Prage 1918–1928 gg.* (Prague: Legiografie, 1928), 9–19. (Second edition – Prague: Národní knihovna ČR – Slovanská knihovna, 1995.)

Prague Perspectives III (Prague, 2009), 203–222.

Union, activities of the "old" pre-October emigration and finally activities of the post-October anti-Bolshevik emigration. The staff assembled, beside the actual archive, a separate library and a newspaper collection pertaining to all four observed areas.

The fact that an archival institution oriented to the problems of the Russian emigration came into being in Prague as early as the first half of the 1920s was a result of the unyielding efforts of representatives of the Russian intelligentsia striving to collect in one place materials with bearing on the modern history of the country they had just left. At the same time, they wanted to prevent the destruction of these documents when it became clear that the originally anticipated short exile was changing into an emigration with no end in sight. Emigrants moved, struggled for their livelihood, and died. Preservation of invaluable documents, books, and periodicals they brought along from home became a problem.

A constantly growing collection, and a stream of offers to sell items of interest coming from around the world, started to cause more than a few financial and organizational difficulties.[2] In conjunction with the gradually diminishing financial support for the Russian emigration on the part of the Czechoslovak government, the only viable solution was a transfer of the whole Russian Foreign Historical Archives to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This was realized on March 31, 1928.[3]

In the interwar years, the staff was able to build an exceptionally large and first-rate collection. Because of its growth, it had to be moved several times during the 1920s into more spacious quarters.[4] Publishing

[2] The staff expressed the significance of the institution and its collections in 1929, after only five years of its existence, in the following words: "In Prague, there exists a unique centre for research on the Russian revolution and, with every year, its scholarly importance grows." *Russkii istoricheskii arkhiv, sbornik pervyi* (Prague: Izdanie Russkogo zagranichnogo istoricheskogo arkhiva v Prage, 1929), 8. Similar texts were published in a number of periodicals, for example: "Rosyjskie Zagraniczne Archiwum Historyczne," *Gazeta Polska*, 18 December 1929; V.[enedikt A.] MIAKOTIN, "Biblioteka R. Z. I. Arkhiva v Prage," *Poslednie novosti*, 11 April 1931, 5; "Russkii zagranichnyi istoricheskii arkhiv," *Vozrozhdenie*, 13 December 1931, 2.

[3] "Slovanské archivy v Praze (Přehledná zpráva)," in *Ročenka Slovanského ústavu* (Prague: Nákladem Slovanského ústavu, 1929), 1 (Rok 1928): 142.

[4] The composition of the collection and new accessions were summarized in the annual reports published in the Slavonic Institute Annual Reports published in Prague since 1929, in independent Russian language pamphlets (published for 1928, 1929, 1930, 1931, 1934 and 1936) and in the extant Annual Reports stored in archival collections.

and organizing exhibitions were other activities pursued by the Archives. Its value was universally acknowledged; not only by members of the émigré community but also by worldwide Slavist circles.[5] Jan Slavík used to say with glee that for its existence and its function, the Archives fulfilled the wish of one of its founders, Václav Girsa,[6] who purportedly said, "who would want to study the Russian revolution would have to come to Prague".[7]

Even though during the Second World War, the Russian Foreign Historical Archives operated in a restricted manner, its collection had been enriched by number of distinctive works. Its fate was settled right after the liberation of Czechoslovakia, at a time when one might have expected a revival of its activities. In 1945, the Czechoslovak government already decided that the whole collection of documents, the actual archival collection of over 4 million pages, and a large number of partial collections (for example several hundred sets of so-called deposits[8], hundreds of manuscripts, memoirs, large collections of visual documents,

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Further for example: Václav ČEJCHAN, "Slovanské archivy ministerstva zahraničních věcí v Praze," *Český časopis historický* 44, no. 2 (1938): 338–343.

[5] About the Archive activities see: POSTNIKOV, *Russkie v Prage*, 41–50; Aleksandr F. IZIUMOV, "Zapiska o Russkom Istoricheskom Arkhive v Prage," in Sergei P. Postnikov, ed., *Politika, ideologiia, byt i uchenye trudy russkoi emigratsii 1918–1945. (Bibliografiia iz kataloga R. Z. I. Arkhiva)* (New York: Norman Ross Publishing inc., 1993), 2 (Periodika Russkoi emigratsii (1918–1945)), 400–409; George FISCHER, "The Russian Archive in Prague," *The American Slavic and East European Review* 8, no. 4 (1949): 289–295; Alexandra ŠPIRITOVÁ, "Ruské zahraniční archivy," in *Paginae Historiae. Sborník Státního ústředního archivu v Praze* (Prague: Státní ústřední archiv, 2002), 10: 153–166.

[6] Václav Girsa (1875–1934) – Czech medical doctor and diplomat. He was born to a Czech family living in Volyn Oblast in the Ukraine. During the First World War, he was at the forefront of Czechoslovak foreign resistance in Russia, and was a chairman of the Union of Czechoslovak Societies in Russia. He organized transports of Czechoslovak legions from Vladivostok back to Czechoslovakia. In the 1920s, he was engaged in organizing help to starving Soviet Russia. As a plenipotentiary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he was a guarantor of the so-called Russian Action to help Russian emigration to Czechoslovakia. Since the mid-20s, he served in several diplomatic posts.

[7] Mentioned for example in: Jan SLAVÍK, "Dr. Václav Girsa a studium Sovětského Ruska," *Národní osvobození*, 1 December 1945, 1.

[8] The deposits were collections that did not belong to the archive. They were put there for safekeeping and administration. Their use had to be authorized by the owner. For information about their provenance, number of items and composition see for example: Národní archiv, Prague (National Archives, further only NA), fund (further only f.) Ústřední archiv ministerstva vnitra (1935–1945), box (further only b.) 126, inventory number (further only inv. n.) II/2b-3, file "Ruský zahraniční historický archiv 1945" ("Deposita při Ruském historickém archivu…", k čj. P 1043/Arch 45).

photographs, bank notes, etc.) were to be handed over to the Soviet Union. According to a declaration of the Czechoslovak government pushed through by Zdeněk Nejedlý, Minister of Education, it was a gift to the Soviet people for the 220th anniversary of the foundation of the Russian Academy of Sciences.[9] Whether the Soviets initiated or demanded the handover is not known. The whole process was conspicuously quick. The government decree on the handover of the RZIA was accepted on June 13, 1945;[10] already by August 30, a protocol about completion of the transfer of the Ukrainian Historical Cabinet (attached to the Archives) to Kiev was signed; on December 13, 1945, signatures confirmed the handover of the collections to Moscow.[11] It is symptomatic that the Archives never reached the Academy. Collections were partly divided according to geographic and subject areas; the largest section was deposited in the present State Archives of the Russian Federation where, after a long time, is now freely accessible.[12]

JAN SLAVÍK AT THE ARCHIVES

There are two viewpoints on the relations of Jan Slavík with the RZIA. The first one is his post as Director, a person responsible for its operations, administration, and scholarly development; the other is the view of Jan

[9] The collection filled up 680 large boxes and was transported in nine railway boxcars. About the volume of transported material see: Václav PEŠÁK, "Zpráva o činnosti Ruského historického archivu, Ukrajinského historického kabinetu a Běloruského archivu v letech 1939–1946," in *Ročenka Slovanského ústavu* (Prague: Nákladem Slovanského ústavu, 1947), 12 (za léta 1939–1946): 216; Patricia Kennedy GRIMSTED, *"Prazki arkhivy" u Kyevi ta Moskvi: Povoenni rozshuky i vyvezennia emihratsiinoii arkhivnoii Ukraiiniki* (Kyiv: Derzhavnyi komitet arkhiviv Ukraiiny, 2005), 44.

For a more detailed account of the demise of the RZIA and its handover to the USSR see: Vladimír BYSTROV, "Konec Russkogo zagranichnogo istoricheskogo arkhiva v Prage," in *Russkaia, ukrainskaia i belorusskaia emigratsiia v Chekhoslovakii mezhdu dvumia mirovymi voinami* (Prague: Národní knihovna ČR – Slovanská knihovna, 1995), 1: 70–84; Nikolai E. ANDREEV, "O suďbe Russkogo Istoricheskogo Arkhiva v Prage," *Grani*, vol. 125 (1982): 307–311; etc.

[10] A copy of the resolution is accessible in: NA, f. Ústřední archiv ministerstva vnitra (1935–1945), b. 126, inv. n. II/2b-3, file "Ruský zahraniční historický archiv 1945".

[11] Handover protocols, including box stocktaking lists, are available in: Ibid.

[12] On the fate of archival collections in the USSR and their local accessibility see further: Taťiana F. PAVLOVA, "Predislovie," in Taťiana F. Pavlova, ed., *Fondy Russkogo zagranichnogo istoricheskogo arkhiva v Prage (Mezharkhivnyi putevoditeľ)* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 1999), 5–32.

Slavík as a user of the Archives, a researcher who finds resources for his inquiries there.

The name of Jan Slavík in association with his activity in the Russian Foreign Historical Archives is mentioned for the first time on September 25, 1925. Then, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that indirectly financed the archive, forced his becoming a member of the Archive Economic Commission and a member of the Archive Provisional (temporary) Council.[13] On October 29, 1927, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs named him its plenipotentiary for the Russian Foreign Historical Archives. He was to oversee the Archive's agenda and above all to complete a prepared transfer to the Ministry. After the completion, Slavík became the *bona fide* chief executive of this newly created section of the Ministry. He himself remembers his arrival at the Archives:

> Some supervision of the financial matters [...] was entrusted to an officer from the archive of the Ministry, Dr. Karel Kazbunda, a university docent and a historian who specialized in modern Czech history; he did not have much in common with the Russian Archives. The Ministry then offered me the position, and, as I see it, it happened on the recommendation of Jan Opočenský, Director of the Ministry Archives. Shortly after, I was appointed a Director of the Russian Foreign Historical Archives.[14]

Jan Slavík was appointed on December 18, 1933.[15]

Slavík was not only the Head of the RZIA. In the mid-1920s's, following the example of the Russian Archives, other institutions developed: Ukrainian Historical Cabinet, Byelorussian Foreign Archives, Don Cossacks Archives, and a Kuban Archives. Just as in the case of the RZIA, the activities of these smaller institutions depended on financial grants from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Slavík was the Ministry plenipotentiary

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[13] Slavonic Library in Prague, T-RZIA, personal files of the RZIA, unprocessed (Service progress of Jan Slavík); Ibid., personal records of staff members "Personalia R.Z.H.A.", unprocessed (Entry "Jan Slavík").

[14] Jan SLAVÍK, "Když minulo let padesát. Příhody a nehody historikovy v letech 1902–1952." Cited from the version published in: Václav Veber et al., *Ruská a ukrajinská emigrace v ČSR v letech 1918–1945* (Prague: Seminář pro dějiny východní Evropy při Ústavu světových dějin FF UK v Praze, 1995), 3: 110.

[15] Slavonic Library in Prague, T-RZIA, personal files of the RZIA, unprocessed (Service progress of Jan Slavík); Ibid., personal records of staff members "Personalia R.Z.H.A.", unprocessed (Entry "Jan Slavík").

Some sources cite another date of his appointment: January 1, 1934 (*Russkii zagranichnyi istoricheskii arkhiv pri Ministerstve Inostrannykh Del Chekhoslovatskoi Respubliki v 1936 godu* (Prague, 1936), 4) or February of the same year (*Russkii zagranichnyi istoricheskii arkhiv v 1934 godu*, for internal use, 4).

for all these archives that were gradually transferred to the full possession of the Ministry. The Don Cossacks Archives merged with the RZIA in 1934, and the other three institutions became autonomous sections within the RZIA.[16] This archival complex was housed in one building and was called the Slavonic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Slavík's title in literature and documents is not always cited uniformly. Most often, he was addressed as the Head of Slavonic Archives or Director of the Russian Foreign Historical Archives.[17]

His appointment as Director of the Russian Foreign Historical Archives had an essential advantage for Slavík's scholarly work. He could rid himself of teaching obligations at the Vinohrady gymnasium in Prague XII. He was free to work systematically as a historian. He was still an employee of the Ministry of Education, but was officially released to work at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

It is not easy to accurately describe the value of his contribution to the development of the Archives. Naturally, he had responsibility for all its activities, scholarly assignments, and financial management. He had rather strong executive authority, because decisions made by the Council of the Archives or by the Scholarly Commission were only applicable with his consent.[18] He was constructive in building the collections. Due to his position, he could proceed with purchases of foreign archival documents and books. While in the Soviet Union in 1926, 1927 and 1932, he acquired a large number of periodicals and books. It is, however, very surprising that even a detailed study of the literature and the official documents that have been preserved about activities of this institution shows how rarely Slavík's handwriting or signature appears. Knowing how many scholarly or popularizing texts he wrote every year, one couldn't help but feel that Slavík as user of the Archives exceeds Slavík as Director. Over all, we could define Slavík's official work as a representative, umbrella function, and not really day-to-day administration. The heads of individual departments and their assistants performed the daily managerial and administrative work, correspondence, and collection

[16] "Slovanské archivy ministerstva věcí zahraničních v letech 1932–1934," in *Ročenka Slovanského ústavu* (Prague: Slovanský ústav, 1935), 5–7 (za tříletí 1932–1934): 400–401; Jan SLAVÍK, "Československý ústav pro studium ruské revoluce," *Slovanský přehled* 29, no. 8 (1937): 243, 245.

[17] Slavík often used the name "Slavonic Archives" as well. See for example: IDEM, "Pražské slovanské archivy (Reálné plody našeho slovanství II.)," *České slovo*, 16 June 1933, 8.

[18] "Slovanské archivy v Praze (Přehledná zpráva)," 143.

preservation, cataloguing, etc., while Slavík granted the employees who came from the émigré community an effective and necessary security in Czechoslovakia, to them a foreign locale.

The position of Jan Slavík inside the structure of the archive was rather peculiar. Interestingly enough, he was the only Czech amongst the specialists. The majority were emigrants. The fact that many articles, published largely in the émigré press, often mentioned names of individual emigrant archivists, and never the name of the Director, could invite a feeling that the emigration representatives only grudgingly put up with the fact that "their" institution was managed by a "foreigner", a ministerial executive. It is quite understandable because representatives of the émigrés always considered the Archives as their property. They constantly refused to acknowledge the fact that the Archive had passed into the possession of the Czechoslovak government, which thus acquired the power to decide on its management.[19] This hypothesis is supported by a memorandum sent on December 15, 1934 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Archive Scholarly Council, the main advisory board of the RZIA, which was comprised of émigré leaders. There, the Ministry supported the Director against the growing attempts of the Council to strengthen its position and win the power to overrule the Director's decisions. The author of the memorandum, Dr. Šebesta, clearly stated that the Russian Foreign Historical Archives came under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and therefore it was the Archive's administrative body; the executive powers belonged to the Director appointed by the Ministry, or to the Ministry itself, which could be appealed to if necessary.[20] The parties concerned had a diametrically different perception of the Archives. The Russians were concerned with preservation of their cultural heritage and documents about their history. Slavík on the other hand saw the collections as an indispensable source for historical research. Due to their unequal status, Jan Slavík was useful and almost an indispensable agent for the Russian emigrants.

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[19] This situation is verified by repeated entries about visits of American specialists, who kept coming in the critical time between 1938–1939. They wanted to remove the Archive to the United States and save it from potential war damage. Prior to their arrival, émigré representatives repeatedly assured them that the Archive was their property, and they, rather frustrated, were finding the true state of affairs in Prague later.

[20] Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Russiiskoi Federatsii, Moscow (The State Archives of the Russian Federation – further only GARF), f. 7030, inv. n. 1, document 17 (Letter of Dr. Šebesta to the Russian Foreign Historical Archives about the changes in the work statute of the archives).

However, the assiduous growth of the collections, even if financially demanding, the resulting activities of the Archives and an almost non-existent personnel turnover demonstrated that there were no dramatic disagreements.

JAN SLAVÍK ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RZIA

Jan Slavík did not perceive the Russian Foreign Historical Archives as an archival agency in the narrow sense of the word. In keeping with the thinking of the entire émigré community he saw it as a worldwide unique archival and documentation institution, which provided to scholars an extraordinary background for studying

> political, nationalistic and revolutionary movements in 19th and 20th century Russia [...] It is an institute collecting historical sources not only for the study of the Russian revolution but also of the Soviet state.

The archival collection was not solely a scholarly resource. There was also a large collection of newspapers and "a special library of Russian political and revolutionary movements that may be called one of a kind".[21]

Slavík saw the realization and success of the idea to concentrate documents about revolutionary movements in Russia and activities of the Russian emigration in Prague in two things:

(1) The devoted work of many Russian emigrants who were either engaged directly in the Archives or in various aid committees locally and abroad. Slavík admitted that, in his position as the Director, he met

> hardworking people who for a small salary work diligently and enthusiastically building an institution that already today [1930] – (even if it works inconspicuously and quietly with papers not ready for publication yet) – attracts many more scholars than any other.[22]

(2) The financial support of the Czechoslovak state. In the first years of its existence, grants were paid from a section of the budget intended for support of the emigrants. Later, when this programme was gradually reduced and the Archives came under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, its activities were financed directly from the state budget.[23]

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[21] SLAVÍK, "Československý ústav," 242.

[22] IDEM, "Ruská emigrace při plodné práci," *Sobota* 1, no. 22 (1930): 431.

[23] The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was indeed very generous in its support. During the years 1928–1933 it provided 508 000 then-Czech crowns just for the purchase of documents, 114 500 for books, 53 500 crowns for periodicals and 81 500 crowns for the

These two factors, together with proclaimed "scholarship", "impartiality", and the "apolitical position" of the project, ensured the trust of a broad variety of members of the Russian emigration community around the world. They sold or donated whole archival collections in the belief that they would be carefully housed and made accessible according to the stipulated conditions of handover or temporary security.

A huge problem for Slavík's approach to the question of the Russian revolution and Bolshevik regime was poor education and poor awareness of the public. This fact very often caused, as he saw it, a distortion of the real state of things and twisted the picture on this issue. Slavík repeatedly pointed to the fact that the real significance of the October revolution and development of Soviet Russia could not be recognized and understood just by factitious and pre-arranged visits to the USSR, or by reading the official soviet press or party-approved textbooks. It was not possible to act as an unfailing defender of the Soviet system, alert to the success of the economic and social development, and at the same time ignore objective and visible problems and shortcomings. Nevertheless, one cannot be an a priori enemy of the Bolsheviks and reach every conclusion based on allusions to terror and mass lawlessness.

According to Slavík, the Russian revolution was one of the biggest social events in human history – in both a positive and a negative sense. Only by the broadest and, if possible, objective cognition of its causes, process, success, and failures, can humanity exploit its potential and eschew its blunders. By striving to see things in their complexity and context,

> you would get approval neither from soviet admirers nor from soviet haters; you would, however, get a chance to see things as they are. To see where the Russian revolution surpassed Europe, where it is catching up, and where it wants to throw Europe back [...] Less zealotry and more investigation would make this double-sidedness, or even triple-sidedness of the Russian revolution

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purchase of newspapers. (Slavonic Library in Prague, T-RZIA, Annual Reports and Statistics 1933, unprocessed (Summary of means provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for activities of the Russian Foreign Historical Archives in the years 1923–1933).) The annual budget of the Archive moved between 500 000 (this interwar minimum was granted during the Great Depression in the first half of the 1930s) up to over a million (this highest sum was received in 1929). Altogether, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs spent between 1923–1935 a sum of 9 090 000 crowns. From the year of the transfer to 1935, the Ministry spent 8 121 000 crowns. (Slavonic Library in Prague, T-RZIA, Annual Reports, and Statistics 1935, unprocessed (Summary of expenditures of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the Russian Foreign Historical Archives and attached archives during the active years).)

> evident and better understood. From the naïve propaganda of soviet Russia, we have to go on to a proper study of the Russian revolution.[24]

For Slavík, precisely this chance for an objective study of the Russian revolution, revolutionary movements and Soviet present, was the basis for the existence of the Russian Foreign Historical Archives, and he used it for that purpose. It is not, surely, an overstatement that without the RZIA Slavík would not have been able to write even a fraction of his articles on Russia. If Slavík had not been the Head of the Archives, he would never have been able to scrutinize the collections to such an extent. No interwar historian, not just a Czech one, was capable of exploiting the collections with such exactitude and thoroughness as Slavík. His total involvement and passion are confirmed by administrative entries stating that new issues of archival newspapers were sent to his vacation address.

The benefits of the Russian Foreign Historical Archives for Slavík's research are evident just from the number of his published scholarly works concerning the subject. If there are only about 15 entries between 1920–1924 in his bibliography for book, periodical and newspaper titles on the Russian revolution and soviet Russia, the number of entries since 1925, when he started his engagement in the Archives, is astounding. In the following four years, he published around 41 texts and, just for 1933, there are 37 items on the topic. He made the most of the collections when he prepared and edited various series,[25] and put together subject-oriented scholarly essays[26] and books.[27] He drew on this resource for his weekly lectures on the situation in the Soviet Union. The series was broadcast in

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[24] Jan SLAVÍK, "Slovanské problémy třeba studovati," *Sobota* 3, no. 13 (1932): 251.

[25] IDEM, ed., "Iz dnevnika generala M. V. Alekseeva," in *Russkii istoricheskii archiv, sbornik pervyi*, 11–56; IDEM, ed., *Listy carských manželů z let válečných* (Prague: Melantrich, 1933).

[26] IDEM, ed., *Ruská revoluce březnová ve vzpomínkách účastníků* (Prague: Melantrich, 1930); IDEM, ed., *Ruská revoluce listopadová ve vzpomínkách účastníků. Vítězství Leninovo* (Prague: Melantrich, 1931).

[27] Among the important ones are: IDEM, *Bolševismus v přerodu. Historicko-sociologická studie* (Prague: Melantrich, 1933; IDEM, *Lenin* (Prague: Melantrich, 1934); IDEM, *Leninova vláda 1917–1924* (Prague: Melantrich, 1935). Slavík's most prestigious text on this subject is his large epilogue for the 2nd Czech edition of the first volume of Masaryk's monumental work *Rusko a Evropa* [Russia and Europe]: IDEM, "Za světové války a revoluce," in Tomáš G. Masaryk, *Rusko a Evropa. Studie o duchovních proudech v Rusku* (Prague: Jan Laichter, 1930), 1 (Problémy ruské filosofie dějin a náboženství): 279–336.

1933 by the Czechoslovak Radio Russian programme under the title *Lektsiia professora Slavika* [Lecture of Professor Slavík].[28]

Slavík himself in his memoirs evaluated the importance of the Russian Foreign Historical Archives for his work:

> After a years-long search for books I needed for my work about the abolition of serfdom in Russia,[29] I was given a chance to study things Slavic from resources our Slavists could not have dreamed of. A Russian Historical Archives, financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was established in Prague [...] This archive, in addition to documentary sources, also contained an invaluable library on the Russian revolutionary movement...[30]

SLAVÍK'S DEPARTURE FROM THE ARCHIVES IN 1939

Jan Slavík was Director of the Russian Foreign Historical Archives until the first months of 1939. Because of the hostile political situation and the changing situation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Archives was, against the protest of some governmental officers, transferred to the Ministry of the Interior, where it was integrated into the structure of the Ministry's archive.[31] Slavík's loud objections against this step and the antagonism between him and the Director of the Ministry of the Interior

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[28] For more details on Slavík's broadcasts see: Jaroslav BOUČEK, *Jan Slavík. Příběh zakázaného historika* (Jinočany: H+H, 2002), 57–60; Mikhail SOKOLOV, "Govorzhi Moskva!: Jan Slavik, russkaia emigratsiia i radioveshchanie iz Chekhoslovakii na sovetskuiu Rossiiu," *Russkoe slovo*, no. 6–7 (2008): 42–48.
Further on the subject: Jan SLAVÍK, "Jak sovětské radiové stanice si řekly o odpověď," *Národní osvobození*, 7. 5. 1933, 4; "Pražská odpověď na moskevské výklady: Radiová odpověď z Československa na české přednášky z Moskvy," *Večerní České slovo*, 24. 2. 1933, 1. For responses to the broadcasting, see: J.M., "Dopis, který by radiojournal neuveřejnil," *Rudé právo*, 6. 3. 1933; "Čeští dělníci ve SSSR odpovídají na ruské vysílání dra Slavíka," *Rudé právo*, 21. 4. 1933, 4.

[29] Jan SLAVÍK, "Abolicionismus a revolucionismus v Rusku," *Český časopis historický* 26, no. 1 (1920): 127–143.

[30] IDEM, "Když minulo let padesát," 110.

[31] For a detailed report of the transfer of the RZIA to the Ministry of the Interior see: Josef KOLLMANN, "Dr. Slavík k případu prof. dr. Jaroslava Prokeše," in *Paginae Historiae. Sborník Státního ústředního archivu v Praze* (Prague: Státní ústřední archiv, 2003), 11: 165–192. For further activities of the RZIA, see: PEŠÁK, "Zpráva o činnosti Ruského historického archivu...," 211–218; Josef KOLLMANN, "Archiv ministerstva vnitra v letech 1918–1945," *Sborník archivních prací* 45, no. 2 (1995): 629–630; Jaroslav BOUČEK, "K historii Ruského zahraničního historického archivu," in Alena Pazderová, ed., *Pocta Josefu Kollmannovi. Sborník k životnímu jubileu* (Prague: Státní ústřední archiv v Praze, 2002), 72.

Archives, Jaroslav Prokeš, led to his recall from the post at the Russian Foreign Historical Archives in the first days of March 1939.[32]

His removal from the archival collections was very painful for Slavík. It meant a total loss of access to the resources so vital for his Russian inquiries.

> Separation from the RHA was for me truly a great disaster. A marvellous opportunity for work was crushed, and with it a chance to finish several works which I was working on preparing, but had procrastinated.[33]

> The Archives gave me the opportunity for genuine research about the Russian revolution; just for my book on Lenin, I needed thousands of books, pamphlets, handbills and newspaper articles. Sometimes I just had to look over a few lines in a newspaper or a pamphlet. I could have done this only as the Archives custodian.[34]

The handover of the Archives to the new caretakers did not lack some tragicomic scenes. Slavík officially delivered his resignation to the hands of a deputy of the Director of the Ministry of the Interior Archives, Dr. Václav Pešák, on March 9, 1939.[35] Concluding the last details took several days and, by a quirk, was finished on the first day of the German occupation of Czechoslovakia. "I was supposed to hand over my office of the Director of the Archives, that is the keys for the safes and to my office, at 8 am, March 15, 1939," Slavík recalls:

> To get ready for this task and remove my personal belongings, I hurried up that morning. It was shortly after 7 am when I got to the Hradčany Square where the Archives was housed in the Toscan Palace at the west side of the Square. At that moment, the first German soldier arrived on a motorcycle. He got off and wanted to speak to me. The furious look in my eyes frightened him. From his breast pocket, he pulled out a piece of paper and began to look

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[32] Slavík was recalled from his post at the Russian Foreign Historical Archives by a decision of the Minister of the Interior, Otakar Fischer, dated March 3, 1939. The same day the Minister invited the Director of the Ministry archives to take over the RZIA immediately. (Both documents are available in: NA, f. Ústřední archiv ministerstva vnitra (1935–1945), b. 126, inv. n. II/2b-3, file "Ruský zahraniční historický archiv 1939".) The personal records of the Russian Foreign Historical Archives show March 13, 1939 as the date of Slavík's dismissal. (Slavonic Library in Prague, T-RZIA, personal records of staff members "Personalia R.Z.H.A.", unprocessed (Entry "Jan Slavík").)

[33] SLAVÍK, "Když minulo let padesát," 122.

[34] Cited from an unpublished version of memoirs housed in Archiv Národního muzea (National Museum Archives), f. Jan Slavík (1885–1978), inv. n. 1 (Když minulo let padesát 1902–1953. Příhody a nezdary historikovy, p. 44).

[35] NA, f. Ústřední archiv ministerstva vnitra (1935–1945), b. 126, inv. n. II/2b-3, file "Ruský zahraniční historický archiv 1939" (Record of transfer of the RZIA of March 9, 1939).

> around. I ran to the Toscan. When I looked out, the Square was filling up with motorized German troops. It was an unforgettable sight and feeling! The First Republic was crashing down! What was my fall from some meager office in contrast… Under these circumstances, I completely forgot all about my resignation. I remember the face of the soldier who first arrived at the Square, I remember the faces of some German students I met on the Charles Bridge when I was returning from occupied Hradčany (they were pushing on to welcome their "liberator"). I just do not remember a single name of the gentlemen from the Foreign Office or from the Ministry of the Interior to whom I was handing over the office. I made a short speech, told them that my deputy (the Russian Iziumov[36]), knew as much as I did, put the safe keys on the table, bade them goodbye and took my leave.[37]

It was the definite end of Slavík's engagement in the history of the Russian Foreign Historical Archives. During the war, access to the Archives was very difficult. The question is whether a humiliated Slavík would even try to get there. After the war, and of course after 1948, the part remaining in Czechoslovakia was put on the list of closed and inaccessible collections.

Slavík was reserved in commenting on the transfer of the Archives to the Soviet Union in 1945. He only objected to the destruction of the Archives sporadically and marginally in a few short articles. According to his words,

> it was an erroneous step of our government to consent to a proposal to make a present of the Russian Foreign Historical Archives and ancillary institutes to Soviet Russia. […] It was a blow to the distribution of information about the Russian revolution here and in Western Europe. People who had no clear concept as to what the Russian Foreign Historical Archives really was destroyed Girsa's worthy idea.[38]

Archival documents show his refusal to participate personally in the transfer of collections to the Soviet Union. He refused, for example, a request to take part in choosing important documents that were to stay

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[36] Aleksandr Filaretovich Iziumov (1885–1950) – Russian historian and archivist, graduate of philosophy, Moscow University. He left Russia in 1922; in Berlin he worked in the Russian Scientific Institute. In 1925, he moved to Prague and was employed in the Russian Foreign Historical Archives. Between 1925–1941, he was Head of the Documents Dept., and from 1934, he was a deputy director. Because he never relinquished his Soviet citizenship, he spent the years between 1941–1945 in an internment camp. After the war, he stayed in Prague. In 1950, he was hit by a car and succumbed to the injuries.

[37] SLAVÍK, "Když minulo let padesát," 122.

[38] SLAVÍK, "Dr. Václav Girsa a studium Sovětského Ruska."

in Czechoslovakia as photocopies.[39] He most likely foresaw the absurdity of this intention in difficult post-war circumstances. The Soviets never delivered the promised photocopies.

Slavík's Directorship in all Slavonic archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs corresponded with the most productive period in his scholarly life. The importance of the RZIA for Slavík's work may be summarized in one sentence: without the Archives and the opportunity to study in detail its collections, Slavík would not have written most of his works on Russian subjects; without the Archives there would have been no Slavík – the Russianist as we know him. He was instrumental in its ever-growing acquisitions and in its financial security even during the Great Depression. His publications helped to present the Archives to the public. Several of his texts were meant to promote the Archives directly.[40] We have to acknowledge his contribution in the fact that interwar Czechoslovakia had been proud to have a worldwide unique and much-respected archival institution that housed a peerless collection of materials on Russian revolutionary movements and the history of Russian emigration; subjects then very much alive, sensitive and sought after.

THE FATE OF THE COLLECTION OF THE RUSSIAN FOREIGN HISTORICAL ARCHIVES LEFT IN PRAGUE AFTER 1945

As already mentioned, the Russian Foreign Historical Archives was handed over to the USSR in its entirety. The library and its collection of periodicals and newspapers remained in charge of the Ministry of the Interior after 1945. The government originally intended to give both collections to the Slavonic Institute, which was supposed to become a new centre of post-war Slavist research. In the end, a proposal to transfer them to the Ministry of Education prevailed and the original

[39] NA, f. Ústřední archiv ministerstva vnitra (1935–1945), b. 126, inv. n. II/2b-3, file "Ruský zahraniční historický archiv 1945" (The letter of the manager of the Ministry of Interior Archives to Jan Slavík of June 25, 1945).

[40] Slavík's texts dedicated to the Russian Foreign Historical Archives, apart from those cited above: "Reálné plody našeho Slovanství (I. Praha, město slovanských knihoven)," *České slovo*, 7 June 1933, 7; "Pražské slovanské archivy (Reálné plody našeho slovanství II)," *České slovo*, 16 June 1933, 8; "Les archives historiques russes près du Ministere des affaires étrangères de la République Tchécoslovaque," *Archives diplomatiques et consulaires. Diplomatic and consular review: Revue mensuelle illustrée paraissant à Bâle* 3, no. 3 (1938), 109–113; "Z ruských časopisů emigrantských," *Národní osvobození*, 22 June 1933, 5.

idea was abandoned. The Ministry was to incorporate them in the collections of the National and University Library. Slavík agreed with the intended transfer to the Slavonic Institute, but intensely opposed the merger with the collections of the National and University Library. He was afraid that the collections would be dispersed and thus would decline in value.

> Under the pretext that the Slavonic Institute had no money, a "Solomon" solution was found. A unique library with an excellent subject catalogue was to be portioned out and put in the mammoth body of the university library. In other words, a chance to study the Russian revolution and soviet Russia would be obliterated or much reduced.[41]

Fortunately, within the National and University Library then existed the Slavonic Library with a large collection of Slavic literature; RZIA's library and the collection of periodicals and newspapers was placed there. These collections were housed separately, together with their catalogues, and Slavík's worries thus did not materialized. Officially, the library of the RZIA was transferred to the Ministry of Education on February 14, 1948; the actual move to the Slavonic Library in Prague Klementinum occurred most likely sometime around the end of 1948 or beginning of 1949.[42]

The librarians and researchers were for a long time convinced that the Soviets got not only the documents, but also parts of the library and collections of periodicals and newspapers. Luckily, this suspicion proved to be unfounded. Preserved official papers indeed show the interest of the Soviet side to get the complete Russian Foreign Historical Archives, including the library and newspapers, but also show the unyielding resistance of the Czechoslovak Ministry of the Interior officials against such a move. A report on the handover of the RZIA to the Soviet Union dated December 17, 1945, says that the Soviets received over 1284 books and 1100 newspaper issues, but all of them came from a duplicate

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[41] Jan SLAVÍK, "Zrušení významného vědeckého ústavu?," *Svobodný zítřek* 3, no. 38 (1947): 5.

[42] NA, f. Ústřední archiv ministerstva vnitra (1949–1950), b. 50, inv. n. 352 (Protocol of a transfer of the library of the Russian Foreign Historical Archives, Ukrainian Historical Cabinet and Byelorussian Historical Archives from the Ministry of the Interior to the Ministry of Education dated April 16, 1948.).

collection. "What we gave them [...] are duplicates, and the library and newspaper collections were not at all harmed by this gift."[43]

This report was confirmed by the meticulous stocktaking in the 1990s that showed that "only" 287 library units were missing. It is, in regard to a convoluted and dramatic history of the Archives, a small number. Moreover, there is a chance that this number will be in time reduced, as there are sporadic discoveries of further items that were put into remote corners of the depository decades ago. A little while ago, a list of books moved to the Soviet Union was found and confirmed all mentioned above.[44]

Materials of the Russian Foreign Historical Archives that came into the possession of the Slavonic Library can be divided into three basic parts: the library, including the collection of periodicals, the newspaper collection and the Archives internal administrative documents for the years 1923 to 1945.[45]

The library now has about 35 000 volumes. There are titles dealing with revolutionary movements in the Russian empire and published in Czarist and Soviet Russia and in the West, original Russian books pertaining to the revolutionary year of 1917, civil war and the development of the Soviet Union during the 1920s and 1930s, and subject-oriented studies and series from the West. Beside history, political science, and sociology, there are books on the economy and economics, statistics and agriculture, which allow studying Russia from the end of the 19th to the beginning of the 20th century from all aspects. In the collection are also rare records about congresses of political parties, as well as pre-Revolutionary propagandist literature or programmes of political parties and organizations. Amongst notable items are books produced by members of the interwar Russian political emigration.

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[43] NA, f. Ústřední archiv ministerstva vnitra (1935–1945), b. 126, inv. n. II/2b-3, file "Ruský zahraniční historický archiv 1945" (Report of Dr. Pešák on transfer of the department of RZIA documents to the Soviet Union dated December 17, 1948).

[44] Slavonic Library in Prague, T-RZIA, unprocessed (List of books transferred to the Soviet Union in 1945).

[45] A detailed description of the Russian Foreign Historical Archives collections moved to the Slavonic Library see: Richard J. KNEELEY and Edward KASINEC, "The Slovanska Knihovna in Prague and its RZIA Collection," *Slavic Review* 51, no. 1 (1992): 122–130. Other texts about a basic collection of the Slavonic Library and the library of the RZIA see: Antonín FRINTA, "Slovanské knihovny v Praze," *Slovanský přehled* 25, no. 3–4 (1933): 72–73; Jiří VACEK, "Knihy, knihovny, archívy a muzea ruské emigrace v Praze," *Slovanský přehled* 79, no. 1 (1993): 68–70.

The collection of journals has circa 4700 titles and is thematically similar to the library collection.

An independently shelved collection of newspapers has about 4300 titles.[46] Newspaper collection emulates to some extent the subject orientation of the library and periodical collection. We could, however, specify four areas that are from any point of view world wide unique: **(1)** newspapers from the revolutionary year 1917 and following civil war;[47] **(2)** Soviet newspapers published in 1920s and 1930s; **(3)** newspapers published during the Second World War on Soviet territory occupied by the Germans; and **(4)** newspapers published around the world by members of the interwar diaspora.

The quality and significance of the last section recently received international recognition. The collection of newspapers and periodicals published around the world in between the wars (i.e., 1918–1939) by members of the Russian emigration was put on the list of UNESCO cultural heritage "Memory of the World" in 2007. The entire collection so honoured has about 2000 periodical titles and about 2600 newspapers. As to its contents, volume and geographical sites, it is an incredibly diverse set.[48] Many titles were issued for a very short time, some disappearing after publishing only two or three issues. There are handwritten news bulletins issued only in a few numbered copies. Yet again, there are titles with large circulation published throughout the interwar years.

The geographical diversity is even greater. Because Russian émigrés settled in countries around the world, we can find there not only periodicals published in main and well-known emigration centres (Prague, Berlin, Paris, Beograd), but also titles from Egypt, the United

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[46] At least a partial picture of the growth and composition of the periodical collection may be gained from several bibliographies published during the 1930s: *Zhurnaly za 1929 god, postupivshie v biblioteku Russkogo zagranichnogo istoricheskogo arkhiva* (Prague: Ruský zahraniční historický archiv, 1930); *Gazety za 1930 god postupivshie v gazetnyi fond Russkogo zagranichnogo istoricheskogo arkhiva* (Prague: Ruský zahraniční historický archiv, 1931); Lev F. MAGEROVSKII, ed., *Bibliografiia gazetnykh sobranii Russkogo istoricheskogo arkhiva za gody 1917–1921* (Prague: Ministerstvo vnutrennich del v Prage, 1939).

[47] This section is recorded in a large bibliography: Jan SLAVÍK and Sergei P. POSTNIKOV, eds., *Bibliografiia russkoi revoliutsii i grazhdanskoi voiny (1917–1921): Iz kataloga biblioteki R. Z. I. Arkhiva* (Prague: Russkii zagranichnyi istoricheskii arkhiv v Prage, 1938).

[48] A printed catalogue of periodicals from the RZIA collections published by members of Russian interwar emigration is the fullest, even if selective: POSTNIKOV, *Politika, ideologiia, byt i uchenye trudy*, vol. 2. Postnikov records 1435 journal titles and 1030 newspaper titles.

States, Canada, Argentina, Brazil, Australia and many other places. Outstandingly rich is the collection of publications from Harbin (Kharbin) and Shanghai in China.[49]

The core of this renown collection is formed by social and political newspapers and journals that brought information on activities of émigré communities and on routine domestic and foreign events. A prominent place was always given to the news from the Soviet Union. The collection contains many other and various serials – from literary journals, long-running "fat" journals to rare handwritten bulletins. We cannot leave out the titles of professional periodicals that were published by miscellaneous historical, philosophic, economic, medical, and military clubs and associations. The émigré institutions such as museums, secondary schools, universities and research institutes were as well very active publishers, as were the Orthodox Church or various political societies (ranging from liberal to ultra-conservative ones advocating restoration of the Czarist autocracy). Other rarities were magazines for women and periodicals concerning family, youth and children. Runs of periodicals published by the émigré community in interwar Czechoslovakia are almost complete. During those years, its members published about 437 titles. The subjects covered are similar to those published abroad.[50]

ACCESSIBILITY OF THE FORMER RUSSIAN FOREIGN HISTORICAL ARCHIVES AT THE SLAVONIC LIBRARY

The entire collection of books, periodicals and newspapers from the former Russian Foreign Historical Archives, together with the catalogues, are freely accessible to researchers. The Slavonic Library houses the original card catalogues of books, periodicals and newspapers.[51] In 1995, the entire card catalogue of books became available on microfiche.[52] Since 2000, the same catalogue has been accessible on line in a scanned version

[49] On the rationale for this rich China-originated collection, see: KNEELEY and KASINEC, "The Slovanska Knihovna in Prague and its RZIA Collection," 128.

[50] For a complete list of periodicals published by emigrants in Czechoslovakia see: Zdeňka RACHŮNKOVÁ, Michaela ŘEHÁKOVÁ and Jiří VACEK, eds., *Práce ruské, ukrajinské a běloruské emigrace vydané v Československu 1918–1945* (Prague: Národní knihovna ČR – Slovanská knihovna, 1996), 1/3: s. 853–931.

[51] The newspaper catalogue that was originally used mostly by the staff is now unavailable due to a newspaper re-cataloguing in progress.

[52] *Katalog byvshei biblioteki Russkogo zagranichnogo istoricheskogo arkhiva* (New York: Norman Ross Publishing Inc., 1995).

in Katif.[53] In 2007, its retrospective conversion was begun, thanks to which it will be accessible in the electronic catalogue of the Slavonic Library. The next task is a re-cataloguing and retro-conversion of the periodical collection. The large part of the periodicals list is still accessible only in the card catalogue.

The collection of newspapers has been painstakingly re-catalogued since the 1990s, and the major part of the records is now accessible in the electronic catalogue of the Slavonic Library.[54]

Newspapers collected by the Russian Foreign Historical Archives were very often printed on poor quality paper; its disintegration presents a major and real threat to the collection. It is the most imperilled collection in the entire former Archives. Even then, Slavík recognized the danger evolving from poor quality paper.

> The big problem of the newspaper department is preservation. If it said about today's newsprint that it perishes quickly, then what about newsprint on which newspapers were printed during the civil war. Even the ink was of the worst quality and fades fast.[55]

To preserve these materials for the future and make them widely accessible, the Slavonic Library has since the middle of the 1990s carried out several microfilming and digitalization projects. So far, there are about 1000 newspaper titles (250 000 pages) from the four above-mentioned unique groups available on microfilm. Special attention has been given to the émigré periodicals published in interwar Czechoslovakia. Approximately half, that is 180 titles (18 000 pages), has already been microfilmed and digitalized. Their electronic format is accessible through the Kramerius programme (http://kramerius.nkp.cz).[56]

The microfilming and digitalization of newspapers from the collection of the RZIA goes forward: in 2007 the Slavonic Library microfilmed and digitalized about 32 000 pages of large format newspapers, and have started the second phase of digitalization of émigré periodicals published in Czechoslovakia.

The archival collection mapping activities of the Russian Foreign Historical Archives (administrative records, institution archives) are quite

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[53] Katif – scanned catalogues of the National Library of the Czech Republic: http://katif.nkp.cz .
[54] Electronic catalogue of the Slavonic Library: http://sigma.nkp.cz/F , database SLK.
[55] SLAVÍK, "Československý ústav pro studium ruské revoluce," 245.
[56] Because of the Authorship Law, full texts of periodicals are available only on the premises of the National Library. A remote user has access only to metadata.

separate. It was discovered after years in oblivion in the depositories of the Slavonic Library only after 1989. This collection, housed in about 120 archival boxes, almost certainly came to the Slavonic Library with the RZIA library collection and newspapers. It contains nearly complete records of meetings and proceedings of the chief bodies of the Archives. There is a voluminous correspondence with emigrants who donated or sold their collections to the Archives, and with acquisition agents working for the Archives. Personal employee records, financial records, and documents pertaining to relations with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs are also important. A careful scrutiny of these documents will give us, for the first time, a chance to map in detail the activities of the Archives throughout its existence. At present, with support of the Czech Science Foundation, we are processing this remarkable collection and making an inventory. It will be available for research during 2010.

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The goals and objectives of the Slavonic Library in regard to the materials from the Russian Foreign Historical Archives are obvious: **(1)** to provide access to the catalogues and inventories for all parts of the collections; **(2)** to provide full access to preserved documents; **(3)** in order to safeguard the value of these collections, to transfer all sections threatened by disintegration to microfilm, or to make a digital copy.

These steps will no doubt contribute to the preservation of the heritage that was left in Prague after the partial mutilation of the Russian Foreign Historical Archives, to documenting the generosity of the former Czechoslovak government, and to the appreciation of the hardworking staff of this institution, and last, but not least, to respecting Jan Slavík.

JAN SLAVÍK, THE RUSSIAN EMIGRATION AND BROADCASTING FROM CZECHOSLOVAKIA INTO THE SOVIET RUSSIA

Mikhail Sokolov

In the 1920s and 1930s, Russian emigrants dreamt of regular broadcasting into the Soviet Union. However, they found financial support neither in Western Europe, which chose a conciliatory approach towards the Soviets, nor in the USA, which started an era of isolationism. Czechoslovakia was the only state where they found support on the governmental level.

Some of the documents about the search for sponsors for broadcasting or even particular projects can be found in the Russian Foreign Historical Archives in Prague (the part which is stored in the State Archives of the Russian Federation, further only GARF).

A group of emigrants led by Boris Ivanovich Sokolov tried to start broadcasting into the Soviet Union with the support of Belgian anticommunists. The chief editor of the activists' journal *Bor'ba za Rossiiu* [Fight for Russia], Mikhail Mikhailovich Fedorov, wrote about such attempts in his letter to one of the supporters of that journal in Prague, Veniamin Sergeevich Ozeretskovskii, on March 31, 1931:

> I got the opportunity to use, from time to time, a radio station and to broadcast speeches and some information to Russia. The opportunity should be kept in secret and used as effectively as possible. I have been asking a number of Russian writers, journalists and politicians to take part in it. In Russia, we must call for struggle against oppressors of the country and for cooperation in the struggle, as non-coordinated activities only lead to crushing of dissidents. We must emphasize the importance of loyalty to the Motherland and resistance against the Soviet power in any situation. We must always point out Soviet lies when they talk about the hard life of population here and a creeping revolution. Some of our appeals will be aimed at farmers, some at workers, others at the army etc.[1]

[1] M. M. Fedorov to V. S. Ozeretskovskii. A letter No. 4437 from March 31, 1931. Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Russiiskoi Federatsii, Moscow (The State Archives of the Russian Federation – further only GARF), fund (further only f.) R-6110, inventory number (further only inv. n.) 1, document (further only d.) 9, sheets (further only sh.) 28–29.

Prague Perspectives III (Prague, 2009), 223–238.

A journalist Aleksei Ivanovich Ksiunin wrote on February 15, 1934, to a member of the Provisional Government, Aleksandr Ivanovich Guchkov: "The radio station in Belgium (and maybe in Luxemburg) was founded half a year ago [...] by an anti-communist publishing group."[2] According to Ksiunin, irregular broadcasting has been carried out since August 1932. In Guchov's letter from May 23, 1934, it is stated that "the radio station was founded by the Belgian anti-communist group Sillak".[3] I haven't yet found out what the group Sillak actually was nor when it ended broadcasting. It is certain though that it was a civic initiative.

One of the reports from Guchkov's file contains information about attempts at broadcasting into the Far East:

> apart from a Baptist station in Manchuria, there is one more station they broadcast anti-Russian propaganda from. This station is located on one of the commercial ships on the Sungara River. The crew is purely Russian. They receive material from Kharbin as well as from Geneva, from the organization Obera[4].[5]

In 1933, the Czechoslovak government decided to broadcast into the USSR. It is possible that this was a retaliatory reaction to the fact that the USSR started communistic broadcasting in Czech from Moscow and Kiev. At any rate, in February 1933, the Riga newspaper *Segodnia* [Today] made a link between the government decision and Comintern activities:

> During the last couple of weeks, on Wednesdays at 8 p.m. CET and on Fridays at 10 p.m. you could hear Czech language from the radio station Comintern: "Moscow's talking..., Moscow's talking" and in the next hour you could listen to propaganda lectures in Czech on Radio-Moscow. In these, they tried to explain the "successes and joys" of the Soviet life and harshly criticize the "capitalistic system"...[6]

Jan Slavík, the director of the Russian Foreign Historical Archives (Russkii zagranichnyi istoricheskii arkhiv – referred to below also as the RZIA), was appointed project director of broadcasting into the USSR.

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[2] A letter from A. I. Ksiunin to A. I. Guchkov from February 15, 1934. GARF, f. R-5868, inv. n. 1, d. 47, sh. 15.

[3] GARF, f. R-5886, inv. n. 1, d. 91, sh. 35.

[4] The League against the 3rd International.

[5] A letter from May 22, 1934. GARF, f. R-5868, inv. n. 1, sh. 40.

[6] K. [Konstantin P. Bel'govskii], "'Govorzhi Moskva'... 'Govorit Praga'...," *Segodnia*, 16 February 1933, 3.

He visited Russia in 1926, 1927 and 1932. He wrote about his last trip:

> Suffering that I witnessed during my travels (I was in Moscow, Leningrad, Nizhny Novgorod, Kharkov and Kiev) were so bitter that I need some rest in order to write about things I saw with my own eyes.[7]

After comparing Russia in the NEP era with Russia in 1932, he came to the conclusion that

> there is no progress. There was no insufficiency in Russia in 1927. This year [1932], Russian cities have been experiencing extreme shortages of everything; the Bolsheviks used the whole national property to get dollars for constructing factories and making machinery.[8]

Texts of Slavík's 20-minute-long presentations were in harmony with the Czechoslovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs.[9] The first lecture (February 17, 1933) was announced in the *Segodnia* newspaper:

> The last issue of the Czechoslovak "Radio-Journal" providing timetables of radio shows on Prague radio station contains an interesting announcement. On Friday, February 17, from 7:30 p.m. until 7:50 p.m., the Prague Radio station (together with all radio stations) will be broadcasting a lecture by Professor Jan Slavík *About the Russian Five-Year Plan* in the Russian language.[10]

In Russian exile publications, they enthusiastically welcomed broadcasting into the USSR. On March 23, 1933, a journalist Dmitrii I. Meisner wrote about Slavík's lectures in the *Poslednie novosti* [The Latest News] newspaper:

> Last year, a Czech expert and historian, Jan Slavík, who specializes on Russia and on the history of the Russian revolution in particular, spent some time in the USSR. After his return, professor Slavík published in a Czech left-oriented press a number of articles describing the horrific situation of Russian people and all of the Bolsheviks' lies about "fulfilling the five-year plan". The Bolsheviks replied in series of harsh articles. To spread their objections against professor Slavík, they used radio broadcasting into Europe in Czech language as well. Recently the Czechoslovak radio got an opportunity to object to the Bolsheviks' propaganda. Professor Slavík shall talk about the truth of the five-year plan and Bolshevist politics. His lectures will be broadcasted in Russian and should be accessible for all the Russian citizens who are able to tune into the Prague Radio station. The first lecture had already been broadcasted; it arose a wave of

[7] GARF, f. R-6123, inv. n. 1, d. 23, sh. 1. A translation of Jan Slavík's article "Dojem z letošní cesty po SSSR," *Národní osvobození*, 14 July 1932, 1.
[8] *Ibid.*, 1–2.
[9] GARF, f. R-5868, inv. n. 1, d. 91, sh. 16.
[10] K., "'Govorzhi Moskva'… 'Govorit Praga'…,".

> sympathetic public responses both from Czechoslovakia and other countries. Moscow fought back with "contra-propaganda".[11]

A similar position could be found in Czech newspapers. The newspaper *Večerní České slovo* [The Evening's Czech Word], for example, published an article called *Pražská odpověď na moskevské výklady* [Prague's Reply to Moscow Lies].[12]

Jan Slavík offered Boris Alekseevich Evreinov, a private scholar and singer, to become a speaker of his lectures. Shortly after that, a mighty voice resounded on radio: "Listen, listen, listen, Prague's talking – a lecture of professor Slavík!"

A democrat and emigrant, Aleksei P. Veľmin, wrote on February 28, 1933, to B. A. Evreinov from Warsaw:

> I am extremely pleased [...] that it is namely you who is about to spread anti-Bolshevik announcements to Russia. I completely understand the feelings you experienced after you realized that people in our country are listening to you. I see the anger of Maslov, Tsurikov and other "activists" about the fact that they were not chosen but a "Miliukovist".[13]

The original name of the first lecture from February 17, 1933, was *The USSR on the Threshold of the Second Five-Year Plan.* Its main thesis was that the Soviet Union reached success through the first Five-Year Plan in one sphere only: "the army and the police". They were never in crisis but "are being improved at all times".

> The Bolsheviks have founded a huge army and police that are successors of the Czarist police. [...] The army and the police, being important to the Bolsheviks as support for their power, enjoy outstanding solicitude by Soviet authorities. And a hundred-million people from the country that always fed Europe suffers from hunger in the 16th year of the Bolshevist rule in spite of the promises that life-conditions would rapidly improve during the first five years.[14]

Responses from Russian emigrants came shortly after. Il'ia S. Shevelev wrote from Stockholm on February 17, 1933:

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[11] Dmitrii I. MEISNER, *Voina v efire.* For the newspaper *Poslednie novosti.* GARF, f R-6123, inv. n. 1, d. 15, sh. 5. – Text published in modified version as: "Radio v Rossiiu," *Poslednie novosti*, 23 March 1933, 2.

[12] "Pražská odpověď na moskevské výklady: Radiová odpověď z Československa na české přednášky z Moskvy," *Večerní České slovo*, 24 February 1933, 1.

[13] A letter from A. P. Veľmin to B. A. Evreinov from February 28, 1933. GARF, f. R-6366, inv. n. 1, d. 9, sh. 146.

[14] Archiv ministerstva zahraničních věcí ČR (The Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic – further only AMZV). 3rd Department, 1933-TZ, 3rd section, box 1297, Radio propaganda Ruska.

> It is my pleasure to react to yesterday's first Russian lecture about the U.S.S.R. [...] The reception was ideal [...]. The unusually clear Russian language and the relaxing tempo of the broadcast were the main factors as to why the result was wonderful. Although I did not know the lecturer – e.g. his conclusions (political) – I must say we should welcome warmly such a lecture cycle as a certain attempt for an anti-soviet propaganda (every truth about the U.S.S.R. is anti-soviet propaganda!). It has an extreme importance, not for us emigrants (we know all of this from emigrant newspapers), but for the Russians who can't listen to anything else but the state hysteria. And we should be extraordinarily grateful to Czechoslovak politicians for not being scared of the U.S.S.R....[15]

A reaction of A. P. Vel'min from Warsaw to the second lecture was reported on March 12, 1933:

> We appreciate your announcement for your radio show. [...] We listened to you three times. It was wonderful. Every single word and even every single letter was clear, with a great expression. We even burst out laughing after hearing the passion with which you pronounced the word "ignorance" while talking about the Bolsheviks' attitude towards science and humanities. [...] As for the content, I must say we all found it a bit too academic; we think it would be possible and even better to chose more actual, contemporary and stronger themes for such lectures...[16]

The texts read by Evreinov were written by Jan Slavík. However, I found some corrections in B. A. Evreinov's hand writing on papers and files from the 3rd department of the Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Czechoslovakia and in GARF.[17] There are also instructions for the translator, B. A. Evreinov's wife, and also corrections by editors in texts from the GARF. It seems that additional comments were put into Jan Slavík's lectures by Evreinov himself as well as Natal'ia Sergeevna Evreinova, his wife, before they were published. On March 16, 1933, Boris Evreinov wrote to Professor Venedikt A. Miakotin in Sofia, one of the leaders of the People's Socialist Party: "If you have a chance to listen to a radio, please tune to Prague (wave 489 meters) on Friday, March 24, 1933, at 7:10 p.m. CET. You won't regret it."[18]

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[15] GARF, f. R-6123, inv. n. 1, d. 13, sh. 8.

[16] A letter from A. P. Vel'min to B. A. Evreinov from March 12, 1933. GARF, f. R-6366, inv. n. 1, d. 9, sh. 147.

[17] See GARF, f. R-6123, inv. n. 1, d. 6. Or: *Piatiletka i sovetskaia nauka*, GARF, f. R-6123, inv. n. 1, d. 9, sh. 1–7.

[18] A letter from B. A. Evreinov to V. A. Miakotin from March 16, 1933. GARF, f. R-5917, inv. n. 1, d. 34, sh. 39.

The first lectures were very popular and widely discussed in Russian press abroad. The Warsaw newspaper *Molva* [Speech] wrote:

> On April 7 at 7:10 p.m. all Czechoslovak radio stations broadcasted a lecture by professor Slavík about the Russian press, presented in Russian. This lecture was just one part of a series broadcasted regularly on Fridays every other week (the next one will be on April 21st at the same time).[19]

In the lecture, it was said that "the Bolsheviks destroyed the free press" and the system in which "the press is a monopoly under the ruling party"[20] was analyzed. Such a system where "Stalin's theses became axioms and thus they are not and could not be criticized" was called a display of an "Asian order".[21]

This is a review of Slavík's lectures published in *Molva*:

> The Czechoslovak Radio started a "war on radio" against Communist propaganda by broadcasting lectures by professor Slavík that relentlessly criticize the Soviet regime every Friday. Professor Slavík knows Russia very well, since he lived there before the Bolshevist revolution [sic!] and after it as well. The letters of support coming from the USSR serve as a proof that the lectures reach their aim. These letters come from Petrograd, Moscow, Kiev, Kharkov and other places.
>
> The Bolsheviks took up the challenge of the Czechoslovak radio stations and started a controversy with professor Slavík. In this, for example, one Soviet journalist from Smolensk presented his reply to Mr. Slavík in which he tried to defend the regulative laws reducing freedom of press and speech in the USSR. In his last lecture on Friday, April 24,[22] professor Slavík replied properly to the journalist's objections.[23]

Molva was referring to the reply of Vasilii I. Ardamatskii,[24] a journalist from Smolensk. In the lecture called *About Soviet Press* broadcasted on April 21, 1933, Jan Slavík reacted to the red propagandist as follows:

> I keep receiving a huge amount of letters from various European countries and from Soviet republics as well dealing with my radio lectures about the contemporary state of Russia. They come from Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev,

[19] B., "Lektsiia o sovetskoi pechati," *Molva*, April 26, 1933, 3.
[20] GARF, f. R-6123, inv. n. 1, d. 6, sh. 8.
[21] Ibid.
[22] The actual date was April 21.
[23] "Rechi prof. Slavika po radio," *Molva*, 5 May 1933, 3.
[24] In Slavík's lecture manuscript, the opponent is named either Aradamatskii or Ardamanskii or Ardamantskii. In fact, we speak about Vasilii Ivanovich Ardamatskii (1911, Dukhovshchina, Smolensk region – 1989, Moscow). He was a soviet writer and a radio journalist in Smolensk from 1929. In his books, he celebrated Cheka/OGPU/NKVD, incl. the murder of B. Savinkov or the operation "Trest". He was the author of the anti-Semitic feuilleton *Pinia iz Zhmerinki* (1953).

Kharkov, Stalingrad, Odessa and other places. Authors of these letters totally endorse my conclusions and judgments. From the content and writing of these letters, I guess not all of the writers are members of the intelligentsia, but some are from the working class too. However, a couple of days ago, I received a letter from Russia containing objections and attempts to defend the fact that freedom of press was destroyed in the USSR. The letter is written in a very mild and modest style that makes it different from the tone used by some gentleman in replies presented in Czech on Moscow radio.

The author of the letter is V. I. Ardamatskii from Smolensk. He told me what his name and his job is, and asked me to reply on radio. Ardamatskii confessed that he personally is not a Bolshevik and that he just works for the Soviet press. He also writes that it is unlikely we will understand each other. He is probably right. But what is the cause? I think it is the mere fact that Ardmatskii doesn't know Western Europe. On the other hand, I know both Western Europe and the Soviet Union where I was three times and for a length of time.

This fact (that Ardamatskii doesn't know Western Europe) explains why he tries to defend the Bolsheviks' approach and the fear of freedom of press by pointing out the restrictions on freedom of press imposed by Hitler in Germany. My opponent puts into opposition Bolshevism and Hitlerism. However, it is well known that both Russian Bolshevism and German Hitlerism are enemies of a democratic system. They are very close to each other: they deny elementary principles of a democratic world-view, including freedom of press.

[…]

The actual goal of enslaving the press has always been to protect a regime and to shut the mouths of legitimate critics. Ardamatskii could derive from history that only governments without public support interfere with freedom of press. Only the power that feels support from a vast majority of a nation doesn't have to be afraid of freedom of speech. […] Ardamatskii writes that a dictatorship is inevitable in a class struggle. The value of such a popular Bolshevist claim is the same as the value of the claim about the sacred origins of the Czar's power and his predestination to rule in the name of the people. It is the same as the claim about the importance of [illegible – press oppression?] aiming to legitimize the unlimited power of the Bolshevik Party which destroys any protesters on the behalf of socialism. It destroys particular individuals and whole classes as well, simply if it thinks they might be dangerous for the Bolshevist tyranny. For example, the Bolsheviks exterminated the most rational and educated group of Russian peasants as soon as they found them dangerous to themselves. If Ardamatskii took pains reading over the protocols from Bolshevik Party gatherings and conferences, he would find that all of the intra-party disputes were actually just about the attitude towards multi-million masses of Russian peasants. The problem was not socialism, but how to maneuver in order to keep power in Bolshevik hands…[25]

Jan Slavík smartly pointed out what a "professional journalist" he dealt with:

Ardamatskii told me he reads foreign newspapers and journals freely. No wonder, considering the fact that he works for the Soviet press in Smolensk.

[25] GARF, f. R-5868, inv. n. 1, d. 86, sh. 29–30.

> The job itself requires him to follow foreign press and Ardamatskii must know that he and his colleagues are pure exceptions, since the foreign press is totally inaccessible and forbidden to a vast majority of Soviet readers. The Bolshevist press can easily fabricate and lie to wide masses of readers, because there is no one who can unveil and mock Bolshevist lies.[26]

On May 17, Aleksei P. Vel'min wrote from Warsaw to Boris A. Evreinov in Prague again:

> On Friday, IV/21, Nikolai Kirillovich and I listened to your radio show. [...] Its content and the controversy with the Smolensk journalist was really interesting. On V/5, three of us were waiting by the radio: P.[iotr] E.[rastovich], Nik.[olai] Kirill.[ovich] and I. What a disappointment it was, however, when we heard music broadcasted after the regular news from Prague. Why wasn't your show on, and will it ever be on? Or is there any connection with the rumours from the newspapers talking about a closer relationship between the Little Entente and the USSR and its recognition by Czechoslovakia?[27]

The fact that the radio shows were very popular is demonstrated by many letters from the Soviet Union speaking highly of the broadcast from Prague. In the Jan Slavík file in the Russian Foreign Historical Archives, in a letter from Kiev written on a piece of wrap-paper can be found:

> Mr. Slavík, I listen to your radio lectures which must be very interesting to Soviet listeners. Yet I found them too short with many long breaks between the lectures. I am waiting for your reply during your radio show. Did you get my letter? Answer![28]

The *Vozrozhdenie* [Renaissance] newspaper published a letter from the Soviet Union in April 1933:

> We got a letter from the USSR claiming that the anti-Soviet propaganda broadcasting reached its goal in the USSR. We quote from a letter about that: "...Thanks to the professor who spoke to us in Russian – from people who still keep human feelings inside. He asked us to write him back, but he doesn't know that everything we write to him will be kept by censors. It was very pleasant to hear about what we can't even think about. We have such an unseen despotism here!" P.S. The original of the letter is in *Vozrozhdenie* editor's office.[29]

Jan Slavík referred to letters coming from Europe and the USSR in a special radio edition called *Reply to my Writers*.[30] One of the letters was written by a group of workers and delivered by a "worker who visited

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[26] Ibid., sh. 31.
[27] A letter from A. P. Vel'min to B. A. Evreinov from May 17, 1933. GARF, f. R-6366, inv. n. 1, d. 9, sh. 148.
[28] GARF, f. R-6123, d. 13, sh. 1–2.
[29] "Protivosovetskoe radio dlia SSSR," *Vozrozhdenie*, 27 April 1933, 3.
[30] GARF, f. R-6123, inv. n. 1, d. 8.

Prague during his Western European travels". This worker-socialist spoke about the situation in the southern region of Russia:

> We suffered a lot. We lacked everything; we starved and saw dying people around. We could have avoided all of this, even under the Soviet regime. A couple of years before Stalin's takeover, there was no hunger in a Russian village.[31]

As Slavík writes, he showed "a whole pile of letters" from "various areas and places throughout the Soviet Union" to the guest.[32] After analyzing the letters, he came to conclusion: "The contemporary Soviet regime emerges from an attempt of a small group of people to keep power in their hands through the so-called second agrarian revolution."[33]

Letters by Russian emigrants who highly appreciated Slavík's lectures can be found both in the RZIA and in files of the Czechoslovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs. "We thank you as a one man and we wish other countries would follow your example" – Russian listeners wrote from the village of Shipka in Bulgaria on June 15, 1933.[34]

Many people spoke about interference with broadcasting into the Soviet Union. One foreign listener wrote:

> As you probably know, the damn Bolsheviks interfere terribly. A lot of people can't listen to you anymore, but we keep listening through Brno despite all the mess. During your last lecture on November 17, it was something inconceivable. We were listening to you with much effort through Brno and in spite of the interferences, crack and murmur we could somehow hear your voice from there, bur from other places it is no longer possible. Especially the broadcasting from Prague is full of cracks. The Bolsheviks interfere with Czech broadcasting during the evening. At the time of your lecture they interfered with not only Czech but even neighboring radio stations. You said something about their fear. Tell them that they are malicious cowards which fear the truth and laugh at the modest, unhappy inhabitants.[35]

A. P. Vel'min was also excited about the success of the radio propaganda, although he spoke about interferences caused by Moscow:

> On Friday, May 19, I listened to your lecture by myself. [...] You spoke wonderfully, put emphasis on every single word, even though rush was obvious sometimes. This time, the show was accompanied by strong interferences, cracks and whistles; it was possible to hear you though. It was surely caused by Bolsheviks considering the fact that there was no interference before your

[31] Ibid., sh. 1.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid., sh. 2.
[34] GARF, f. R-6123, inv. n. 1, d. 13, sh. 15.
[35] Ibid.

> lecture when the regular news was on; we did not hear it even when we tuned to other stations. But why did you change the time of your lectures? You certainly know that the new time is after midnight in Russia and most people are already asleep.[36]

Slavík's lectures had really been rescheduled for a later time; in June it was announced: "The next Russian radio lecture will be broadcasted on Friday evening [June 14, 1933] at 10:20 p.m. CET which means at 0:20 a.m. Moscow time." They were speaking about. They broadcasted from five transmitters in order to make interfering more difficult. It became known from information "that lectures will be broadcasted by five Czechoslovak radio stations (Prague, 489 LW), Brno (342 LW), (Košice, 293 LW), (Bratislava, 279 LW), (Ostrava, 254 LW)". It was repeated: "Letters from the Soviet Union keep on coming. It is a proof of a lively and direct contact with the inhabitants of a secretive Russia."[37]

At the same time, listeners started complaining about the later time of lecture broadcasting. In his letter to A. P. Veľmin, B. A. Evreinov mentioned in the middle of June 1933: "I have not heard you for a long time – it is on late and I must go to my friends. I am glad your radio shows get better and better – you can enjoy yourself and obtain some capital too."[38] In spite of the later time, letters from the Soviet Union kept comming and at times provided terrible evidence.

Jan Slavík spoke to his audience on June 1, 1933:

> I shall read a letter I got from a collective farmer: He writes: "We are really sorry you did not mention anything about kolkhozes in your last lecture. You did not say how the workers' government robbed farmers so that they starve in the Caucasus and lack bread and potatoes and cabbage and other vegetables… the mortality rate is frightening because of hunger. The majority of stations, towns and cities is half-empty or worse… Little is sown. And there is no one to harvest what is sown. If there is no measure to provide farmers with bread and other products, another half of them will die or run away due to hunger. Simply, there won't be enough people to harvest in villages.
>
> The grateful farmers who are still alive have been collecting material (pictures of people swollen from hunger, corpses lying along roads, loafs made of acorn or roots, conserved meat of dogs, cats, sousliks and even people) that will be sent to our 'dear and beloved leader' to the museum of revolution. Signed: one of the

[36] A letter from A. P. Veľmin to B. A. Evreinov from May 21, 1933. GARF, f. R-6366, inv. n. 1, d. 9, sh. 150.

[37] Lectures of Jan Slavík in A. I. Guchkov's file. GARF, f. R-5868, inv. n. 1, d. 86, sh. 31.

[38] A letter from A. P. Veľmin to B. A. Evreinov from June 25, 1933. GARF, f. R-6366, inv. n. 1, d. 9, sh. 153.

> refugees from the Caucasus region." […] What can be added to these words full of horror and hatred? We must admit that the hatred is legitimized,[39]

Jan Slavík concludes. This is one of the ways that the West was informed about the starvation in southern Russia and Ukraine.

Apparently in the last lecture read by B. A. Evreinov called *About the Baltic Sea-White Sea Canal*, Jan Slavík concentrated on the slave labour of prisoners.

> We can say that the GPU is the greatest Soviet entrepreneur, since it always has an over-supply of labour power. It is not necessary to insure prisoners. The GPU doesn't have to pay the workers. It doesn't have to pay reparations or compensations. Prisoners do not need to be provided with a special working outfit and boots as is normal when hiring professionals. "The entrepreneur" is not obliged to keep an eight- or seven-hour working-day. Workers hired by the GPU work sixteen hours a day. They cannot resign, escape or strike; they would be jailed or shot. We should note that the GPU has the best technicians from Russia in its services. Due to the fake trials against "saboteurs" the GPU took over groups of experts from a range of work and science areas. These experts are free labour power in the same way as farmers working physically. […] Using forced labour, the canal was built in the 20th century under a government that calls itself Socialistic.[40]

Topics of lectures differed: *About a New Political Control in the USSR*,[41] *About Democracy and Bolshevist Dictatorship*,[42] *The Five-Year Plan and the Russian Science*,[43] *Worker in the USSR and Western Europe*,[44] *Pictures of Collectivization of Soviet Agriculture in Soviet Novels*,[45] *About the Purge of the Bolshevik Party*,[46] *About the Far-East Conflict and the Red Army*,[47] *About the Bolsheviks' Political Literacy*,[48] *What The Soviet Decrees Unveil about the Contemporary State of Russia*,[49] *Judgments of Foreigners Regarding the USSR*,[50] *Bolshevism*,[51]

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[39] Lectures of Jan Slavík in A. I. Guchkov's file. GARF, f. R-5868, inv. n. 1, d. 86, sh. 10–11.
[40] Ibid.
[41] Ibid., sh. 13–16.
[42] Ibid., sh. 22–27.
[43] GARF, f. R-6123, inv. n. 1, d. 9.
[44] Ibid., d. 10.
[45] GARF, f. R-5868, inv. n. 1, d. 86, sh. 7–12.
[46] Ibid., sh. 1–6.
[47] Ibid., sh. 34–38.
[48] Ibid., sh. 39–43.
[49] Lectures of Jan Slavík in A. I. Guchkov's file. Ibid.
[50] GARF, f. R-6123, inv. n. 1, d. 11.
[51] Ibid., d. 1b.

About Soviet Currency,[52] *On the Eve of the Russian Communistic Party Conference*,[53] *About the Soviet Encyclopaedia*.[54]

The lecture called *Worker in the USSR and in Czechoslovakia*,[55] broadcasted on April 11, 1933, was one of the most successful as far as propaganda goes. Slavík compared the situation of the proletariat in the two countries; he put in comparison real incomes and prices, possibilities to buy certain products, etc. He concluded:

> Not only do we not fear any control, but we would even be glad if the doubtful Soviet people came to Western Europe, if they lived there for a while and saw how the Bolsheviks confuse and mislead the suppressed inhabitants. These doubting Thomases would see a well-dressed social class that is very well-organized and organizing social life. They would see intensive business going on in cities and towns, as well as the peaceful and stable work of farmers and free workers who are protected by law. In Western Europe, a worker is really free; not like in Bolsheviks' words, but actually free. Freedom for the working class means the right to fight for my interests in a parliament; the right to read and speak what I want as well as to listen to and to vote for whomever I want; it means the right to go to a church or an atheists' club. Freedom of a worker also means that trade-unions really protect and pursue his interests and are not just instruments in the hands of the Communist leadership, as in the USSR. And last but not least, the worker from Western Europe gets paid full wages without forced obligation to pay all of the idlers from Third International or to financially support civil wars and uprisings all around the world. [...] We should not judge a political system from a wide-spread, often-used name. It's not hard to stick a label saying "Champagne" on a bottle of spirit. The spirit still remains spirit. The same is true for the Bolsheviks: we read "Socialism" and "The Workers' and Peasants' State" on the label; but we find only disgusting serfdom and common hunger under that.[56]

After October 13, 1933, the lectures were broadcasted every week instead of every other week, still on Fridays at 10:20 p.m. CET.[57]

Reactions kept coming. Someone nicknamed "Marquise" wrote in a letter from November 27, 1933:

> I listened to your lectures on November 17 and 24. On November 17, the signal was bad due to interferences. On November 24, it was better except for two or three minutes. The radio show cannot be heard sometimes. However, I will listen in the future.[58]

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[52] Ibid., d. 5.
[53] Ibid., d. 2.
[54] Ibid., d. 7.
[55] GARF, f. R-5868, inv. n. 1, d. 86, sh. 17–21.
[56] Ibid., sh. 20–21.
[57] GARF, f. R-6123, inv. n. 1, d. 8, sh. 11, 8.
[58] AMZV, 3rd Department, 1933-TZ, 3rd section, box 1297, Radio propaganda Ruska.

The letter demonstrates the continued interfering with broadcasting. On December 28, 1933, the Czechoslovak embassy in Moscow reported to the Ministry that the Soviets interfere only with J. Slavík's lectures.[59]

Russian emigrants tried to use Slavík's lectures in their own projects. In February 1933, a well-known cadet, Nikolai I. Astrov, who lived in Prague and was a close ally to Karel Kramář and his circle, sent texts of the lectures obtained directly from Jan Slavík to A. I. Guchkov:

> I just got texts of Slavík's radio lectures. And just today I got his approval that you may dispose of the copies of his lectures as you wish. I am attaching 10 drafts. It is not everything that was broadcasted from Prague. There were lectures about the Russian currency, about Soviet trade, about foreign opinions on the USSR, about the situation of workers in Soviet Russia and Western Europe. There were probably many topics, but I did not get the texts. Yet I think these 10 texts are enough to have an idea about the character of the Prague lectures. You will definitely notice the "contact" with Russia and the questions asked during the lectures – whether the signal is good, how people like it etc. The reaction from Smolensk and the discussion about freedom of speech (in the lecture about the Soviet press) are extremely interesting. Slavík will allow you to fully dispose of the sent texts as you pleased.[60]

A unique explanation of the essence of the Czechoslovak propaganda can be found in the recently published memoirs of a general secretary of the anti-Communist "League Obera", Iurii I. Lodyzhenskii, called *Ot krasnogo kresta k bor'be s kommunisticheskim Internatsionalom* [From the Red Cross to the Fight Against Communist International].

> In spite of Beneš' mistakes and Sovietophilism we must acknowledge that he did not obstruct the Czech support to Russian emigrants, but even contributed to such a help. This is the situation that proves that Beneš, despite his apparent Sovietophilism, understood how to get what he needed from the Bolsheviks extremely well.
>
> I do not understand why relations between Moscow and Prague deteriorated so suddenly. At that time, in order to reach his goals, Beneš asked to find an expert on Soviet reality and make him broadcast radio emissions [programs] criticizing the shortcommings and defects of the Soviet regime. They chose a young economist, B. Evreinov, who possessed not only the required knowledge, but outstanding diction as well. A German general counsellor in Kiev told me later that Evreinov's radio shows had been exceptionally successful in southern Russia and made the Soviets angry. It ended as soon as the Soviets agreed to concessions, just in order for the Czechs to shut Evreinov's mouth.[61]

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[59] Ibid.

[60] GARF, f. R-5868, inv. n. 1, d. 91, sh. 16.

[61] Iurii Il'ich LODYZHENSKII, *Ot krasnogo kresta k bor'be s kommunisticheskim Internatsionalom*. (Moscow: Airis-press, 2006), 426.

I. I. Lodyzhenskii described Russian displeasure very well. The Soviet Foreign Affairs Committee sent to the Czechoslovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs several official protests against broadcasting in Russian language.[62] The author wrote his memoirs in the 1950s' and he had apparently forgotten a lot by that time, incl. the fact that Jan Slavík was the author of the lectures and they were still on even after B. A. Evreinov's sudden death on October 29, 1933.

One of the most famous lectures was called *On the Eve of the Russian Communist Party Conference* and was broadcasted on January 5, 1934. In this lecture, Slavík wrote that compared to former revolutions "the Russian revolution is not exceptional at all. It is also on a way towards a one-person dictatorship."[63] In his lecture from January 19 called *About the Results of the Five-Year Plan* (possibly the last lecture), Jan Slavík noted that

> the Russian revolution was a beginning of a new life for Russian people. However, the contemporary stage shows that despotism by one select group came; these elites claim, of course, that everything it does is in the name of people and for their sake. Such Communism is very similar to the state system of Peruvians in the 15th century before Europeans came. [...] Rulers blame whomever except for the governmental system which has already proved itself archaic; it still maintains its position though. However, history teaches us that those who become rulers through a revolution never give up their position willingly.[64]

Jan Slavík's activity was highly appreciated by Russian anticommunists. In Aleksei I. Ksiunin's report which tried to argue the necessity of broadcasting into the USSR, it is written:

> In the last two years, a similar radio station directed by professor Slavík and maintained by several Russians has broadcasted from Czechoslovakia. Lectures broadcasted by this station were very popular and, considering reactions, successful in Russia. The Czechoslovak government tried to get closer to the Soviet state and so the station was simply cancelled.[65]

The end of the letter from Nikolai I. Astrov to Aleksandr I. Guchkov sounded sad:

> Now the lectures from Prague have ended. Topics are different. The whole climate has changed. Slavík's lectures are censored by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

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[62] AMZV, 3rd Department, 1933-TZ, 3rd section, box 1297, Radio propaganda Ruska.
[63] GARF, f. R-6123, inv. n. 1, d. 2, sh. 3.
[64] AMZV, 3rd Department, 1933-TZ, 3rd section, box 1297, Radio propaganda Ruska.
[65] GARF, f. R-5868, inv. n. 1, d. 91, sh. 8.

> That is why they are so weak and anemic. And yet, I appreciate even these! It is still the only voice that protests, judges and unveils Soviet lies in Russia![66]

Russian emigrants then sought an opportunity to create an independent radio station that would broadcast to citizens of the USSR. We can read about this initiative in a document written by A. I. Ksiunin, a member of Guchkov's informational and analytical group.[67]

As Ksiunin informs, Russian emigrants looked for sponsors all around Europe:

> I am re-sending a letter I just got from K. S. Zaitsev in Prague. I think if we organized it as a "joint purse" – of English lords (we already did this) together with American "colonels" (we did this as well) together with Yugoslavian and Czechoslovak "friends of Russia" (we are working on it and will continue) and, finally, together with the Russians who never stopped being "friends of Russia" (such Russians still exist), it could bring some result. [...] We must make clear how strong and reliable Yugoslavia can be; especially with the future perspective that has just opened.[68]

A. I. Ksiunin wrote more on November 30, 1934:

> [M.] Kovalev[69], a "comrade" from Prague, has just told me that some Czechs still keep interest in radio station broadcasting to Russia. He asked me to draft a full project and a budget. I completed and sent it. It turned out that the expenses of an independent station (with the demand for its effectiveness) would be really high. [...] That is why a local expert [...] suggests starting the activity by renting a big radio station in Scandinavia or Finland.[70]

Aleksandr I. Guchkov together with Aleksandr F. Kerenskii addressed Lord Godfrey Phillimore with a request for assistance offering that they would cover £400 Sterling for equipment and further up to £40 Sterling to cover the station's expenses. In the letter from May 23, 1934, Guchkov referred to Jan Slavík's experiences:

> We have useful experience with two radio stations that broadcasted propaganda for a long time. The first of them was founded in Czechoslovakia; it existed for two years and brought good results confirmed by many responses from Russia. The planned Czechoslovak-Soviet treaty made every anticommunist activity stop. The other radio station was created by the Belgian anti-Communist

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[66] Ibid., sh. 16.

[67] A letter from A. I. Ksiunin to A. I. Guchkov from February 21, 1934. GARF, f. R-5868, inv. n. 1, d. 47, sh. 21.

[68] A letter from A. I. Ksiunin to A. I. Guchkov from November 8, 1934. Ibid.

[69] Mitrofan F. Kovalev, a member of the central committee of the political party Krestianskaia Rossiia (Peasant Russia) until 1934. An associate of RZIA in Prague.

[70] A letter from A. I. Ksiunin to A. I. Guchkov from November 8, 1934. GARF, f. R-5868, inv. n. 1, d. 47, sh. 38.

> movement Sillak. Unfortunately, this station will be closed soon. It makes a new station even more necessary.[71]

Guchkov emphasized that every emigrant group would have a possibility to influence the station's activity; to prove that it was possible, he mentioned his "intimate cooperation" with A. F. Kerenskii.

> He is a republican and Socialist, and still he is neither revolutionary, nor a deep Marxist critic. On the other hand, I am a Monarchist and conservative. My conservatism doesn't deny radical reforms – political as well as social and economic. Nevertheless, we both are convinced that as soon as the main and the most important task – removal of the Soviet government – is accomplished, we will find a common way to cooperation in the building of a Great Russia.[72]

This plan was never fulfilled. No other country except for Czechoslovakia attempted to confront the Stalinist propaganda for sake of citizens of Soviet Russia. Democracies such as France and Czechoslovakia considered the Stalinist regime as an ally against Hitlerism; Nazi Germany did not want to involve themselves with the Untermensch; the neighboring countries were scared of Stalin and the others did not care.

Under such circumstances we can say that Czechoslovakia was the first (and the last at least in the 1930s) European state that broadcasted regularly anti-communist informational and propaganda radio shows.

Jan Slavík and his co-workers and translators – historian Boris A. Evreinov with his wife Natal'ia Sergeevna – were the first warriors known to me who fought in the on-air radio battle of the 20th century on the side of Western democracies.

[71] GARF, f. R-5886, inv. n. 1, d. 91, sh. 36.

[72] A letter from A. I. Guchkov to Lord Phillimore from June 1, 1934. GARF, f. R-5886, inv. n. 1, d. 91, sh. 42–43.

SUPPLEMENTS

Jan Slavík's Personal Papers in the National Museum Archives

Dagmar BURÁŇOVÁ

Jan Slavík was a historian interesting not only for his idiosyncratic approach to history, but also for the quantity of his scholarly works that are in his personal archive. He wrote several books and a large number of historical essays and newspaper and periodical articles. His published works are complemented relatively well by his personal papers that are now in the National Museum Archives. It was not always so.

Slavík did not give his papers all at once to just one archive. In 1968–1969, he gave part of his papers to the Institute for History of Socialism, who ceded them to the State Central Archive. In 1973, Slavík deposited another portion of his materials in the National Museum Archives. In 1987, Jaroslav Bouček organized documents stored in the State Central Archives (today known as the National Archives). Papers housed in the National Museum Archives (6 cartons) have not yet all been processed. On February 18, 2002, Slavík's papers at the State Central Archives (3 cartons) were transferred to the National Museum Archives, and his papers were finally in one depository. The processing began in 2007.

Almost all his papers relate to his publishing and scholarly pursuits, so for this reason we chose a subject arrangement. Topical units were then further organized chronologically. From the original 9 cartons, due to a better utilization of space and the elimination of exact duplicates, there are now 6 boxes. We kept any copies with handwritten notes or small changes. The documents are mostly typewritten, but there are also some printed materials and a few manuscripts.

As to the subject orientation, the collection consists chiefly of materials on the Russian revolution and events in Russia up to 1968, papers on a theory of historiography and on Czech history. Many documents are essays and studies which Slavík could not publish during his lifetime. Many are just outlines and fragments; they, however, reveal many interesting facts. It is pity that there are none of Slavík's personal documents. We did not find any other interesting documents, such as letters

Prague Perspectives III (Prague, 2009), 241–243.

(with the exception of two from Jaroslav Werstadt). His correspondence was most likely confiscated (together with other papers) in 1948 by the security police. Nevertheless, we can learn about his letter-writing activities from other sources, i.e., the personal papers of other people. The correspondence of Jan Slavík with Josef Pekař is located in Pekař's papers in the National Museum Archives; correspondence with Rudolf Urbánek is in the Literary Archive of the Museum of Czech Literature; and correspondence with Kamil Krofta, Jaroslav Bidlo, Jaroslav Werstadt and Zdeněk Nejedlý is in the Archives of the Academy of Sciences.

A valuable biographical source is his autobiography *Když minulo let padesát* [When Fifty Years Passed], which is preserved in a manuscript and several transcripts. His diaries from the Second World War constitute a unique resource, deserving in-depth exploration. Slavík naturally could not publish them, but felt an urge to note his views on Hitler and his crimes. Through the exposure of Hitler's individual misdeeds, he aimed to show the turpitude and untenability of the German regime.

His own clippings from periodicals and newspapers compose a large part of the collection. It is divided into two sections: essays and treatises from various collections and weeklies (mainly *Sobota* [Saturday], and, after 1945, from *Svobodný zítřek* [The Free Tomorrow]), and from the dailies (*Národní listy* [The National Gazette], *Stráž svobody* [The Freedom Watch], *Čas* [The Time], *Národní osvobození* [The National Liberation], and *Svobodné slovo* [The Free Word]). Articles published after the Second World War are filed separately. The main subjects of these articles are: Russia, the Russian revolution and the Slavs, Germany, fascism and the Sudetenland question, polemics with Josef Pekař and official historiography, Czech history and problems of education. Articles from the dailies are mainly reviews. His abstracts and quotes from the articles are helpful for orientation within larger works, and are often supplemented by commentaries (for example *Jak jsem chápal ruskou revoluci – komentář s citáty z prací a článků z let 1917–1939* [How I perceived Russian revolution – quotes from works and articles from the years 1917–1939]). Here should also be mentioned Slavík's lectures, broadcast by the Czechoslovak Radio, on Czech history (broadcast after the war) and the prewar situation in Russia (broadcast before the war).

Perhaps the most valuable are his essays written for a book in preparation, *Teorie historického poznání* [Theory of Historical Cognition].

They clearly show how thoroughly Slavík engaged himself in questions of historiography. (The book was never published.) There are essays on noetics – a theory of historical cognition, a theory of historical process, the influence of sociology on historical science, and treatises on a theory of revolution. From this theory of revolution issues his specific perception of the Russian revolution. He understood it not only as an event that happened in October 1917, but also as the whole long communist era which followed.

Further application of his new theoretical concepts can be found in his essays written for further parts of his work *Vznik českého národa* [Genesis of the Czech Nation].

The largest part of the collection, beside published articles, consists of his private commentaries *Do vykotlané vrby* [For a Hollow Willow],[1] which Slavík wrote for "the drawer" after 1948, when he was definitely banished from public life. In them, he commented again on Russian affairs and continued to develop his theories on the Russian revolution. These commentaries are in chronological sets; set apart are observations on the 50th anniversary of the Russian revolution and on the 100th anniversary of Lenin's death, on the German question after the war and about Bolshevik teachings on war and peace. A summary of these topics is a prolegomena to Russian studies.

In the collection of Slavík's papers are several documents concerning the Russian Foreign Historical Archives where Slavík was, for many years between the wars, a director. Less important are his political epigrams and a verse parody about an attempt of younger historians to stand up to Pekař. There are also several photographs.

At present, the complete collection of Slavík's papers is placed in the National Museum Archives in 6 cartons (archival boxes). The material is organized according to common rules used for the arrangement of personal papers. This archival unit is deposited under the heading *Jan Slavík (1885–1978)*. There is a finding aid under the same heading, with 415 listed archival units in the Czech language. The collection is freely accessible and conditions for research are stipulated in the research regulations of the National Museum Archives and also published on the internet at http://www.nm.cz/historicke-muzeum/archiv.php .

[1] Editor's note: In Czech, revealing one's troubles to a "hollow willow", or secret diary, ensures that nobody will hear them, and that they will be safe.

SLAVÍK'S THOUGHT AND "SILENCE" AFTER FEBRUARY 1948[1]

Josef HANZAL

Historian, sociologist and political analyst Jan Slavík was forcibly silenced – like many other Czech personalities – after the February 1948 *coup d'état*. His suppression was particularly severe; it meant a loss for society, scholarship and culture in general since he was a brilliant historian and well-known political analyst, as well as a specialist on modern Russian history and the Bolshevik movement. He was then 63 years old, physically and mentally fit. Fate allotted him 30 more years, lived in isolation and almost total silence.

Slavík's name – with the brief exception of the Prague Spring – was on the "Index". Only Kutnar's *Přehledné dějiny českého a slovenského dějepisectví* [The Comprehensive History of Czech and Slovak Historiography], published in 1978, shone some light on this forgotten scholar.[2] We can compare Slavík's ideas, public activities and political orientation with that of Ferdinand Peroutka and Václav Černý, but while both these scholars are still in public eye, and their works are being published, there remains almost total silence about Slavík. He was though much more rigorous, and wrote much more pointed criticisms and exposés of Soviet practices than either Peroutka or Černý.

Because of his richly-researched and detailed studies on pre-revolutionary Russia, the October Revolution, Lenin and other Soviet leaders, Slavík was considered, even before the war, as a Marxist and socialist by the right wing, and as anti-socialist and enemy of the Soviet Union by the Soviets and Czech Communists. After the war, Slavík intensified his efforts to draw attention to the acute danger of Soviet imperialism and thus became an irritant to Soviet foreign policy makers and to the

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[1] Lecture presented at the Historical Club in the Czech National Museum on February 8, 1995. Text was originally published in: *Slovanský přehled* 81, no. 1 (1995): 93–96. The essay is reprinted with publisher's consent. The editors added the references.

[2] František KUTNAR, *Přehledné dějiny českého a slovenského dějepisectví* (Prague: SPN, 1978), 2 (Od počátků pozitivistického dějepisectví na práh historiografie marxistické): 284–290.

Czechoslovak Communists controlled by Moscow. It was felt necessary to silence him, and unfortunately some leaders of the National Socialist Party succumbed to the pressure and managed to restrict his writing for the party's paper, which had become Slavík's usual publishing venue.

A fundamental break came after February 1948. For Slavík, it meant the end of any public activities. He was imprisoned, then released because the oppressive Communist apparatus was not yet in place,[3] but in fact he was confined within the four walls of his Vinohrady flat. This did not defeat him; he continued thinking and writing, the proof of which are his rich personal archives. These records are, however, sadly incomplete since the State Security confiscated some of his papers, including several manuscripts, and most likely destroyed them. His surviving papers are deposited in the National Museum Archives.

Slavík's post-1948 reflections and analyses were predominantly concerned with two thematic areas in which he had been interested in since his youth. The first was the Russian revolution and the Bolshevik movement; the second the methodology of historical understanding and historical process. Slavík at that time had no access to new historical or historiographical literature, so he developed and adapted his own earlier theories to relate to contemporary events. He did not show any interest in the contemporary Czechoslovak "Marxist" literature, with the exception of the four-volume *Maketa čs. dějin*, [Outline of Czechoslovak History][4] about which he wrote a scathing and damning letter to the Presidium of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences.[5]

Slavík's analyses and notes on the Russian issues are numerous and most interesting – he titled them *Do vykotlané vrby* [For a Hollow Willow]. They were largely a repeat of his earlier theories on Russian expansionism and backwardness, and on the logical and gradual continuation of these trends during the Bolshevik revolution and on through Stalin's era. Indeed, in many respects he went even further, elaborating and perfecting his previous theories. He commented on Soviet foreign policy and its application in Czechoslovakia, considering the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia as

[3] For Jan Slavík's prosecution see for example: Jaroslav BOUČEK, ed., "Dokumenty k trestnímu stíhání Jana Slavíka v roce 1948," *Soudobé dějiny* 6, no. 4 (1999): 617–626.

[4] *Přehled československých dějin*, 4 vols. (Prague: ČSAV, 1958–1960).

[5] "Příloha k dopisu J. Slavíka 'P.T. historikům – řádným členům ČSAV' ze 14. května 1959: Přehled československých dějin, Maketa není spis marxistický, nýbrž staroburžoazně idealistický," *Zpravodaj Historického klubu* 11, no. 1 (2000): 64–66.

a breaking point. Even then, as during his forced silence, he did not become emotional or regretful, but analyzed the situation rationally, sought connections and forecast the logical consequences of Soviet aggression.

Slavík's writings on Soviet Russia became more prolific in 1961; he then gave much consideration to the tragedy of the October revolution. According to him, its essence and nature arose from the moral fibre of Czarism and the ignorance or backward nature of the Russian people. Despotism under Bolshevik rule was, however, worse than the Czarist imperial system. He viewed Nikita S. Khrushchev's politics very critically, and wrote that "in each Bolshevik we can smell centuries of servility to the despot" and that the current Bolshevik leaders "showed again that the blood of oriental flunkeys of tyrannical rulers flows in their veins; they slavishly attack anyone who is opposed to their present masters". He substantiated this thesis by pointing to the attacks by Moscow on Khrushchev's former allies Molotov, Malenkov and Kaganovich (without, however, defending them himself).

He nevertheless saw a certain progress in Khrushchev's attempts to reform the system, although, he pointed out, it was a very small step in the direction of historical truth. It was in this context that he examined the relationship between revolution and reaction. He identified a clear link between the two and understood it in sociological terms as a necessary progression, revolution inevitably followed by reaction.

In the Soviet example, he pointed out that the October revolution already combined revolutionary and reactionary elements, and it progressed rapidly towards a one-party oligarchy which was never socialistic, and which stayed in power only through the use of terror and the suppression of freedom. Accompanied by a falsification of history, since history, left alone, could become dangerous for the so-called revolutionaries, they thus became the revisionists of their own history.

The stimuli for Slavík's thought and ideas were, as in his youth, political events, but now he could only entrust his reflections to paper and to a diminishing group of friends. In 1965 his reaction to the 20th anniversary of the liberation of Czechoslovakia he was to note that many essential facts were ignored. For instance, the Czech National Council had, in reality, directed the Prague uprising in May 1945. According to him, writings about the anti-Nazi resistance were totally misleading. In 1945 the Sudeten Germans were deported. Slavík at the time mentioned this infrequently, and took the official, and generally

accepted line that this act was historically justifiable and politically inescapable. In 1965, however, he noted that a very strong nationalism had accompanied the handover of German properties to Czech hands in 1945, and remarked aptly "Communism arrived here on the nationalist horse".

In 1967, on the 50th anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution, Slavík noted a newly emerging trend from internationalism toward nationalism and a half-century of deliberate falsification in Soviet historical literature pertaining to the revolution. Slavík's comments on Lenin in 1970, the centenary of his birth, are also very interesting. He saw Lenin as an inconsistent person who often changed tactics and was prey to dark Russian moods. He recalled that Lenin was the first who, after the disintegration of Czarist rule, announced to the world in his letter from Switzerland that it would be impossible to establish socialism in Russia. Lenin recognized that Russia was a backward agrarian country where the conditions for achieving socialism were not ripe. He speculated that a Russian revolution, together with agrarian reform and the obliteration of a weak Russian bourgeoisie would influence the West, and that a proletarian revolution there would in turn influence Russia. Lenin counted upon the German proletariat to do this. Slavík also discussed the distortion of Lenin's image – which was mainly Stalin's doing – and pointed out that there was both a Lenin who was silenced, but also a Lenin who was deliberately taciturn. The fact remains, he said, that in fifty years there had been no scholarly biography of Lenin published in the Soviet Union.[6]

The important and critical year of 1968 was for Slavík a year of hope, both raised and dashed. "Following January 1968, the movement for 'Socialism with a human face' awakened in me a spark of hope that the right to publish would be returned to me" he wrote, a year after the events of August 1968, which had taken him somewhat by surprise. Although in his 83rd year, Slavík's mental faculties were still intact; he was able to analyze, think clearly and evaluate. It should be said that he was to a certain extent skeptical about post-January 1968 developments. He did, however, feel sympathy for Dubček's leadership of the Communist Party, but did not value his political abilities highly. Nevertheless, he did not foresee such an end – on August 21, 1968, he wrote:

[6] Texts mentioned below are to be found in collection of Jan Slavík's papers in the National Museum Archives in Prague.

> Our republic is being occupied by Soviet soldiers – a new epoch of the Russian revolution has begun. How right was the woman who, after that threatening Warsaw letter, told me "you mark my words, the Russians will occupy us".

The expert on the Russian revolution had objected that it would be stupid, the Russians would lose all credibility with Communist parties everywhere. In the end, however, they did commit such a "stupidity", and Slavík mocked himself by putting his "expert reports" in quotation marks. His commentary, dated August 22, was called *Křížová výprava proti českým kacířům* [Crusade Against the Czech Heretics]. He speculated that preparations for the invasion had in fact been going on for some time and that the excuse offered to regular soldiers was the danger of a German attack on Czechoslovak socialism was proof of this preparation. He further thought that the occupation would be a big blow to Czech Russophiles and admirers of the Soviet Union. To him, the August strike meant mainly a continuation of old Czarist and despotic traditions, but he believed that "the reformation of socialism – deformed in backward Russia would eventually come. Dubček's movement in Czechoslovakia may not have been the beginning, but was at least a symptom of things to come."

Jan Slavík considered the assault on Czechoslovakia a grave mistake from a theoretical political point of view as well. He knew, of course, that the Soviets had made many such mistakes in the past, but this act of aggression persuaded him that Moscow had lost the ability to behave rationally and that "barbarity and violence" prevailed. Already after the putsch in 1948 Slavík pointed out that the Czechoslovak government was adopting a Bolshevik model of conduct and a police regime. He asked himself how long a civilized Czech nation would tolerate these methods. He was not one of those who naively thought that the Communist regime would not last long; but subsequent events, and the behavior of some fellow citizens, deeply offended him. That is why in 1968 he welcomed the rebirth of democratic processes, particularly its key tenet – the abolition of censorship. The whole Prague Spring movement would, he thought, eventually bring about the end of unrestricted Communist rule, as would the Czech Communists' refusal to obey Moscow's orders. When, in October 1968, he evaluated the existing situation, it was obvious to him that things are going badly for Czechoslovakia. He did not agree with the Czechoslovak parliament's acceptance of the Soviets' dictation, which went entirely against the popular will. He wrote then "Nobody really understands why the present

representatives, after such a flagrant crushing of Czechoslovak sovereignty, keep saying 'Our place is alongside the Soviet Union'". He saw fear of Germany as one reason, since after the deportation of the Sudeten Germans, the country needed the Soviet Union to safeguard the *status quo*. He regarded the Soviet view of a world divided into two camps, the socialistic and the capitalistic, as fatally flawed, first since he did not think of the Soviet Union as truly socialist, and second because he did not accept the Soviet description of capitalism as valid. In his opinion the problem was that "people around the world rejected Bolshevism, but lacked the will to fight it, thus allowing it to stay in power".

Slavík's reflections on the Soviet Union and Bolshevism after August 1968 stem from ideas he formulated before the war but, as I pointed out earlier, his thought did not stagnate, but was constantly developing. He proceeded from the fact that, during and after the war, the number of Communist sympathizers grew, but nowhere were they in majority. Stalin's model for takeover originated in Lenin's advice to the Hungarian Communists in 1919: "Be tough. Who would resist should be shot." The Soviets were sending advisors and mentors to the countries they "liberated" to assist in setting up regimes of oppression, interrogation and executions.

Slavík regarded the post-war struggle for Germany as very important. Stalin had relied on a worldwide revolution, which he thought should have begun in Germany and continued in France and Italy. The Germans were punished by the loss of their vast eastern territories and the deportation of their inhabitants to the West. It was an act, Slavík contended, which was in blatant contradiction with everything the Bolshevik leaders were declaring to the Communist parties around the world. Stalin had counted on a revolutionary outburst caused by the arrival of millions of impoverished Germans in the war-shattered country, which would result in the Communists, with the help of the Soviet army, coming to power. This plan failed pitifully, however, as the displaced labourers proved to be an important factor in the recovery of a shattered Germany. Instead of poverty came a rapidly growing prosperity.

Slavík expressed these thoughts at the end of 1968, explaining that they had been more fully worked out in the manuscripts and notes confiscated by the police in 1948. Also among them was his prognosis on the development of Czechoslovakia, which would only be fulfilled some twenty years later. In those days he asked himself how one could resist the dangers of Bolshevism, and answered himself:

> ...only with intellectual weapons. All civilized countries would support such weapons, perhaps for the first time in history. What can tanks, mortars and machine guns do against them? Would the oppressors dare dragging to Siberia thousands and thousands of intellectuals, both non-socialist and socialist, as they did in Baltic states? Even such an attempt I do not rule out in advance, but the end result would in any event be the defeat of deformed Bolshevik socialism. That is my verdict as an old historian of revolutions who had observed the Russian Bolshevik one from its very inception. As Edgar Quinet concluded his observations on the French revolution: "Time will pass judgment on us."

With this forecast, Slavík left behind the theme that had occupied and interested him since his early years and to which he devoted so much of his scholarly effort. He was in essence right, although fortunately his prediction of Siberian deportations did not come true. The nation – above all its intellectual elite – held out and endured to witness the end of Communism. Sadly, the historian who had doubtless helped the cause did not live to see it.

Toward the end of his life, in total seclusion and practically forgotten, Jan Slavík turned toward theoretical questions about history, and Czech historiography in particular. His thoughts and commentaries are worth considering, as they summarize and often expand on his historical-sociological system. In his essay *V čem jsem spatřoval hlavní nedostatek české historiografie* [What Were in my View the Main Shortcomings of Czech Historiography] he developed the thesis that Czech historians were overlooking the fact that a historical scholarship does not evolve from seeking new sources and critically interpreting them, but from refining the concepts and methods used. He exemplified his ideas about historiography using the example of early Czech history. He reproached his fellow historians for the absence of even a single work explaining the transition from paganism to Christianity. He maintained that Christianity could not have suddenly supplanted paganism, but that it could only have come about through the formation of a milieu similar to that from which Christianity had emerged – namely the development of towns. In his opinion, the Czech lands in the 9th to 11th centuries were not yet Christian, and Christianity was first introduced through coercion. Only later were gentler, non-violent methods used. The historian should be obliged to observe the development of the Church and its doctrines and practices. In the case of the Hussites, Slavík proposed that the criticism of the Church and its clergy did not speak so much of an actual decline as of the betterment and humanization of Christianity.

Slavík's work entitled *Marně vysmívaná věda* [Science Ridiculed in Vain] is also very interesting. He demonstrates how often history was ridiculed (Voltaire, Rousseau, Tolstoy, Schopenhauer et al.). The development of the natural sciences in the middle of the 19th century had an impact on historical science, but regrettably this influence did not help it to purge itself of obsolete theories and concepts. According to him, the idea that history represents a continuous struggle for freedom is an erroneous leftover from the 19th century. It was commonly thought that men were born with a love of freedom, whereas to Slavík the idea of freedom is a cultural product. In this aspect he saw the thinking of Palacký and Marx as anachronistic. Similarly, he saw the problem of labour as being forced on humankind by historical necessity.

In 1965 Slavík wrote *Tři bludy naříkajících dějepisců*, [Three Delusions of Lamenting Historians] which, to my mind, has lost nothing of its accuracy. During the war, one historian complained to him that he could not do any scholarly work, because he had no contact with scholars abroad. This, to Slavík, was an expression of the first fallacy; he thought that historians of his generation, who had survived two world wars and a large-scale revolution, had never had such great possibilities. Progress, he felt, does not come from uncovering new facts so much as from re-examining what is known, and that one must not forget how much the perception of the past influences the present.

Another historian led Slavík to expose the second fallacy. He had found fault with Slavík's interest in the origins of the Czech state, since there were only a handful of sources, but Slavík pointed out the error of ignoring the process by which our vision of the past is formed. On examining old records, researchers may uncover facts, which earlier historians had overlooked.

The third significant fallacy arises from the common idea that history is determined by the given period and regime. Slavík knew very well that such "breakings, bends and overturnings" are not possible in the exact sciences, but he asked: "Which science was so honoured by the attentions of the powerful of this world? Why do the governments pounce on history and not on chemistry, mathematics or physics?" Slavík did not see the educational or political role of history to be as significant as its role as the revealer of truth. Here he recalls Tacitus'

famous defense of the historian Cremutius Cordus.[7] That historical truth cannot be violated follows clearly from his speech before the court; history may be vitiated, but never changed.

Slavík devoted a whole series of his commentaries to historical anachronisms. He maintained that they encumbered older historical works and were particularly prevalent in so-called Marxist writings. He documents the false Marxist understanding of feudalism, which in that view was a monstrosity. The theory of class struggle, where the state is an instrument of coercion, does not hold because it is ahistorical. The state, even the feudal one, is a natural product of historical development.

In a similar spirit, Slavík created his methodological notes on the history of the peasantry. Here he showed how the concept of "fief" had been changing and how the relationship between peasant and labour was developing. His criticism of Marxist historians who fallaciously explained Christianity, and whose interpretation of the proletarian revolution was one-sided, is still valid. His deliberations on the development of towns, the Church, sociology and history, the meaning of the Reformation, Alexis de Tocqueville, and many other subjects should not be overlooked. They often had blazed a trail, which many other historians followed years late. Indeed, in some cases his lead has not yet been further explored. Naturally, Slavík did have his limits; he did not always avoid errors or simplified interpretations, and his emphasis on a pragmatic sociological and philosophical approach or methodology led sometimes to fitting complicated historical events into ready-made frames or moulds.

It is impossible to describe and analyze all of Slavík's manuscripts, but I have tried to make the most of a large amount of poorly-arranged, repetitious and overlapping notes. His papers also contain other incomplete writings on Russian and Czech history, and on methodological problems. Nevertheless, they all demonstrate that Jan Slavík retained his many abilities of a historian with a sociological bent. We can only regret that he was not permitted to work and to publish after February 1948, particularly since he was the kind of historian who had a taste for the actual mission of history, and who, in his discussions, disputations and public lectures, often came up with new and non-traditional thoughts and interpretations.

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[7] Publius Cornelius TACITUS, *Annales* IV, 34–35.

Bibliography of Jan Slavík's Works and Works about Jan Slavík

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF JAN SLAVÍK'S WORKS AND WORKS ABOUT JAN SLAVÍK

Editors' Note

This bibliography of works by and about Jan Slavík is based on the list prepared by Jaroslav Bouček and published by the Slavonic Library in Prague in 1994. However, this edition contains many changes and modifications – the content of the list was enriched with new texts published by mid-2009 and newly discovered records. Journals Jan Slavík often used to publish in were fully excerpted, unlike in the original bibliography that recorded only the main texts. These journals include mainly *Sobota* [Saturday], *Slovanský přehled* [The Slavonic Review], *Český časopis historický* [The Czech Historical Review] and *Svobodný zítřek* [The Free Tomorrow]. Only insignificant notes and short – usualy Slavist – entries from the *Masarykův slovník naučný* [Masaryk's Encyklopaedia] and *Ottův slovník naučný nové doby* [Otto's New Encyklopaedia].

In the process of adding to the bibliography, we also used the card catalog Slavik of the Czech press maintained by the Slavonic Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic. Only texts undoubtedly written by Slavík were included. Texts without any signature or with pseudonyms – despite thematic closeness with other Slavík works – were omitted.

All original records in the bibliography were checked *de visu* and inaccuracies and mistakes were corrected. At the same time, missing page numbers and other details were added, particularly in newspaper articles. The only exception was *Rudé právo* [The Red Right] due to its irregular paging and the impossibility to determine page numbers. All corrections and additions made by the editors (incl. indicating illegible page numbers) are put in square brackets.

Original records that were impossible to check were marked with the symbol *. The original bibliography sourced mainly from the scrap archive of Slavík's heritage. For this reason we suppose that incorrectly cited records were only mis-transcribed and actually exist, though we could not have corrected them at the moment.

Due to the same reason, we kept records of texts that are inaccessible now. These records are marked **.

In our bibliography, so-called "genuine separates" are included. They are the special separate editions of texts with particular publishing

specifications and paging. We marked these texts *** and put the number of the original text at the end of the bibliographical entry.

Compared with the original bibliography containing 1298 records, our bibliography has 2418 entries and we were forced to slightly change its structure. The general sorting is chronological according to the year of publishing. A particular year's records are then divided into chapters – books, editions, proceeding papers, journal articles, journal reviews, newspaper articles, newspaper journals and poems. In addition, the categories of books, editions and proceeding papers are sorted alphabetically according to the title. The category of journal articles is sorted alphabetically according to the names of the journals, and then according to volume and page numbers. In case of the same data, entry is in alphabetical order according to article title. The category of newspaper articles is sorted chronologically and, in case of identical date, alphabetically ordered according to article titles. Besides long texts, even smaller informational notices without the characteristics of a typical comparative review were included into the category of reviews.

For transliteration of texts in Cyrillic we used the rules for English language. Such records always stand separately at the end of the category. They are sorted according to the abovementioned rules. We chose the same rules for reviews with titles in Cyrillic that were published in Czech media. If a transliteration differs from the English rules, it is the original form of a title.

Biographical entries about Jan Slavík from various encyclopaedias and handbooks are in a separate section. They are sorted chronologically according to dates of publication of the titles.

Like in the original bibliography, in square brackets there are important names and events connected with the particular text. Personal names mentioned in the bibliography can be found in the name index together with a number in italics referring to the number of the bibliography entry. Also, names of authors publishing under abbreviations or pseudonyms, titles of reviewed texts and different editions of the same text are put in square brackets. If the reviewed work was originally published in Cyrillic, its title is transliterated according to English rules in square brackets as well.

Translations of selected important texts published in Czech might be helpful for a better orientation of a non-Czech speaker in the bibliography. Translations in italics are put in square brackets after the particular title.

Jan Slavík signed many articles with pseudonyms (Anax, Arij, Bohemicus, Václav Lexa, Nebudimír, Jan Nepomucký, Norman, J. Stehlík, Varjah, Warjah Norman, Viking, Warjaha Nebudimirovič) and ciphers (J. S., S. J., S., S. F. J., J. F. S., -k, Sl, Slvk), and some were published anonymously. The author of the original bibliography, Jaroslav Bouček, recognized a lot of them after studying Slavík's inheritance. The bibliography is not and, indeed, cannot be complete. Particularly the section dedicated to works about Jan Slavík was put together selectively. Many texts remain, unfortunately, unknown.

Besides the editors, in particular, Hana Opleštilová, Libuše Pešková, Helena Petáková a Tereza Rejdová contributed to the new edition of the bibliography. We would also like to thank Czech and foreign institutions and individuals who helped search and verify difficult-to-access documents.

List of Jan Slavík's Works (1906–2009)

1906

Books

1 *** *Habsburkové a Rusko v 16. století* (unlocated, undated [1906]), 53 p. – [See also **2**]
[*Hapsburgs and Russia in the 16th Century*]

Journals

2 "Habsburkové a Rusko v 16. století," *Český časopis historický* 12, no. 2 (1906): 169–177; no. 3: 312–334; no. 4: 447–467. – [See also **1**]
[*Hapsburgs and Russia in the 16th Century*]

1908

Articles in Proceedings

3 "Wiklif Jan," *Ottův slovník naučný* (Prague: J. Otto, 1908), 27: 228–230.

4 "ze Žerotína Karel st.," *Ottův slovník naučný* (Prague: J. Otto, 1908), 27: 820–823.

Journals – Reviews

5 "Hruševskij Michael, Geschichte des ukrainischen (ruthenischen) Volkes," *Český časopis historický* 14, no. 2 (1908): 214–217.

6 "Lesy a hory v dějinách […] sestavil Jan E. Chadt," *Český časopis historický* 14, no. 3 (1908): 354–356.

1909

Articles in Proceedings

7 "Francie. Dějiny politické (1895–1908)," *Ottův slovník naučný* (Prague: J. Otto, 1909), 28: 442–445.
[*France. Political History (1895–1908)*]

Journals

8 "Vydání korrespondence Aeneáše Silvia…," *Český časopis historický* 15, no. 2 (1909): 257. – [Rudolf Wolkan]

9 "Historicko-filosofická sekce Naukovogo Tovaristva imeni Ševčenka…," *Český časopis historický* 15, no. 2 (1909): 269. – [Zherela do istoryii Ukraiiny-Rusi]

10 "Dne 13. ledna t. r. zemřel v Moskvě Ivan Egorovič Zabělin…," *Český časopis historický* 15, no. 2 (1909): 270. – [Necrologue]

11 "Antonín Rezek," *Zlatá Praha* 26, no. 21 (1909): 241–242. – [Necrologue]

Journals – Reviews

12 "Ključevskij, V., Kurs russkoj istorii," *Český časopis historický* 15, no. 1 (1909): 104–108.

13 "Jorga, N., Geschichte des rumänischen Volkes in Rahmen seiner Staatsbildungen," *Český časopis historický* 15, no. 1 (1909): 108–111.

14 "Veliké ruské sbírky pramenů Polnoe sobranie russkich lětopisej…," *Český časopis historický* 15, no. 2 (1909): 137.

15 "Kaindl Raimund, Geschichte der Deutschen in der Karpathenländern," *Český časopis historický* 15, no. 2 (1909): 219–222.

16 "Gorjainov, S. M., Correspondance de Catherine Alexéievna, grande duchesse de Russie et de sir Charles H. Williams, ambassadeur d'Angleterre 1756 et 1757," *Český časopis historický* 15, no. 3 (1909): 371–374.

Newspapers

17 "Dekret kutnohorský," *Den*, 17. 1. 1909, 1. – [Jan Hus] [*Decree of Kutná Hora*]

1910

Articles in Proceedings – Reviews

18 "Florinskij, T. D., Slavjanskoje plemja […] Niederle, L., Slovanský svět," in Vojtěch Hulík and Jaroslav Jeništa, eds., *Věstník českých professorů: orgán Ústředního spolku českých professorů v Praze* (Prague: self published, 1910), 17: 175–176.

Journals

19 "Památka v minulém roce zemřelého…," *Český časopis historický* 16, no. 1 (1910): 122. – [Ivan E. Zabelin]

20 "Po předčasné smrti N. P. Pavlov-Silvanského […] přikročeno k soubornému vydání jeho spisů," *Český časopis historický* 16, no. 1 (1910): 122.

Journals – Reviews

21 "Hruševskyj Michajlo, Istorija ukrainskoj Kozaččini […] Kripjakevič Ivan, Materiali do istorii ukrainskoj Kozaččini," *Český časopis historický* 16, no. 3 (1910): 335–339.

1911

Journals

22 "Prokop Holý v kronice Bartoška z Drahonic," *Český časopis historický* 17, no. 1 (1911): 75.

Newspapers

23 "Prokop Holý," *Národní listy*, 27. 4. 1911, 1.

1912

Books

24 *** *Lev Nik. Tolstoj jako historik* (Prague: self published, 1912), 7 p. – [See also **25**]
[*Lev Nik. Tolstoy as a Historian*]

Articles in Proceedings

25 "Lev Nik. Tolstoj jako historik," in *Osmnáctá výroční zpráva c. k. českého gymnasia na Král. Vinohradech za školní rok 1912* (Král. Vinohrady: nákladem c. k. českého gymnasia, 1912), 3–9. – [See also **24**]
[*Lev Nik. Tolstoy as a Historian*]

Journals

26 "Nik. P. Pavlov-Silvanskij a jeho názory na ruské dějiny," *Český časopis historický* 18, no. 2 (1912): 145–152.
[*Nik. P. Pavlov-Silvanskii and His Views on Russian History*]

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27 "Slovanstvo. Obraz jeho minulosti a přítomnosti," *Český časopis historický* 18, no. 3 (1912): 341–344.

1916

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28 "Karel Myslbek," *Národní listy (večerní vydání)*, 8. 5. 1916, 1.

29 "Gollovy přednášky: Vzpomínka k 70. narozeninám," *Národní listy*, 14. 7. 1916, 1.
[*Goll's Lectures: Commemoration on the Occasion of His 70th Birthday*]

1917

Newspapers

30 "Počátky konstitučního hnutí v Rusku," *Národní listy (večerní vydání)*, 30. 3. 1917, 1–2. – [Pavel I. Pesteľ]
[*Beginnings of the Constitutional Movement in Russia*]

31 "Turgeněv a nihilism," *Národní listy (večerní vydání)*, 19. 4. 1917, 1–2; 14. 5. 1917, 1–2. – [See also **1704**]
[*Turgenev and Nihilism*]

1918

Journals

32 "Turgeněv a válka prusko-francouzská," *Národ* 2, no. 6 (1918): 81.
[*Turgenev and the Franco-Prussian War*]

1919

Books

33 ** *Mistr Jan Hus v boji za přesvědčení* (Kladno: Josef Šolc, 1919).
[*Jan Hus in the Struggle for Faith*]

Journals

34 "Aféra Munova!," *Věstník Národního výboru pro okres kladenský a unhošťský* 2, no. 1 (1919): [1].
[*Muna's Affair!*]

35 "Výstražné události," *Věstník Národního výboru pro okres kladenský a unhošťský* 2, no. 2 (1919): [1].
[*Warning Events*]

Newspapers

36 "Komu patří budoucnost?," *Stráž svobody*, 23. 4. 1919, 1–2; 26. 4. 1919, 1–3. – [Petr L. Lavrov, Komu prinadlezhit budushchee?]
[*To Whome the Future Belongs?*]

37 "Pohádka máje a kladenská skutečnost," *Stráž svobody*, 30. 4. 1919, 1–2.
[*The May's Fairytale and the Reality in Kladno*]

38 "Hradčanská poprava českých pánů z r. 1547," *Národní politika*, 15. 5. 1919, 1–2.
[*Execution of Czech Lords in Hradčany in 1547*]

39 "Demagogové žízní," *Stráž svobody*, 28. 5. 1919, 1. – [See also **1722**]
[*Demagogues Hunger*]

40 "Život za přesvědčení," *Stráž svobody*, 5. 7. 1919, 1–2; 9. 7. 1919, 1. – [Jan Hus]
[*Life for Belief*]

41 "Učitel Náprstek (Doklady kladensko-bolševické kultury)," *Stráž svobody*, 13. 12. 1919, 1–2; 17. 12. 1919, 2; 20. 12. 1919, 1–2. – [František Náprstek; cont. see **44**]
[*Náprstek a Teacher (Documents on Kladno-Bolshevik Culture)*]

1920

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42 *** *Abolicionismus a revolucionismus v Rusku* (unlocated, undated [1920]), 17 p. – [See also **43**]
[*Abolitionism and Revolutionism in Russia*]

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43 "Abolicionismus a revolucionismus v Rusku," *Český časopis historický* 26, no. 1 (1920): 127–143. – [See also **42**]
[*Abolitionism and Revolutionism in Russia*]

Newspapers

44 "Učitel Náprstek (Doklady kladensko-bolševické kultury)," *Stráž svobody*, 7. 1. 1920, 2; 10. 1. 1920, 2; 28. 1. 1920, 1–2. – [Beginning see **41**]
[*Náprstek a Teacher (Documents on Kladno-Bolshevik Culture)*]

45 "Lenin a Petr Veliký (Z poznámek k ruské revoluci)," *Stráž svobody*, 11. 2. 1920, 2; 14. 2. 1920, 1–2; 18. 2. 1920, 2.
[*Lenin and Peter the Great (Remarks on Russian Revolution)*]

46 "Masaryk a ruská revoluce," *Stráž svobody*, 3. 3. 1920, 1; 6. 3. 1920, 1; 10. 3. 1920, 1.
[*Masaryk and the Russian Revolution*]

47 "Husitská demokracie (K šestému a čtrnáctému červenci)," *Stráž svobody*, 3. 7. 1920, 1–2; 10. 7. 1920, 1–2; 17. 7. 1920, 1–2; 24. 7. 1920, 1–2; 31. 7. 1920, 1–2.
[*Hussite Democracy (On the Occasion of July 6 and 14)*]

48 "Iluse a skutečnost (K 28. říjnu)," *Stráž svobody*, 28. 10. 1920, 1–2. – [See also **1722**]
[*Illusion and Reality (On the Occasion of October 28)*]

49 "Vzpomínka na profesora Čermáka," *Stráž svobody*, 28. 10. 1920, 2–3. – [Alois Čermák]

Newspapers – Reviews

50 "Srbské dějiny," *Národní listy*, 22. 10. 1920, 1–2. – [Stanoje Stanojević, Dějiny národa srbského]

1921

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51 "V. A. Francev vydal v Praze (1919) dvě rusky psané studie," *Český časopis historický* 27, no. 3–4 (1921): 517–518. – [Polskij slavjanofil Roman Zmorskij; "Monumenta Illyrica" P. J. Šafarika]

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52 "M. K. Ljubavskij, Istorija zapadnych Slavjan," *Český časopis historický* 27, no. 1–2 (1921): 219–220.

53 "M. V. Kločkov, Očerki pravitěľstvennoj dějatelnosti vremeni Pavla I.," *Český časopis historický* 27, no. 1–2 (1921): 229–231.

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54 "Komunistické sklony mládeže," *Stráž svobody*, 22. 1. 1921, 1–2.
[*Communist Tendencies of the Youth*]

55 "Masaryk a Kropotkin," *Stráž svobody*, 5. 3. 1921, 1–2.

56 "Bolševismus nažehlených kalhot," *Stráž svobody*, 28. 5. 1921, 1–2. – [See also **1722**]
[*The Bolshevism of Ironed Trousers*]

57 "Z našich kostí mstitel vstane (1621–1921)," *Stráž svobody*, 18. 6. 1921, 1; 25. 6. 1921, 1.
[*An Avenger Will Rise from Our Bones (1621–1921)*]

58 "Hořká kapitola," *Stráž svobody*, 6. 8. 1921, 1.
[*A Bitter Chapter*]

59 "Buditel národní energie," *Stráž svobody*, 20. 8. 1921, 1–2. – [Alois Jirásek]
[*A Revivalist of the National Energy*]

60 "Dějiny ruské revoluce," *Čas*, 12. 11. 1921, 2–3; 16. 11. 1921, 2–3; 23. 11. 1921, 2–3. – [Pavel N. Miliukov; see also **177**]
[*History of the Russian Revolution*]

1922

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61 "P. N. Miljukov, Istorija vtoroj russkoj revoljucii, T. I," *Český časopis historický* 28, no. 3–4 (1922): 482–485.

62 "Důležitým podnikem pro poznání ruské revoluce…," *Český časopis historický* 28, no. 3–4 (1922): 530–531. – [Arkhiv russkoi revoliutsii, 6 vols.]

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63 "Pád Kerenského (K 5. výročí listopadové revoluce)," *Čas*, 7. 11. 1922, 2–3. – [Aleksandr F. Kerenskii, Izdaleka; see also **177**]
[*Kerenskii's Fall (The 5th Anniversary of the November Revolution)*]

NEWSPAPERS – REVIEWS

64 "Kramářova kniha o Rusku," *Čas*, 26. 2. 1922, 7; 2. 3. 1922, 3–4; 4. 3. 1922, 3–4. – [Karel Kramář, Ruská krise; see also **177**]
[*Kramář's Book on Russia*]

1923

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65 "Nikolai Vlad. Iastrebov 1869–1923," *Slavia* 2, no. 2 (1923–1924): 577–579. – [Necrologue]

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66 "Schkaff Eugène, La Question Agraire en Russie," *Český časopis historický* 29, no. 1–2 (1923): 245–249.

67 "Maurice Paléologue, La Russie des tsars pendant la grande querre," *Naše revoluce* 1, no. 2–3 (1923): 308–311.

68 "Lev Trockij, Vojna i revoljucija," *Naše revoluce* 1, no. 2–3 (1923): 321–325.

69 "Pod názvem 'Iz daleka' vydal A. Kerenskij sborník…," *Naše revoluce* 1, no. 2–3 (1923): 356–357.

70 "Po 37 letech vyhnanství G. V. Plechanov vrátil se do Ruska…," *Naše revoluce* 1, no. 2–3 (1923): 357. – [Georgii V. Plekhanov, God na Rodine]

71 "Ruskou revoluci mnozí prohlašují především za dílo Židů…," *Naše revoluce* 1, no. 2–3 (1923): 357.

72 "Elias Hurwicz, Geschichte der jüngsten russischen Revolution," *Naše revoluce* 1, no. 4 (1923): 453–456.

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73 "Ruská revoluce a Masarykova 'těžká kniha'," *Čas*, 12. 1. 1923, 1–2; 15. 1. 1923, 1–2; 18. 1. 1923, 1–2.
[*The Russian Revolution and Masaryk's "Heavy Book"*]

74 "Leninova lokomotiva (K 6. výročí bolševické revoluce)," *Čas*, 27. 10. 1923, 1–2. – [See also **1722**]
[*Lenin's Locomotive (On the Occassion of the 6th Anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution)*]

1924

Books

75 *Kapitoly o Leninovi* (Prague: Pokrok, 1924), 64 p.
[*Chapters about Lenin*]

Journals

76 "Zemřelý Nikolaj Lenin zůstane osobností historickou…," *Český časopis historický* 30, no. 1 (1924): 194. – [Vladimir I. Lenin]
[*Dead Nikolai Lenin Will Remain a Historical Figure...*]

77 "Ministr carovy duše," *Naše revoluce* 2, no. 2–4 (1924): 237–251. – [Grigorii E. Rasputin; see also **99**]
[*The Minister of Czar's Soul*]

JOURNALS – REVIEWS

78 "S. F. Platonov, Ivan Groznyj […]. Týž, Boris Godunov…," *Český časopis historický* 30, no. 2 (1924): 347–349.

79 "Ve sborníku prací historických ku poctě S. F. Platonova…," *Český časopis historický* 30, no. 2 (1924): 384. – [Nikolai D. Chechulin, Petr Velikii i khudozhnik Iogann Kupetskii]

80 "Ključevskij V. O., Kurs russkoj istorii. Část V," *Český časopis historický* 30, no. 3 (1924): 581–584.

81 "Suchomlinov, V. A., Vospominanija […] Týž, Erinnerungen," *Naše revoluce* 2, no. 2–4 (1924): 434–439.

82 "Jako v jiných armádách, také v ruské armádě byly censurovany dopisy z fronty…," *Naše revoluce* 2, no. 2–4 (1924): 469. – [Vladimir I. Dziubinskii, Revoliutsionnoe dvizhenie v voiskakh vo vremia mirovoi voiny, Krasnyi arkhiv, vol. 4]

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83 "Lenin zemřel," *Čas*, 26. 1. 1924, 1. – [Necrologue; see also **1722**]
[*Lenin's Dead*]

84 "Kapitoly o Leninovi," *Československá samostatnost*, 10. 2. 1924, 8; 17. 2. 1924, 8–9; 24. 2. 1924, 6–7; 2. 3. 1924, 7; 9. 3. 1924, 6–7.
[*Chapters about Lenin*]

85 "Josef Šusta (zu seinem fünfzigsten Geburtstag)," *Prager Presse*, 19. 2. 1924, 4.
[*Josef Šusta (On the Occasion of the 50th Birthday)*]

86 "Ruský monarchismus a naše slovanství," *Národní osvobození*, 16. 5. 1924, 1–2.
[*Russian Monarchism and Our Slavism*]

87 "Sjezdy slovanských učenců a naše knihovny," *Národní osvobození*, 7. 6. 1924, 4.
[*Gatherings of Slavic Scholars and Our Libraries*]

88 "Herriot a Rusko," *Národní osvobození*, 17. 6. 1924, 1–2. – [See also **177**]
[*Herriot and Russia*]

89 "Hus a Žižka," *Národní osvobození*, 6. 7. 1924, 1–2. – [See also **1722**]

90 "Případ Borise Savinkova," *Národní osvobození*, 23. 9. 1924, 1–2. – [See also **177**]
[*The Case of Boris Savinkov*]

91 "Rozhodné slovo cara ubožáka," *Národní osvobození*, 30. 9. 1924, 1–2. – [Nicholas II]
[*A Decisive Word of the Poor-Czar*]

92 "Oči Trockého a Herriotovy," *Národní osvobození*, 1. 11. 1924, 6. – [See also **177**]
[*Trotsky's and Herriot's Eyes*]

93 "Sabina zrádcem české výpravy do Moskvy r. 1867," *Národní osvobození*, 3. 12. 1924, 1–2. – [Karel Kazbunda, Pouť Čechů do Moskvy…]
[*Sabina as a Traitor of the Czech Trip to Moscow in 1867*]

94 "Odumírání revoluce," *Národní osvobození*, 14. 12. 1924, 6. – [See also **177**, **1722**]
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1925

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1926

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1927

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II. *Ruská revoluce* [*The Russian Revolution*]: Leninova lokomotiva (95) – [See also **74**]; Lenin zemřel (100) – [See also **83**]; Odumírání revoluce (103) – [See also **94**, **177**]; Předzvěsti zemětřesení (K šanghajským událostem) (107) – [See also **129**]; Leninský živel mezi děkabristy (109) – [See also **133**]; Bolševický nacionalismus (112) – [See also **308**]; Bolševismus kacířství propadlý (115) – [See also **399**]; Druhá pětiletka vytvoří netřídní společnost? (117) – [See also **617**]; Bernstein, Kautský, Lenin (119) – [See also **655**]; Úvahy o uznání sovětské vlády (122) – [See also **830**]; Nejobtížnější svazek velké sovětské encyklopedie (126) – [See also **951**]; Kniha o procesu "sedmnácti" (128) – [See also **1240**]; Stalinův zápas s Trockým a trockismem (131) – [See also **1209**]; Otevřený list prof. Zdeňku Nejedlému jako autoru knihy Lenin (133) – [See also **1236**]; K socialismu, nebo přes diskreditovaný socialismus k reakci? (Příznaky dialektické přeměny revoluce v reakci) (135) – [*Towards Socialism, or Through Discredited Socialism towards Reaction? (Symptoms of Dialectic Transformation of Revolution into a Reaction)*]; Vrchol patolízalství (XIX. sjezd bolševické strany) (138) – [*The Peak of Servility (The 19th Congress of the Bolshevik Party)*]; Despotický výklad Stalinova despotismu (142) – [*Despotic Interpretation of Stalin's Despotism*]; Jak je to se socialismem v SSSR (144) – [*Socialism in the USSR?*]; Na uvítanou padesátého výročí ruské revoluce (147) – [*Comment of the 50th Anniversary of the Russian Revolution*]; Komentář o prvním kole československo-sovětského konfliktu (150) – [*Commentary about the First Round of the Czechoslovak-Soviet Conflict*]; Spasitelé, nebo ničitelé? (154) – [*Saviours, or Destroyers?*].

III. *Dějiny a přítomnost* [*History and the Present*]: Hus a Žižka (159) – [See also **89**]; Od které doby jsou Slované pokrokoví? (162) – [See also **201**]; Dějiny a dějepis (165) – [See also **239**]; Oslavy Husovy a václavské jubileum (168) – [See also **305**]; Svatý Václav a český pokrokový člověk (170) – [See also **312**]; Sté výročí polské revoluce listopadové (173) – [See also **398**]; Vítězství vyspělejšího národa (K 500. výročí bitvy u Domažlic) (175) – [See also **514**]; Nová teorie náhodného osvobození (177) – [See also **528**]; Čechové a Poláci (180) – [See also **625**]; Herbenova práce historická (183) – [See also **628**]; Slavit Valdštejna, nebo Prokopa Holého? (186) – [See also **828**]; Lipany výstrahou, ale komu? (188) – [See also **834**]; Pekařův Valdštejn (190) – [See also **836**]; O době knížete Václava (193) – [See also **943**]; Basilejská kompaktáta a dnešek (197) – [See also **1722**]; Palacký věčně pravdivý a věčně překrucovaný (K výročnímu dni úmrtí) (198) – [See also **1530**]; Marně vysmívaná věda (203) – [See also **1580**]; Hus Palackého a Hus Pekařův (207) – [See also **1560**]; Svatý Vít ve svatováclavské historii (210) – [See also **1567**]; K mé diskusi s profesorem Pekařem o husitské revoluci a historii revolucí vůbec (213) – [*On My Discussion with Professor Pekař about the Hussite Revolution and History of Revolution in General*].

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Selected publications

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Index

(No entry "Jan Slavík" was found in the index. Numbers in italics refer to numbers of entries in the *Bibliography of Jan Slavík's Works and Works about Jan Slavík.*)

A

Adamov, Evgenii A. – *154*
Akhmatova, Anna – 41
Aksakov, Ivan S. – *266*
Akseľrod, Pavel B. – 161 / *222*
Albert, Jan see Kalandra, Záviš
Aleksandra Fedorovna – *195, 1739, 1741*
Alekseev, Mikhail V. – 192, 212 / *252, 256*
Alexander II – 174
Andreev, Nikolai E. – 206 / *2254*
Antonov-Ovseenko, Vladimir A. – *1827*
Archangelskii, Vasilii G. – 190
Ardamatskii, Vasilii I. – 228–230
Arutiunov, Akim A. – 167
Astrov, Nikolai I. – 235, 236
Astrov, Vladimir N. – *782*
Athanasius of Alexandria – 113
Aulard, Francois Alphonse – 86

B

Babka, Lukáš – 9, 203, 433, 439, 441 / *2388, 2390*
Bach, Alexander – 36
Bahalii, Dmytro – *188, 228, 553*
Baikov, Nikolai A. – *1348, 1526, 1539*
Bajcurová, Tamara – *2253*
Bakunin, Mikhail A. – *278*
Barbusse, Henri – 178 / *1238*
Bareš, Gustav – 41 / *2173*
Bartoš, František Michálek – 13, 52, 54–56, 59, 63, 65, 67, 70, 76, 90, 91, 93 / *95, 96, 309, 1044, 1740, 1788, 1789, 2000, 2036, 2121*
Bartošek of Drahonice – 55 / *22*
Barvíková, Hana – *1721, 2315, 2316, 2333*
Bass, Eduard – *1815*
Baťa, Jan Antonín – *1513*
Bauer, František – *1084*
Bauer, Otto – *1088, 1432, 2182*
Baumgarten, Hermann – 32
Bazanov, Piotr N. – 440
Bažant, Zdeněk – 191 / *1923, 1924, 1969, 1972*
Beck, Rudolf – 75
Beer, Fritz – 75
Běhounek, Václav – *1239, 1868, 1869, 1976, 2030, 2096, 2148, 2153, 2164, 2172*
Bekhterev, Vladimir M. – *217*
Bělehrádek, Jan – 150
Beľgovskii, Konstantin P. – 200, 201, 224, 225 / *1923, 1924, 1969, 1972*
Běloševská, Ljubov – 189
Below, Georg von – 39
Bem, Alfred L. – 191, 198, 200, 435 / *1766, 1922, 2056*
Beneš Třebízský, Václav – *803*
Beneš, Edvard – 26, 27, 33–35, 39, 192, 193, 196, 197, 235 / *197, 777, 799, 801, 918, 1372, 1374, 1379, 1385*
Beneš, Karel Josef – *1821*
Beneš, Zdeněk – 7, 13, 14, 20, 433, 434
Beran, Rudolf – 36
Béraud, Henri – *196*
Berdiaev, Nikolai A. – *761, 1141*
Berger, Peter L. – 16
Bernheim, Ernst – *658*
Bernstein, Eduard – 138, 139, 160 / *599, 655, 669, 1722*
Bidlo, Jaroslav – 54, 90, 102, 190, 242 / 209, *210, 224, 229, 238, 246, 247, 511, 944, 961, 1095, 1123, 1125, 1767, 1774*
Binas, Eckehard – 437
Bismarck, Otto von – 39
Bláha, Inocenc Arnošt – 18 / *1946*
Bláhová, Kateřina – 60
Blažek, Petr – *2385*
Błeszyński, Tadeusz – *710, 759*
Blum, Léon – *1390*
Blüml, Josef – 82 / *2373*
Blümlová, Dagmar – 82 / *2373*

Bobíková, Lenka – *2341*
Bogaevskii, Afrikan P. – 190
Bogomil – *1603*
Bogoslovskii, Mikhail M. – *272*
Borecký, Vladimír – 104
Borovička, Josef – *2107*
Borovský, Tomáš – 20 / *2358*
Borský, Lev – *244, 301, 962*
Bouček, Jaroslav – 8, 9, 15, 21, 23, 25, 27, 38, 40, 42, 52, 54, 55, 59, 64, 71, 74–76, 82, 88, 133, 149–152, 170, 184, 191, 213, 241, 246, 257, 434 / *1704, 1705, 1707–1710, 1720–1722, 1724, 1725, 1729, 1730, 2265, 2266, 2272–2275, 2281, 2282, 2288–2291, 2293, 2296, 2297, 2303, 2315, 2320, 2323–2327, 2329–2331, 2333–2335, 2337–2339, 2343, 2344, 2347–2349, 2355–2359, 2361, 2363, 2364, 2366, 2368–2371, 2374–2376, 2380, 2381, 2385*
Bourdeau, Louis – 107
Brabec, Jiří – 49, 71, 75 / *2405*
Brackmann, Albert – *963*
Breshko-Breshkovskaia, Ekaterina K. – *263, 784, 850*
Bretfeldová, Helena – *2259*
Breysig, Kurt – 94
Briehl, Iwan – *1975*
Brouk, Bohuslav – 104
Bruch, Rüdiger von – 48
Brusilov, Aleksei A. – *167, 177*
Bubeníková, Miluša – 9, 189, 434, 435
Buckle, Henry T. – 172
Bukharin, Nikolai I. – 123, 179 / *447, 510, 981, 1312, 1315, 1333*
Bunin, Ivan A. – *1074*
Buráňová, Dagmar – 9, 241, 435
Burke, Peter – 89
Burtsev, Vladimir L. – *1856*
Butenko, Piotr E. – 230
Bystrov, Vladimír – 206, 441 / *2319*
Bzonková, Radka – 433

C

Čáda, František – 45
Čadková, Kateřina – 440 / *2384*
Čapek, Jan Blahoslav – *2068*
Čapek, Josef – 26 / *1565, 1695, 1727*
Čapek, Karel – 26, 59 / *1131, 1574*
Carlyle, Thomas – 107
Carnap, Rudolf – 16
Catherine (II) the Great – *16*
Čechura, Jaroslav – 57, 58 / *2318, 2412*
Čechurová, Jana – 57, 58 / *2318*
Čejchan, Václav – 85, 145, 205 / *278, 872, 1800, 1832, 1844, 1870, 2002, 2086, 2099, 2130*
Čeněk of Vartenberk – 70
Čermák, Alois – *49*
Černík, Václav – 14, 17, 20, 21
Černín of Chudenice, Humprecht Jan – 82
Černý, Adolf – *108, 123, 499, 839, 1754*
Černý, Václav – 245 / *1215, 2125*
Červinka, Vincenc – *634, 637, 738, 1878, 1879, 1907, 1910, 1961, 2015*
Červinková, Milada – *2244*
Cháb, Václav – *1041, 1790, 1841, 1925, 1951, 2016, 2026, 2041, 2063, 2067, 2076, 2081, 2100, 2101, 2104, 2115, 2117, 2120, 2121, 2132, 2155, 2232*
Chadt-Ševětínský, Jan Evangelista – *6*
Chalidze, Valerii N. – 188
Chaloupecký, Václav – 44, 48–50, 54, 58, 64, 85, 90 / *241, 1433, 1445, 1446, 2143, 2179*
Chalupný, Emanuel – 18, 90 / *316, 2045, 2055, 2159*
Charles I – *346, 389, 1804*
Charles IV – 438 / *1241*
Chartier, Roger – 21
Charvát, Jaroslav – 20, 44, 69, 74, 85, 91 / *1819, 2034, 2036, 2247*
Chechulin, Nikolai D. – *79*
Chelčický, Petr – 63 / *246, 933*
Chicherin, Georgii V. – *986*
Chirikov, Evgenii N. – *184*
Chkheidze, Konstantin A. – 441
Chudoba, Bohdan – 45, 91
Churaň, Milan – *2409*
Churchill, Winston S. – *1586*
Cinger, František – 75
Clausewitz, Carl von – *2195*
Cleopatra VII Philopator – 115
Čmorej, Pavel – 17
Comenius, John Amos – 67
Conze, Werner – 89
Cordus, Cremutius – 252
Čornej, Petr – 8, 53, 58, 60, 62, 63, 69, 71–73, 75, 435

Cosmas of Prague – *1433, 1449*
Croce, Benedetto – 107, 111

D

Danilák, Michal – 437
Danilov, Iurii N. – *111*
Danto, Arthur Coleman – 16
Davydova, Natalia M. – *2268*
Delson, Chantal – 436
Denis, Ernest – 62
Dichtl, Alois – *2028*
Dietzenschmidt, Anton Franz – *1133*
Dilthey, Wilhelm – 15, 19, 94, 105, 171
Diterikhs, Mikhail K. – *1287*
Dobiáš, Josef – *611*
Dokoupil, Lumír – *1703*
Dolanský, Julius – *1764*
Dolenský, Antonín – *2397, 2399*
Doležal, Josef – *2009*
Doležalová, Eva – *2320*
Domin, Karel – *848, 851*
Dopsch, Alfons – 86
Doroshenko, Dmytro – *188*
Dostál, Josef – 65, 67, 69, 70 / *1828, 1991, 2040, 2175, 2183*
Dostoevsky, Fedor M. – 163, 170, 183, 191, 435 / *428, 501, 890, 1704, 2056–2058*
Doubek, Vratislav – 8, 169, 436
Doumer, Paul – 196 / *629*
Dratvová, Albína – 18
Drda, Jan – *1643, 1703*
Dreiser, Theodore – 178–180, 184, 185
Drtina, Prokop – 35
Dubček, Alexander – 248, 249
Ducháček, Ivo – *2208, 2224*
Durych, Jaroslav – *412, 1131*
Dvořák, Jan – *2378, 2387*
Dvořák, Libor – 151
Dvornik, Francis – 13 / *2167*
Dyk, Viktor – 191 / *413, 416, 1793, 1808*
Dymkowski, Maciej – 21
Dzerzhinskii, Feliks E. – 185, 198 / *172*
Dziubinskii, Vladimir I. – *82*

E

Edward VIII – *1036*
Egorov, Dmitrii N. – *552*
Eisenmann, Louis – *714*
Engels, Friedrich – 65, 66, 68, 69, 72, 87, 108, 139, 141, 161, 162 / *703*
Esih, Ivan – *2066, 2067*
Espinas, Victor – 107
Eugene of Savoy – 70
Evreinov, Boris A. – 190, 226, 227, 230, 232, 233, 235, 236, 238, 440 / *254, 257, 438, 678*
Evreinova, Nataľia S. – 227, 238

F

Fadeev, Aleksandr – *1622, 2192*
Fajfr, František – *1784*
Febvre, Lucien – 21
Fedorov, Mikhail M. – 223
Fedotov, Georgii P. – 188
Felcman, Ondřej – 440 / *2379*
Feuchtwanger, Lion – 178
Feynman, Richard Phillips – 16
Fiala, Jiří – 16
Fiala, Josef – *1833* –
Fichte, Johann Gottlieb – 40
Fierlinger, Zdeněk – *605, 1606, 1617, 1686*
Filip, Václav – *1049*
Fischer, George – 205
Fischer, Josef Ludvík – 18, 108
Fischer, Otakar – 214
Flegl, Michal – *2249*
Florinskii, Timofei D. – *18*
Florovskii, Antonii V. – 192 / *874, 959*
Francis I of France – 21
Franěk, Jiří F. – *2241, 2314*
Frantsev, Vladimir A. – 190 / *51, 1112*
Franz Joseph I – 19
Frenkel, Naftalii A. – 433
Frinta, Antonín – 218 / *423, 443, 887, 1773, 1825, 1826, 2141*
Fuchs, Alfréd – *1821, 1822*
Fučík, Julius – 74, 75 / *2091*

G

Gabriel, Jiří – 18 / *2259*
Gallas, Jan – *1860, 1937*
Galuška, Miroslav – *2226*
Gamarnik, Ian B. – *1218*
Gauchet, Marcel – 89
George V – *997*
Gergen, Kenneth J. – 20, 21

Gertsenzon, Aleksei A. – *1198*
Gibbon, Edward – 110
Gide, André – 178, 179, 181–184, 186–188 / *1032, 1078, 2115, 2116*
Gindely, Antonín – 91
Girsa, Václav – 196, 205, 215 / *884, 1571*
Godunov, Boris F. – *78*
Goethe, Johann Wolfgang – *621*
Goll, Jaroslav – 19, 25, 44, 48, 50, 58, 62, 81, 82, 84–86, 91, 99, 102, 104, 113 / *29, 239, 275, 1722, 1805, 2373*
Gorgulov, Pavel T. – 196, 197 / *629, 632, 659, 1877*
Goriainov, Andrei N. – 435
Goriainov, Sergei M. – *16*
Gorky, Maksim – 163, 164, 182, 191, 201 / *165, 220, 343, 386, 463, 540, 547, 559, 643, 810, 840, 890, 969, 983, 1012, 1042, 1062, 1063, 1195, 1418, 1704, 1908, 2014, 2015, 2056, 2057, 2096, 2104*
Görlich, Ladislav – *1928, 1953*
Gorn, Vasilii L. – *1294*
Gottwald, Klement – 75 / *815, 2025*
Gramsci, Antonio – 135
Graus, František – 48, 50, 51 / *2240*
Grave, Berta B. – *199*
Grimsted, Patricia Kennedy – 206
Grinko, Grigorii F. – *657, 1850*
Groman, Vladimir G. – *505*
Gruša, Jiří – *2405*
Guchkov, Aleksandr I. – 224, 232, 233, 235–238 / *979*
Gurevich, Aron Ia. – 107
Guttmann, Josef – *2116*

H

Haensel, Paul – *604*
Hahn, Hans – 16
Hájek, Igor – *2405*
Hájek, Zdeněk – *1749, 1772, 1796–1798, 1820, 2003, 2046, 2102, 2110, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2151, 2158, 2168, 2169*
Halík, Rudolf – 36, 38 / *1607*
Hanka, Jan Evangelista – *1968, 1978*
Hanuš, Jiří – 20 / *2387*
Hanuš, Josef – 91, 92
Hanzal, Josef – 9, 44, 53, 58, 63, 134, 135, 245, 436 / *2256, 2285, 2294, 2295, 2299, 2301, 2306, 2312, 2317, 2328*
Hanzalová, Jarmila – *2408*
Hanzelka, František – *1576*
Harbuľová, Ľubica – 8, 159, 436
Hartmann, Eduard – 32
Hasil, Jiří – 14
Hauner, Edgar Stanislav – *2006*
Havelka, Miloš – 7, 54, 56, 57, 59, 60, 69, 82–84, 89, 91–93, 115, 135, 437 / *1716–1718, 2271, 2342*
Havlíček Borovský, Karel – 36–38 / *1391*
Haydu, Julius – *645*
Hegel, Georg W. F. – 105, 110, 160 / *491, 820*
Heidegger, Martin – 111, 112
Heidler, Jan – *346*
Helmholtz, Hermann von – 15
Henbury-Williams, Charles – *16*
Henlein, Konrad – 31, 32, 144 / *930, 1139, 1329, 1342, 1359, 1424*
Henri, Ernst – *1553*
Heppner, Harald – 437
Heraclitus of Ephesus – 110
Herben, Ivan – 150
Herben, Jan – 27, 82, 91 / *628, 1126, 1128, 1197, 1644, 1722, 2373*
Herriot, Édouard – *88, 92, 177, 1937, 1966*
Hertl, Jan – 99, 143 / *483, 1406, 1420, 1834, 2053, 2144*
Herzen, Aleksandr I. – *1212*
Hessen, Sergei I. – 191 / *454*
Hilferding, Aleksandr F. – *437*
Hilferding, Rudolf – 87
Hitler, Adolf – 28, 32–34, 39, 40, 42, 144, 156, 229, 242 / *689, 736, 756, 924, 1001, 1053, 1091, 1100, 1134, 1358, 1372, 1553, 1722, 1965*
Hledíková, Zdeňka – 62
Hlinka, Andrej – *1298*
Hoch, Karel – *1086, 1840*
Hoch, V. – *2118*
Hodža, Milan – *1468*
Hoffmannová, Jaroslava – *2416*
Höfler, Konstantin – 67
Hohlbaum, Robert – *1034*
Holát, Pavel – *2374, 2375*
Holeček, Vojtěch – *1891*
Holinka, Rudolf – *1420, 2144*
Holý, Jiří – 74, 75
Holý, Prokop – 55, 64 / *22, 23, 828, 1722*
Holzbachová, Ivana – 134, 136, 138, 145 / *2259, 2260, 2276*

Hora, Josef – *1986, 2131*
Hora, Oto – *2270*
Horáček, Cyril – *450*
Horák, Jiří – 190, 191
Horký, Karel – *581, 1311, 1328*
Horský, Jan – 19, 56, 66, 106 / *2280, 2287, 2321*
Horský, Jar. – *1935*
Hosák, Ladislav – 45
Hostička, Vladimír – *2332*
Hostovský, Egon – 60
Hrabáková, Marta – 435 / *2391*
Hrdlička, Jaroslav – *2357*
Hříbková, Radka – 435
Hřivna, Květoslav – *1799, 1842, 1843*
Hroch, Miroslav – 66
Hrushevskyi, Mykhailo – 169 / *5, 21, 785, 853, 2332, 2345*
Hübl, Milan – 434
Hulík, Vojtěch – *18*
Hurwicz, Elias – *72*
Hus, Jan – 55, 63, 75, 123 / *17, 33, 40, 89, 305, 595, 749, 904, 933, 1531, 1560, 1603, 1722*
Husa, Václav – 46, 66, 85, 91, 104, 145 / *2261*
Hýbl, František – *274, 306, 320, 372, 511, 1833*
Hýsek, Miloslav – 62

I

Iakushev, Ivan A. – *886*
Iasinskii, Anton N. – 51
Iastrebov, Nikolai V. – 192 / *65*
Ilin, Vasilii S. – 191
Iorga, Nicolae – *13*
Ipaťev, Vladimir N. – *1124*
Isaev, Vladimir I. – 191
Istrati, Panait – 178, 180–184, 188 / *1790*
Iudenich, Nikolai N. – *680*
Iugov, Aron – *284, 657*
Ivan IV (Ivan the Terrible) – *78*
Ivanov, Aleksandr A. – 167
Ivantsov, Dmitrii N. – 190, 191
Iziumov, Aleksandr F. – 190, 205, 215 / *253, 256, 552*

J

Jaksch, Wenzel – *1670*
Jan Želivský – 69, 70, 72, 73, 125
Janda, Josef – *1746*
Janoušek, Emanuel – *1803, 2061*
Jaworski, Paweł – *2385*
Jelínek, Milan – 61
Jeništa, Jaroslav – *18*
Jeřábek, Čestmír – 40
Ješ, Jiří – *2278*
Jesenská, Milena – 75
Jirásek, Alois – *59, 527, 788*
Jiroušek, Bohumil – 82, 439 / *2373*
Jíše, Karel – 27

K

Kabeš, Petr – *2405*
Kaganovich, Lazar M. – 247
Kaindl, Raimund Friedrich – *15*
Kalandra, Záviš – 8, 38, 48, 49, 71–77, 434 / *1433, 1449, 2038, 2113, 2116*
Kalinin, Mikhail I. – *883, 1598, 1641*
Kalista, Zdeněk – 13, 14, 17, 18, 43–45, 58, 81, 82, 91 / *2304, 2334*
Kalivoda, Robert – 66, 67, 73, 76, 77
Kalousek, Josef – *1421*
Kamenev, Lev B. – 179, 182 / *989, 1067*
Kamiński, Łukasz – *2385*
Kantor, Jakov – *960*
Kantorowicz, Ernst H. – 89
Kantůrková, Eva – 60–62
Karafiát, Jan – 94
Kareev, Nikolai I. – 107 / *151, 431, 504*
Karel Older of Žerotín – *4*
Karelin, Appolon A. – *379*
Kárný, Miroslav – *2201, 2202*
Karpa, Jiří – *1887, 1912*
Karpinskii, Aleksandr P. – *987*
Kasinec, Edward – 218, 220
Kautsky, Karl – 64, 65, 68, 138, 160 / *655, 1377, 1439, 1722*
Kazbunda, Karel – 13, 76, 207 / *93*
Kerenskii, Aleksandr F. – 125, 237, 238 / *63, 69, 177, 285, 1174*
Kharlamov, Vasilii A. – 190
Khrushchev, Nikita S. – 247
Kirov, Sergei M. – 182
Kizevetter, Aleksandr A. – 190, 192 / *253, 254, 256, 257, 291, 671, 718, 719, 866*
Klapka, Otakar 27
Klecanda, Jiří – *234, 1592*

Klepl, Jan – *1222*
Klik, Josef – 45 / *1246*
Klímková, Marie – 69
Klimt, Antonín – *2001*
Kliuchevskii, Vasilii O. – 169, 192 / *12, 80, 194, 208*
Klochkov, Mikhail V. – *53*
Klofáč, Václav – 27 / *1300, 1362, 1436*
Kneeley, Richard J. – 218, 220
Kočí, Josef – 53
Kocka, Jürgen – 89
Kohárová, Marta – 440 / *2386*
Kojecký, Zdeněk – *525*
Kolář, František – *2411*
Kolář, Pavel – 81
Kolbenheyer, Erwin Guido – *1144*
Kolchak, Aleksandr V. – 437
Kollár, Jan – *371, 991, 1076, 2097*
Kollmann, Josef – 213 / *2352*
Kolman, Arnošt – 41, 42, 150 / *1623, 1628, 2194*
Kolman-Cassius, Jaroslav – *687, 1964, 2074, 2077*
Kolodnyi, Lev E. – 167
Komárková, Božena – 91
Kondakov, Nikodim P. – 190
Koni, Anatolii F. – *185*
König, Václav – *1872*
Konrad, Kurt – 64, 70, 72–76 / *2242*
Kopetskii, Leontii V. – *1451*
Kořalka, Jiří – 64, 71
Kosatík, Pavel – *2393*
Košťál, Antonín – *1915, 2023*
Kostlán, Antonín – 43, 44, 47, 434 / *1711, 1712, 2284, 2311*
Koutník, Bohuslav – *1981, 1997, 2047, 2398*
Kovalev, Mitrofan F. – 237
Kovalevskii, Maksim M. – 68, 86
Kovařík, Fedor – *601, 634, 660, 738, 1109, 1878, 1879, 2109*
Kovář, Martin – 433
Kozák, Jan Blahoslav – 118, 150 / *536, 1814, 1864, 1867, 1874, 1949, 2020*
Kozlov, Piotr K. – *882*
Kramář Karel – 26, 27, 41, 235 / *64, 177, 191, 200, 326, 489, 503, 580, 616, 837, 1114, 1116, 1216, 1304, 1736, 1814, 1980*
Kratochvíl, Jaroslav – *654, 1918, 1919, 1920, 1928, 2251*
Kratochvíl, Miloš V. – 45
Krausová, Renata – *2357*
Krejčí, František – *800*
Křesťan, Jiří – *2356*
Kristian – *1433, 1449*
Křížek, Otto – *872*
Krofta, Kamil – 25, 45, 46, 54, 57, 58, 61, 62, 90, 91, 149, 152, 170, 190, 196, 242 / *388, 461, 821, 919, 984, 1045, 1087, 1450, 1563, 1614, 1794, 1807, 2299, 2318*
Kropotkin, Piotr A. – *55*
Krupka, Josef – *2257*
Krypiakevych, Ivan – *21*
Ksiunin, Aleksei I. – 224, 236, 237
Kuba, Ludvík – *711, 1043*
Kučera, Martin – 7, 57, 84, 89, 101, 437 / *2357, 2372*
Kucharzewski, Jan – *2387*
Kuchyňka, Zdeněk – *2336*
Kudela, Josef – *1779*
Kudělka, Milan – *2246, 2308, 2402*
Kudrna, Jaroslav – 89
Kunc, Jaroslav – *2404*
Kupecký, Jan – *79*
Kurnatowski, Jerzy – *860*
Kuskova, Ekaterina D. – 199, 200 / *1921*
Kutnar, František – 13, 17, 18, 55, 85, 94, 95, 134, 245, 440 / *1279, 1280, 2245, 2248, 2309, 2379*
Küttgler, Wolfgang – 48
Kvaček, Robert – 439 / *2340*
Květ, Jan – 20
Kyrill I – *121*

L

Laichert, František – *1664, 2197*
Laichert, Prokop – *2085*
Lamprecht, Karl – 107
Lapshin, Ivan I. – 191
Laski, Harold Joseph – *1655*
Latyshev, Anatolii G. – 167
Laudon, Ernst Gideon von – 70
Laušman, Bohumil – 36
Lavrov, Piotr L. – *36, 707*
Lazarev, Egor E. – *873, 1121*
Le Bon, Gustav – 128
Le Goff, Jacques – 21
Léblová, Alena – *2406*

Leduc, Jean – 19
Leites, Aleksandr M. – *965*
Lenin, Vladimir I. – 21, 22, 58, 65–68, 73, 87, 94, 123, 125, 127, 130, 138, 139, 151, 152–155, 157, 159–168, 179, 185, 192, 212, 214, 243, 245, 248, 250 / *45, 74–76, 83, 84, 122, 155, 165, 172, 177, 205, 367, 382, 491, 614, 655, 699, 769, 786, 819, 822–824, 865, 867–869, 888, 894, 927, 928, 975, 1023, 1040, 1233, 1236, 1237, 1276, 1283, 1321, 1339, 1345, 1431, 1452, 1540, 1603, 1654, 1722, 1738, 1992, 1993, 1995, 1997–1999, 2002, 2003, 2008, 2012, 2029, 2031, 2033, 2045, 2047, 2048, 2052, 2055, 2080–2082, 2087*
Leo XIII – *478*
Lepke, Rudolph – 195
Lermontov, Mikhail I. – *1687*
Lessing, Theodor – *698*
Letošník, Václav – *106*
Liatskii, Evgenii A. – 191 / *1290*
Limbek, Julius – *1141*
Lippert, Julius – 51
Litvinov, Maksim M. – *985*
Liubavskii, Matvei K. – *52, 1106*
Liubimov, Dmitrii N. – *428*
Líva, Václav – *2007*
Lodyzhenskii, Iurii I. – 235, 236
Lombroso, Cesare – 107, 111
Lopatka, Jan – *2405*
Losskii, Nikolai O. – *254, 257*
Lotze, Hermann – 111
Loubal, František – *1753*
Louis XVI – 129
Louis XVIII – 129
Loužek, Marek – 106
Luckmann, Thomas – 16
Ludmila of Bohemia – 48 / *496, 1795*
Ludwig, Emil – 178
Luke, the Evangelist – 113
Lvov, Georgii E. – *104*

M

Macek, Josef – 73–76, 91 / *1871, 2239*
Macek, Zdeněk – 440 / *2379*
Macenauer, Jan – *1962*
Mach, Bohumil – *2220*
Mach, Ernst – 107
Máchal, Jan – 191
Machar, Josef Svatopluk – *563, 683*
Macků, Jan – 99
Macůrek, Josef – 76, 91
Magerovskii, Lev F. – 218
Mainländer, Filip – 32
Majerová, Marie – *156*
Malenkov, Georgii M. – 247
Malíř, Jiří – *2354*
Manfred, Albert Z. – 73
Marek, Jaroslav – 55, 59, 60 / *2276, 2277, 2279, 2282, 2286, 2309, 2330, 2350*
Markus, Boris L. – *506*
Martov, Iulius O. – 87, 161
Marwick, Arthur – 80
Marx, Karl – 8, 65, 66, 68, 87, 95, 108, 130, 135–142, 145, 161, 162, 184, 252 / *685*
Masaryk, Tomáš Garrigue – 8, 19, 26, 27, 33–37, 44, 54, 57, 58, 65, 71, 82, 84, 86, 87, 89–97, 107, 110, 113, 115, 116, 130, 144, 149, 151, 153, 160, 169, 170, 192–194, 201, 212, 436, 438 / *46, 55, 73, 113, 126, 166, 248, 299, 319, 324, 340, 373, 382, 393, 422, 507, 527, 602, 606, 613, 717, 793, 893, 917, 926, 994, 1102, 1164, 1167, 1169, 1170, 1174, 1226–1228, 1242, 1243, 1304, 1306, 1311, 1313, 1316, 1328, 1332, 1395, 1449, 1629, 1644, 1647, 1683, 1716, 1719, 1797, 1800, 1801, 2271, 2286, 2314, 2329, 2353*
Maslov, Sergei S. – 192, 226, 440 / *1417*
Masłowski, Michel – 436
Mathesius, Bohumil – 191 / *1982, 2241*
Mathesius, Vilém – 75
Mathiez, Albert – *473, 619*
Matiegka, Jindřich – *701*
Matoušek, Josef – 20 / *1336, 1341, 1569*
Maur, Eduard – 66
Maurel, Marie-Claude – 437
Mayer, Françoise – 437
Meinecke, Friedrich – 39, 40
Meisner, Dmitrii I. – 225 / *1971, 2243*
Meľnichenko, Vladimir E. – 167
Mendl, Bedřich – 13, 48, 51, 66, 89, 99, 134 / *1222, 1225, 1770, 1792, 2111, 2112, 2127*
Merta, František – *2088, 2138*
Metternich, Klemens Wenzel von – 28, 29 / *795*

Meyer, Eduard – 86
Mezník, Jaroslav – 61 / *2258*
Miakotin, Venedikt A. – 204, 227 / *109, 1120, 1173, 1230*
Michelet, Jules – 110
Midlovskij, Lev – *2060*
Mikhailov, Nikolai N. – *1407, 1451*
Mikhailovskii, Nikolai K. – 107
Miklík, Josef – 91 /
Miklík, Josef Konstantin – *527*
Mikuláš Diviš of Doubravín – *766*
Mikuláš of Pelhřimov – 67
Miláček, Martin – *1962*
Miliukov, Pavel N. – 118, 154, 190, 192, 193, 198 / *60, 61, 97, 158, 177, 251, 254, 257, 259, 296, 317, 370, 714, 825, 842, 921, 973, 1796*
Mill, John Stuart – 21
Milovidov, Piotr F. – 191
Milton, John – *1621*
Mirbt, Rudolf – *645*
Mitterauer, Michael – 89
Mlynárik, Ján – *2293*
Molotov, Viacheslav M. – 247
Moskalev, Mikhail A. – *1137*
Motyčka, Jaroslav – 27
Moudrý, Karel – 27, 37
Moulis, Vladislav – 151, 442
Muk, Jan – *2184*
Muna, Alois – *34*
Murko, Matija – 190 / *1081*
Musil, Jiří V. – 18
Mussolini, Benito – 30 / *1100*
Myslbek, Karel – *28*

N

Nálevka, Vladimír – 433
Nansen, Fridtjof – *325*
Napoleon I of France – 139, 140 / *1410, 1455, 1705, 1707*
Náprstek, František – 30 / *41, 44, 1733, 1734*
Navrátil, Ivo – 59 / *2290*
Navrátil, Jaroslav – 190
Navrátil, Josef – *1847*
Nechkina, Militsa V. – *189*
Nechvátal, Martin – 64
Nejedlý, Petr – 69
Nejedlý, Zdeněk – 58, 63, 72, 76, 90, 91, 104, 118, 165, 166, 191, 197, 206, 242, 436 / *316, 393, 536, 613, 717, 926, 1013, 1236, 1237, 1242, 1243, 1276, 1283, 1286, 1315, 1413, 1414, 1423, 1713, 1722, 1737, 1864, 1867, 1874, 2011, 2105, 2123, 2134, 2142, 2266, 2313*
Nelson, Horatio – *516*
Němcová, Božena – 74
Němec, Bohumil – 191
Němec, František – *2064*
Němec, Igor – 69
Nemirovich-Danchenko, Vladimir I. – 191
Nepomuk, John of – 54
Nesejt, František – 440 / *2386*
Neurath, Otto – 16
Neusykhin, Aleksandr I. – 89, 95
Newton, Isaac – 103
Nicholas II – 173, 174, 442 / *91, 110, 114, 142, 157, 166, 171, 195, 1741*
Nicholas III – *121*
Nicholas Nikolaevich of Russia, Grand Duke – *261, 293*
Niebuhr, Barthold Georg – 110
Niederle, Lubor – *18, 107, 119, 131, 135, 150, 712, 876, 941*
Nikolau, Stanislav – *338, 351, 359, 492, 567, 575, 584, 661, 691, 693, 723, 999, 1003, 1046, 1054, 1331, 1809, 1893*
Nodl, Martin – 8, 43, 44, 51, 60, 438 / *2359, 2382*
Northcliff, Lord – 29
Nosovský, Karel – *152*
Novák, Arne – *314, 449, 502, 793, 911, 1214, 1356, 1427, 1722, 2097*
Novák, Jan Bedřich – *535*
Novák, Mirko – 91
Nováková, Milena – *2057*
Novgorodtsev, Pavel I. – *725*
Novikov, Mikhail M. – 191
Novotný, Jan – *2307*
Novotný, Václav – 63 / *639, 1771, 1786*
Novotný, Vladimír – *2322*
Nový, Rostislav – 64
Nový, Vilém – *2228*

O

Obidnyi, Mykhailo – *1412*
Oexle, Otto Gerhard – 47, 48
Omel'chenkova, Mariia – *606*
Opleštilová, Hana – 259

Ordzhonikidze, Grigorii K. – *1206*
Orwell, George – 157
Ostwald, Wilhelm – 32
Osvald, Václav – *1780*
Otáhalová, Libuše – *2244*
Ozeretskovskii, Veniamin S. – 223
Opočenský, Jan – 207
Odložilík, Otakar – 13, 45, 91

P

Pachta, Jan – 85, 145
Palacký, František – 36, 54, 56, 63, 71, 72, 74, 75, 90–92, 114, 171, 175, 252, 441 / *149, 211, 242, 524, 933, 1530, 1536, 1560, 1576, 1595, 1639, 1722, 1782, 2320*
Paléologue, Maurice – *67*
Palkovský, Břetislav – *982, 1085, 1423, 2133, 2146, 2147, 2148*
Pánek, Jaroslav – *2354*
Panina, Sofia V. – 190
Pankratova, Anna M. – *792*
Papoušek, Jaroslav – *190, 230, 234, 1449, 1569, 1631*
Pascal, Blaise – 115
Pátek, Jaroslav – 20, 44, 74, 85 / *247*
Paterová – *1935*
Patočka, Jan – 101, 112 / *1865*
Paul I – *53*
Paulová, Milada – 20 / *1113, 1244*
Pavel, Jakub – 45
Pavlov, Ivan P. – *980, 981*
Pavlova, Taťiana F. – 206 / *2269*
Pavlov-Silvanskii, Nikolai P. – 169 / *20, 26*
Pavlů, Bohdan – *1295*
Pazderová, Alena – 213
Peisker, Jan – *433*
Pekař, Josef – 7, 19, 22, 23, 31, 43, 44, 48, 49, 52–64, 66, 67, 69, 70, 75, 81–84, 89–101, 106, 111, 119, 115, 120, 125, 143, 144, 242, 243, 436, 438 / *95, 137, 211, 241, 242, 248, 297, 299, 302, 334–347, 365, 384, 385, 388, 389, 391, 483, 488, 527, 532, 578, 622, 662, 754, 755, 836, 922, 1098, 1102, 1132, 1201, 1202, 1211, 1246, 1406, 1420, 1447, 1560, 1653, 1716, 1718, 1722, 1777, 1782, 1793–1795, 1804, 1806–1810, 1815, 1816, 1821–1823, 1967, 1996, 2009, 2144, 2244, 2290, 2318, 2328, 2331*
Pelikán, Ferdinand – *610*
Peroutka, Ferdinand – 38, 245 / *1854, 1928*
Perry, Matt – 135
Pešák, Václav – 206, 213, 214
Pešek, Josef – *2089, 2098*
Peshekhonov, Aleksei V. – *134, 136, 177*
Pešková, Libuše – 259
Pesteľ, Pavel I. – 172 / *30, 133, 1722*
Petáková, Helena – 259
Peter (I) the Great – 143, 155, 159, 165, 173, 174 / *45, 79, 124, 155*
Petráň, Josef – 20, 44, 62, 66, 85 / *2261*
Petrusek, Miloslav – 18
Petrushevskii, Dmitrii M. – 68
Pexa, František – *2177, 2204*
Pfitzner, Josef – 31 / *944, 1097, 1150, 1155, 1203, 1217, 1425, 1662, 2128, 2197*
Phillimore, Lord Godfrey – 237, 238
Piatakov, Georgii L. – *1240, 1722*
Piccolomini, Aeneas Silvius – 54, 56, 57 / *8, 95*
Picková, Dana – *2302*
Pilař, Jiří – *2178, 2203, 2205*
Pilipchuk, Sergei – *2179, 2185, 2201, 2202*
Pipes, Richard – 167
Pirenne, Henri – 68, 86
Pistorius, Theodor – *1805*
Platonov, Sergei F. – *78, 79, 672*
Plekhanov, Georgii V. – 21, 22, 87, 161 / *70, 115*
Plháková, Alena – 21
Plocek, Jiří – *2394*
Pobedonostsev, Konstantin P. – 173–175 / *555*
Poche, Emanuel – *1822*
Pokorný, Jiří – 71
Pokrovskii, Iosif A. – *725*
Pokrovskii, Mikhail N. – *556, 624, 1028*
Polák, Karel – *2128*
Poletika, Nikolai P. – *375*
Polívka, Miloslav – 60
Popelová, Jiřina – 19, 91
Popov, Fedor G. – *764*
Popper, Karl Raimund – 15, 16, 92
Postnikov, Sergei P. – 193, 203, 205, 218 / *1277*
Potemkin, Grigorii A. – *516*
Potseluev, Vladimir A. – 167
Pousta, Zdeněk – *2298, 2310*
Pražák, Albert – *408, 1197*
Pražáková, Jana – *2416*

Prelog, Milan – *607*
Presniakov, Aleksandr E. – *277*
Priklonskii – *168*
Příkopský – *1270*
Přikryl, Bohumil – *1854, 1928, 1930, 1950, 1952, 1954, 1980*
Procházka, František Serafínský – *1786*
Procházka, Jiří – *2353*
Prokeš, Jaroslav – 13, 72, 213, 214 / *1791, 2352*
Prokopovich, Sergei N. – 190, 192 / *436, 861*
Pullmann, Michal – 135, 140
Pushkarev, Sergei G. – 190
Pushkin, Aleksandr S. – 441 / *428, 1135, 1250*
Pytlík, Radko – *2251*

Q

Quinet, Edgar – 251

R

Ráček, Blažej – 91
Rachůnková, Zdeňka – 220, 441
Radek, Karl B. – *1072, 1240, 1722*
Radetzky von Radetz, Johann Josef Wenzel – 70
Radishchev, Aleksandr N. – 190 / *178*
Rádl, Emanuel – 42, 63, 91–93 / *909, 2070, 2071*
Raevskii, Mikhail F. – 436
Rákosník, Jakub – 8, 133, 135, 438 / *2376*
Ranke, Leopold von – 39, 171
Rapant, Daniel – *1453, 1454*
Raphael, Lutz – 80, 135, 136, 140, 146
Rasputin, Grigorii E. – 173, 174 / *77, 99, 169, 1035, 1079, 1627, 1741, 1943*
Rataj, Jan – 36, 37
Reclus, Elysée – 121 / *170*
Řeháková, Michaela – 220, 441
Rejdová, Tereza – 259
Řepa, Milan – 20, 61, 69
Revel, Jacques – 21
Řezáč, Václav – *2230*
Rezek, Antonín – 102 / *11*
Řezníček, Václav – 82 / *2373*
Riazanov, David B. – *505, 732*
Rickert, Heinrich – 19, 96, 105
Rieger, František Ladislav – *524*
Riegrová, Marie – *524*
Riess, Jiří – *1239*
Ripka, Hubert – *1742, 1823, 2042*
Robespierre, Maximilien de – 160
Rodichev, Fedor I. – *265*
Rogmann, Heinz – *1422*
Rolland, Romain – 178
Roosevelt, Franklin D. – *1100*
Roubal, Petr – 9, 433, 439 / *1715, 1728, 2365*
Roubík, František – 45 / *498*
Rousseau, Jean-Jacques – 252
Rozhkov, Nikolai A. – *180*
Rundt, Arthur – *646*
Rusanov, Nikolai S. – *292*
Rüsen, Jörn – 47, 48
Russell, Bertrand – 16
Rybák, Josef – *1990*
Rykov, Aleksei I. – *1068*
Ryleev, Kondratii F. – 173
Ryšavý, Jiří – *1785*

S

Sabina, Karel – 74 / *93*
Šádová, Věra – 20, 44, 74, 85 / *2247*
Sady, Peter L. – 16
Sady, Wojciech – 16
Šafařík, Pavel Josef – *51*
Sakhanev, Vsevolod V. – 190
Salajka, Antonín – *1992, 2032*
Šalda, František Xaver – 91, 99 / *1256, 1304, 1667, 1988, 1989, 2022, 2026*
Saltykov-Schedrin, Mikhail E. – *1599*
Šámal, Petr – 75
Šamberger, Zdeněk – *2360*
Savinkov, Boris V. – 228 / *90, 177*
Savitskii, Piotr N. – 190
Sazonov, Sergei D. – *198, 216, 245*
Schiemann, Theodor – 32
Schkaff, Eugène – *66*
Schopenhauer, Arthur – 105, 252
Schroller, A. – *2186*
Schulin, Ernst – 48
Šebesta – 209
Sedakov, Boris V. – 191
Sedelnikov, Valerii O. – *2267, 2268*
Sée, Henri – 86
Šefrna, Miloslav – *2070*
Seidel, Viktor – *964*
Seignobos, Charles – *714*
Sekanina, František – *1761, 1818*

Sekyrková, Milada – 45
Semennikov, Vladimir P. – *153*
Serebriakov, Leonid P. – *1240, 1722*
Service, Robert – 167, 168
Seton-Watson, Robert William – *273, 374*
Shakhmatov, Mstislav V. – 190
Shaw, George Bernard – 178
Shchegolev, Pavel E. – *429*
Shchepikhin, Sergei A. – *333*
Shchepkin, Viacheslav N. – *105*
Shcherbyna, Fedir – *992*
Shestov, Lev I. – *1303*
Shevelev, Il'ia S. – 226
Shmurlo, Evgenii F. – 190 / *116, 163, 235, 254, 257, 776, 778, 835*
Sholokhov, Mikhail A. – *696*
Sigismund of Luxemburg – 61
Šimák, Josef Vítězslav – *1457*
Šimánková, Alena – 433
Šimeček, Zdeněk – *2246, 2303, 2308, 2402*
Simmel, Georg – 19
Šimsa, Jaroslav – *1778*
Sklenářová, Sylva – 439, 440 / *2383*
Skobelev, Ivan N. – *1212*
Škrach, Vasil K. – 90 / *537*
Sládek, Ondřej – 60
Sládek, Zdeněk – 125, 151, 442 / *1274, 1701, 1706, 2264, 2292, 2304, 2305, 2313*
Slonim, Mark L. – *155*
Słonimski, Antoni – *709, 759*
Šmahel, František – 60, 73, 77, 438 / *2283, 2320*
Šmeral, Bohumír – *494, 635*
Smetáček, Zdeněk – 65 / *1830, 1864, 1866, 1867, 1979, 1994*
Šmída, Josef – 67 / *2050*
Šnobr, Jan – *683*
Sokol, Vojtěch – *766*
Sokolnikov, Grigorii Ia. – *1240, 1722*
Sokolov, Boris I. – 223
Sokolov, Mikhail V. – 9, 213, 223, 439, 440 / *2392*
Sokolov, Nikolai A. – *193*
Soldán, Fedor – *2171*
Šolle, Zdeněk – *2316*
Solovev, Sergei M. – 107
Sombart, Werner – 65, 87
Sommer, Otakar – *331*
Sommer, Petr – 60
Sorokin, Pitirim A. – 87, 119
Spektorskii, Evgenii V. – *881*
Spengler, Oswald – 28, 29, 39, 107 / *912, 1057, 1570,*
Spinka, Matthew – *279*
Špiritová, Alexandra – 205 / *2351*
Sreznevskii, Vsevolod I. – 435
Šrom, Josef Eduard – *98, 286, 1928, 1933*
Štaif, Jiří – 7, 65, 79, 440, 441 / *2252, 2373*
Stalin, Iosif V. – 39, 65, 73, 74, 130, 139, 152, 155, 156, 164, 178, 179, 183, 186, 188, 197, 228, 231, 238, 246, 248, 250 / *236, 342, 442, 452, 510, 523, 692, 735, 756, 789, 806, 1014, 1100, 1137, 1145, 1209, 1238, 1310, 1415, 1540, 1722, 1835, 1836, 1911, 2058, 2059, 2195*
Stanislavskii, Konstantin S. – *1285*
Stankevich, Vladimir B. – *841*
Stanojević, Stanoje – *50*
Šťastný, Vladislav – *2246, 2308*
Štěpán, Jiří – 440 / *2386*
Stloukal, Karel – 13, 20, 85, 91 / *524, 792, 1664, 2017, 2022, 2029, 2146, 2147, 2197*
Štoll, Ladislav – 73 / *1671, 1999*
Štorch, Karel – *1752*
Stránský, Pavel – *1537*
Středa, Petr – 8, 115, 440 / *2367, 2368, 2377, 2379, 2383, 2384, 2386*
Středová, Veronika – 440 / *2377, 2379, 2386*
Stříbrný, Jiří – 27 / *569, 1311*
Strmiska, Maxmilián – 65
Struve, Piotr B. – 200 / *585, 1863*
Suk, Vojtěch – *701*
Sukhomlinov, Vladimir A. – *81, 164*
Sumbatov-Iuzhin, Aleksandr I. – *186*
Sus, Oleg – 104, 105
Šusta, Josef – 43, 57, 85, 91, 102, 138 / *85, 528, 644, 765, 827, 858, 1080, 1535, 1538, 1556, 1662, 1722, 2197*
Svadbová, Blanka – 58, 63
Švankmajer, Milan – 151, 442
Švec, Josef Jiří – *333*
Švehla, Antonín – *1130, 1393, 1395*
Sviatikov, Sergei G. – *117*
Svoboda, Emil – 191
Svoboda, Jiří Václav – *2217*
Svobodný, Petr – *2325, 2343*
Švorc, Peter – 437
Świętochowski, Aleksander – *1332*

Sybel, Heinrich von – 39
Sychrava, Lev – 34, 35 / *1816*

T

Tacitus, Publius Cornelius – 252, 253
Tanin, Mikhail A. – *231*
Taranovskii, Fedor V. – *875*
Tardy, Vladimír – *1829*
Tarle, Evgenii V. – *1410, 1455*
Tauer, Felix – 20
Teichmann, Jaroslav – *1817*
Teichová, Alice – 73
Teige, Karel – *1944, 2116*
Tertullian – 113
Tesař, Jan – 75
Tigrid, Pavel – *2208, 2224, 2231*
Tikhonov, Nikolai S. – *2200*
Tinková, Daniela – 438
Tocqueville, Alexis de – 19, 107, 128, 170, 253 / *1141, 2286*
Tolstoy, Lev N. – 108, 171, 177, 252 / *24, 25, 225, 887, 953*
Toman, Karel – 58
Tomáš, Milan – 15
Tomaszewski, Jerzy – *2371*
Tomek, Václav Vladivoj – 91
Tomeš, Josef – *2361, 2366, 2406, 2413*
Tomskii, Mikhail P. – *990*
Traub, Hugo – *1762*
Trávníčková, Božena – *2044*
Treitschke, Heinrich – 32, 39, 107
Treťiakov, Sergei M. – *1193, 1245*
Troeltsch, Ernst – 19, 66, 86, 93, 94 / *857, 1084*
Trotsky, Leon D. – 152, 163, 179, 182 / *68, 92, 101, 177, 313, 469, 526, 579, 651, 734, 940, 1090, 1165, 1194, 1209, 1231, 1247, 1330, 1722*
Trubetskoi, Nikolai S. – *1297*
Trzyniecki, Paweł – *626, 1875*
Tsurikov, Nikolai A. – 226
Tuček, Ladislav – *1962*
Tukalevskii, Vladimir N. – *1077, 1107*
Tukhachevskii, Mikhail N. – *1151, 1220, 1221*
Tumarkin, Nina – 167
Turgenev, Ivan S. – 169, 170 / *31, 32, 677, 1704*
Tvrdý, Josef – 18 / *610*
Tyler, Wat – 68, 72
Tyrš, Miroslav – 37 / *621*

U

Uhlíř, Dušan – 73
Urban, Klement – *1451, 2139*
Urban, Otto – 89
Urbánek, Rudolf – 48, 49, 63, 242 / *862, 1991*
Uspenskii, Fedor I. – *226*
Ustrialov, Nikolai V. – *160, 173, 177, 332, 863*

V

Vacek, František – 51
Vacek, Jiří – 9, 177, 218, 220, 441 / *2291*
Vachalovská, Lenka – 435
Vaganian, Vagarshak A. – *115*
Vajdlová, Miloslava – 69
Vajs, Josef – *713, 2167*
Vaks, Boris A. – *112*
Válka, Josef – 60, 62, 73, 86 / *2346*
Vančura, Otakar – *668, 1931*
Vaněček, Václav – 45, 48
Vaněk, Miloš – *1928, 1929, 1955, 1959*
Varshavskii, Sergei I. – 190, 191
Varsik, Branislav – 85 / *1149*
Vasiľeva, Mariia A. – 441
Vasylenko, Mykola P. – *885*
Vávra, Jaroslav – 74
Vavřina, František – 37
Vavřinec of Březová – 60
Veber, Václav – 8, 82, 149, 150, 151, 207, 439, 441, 442 / *1713–1715, 1728, 2300, 2306, 2313, 2332, 2365*
Večerka, Radoslav – *2246, 2308*
Velek, Luboš – 71
Velemínský, Karel – *283*
Velková, Alice – 71
Veľmin, Aleksei P. – 226, 227, 230–232
Verbitskaia, Anastasiia A. – *219*
Vernadskii, Georgii V. – 167
Veselý, Antonín – *2154*
Veverková, Irena – *2363*
Veyne, Paul – 60, 89
Viceník, Josef – 14, 17, 20, 21
Vichrov, A. – *1859*
Vilinskii, Valerii S. – *495*

Vinogradov, Pavel G. – 86 / *146*
Višňovský, Emil – 14, 17
Vítek of the House of Red Bells – 69
St. Vitus – *929, 1567, 1722*
Vlček, Radomír – *2354, 2370, 2387*
Vlnas, Vít – 62
Vodovozov, Vasilii V. – *679, 704, 753*
Voikov, Piotr L. – 186
Vojtěch, Tomáš – 65, 134, 145 / *2255*
Volf, Josef – *1115, 1159*
Volf, Miloslav – 45, 46, 49 / *972, 1926, 2037, 2165, 2236, 2238*
Volkogonov, Dmitrii A. – 166, 167
Voltaire – 252
Vopravil, Jaroslav – *2403*
Vorel, Jaroslav – 433
Vrangel, Piotr N. – *223*
Vrbata, Jaroslav – 64
Vydra, Jiří – *2222*
Vykouk, Jaroslav, jr. – *2362*
Vykoukal, Jiří – *2345*

W

St. Wenceslas – 48 / *249, 250, 257, 268, 304, 307, 309, 312, 496, 662, 770, 771, 783, 929, 943, 1722, 1788, 1789, 1795*
Wallenstein, Albrecht von – 61, 64, 70 / *828, 836, 1722*
Weber, Max – 7, 8, 19, 30, 56, 64, 81, 83, 84, 86, 89, 94–99, 100, 105–107, 109, 110, 113, 114, 135, 145 / *2271, 2280, 2287*
Wehler, Hans-Ulrich – 89
Weil, Jiří – *258, 1783*
Weingart, Miloš – *187, 443, 770, 783, 2079, 2167*
Wells, Herbert George – 178 / *2015*
Werstadt, Jaroslav – 13, 26, 44, 85, 149, 242 / *1419, 1765, 1794, 1941, 2043, 2062, 2199, 2299*
Weyr, František – *597*
Whimster, Sam – 107
Wihoda, Martin – 49
Wilhelm II – 29, 32 / *1334*
Wilson, Woodrow – 165 / *1233*
Windelband, Wilhelm – 19, 105
Wingfield, Nancy M. – 441
Wittgenstein, Ludwig – 16
Wittkau-Horgby, Annette – 47
Wolkan, Rudolf – *8*
Wright, Georg Henrik von – 16, 23
Wundt, Wilhelm – 32, 64, 94
Wyclif, John – *3*

Z

Zabelin, Ivan E. – *10, 19*
Zahradníček, Tomáš – *2364*
Zaitsev, K. S. – 237
Zasulich, Vera I. – 163
Závada, Vilém – *823*
Zavadskii, Sergei V. – *878*
Zavázal, Zeno – *974*
Zavřel, František – *1254*
Zelinka, Vojtěch – *2008*
Zeman, Zbyněk A. B. – 135, 137 / *2262*
Zenkl, Petr – 42 / *2194*
Zíbrt, Čeněk – *554, 656*
Zich, Otakar – 18
Zilynská, Blanka – *2325, 2343*
Zilynskyj, Bohdan – *2332, 2345*
Zimmermann, Mikhail A. – *877*
Zinoviev, Grigorii E. – 179, 182 / *889, 988, 1067*
Žižka, Jan – 54–64, 89–93, 120, 139 / *89, 754, 755, 1045, 1087, 1722*
Zlatý, Jan – *1974*
Zmorski, Roman – *51*
Zorin, Valerian A. – 42
Zoshchenko, Mikhail M. – 41 / *1610, 1704*
Zuman, František – 26 – / *1735*
Zumr, Josef – 18
Zweig, Stefan – 177, 178

Publikace Slovanské knihovny – 66

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