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# **Czech Philosophy in the XXth Century**

**Czech Philosophical Studies, II**

edited by  
Lubomr Nový, Jiri Gabriel, Jaroslav Hroch

The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy

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## Preface

*Lubomír Nový, Jaroslav Hroch and Jirí Gabriel*

This book is an attempt to characterize Czech philosophical thought in the twentieth century, its main streams and representative personalities. It was difficult to take up this work, to dare to do so especially in the midst of the stormy reconstruction of our society. But we were encouraged by the suggestion of Professor George F. McLean from the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy to develop a picture of the spiritual climate, intellectual traditions, values and challenges of post-Communist countries.

The authors of this book, members of our Philosophy Department could draw upon the earlier works by Josef Král, *Czechoslovak Philosophy* (Prague, 1937); and *Anthology of the History of Czech and Slovak Philosophical Thought* (Prague, 1989) and could enrich that content on the basis of their own monographs and journal studies. For the analyses of several special thematic areas we drew upon the generous collaboration of our colleagues in Prague: Marie Bajerová, Slavomil Strohs and Stanislav Sousedík.

It is evident that a great number of problems could be considered in this text, and that it would be possible to write more about any particular thinker: this survey is not exhaustive. Certain chapters, especially regarding Marxist philosophy and the significant work of many Czech philosophers in exile, represent material which has been little elaborated in monographs till this time. It is not necessary to recall that it had not been possible for years to write about a great number of philosophers in our country.

We are aware of these difficulties and limits. Nevertheless, we have endeavored at least to outline a certain panorama of Czech thought in our century. It is a modest but positive step on the way to a comprehensive elaboration of the history of Czech philosophy. Not many of its representatives are famous in the world, but all have contributed to creating the culture of our small central European country and thereby to European intellectual culture as a whole.

The chapter on Czechs and Czechoslovakia (now the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic) will provide readers from other lands with basic data on the history of Czech national life.

The authors wish to thank the readers for their interest and understanding. Finally, we want to thank the Czech Literary Fund and the leadership of the Faculty of Arts at Masaryk University for financial support for the translation of this work into English.



# Introduction

*George F. McLean*

This volume, *Czech Philosophy in the XXth Century*, is a crucial accomplishment at this juncture in the history of the Czech peoples, and indeed of all peoples of Central and Eastern Europe.

Today they emerge from a long period of forced universalism and are able, once again, to take account of their distinctiveness. Day by day, however, this is proving more difficult than had been imagined. Conflicts, even atrocities, show the fragility of approach to constructing a more human world by legal accords regarding human rights, elaborated painstakingly since World War II. Too easily these fall before the deep inner passions of peoples or the hesitancy of nations to enforce their general declarations. From this emerges evermore clearly the importance of the inner commitment of a people, without which formal or external restraints risk being reduced to obstacles to be avoided, circumvented or undermined, or simply never applied.

This has been long and deeply felt by the Czech people. As a small people surrounded by large, mobile and self-concerned nations, it was always clear that their welfare depended upon factors that transcended the multiple and changing interests of this world. In order that these many concerns be convergent there is need for a foundation that can provide unity in human affairs. In order that no one be simply at the disposition of others, the basis for the dignity of peoples must transcend them all. This is the profound human truth of Thomas Aquinas' famous five ways to the existence of God: changing thrives when grounded in permanence--otherwise it is empty confusion and conflict.

This lesson, learned in tears, is perhaps the most urgently needed insight in this period of looming tragedy in the region and throughout the world. This volume is essentially an exploration of the history of the profound ways in which this insight has shaped the many facets of the modern Czech mentality, from its history before modern times, through the characteristics of its modern beginnings, to its articulation through positivism, structuralism and phenomenology.

For the beginning of Czech intellectual history one would need to return to the founding of Charles University in Prague in 1348, among the earliest universities in Central and Eastern Europe. There, the philosophy was scholastic in character, which meant essentially the great century synthesis of the transcendent vision of Christian Platonism with the emergent, more scientifically structured, Aristotelian structures physics and metaphysics. Thomas Aquinas united these spiritual and material dimensions in the one human nature, and resolved the division between mankind and God through the theology of the incarnation in the one person of Christ, where Nicholas of Cusa saw the definitive union of heaven and earth.

For the Czech mind this basic unity in transcendence was never lost. Thus, where the French Enlightenment meant a secularization of the world and of man, Czech thought reflected the efforts of the reformation and counter-reformation to understand man in fundamental relation to the divine. This appears, of course, in the "idealism" of chapter IV and in the following two chapters on philosophy and Czech Protestantism and Catholicism, each of which suggests the deep drama of the effort to uphold the transcendence needed for human dignity.

But this is truly the recurrent theme of the whole volume. It undergirds the great contribution of Czech philosophy to phenomenology and thus to the sense of person and freedom which finally worked the liberation of Czechoslovakia and the other Central and Eastern European nations in

1989. It is reflected in the philosophy of history where M. Novak takes up Bergson; it is manifest as well in the dynamics of Czech ethical thought which moves not only from the transcendent to the concrete, but from empirical observation in factual terms to the religious context of human meaning.

Surprisingly and in reverse, this emerges in the history of positivism itself in Czech culture. Here, the drama is essentially that of the encounter of the closed anticlericalism and naive humanism of nineteenth century in Western Europe with the sobering realities of Central Europe. It is reflected in the experience of young Czech scholars, trained in the West where they encounter the new sciences which they were anxious to contribute to their people. Rather consistently, however, in time they stripped off the limitation of meaning to the empirical in order to reach for a deeper and more integrating basis. Hence, though the distance in space is not great and the contacts and interchanges were intense, Czech positivism was never that of the Vienna Manifesto.

Indeed, despite the ardent proclamation of positivist intent, one is hard put to find consistent instances of positivism as generally understood. Thus, Czech positivism would seem to come down to the effort to establish a dimension of scientific thought independent of faith and based upon sense experience--though, importantly, never limited thereto. This is reflected in many ways, but perhaps never so brilliantly as by T.G. Masaryk himself. He was bound in a love-hate relationship with positivism as a necessary, but not sufficient, foundation for political life. This he complemented by deep religious concern. It was of major philosophical importance that he sent his young friend, E. Husserl, to his old teacher Catholic Brentano, from whom Husserl drew on appreciation of intentionality and of the human spirit. This, in turn, opened his way to the development of phenomenology and eventually to Charta 77 and the events of November, '89.

The final chapter makes an eloquent plea for allowing the diversity of the human spirit to blossom, and for the tolerance which will be needed for the future. It rightly says that the sense of diversity could be a major contribution of the Czech region to the contemporary search of mankind. To this I would add the rich Czech contribution to the deep sense of the meaning of life and its transcendent principles which affirm at once both the dignity of every person and their fundamental interrelatedness as the bases for peace and harmony. Indeed, in the end, the last chapter's fear of nationalism spinning out of control forms the historical lesson from the first chapter of *Traditions and Present Problems of Czech Political Culture* Czech Philosophical Studies, I, on anarchy, regarding compromising principles for tactics, namely, that it does not work.

The chapters of this volume progressively unfurl the persistent and brilliant effort of philosophy in Czech culture to articulate the meaning of high principle for human life. It is an elegantly worked analysis of the significance of the principled life for philosophy as for life as a whole.



## Chapter I Czechs and Czechoslovakia

*Libor Vykoupil*

Since the migration of nations, the history of Central Europe has been connected with the history of the Slavs, the predecessors of today's Czechs and Slovaks. These predecessors settled in the territory of Czechoslovakia, i.e., the present territory of Bohemia, Moravia and Slovakia, before the sixth century. The first preserved accounts of the Slavonic empire of Sámó date back to the seventh century, about 623-624. This was not a true state formation as Sámó was only the ruler of the united Slavonic tribes, nevertheless it drew the attention of contemporary chroniclers because of its successful warfare with its neighbors, the Avars and Franconians. The first state formation in this region was the Great Moravian Empire. The Moravians are mentioned for the first time in a written account of 822; eleven years later the name of their prince was mentioned.

In its period of peak prosperity, the Great Moravian Empire reached over the territories of its present neighbors--Austria, Hungary and Poland. It was the most important state formation lying between the Franconian Empire in the west and the Byzantine to the southeast. While its connections with the Byzantine Empire were friendly, there were wars with the Franconians. These were the roots of the later continuingly tense relationships between the Slavonic and Germanic ethnic groups in Central Europe, a relationship which has affected Czech history till the present time. A result of the good contacts with the Byzantine Empire was the mission of Cyril and Method to the Great Moravian Empire. This mission was the beginning of the nation's cultural history. These two learned, religious men--brothers from Thessalonike, Konstantin (Cyril) and Method--translated the liturgical texts into the language of the Slavs; in this way laying the foundation-stone for a national literature and culture, and, in essence, for an ideology for the formation of a state.<sup>1</sup>

Still, before the definite fall of the Great Moravian Empire, the Czech princes had already broken away. From among them, in the tenth century, the Pemyslides came to the fore, thereby laying the foundations of the Czech state. In the late twelfth century, Pemysl I Otakar became king and the lands of the Czech Crown became among the most important states of Europe at that time. Prince Václav (Wenceslaus), who died in 935, was declared a saint and became the patron saint of the Czech lands. He died a martyr, killed by his own brother who disliked his policy of appeasement toward the German Empire. The veneration of Wenceslaus later became a two-edged weapon. At first, it served particularly the Pemyslides as an ideological support. The patron of the dynasty was St. Wenceslaus, the Duke of Bohemia, and his symbol was the lance, the attribute of a warrior. Later, Wenceslaus the warrior became Wenceslaus the martyr as the Church stressed Wenceslaus' martyrdom for religious purposes. In the seventh century, Wenceslaus, as a Catholic, receded into the background, and, in the early eighteenth century, he was nearly completely replaced by St. John of Nepomuký, an otherwise insignificant victim of disputes among the powerful of the late fourteenth century. The Germans later revived the cult of St. Wenceslaus as a

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<sup>1</sup> In the Old-Slavoni legend, "The Life of St. Cyril," which was written by one of Cyril's disciples, the words *filosof* (philosopher) and *filosofie* (philosophy) appeared for the first time in the Czech milieu. It is written that Cyril was educated as a philosopher and that when asked what philosophy is, he answered: it is a matter of "knowing the things of God and man, provided man can come closer to God, because it is his task to be in the image of the One who created him."

friend of the German Empire; they attempted to force this on the Czechs instead of other saints. These endeavors were strongest during the German occupation in the period 1939-1945. St. Wenceslaus became truly the Czech patron again in the 1980s when he served as a symbol of resistance against the communists.

Other important Pemyslides were Pemysl II Otakar (who ruled 1253-1278) and his successors. At that time, the Czech Kingdom expanded and included, for a time, the territory of present Austria and other countries to the south down to the Adriatic Sea, as well as the territories of Hungary and Poland. However, the acquisition of these territories proved to be problematic and in the end they became more a burden than a contribution to the Czech Crown. The great authority of Pemysl II Otakar, the "iron and gold king", actually prevented his becoming emperor, because none of his neighbors wanted to enhance the power of so forceful a ruler.

After the Pemyslides died out (1306), John Luxembourg became the Czech king (1310), beginning a new and very important stage in Czech history. The Czech kingdom could lean upon the authority of John's father, Henry VII, the Roman king. However, it was undoubtedly John's son and successor to the throne, Charles IV, who made the greatest contribution (1346-1378). A great politician, he was also the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire and succeeded in incorporating the Czech Kingdom into the European political system of the time. Charles IV ensured a dignified positive relationship of the Czechs to the German Empire. He made Prague, his seat city, a truly cosmopolitan center of culture, intellectual pursuits and economic enterprise. In 1348 he founded a university in Prague, the first of its kind in Central Europe which, from the very beginning, had faculties of philosophy, law, medicine and theology. The frontier which Charles IV had ensured for the Bohemian Crown did not change for 400 years.

The evaluation of Charles IV by the historians was very controversial, as is true of all great personalities of history. The Czechs consider him to be the Father of their country, while the Germans call him the Papist king. Although the latter is farther from the truth, it should be noted that Charles' religion brought many religious orders to Bohemia and enabled them to be engaged in trading and business activities, preparing thereby the ground for the later reformation of the Church. The Hussite revolutionary movement originated particularly from the denunciation of the Church religious orders which expanded greatly in the rich Czech lands. The criticism by Jan Huss (who was burned at the stake in 1415 after being sentenced to death by the Council of Constance), Jakoubek of Střbro and other representatives of the Czech reformation was intended initially to be a means of reformation within the Church. In the hands of popular radicals, however, it became a tool which brought to life the greatest heretical movement in Europe at that time. Even in France and England, at that time fully occupied with the 100-year war, the Hussite movement was well known. Joan of Arc wrote a letter in her own hand to the Hussites (a hostile letter, of course).

The Hussite period is yet to be thoroughly evaluated, even though much has been written about it. As all the other revolutionary periods, it was neither univocally positive, nor univocally negative. Opinions coming from the outside are different than those from within, and it is perceived differently by historians of the Church and by historians of culture. What is important is that this period, like no other period before or after, ensured world fame for the Czechs. It gave them a feeling of being exceptional: Czechs *contra omnes*. It also proved that the definition of the Czech character as "dove-like" is a recent designation, manifesting the Czech feeling of pain after loss of their own state. Traditionally, the Czechs of the early fifteenth century were regarded as outstanding warriors.

However, the following period interrupted this promising tradition. It is true that a great king arose, George of Podbrady, a significant personality, elected in 1458 from the Bohemian Estates.

On a European scale, however, this ruler was not so significant as the domestic historians have wished to present him. His peace incentives generally were not considered highly and, in particular, he did not succeed in breaking the barrier which the Church had built around the heretic Czech lands. His rule was a struggle for the preservation of the Czech Kingdom, not for improving his position. He represented the last resistance against the gradually growing agony of the Czech state which began with the ascension of the House of Habsburgs to the Czech throne in 1526. Ferdinand, the brother of Emperor Charles V, was the first sovereign to become Czech King only incidentally. The Czech throne to which he was elected was for him only a part of a widely conceived territory, which included also the Austrian and Alpine countries and Hungary. The ambitions of Ferdinand were those of a visionary European politician who did not intend to bind his hands for the limited local policy of the Bohemian Estates.

After the incorporation of the Czech lands into the alliances of Habsburg countries, it was only a matter of time until the striving of the Bohemian Estates for an independent policy would become subject to the centralization efforts of Vienna. However, the Czech politicians tended to underestimate their adversaries. As the interests of the nobles and of the cities, of the Catholics and the "Calixtins" or Utraquists,<sup>2</sup> were contradictory, the interests of the individual lands of the Bohemian Crown were different. This disunity led to the disruption of Czech society and, in the end, to the extinction of the Czech State. In spite of this, the domestic politicians considered the hostile activities of the German Habsburgs, to be the main cause. At that time the Czech image of the world was formed: What is good is an Utraquist Czech, what is bad is a Catholic German. It is true that this scheme did not apply consistently even at the time of its origin, but it was adamantly preserved in the subconsciousness (even of politicians) for the following 300 years as a part of the political tradition.

Two unsuccessful uprisings of the Estates against the Habsburgs (in the mid-sixteenth century and in 1618) ended in the complete loss of rights of the Czech Crown. The lost battle of White Mountain in 1620, in substance a completely insignificant skirmish at the beginning of the Thirty Year War, became a symbol of this humiliation. The following period, in which Czech lands were under the pressure of Germanization and completely subordinate to Vienna, is called the post-White-Mountain period. In retrospect, it was a period when the "dark night" settled upon the Czech people. The Czech language was suppressed, the inhabitants were forcibly Catholicized (see the above-mentioned John of Nepomucký). This meant not only the restriction of political and economic freedom, but also of cultural development. This total oppression led to the exile of thousands of Czech people, though this had multiple reasons. Among those who were forced to leave their country at that time was Karel Starsí of Zerotín, a significant politician; Václav Hollar, painter and engraver; and Jan Amos Komenský (Comenius), philosopher, diplomat and prophet of education.

The Czech lands suffered great losses at that time, but in the following period this time came to be viewed in even more dismal colors than it appeared to its contemporaries. Most controversial in this regard was the issue of culture. In the Czech lands the development of baroque was very creative, integrating many regional themes. This proved that baroque was very much alive and not simply imported in a final rigid form. This is true not only of architecture--the architectural beauty of present-day Prague is mostly baroque. South-Bohemian baroque is significant in ethnography and the history of the arts including sculpture and painting, music and even literature.

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<sup>2</sup> Utraquism is a religious doctrine, which originated after 1400, demanding that the laity should receive the cup (wine) as well as the bread in the Eucharist (hence, Calixtins), i.e., *sub utraque specie*.

A notable national revival began at the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, reached its peak in the mid-nineteenth century and overlapped the period of great development in the social sciences and economy. In its beginning this brought to the Czech lands the strong influence of West-European Enlightenment, even though it did not take root in this environment because of its cosmopolitan search for novelty. Subsequently, the concepts of "nation" and "nationality" were formulated in a modern manner, history was studied from a different aspect (not only purely politically and dynastically) and even politics acquired new dimensions after the onset of liberal and even revolutionary democratic currents. Most of the present Czech concepts of tradition, nation, historical continuity and development, and political heritage have their origin at this time.

How did the Czech national revival, in the context of the revival movement in all Europe, define the concept of the Czech nation? The new definition naturally included historical frontiers, a unified history and culture, and one common language. On this basis, in fact, the Czech nation, which was endangered by Germanization under the Austrian monarchy, was redefined. Along with the idea of nation there was nostalgia for the lost state.

The situation was even more complicated for the Slovaks who were also faced with the danger of de-nationalization for the Slovaks had no historical consciousness of a past state, having been always simply an "Hungarian upper land". At that time the mutual Czecho-Slovak relationships began to form. These had never existed before because of their completely different histories and cultural influences. The Slovak national revival was highly related to the Czech cultural tradition because the Slovaks lacked anything similar. If the Czechs struggled for their own state through the struggle for their language, the Slovaks strove only to save their language and culture.

The political situation of the mid-19th century was very complex and controversial. The radicals rejected the German language, the Germans and the Austrians, Austria and the Habsburgs, in the revolution of 1848-1849. However, the realistic wing of Czech politicians leaned toward the idea of Austroslavism which Frantisek Palacký (1798-1876), politician and the most important Czech historian, articulated thus: "If there were no Austria, we would have to create it."<sup>3</sup>

This was not an attempt, as has sometimes been mistakenly interpreted, to subordinate completely Czech politics to German supervision; on the contrary, it was an effort to ensure an important position for the Czechs in the Austrian State. Their politics would be the balance point for the intersection of powers passing through Central Europe. In practice this meant following Austrian politics when convenient, and abandoning them in hostile times. To this were added cautious efforts to resist the centralization of the state and efforts for dual arrangements of the government by maintaining, if possible, a balanced federation. This concept (based on another quotation of Palacký: "We existed before Austria and we shall exist after") was dealt a blow when the dualistic variant of government was accepted in 1867 and later by the strengthening of the power of the central authorities.

At that time, however, the Austrian-Hungarian Empire was losing one battle after another and Czech politics was finally able to show its capabilities. It was also given an opportunity during World War I which resulted in the constitution of an independent Czechoslovakia. This constitution was not only a historical necessity; it was also the work of the Czechoslovak politicians abroad, and of such other factors as the importance of the Austrian government, the interests of the Western powers, and, last but not least, the Great October Revolution in Russia which changed the attitudes of politicians toward Russia and called for a shield across Central Europe.

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<sup>3</sup> The most important work of Frantisek Palacký is his monumental *History of the Czech Nation in Bohemia and Moravia*, which he began to write in 1832, and published in German and Czech in the period of 1836-1876.

On October 28, 1918, the Czechs finally reached the longed-for independence they had lacked for 300 years. The Slovaks were offered the possibility of joining them on condition of a preference for the state and not the nation. This was partly a concession to the active foreign policy of Milan Rastislav Štefánik, the astronomer, soldier and Slovak diplomat who, together with Masaryk and Benes, contributed greatly to the constitution of an independent Czechoslovak State. The issue of Carpathian Ruthenia was similar to Slovakia, it being joined to Czechoslovakia without any interest on the part of the Czech politicians.

In spite of the radical transformation of political life, it appeared that the Czech propensity to tradition would be triumphant. In the heritage of the Republic there remained much more from the old Austrian Empire than its heirs were willing to admit. In the first place, it remained a multi-national state with strong national minorities (in comparison with the 2.5 million Slovaks, there were 3.5 million Germans), that is, with the same maladies as the Austrian-Hungarian Empire. Although only a few years before the Czechs had condemned the insensitive Austrian-Hungarian national policy, now they had to act similarly in order to maintain the existence of a strong state against centrifugal tendencies. The problem of nationalities was one of the most important problems disturbing the First Republic.

The "men of 28 October" came to the fore in Czech politics, particularly Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk who was not only a competent and realistic politician, but also a philosopher and sociologist.<sup>4</sup>

The Czechoslovak Republic generally was considered to be an oasis of democracy in Central Europe up to the 30s when it was surrounded by fascist and semi-fascist countries. Its democracy, however, had some peculiarities. If we admit that the degree of democracy is determined not only by the magnitude of various freedoms, but also by the ability of the system to take care of the weakest part of the population, then Czechoslovakia was not an ideal country. One of the main factors in maintaining democracy was the personality of T.G. Masaryk who was not only a president for many of the citizens of the Republic, but also their "dear father", and, for many philosophers, in many respects also an arbiter. How content he was with this role is another issue and a somewhat paradoxical situation arose when the purity of the democracy was defended by the not very "democratic" means of a personality which thus became the guarantee of rule by the people.

The 20 years of the existence of the Czechoslovak Republic was also a period of relatively successful economic development. Alois Raín, the minister of finance, began this economic development by separating from the Austrian inflation by closing the frontiers and introducing duty stamps. His successors, too, fought for a strong currency so that a devaluation of the crown did not have to be made until several years later after great struggles against an economic crisis which was much worse in Czechoslovakia than in other countries and lasted longer (from 1929 to 1934). It was deeper because Czechoslovakia, as a producer of consumer goods, was dependent on large and potential markets which disappeared during the general economic crisis.

The unsolved nationality problems included the traditional problems of the relations of the Czechs with the Germans, but also Hungarians, Ruthenians and Poles, and, last but not least, the Czecho-Slovak relationship. Even though the official governing idea was that of Czechoslovakism,

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<sup>4</sup> Masaryk participated in the dispute about "the bearing of Czech history." The other main protagonist was Josef Pekar, probably the most important Czech historian of this century. In this dispute between the rather romanitizing conception of Palacky's followers and the non-sentimental positivism of the followers of the new generation there were no winners. The dispute did not end until the time of socialism in Czechoslovakia when inconvenient attitudes were disqualified. Today it is once again an open problem.

meaning not only one nation, but even only one language (in Bohemia and Moravia it was the Czech language, and in Slovakia the Slovak language), under the lid feelings were boiling. Dissatisfaction grew particularly on the part of the weaker Slovak population which frequently stated that the Hungarian oppressor had only been exchanged for a Czech bully. Different problems, cultural, economic and political, combined into one. The Slovak party was quite obstinate in its weakness, and the Czechs were not capable of being broadminded enough, in spite of their strength. These disputes between the two main nations of the First Republic contributed, to a certain extent, to its break up in 1939.

However, the most important reason for the fall of independent Czechoslovakia was her powerful neighbor in the west, Germany and its "Drang nach Osten", where Czechoslovakia stood in the way. In the decisive period of September, 1938, the Western powers lost their morality in a duel with pragmatism. In Munich, France and Britain sacrificed Czechoslovakia to Germany in the interests of an expected preservation of peace. However, the aggressor was not satisfied; his major orgies were only postponed for a short time. The Czechoslovak Republic thus became, without fighting, the second victim after Austria of the German expansion.

The Munich treaty in September, 1938, and the subsequent occupation, first of the borderlands and then of the remaining part of Czechoslovakia (in March, 1939, of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, on the one hand, and of the Slovak State, on the other) was an essential turning point in the country's history.<sup>5</sup>

It was also a turning point in political thinking, and not only of professional politicians. The idea of retaliation for Munich and safeguarding against its repetition did appear, but many politicians suffered from a defeatist Munich complex. The political representation was headed by Dr. Edvard Benes who had been a key co-operator with Masaryk and Stefáník in the creation of the Czechoslovak State. During the whole period of the First Republic he was Minister of Foreign Affairs and the spiritual father of the grand conception of Czechoslovak foreign policy, which included not only the allied block of the Small Entente, but also ambitious plans for allied cooperation with the Great Powers of Europe. As Masaryk's closest collaborator, Dr. Benes naturally became his successor as president. The Munich disaster became his own personal failure from which he never recovered either as politician or as a person.<sup>6</sup>

The period of the Protectorate under German rule (1939-1945) was one of the worst periods for the Czech nation and changed people's thinking. The hopes of most of the people gradually turned to the east. In the west were the allied powers which had betrayed them, but help could still be expected to come from the USSR. And come it did. The victory of the Red Army over Fascism greatly strengthened the prestige of the Communist Party. The idea of a Slavonic brotherhood standing against the German enemies was renewed. In sum, this meant that after the defeat of fascism in 1945, it was not possible merely to link up with the preceding development and continue in the traditions of the pre-Munich Republic.

The political climate had changed, not only within the country, but also in world politics. The Soviet Union had become the most important ally of the anti-Hitler coalition. Along with the USA,

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<sup>5</sup> The period between Munich and the proclamation of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia is indicated as the period of the Second Republic in the historiography of Czechoslovakia.

<sup>6</sup> Edvard Benes (1884-1948) was associate professor (from 1912) and then professor (from 1921) of sociology at Charles University in Prague. After the beginning of World War I he was engaged in political activities. He wrote about the concept of Czechoslovakian development in his books: *The World War and Our Revolution I-II* (1928-1929); *Democracy Today and Tomorrow* (1946); *Six Years of Exile and World War II* (1946); *Memories. From Munich to New Victory* (1947); *Sondierations about Slavism* (1947).

it began to aspire to the role of super-power. The so-called period of the Third Republic (1945-1948) was marked by great irresoluteness on the part of many non-communist politicians and parties against the concentrated attacks of the communists on the positions of power. In this, the Communist Party was supported by other political parties and even by President Benes himself. Czechoslovak politics was closely connected with Soviet politics, and this was associated with gradual economic, cultural and other connections. Under these influences, Czechoslovakia disclaimed participation in the Marshall Plan, sacrificed Carpathian Ruthenia to the USSR, and finally sacrificed even the independence of its foreign and, consequently, also its home affairs. The result (particularly after February, 1948) was the following of the Soviet model of political totalitarianism, including political judicial procedures.

The development in Slovakia at that time was very interesting. During World War II, Slovakia was a satellite of Germany with a clerical-fascist government. However, Slovakia was the first part of Czechoslovakia to be liberated by the Red Army, and so the popularity of the Communist Party increased there, though not as much as in the Czech lands. In 1946, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia won the elections in the Czech lands. In Slovakia, however, the Democratic Party, in which all the other political movements were grouped from an originally quite wide spectrum, won by a two-thirds majority. This situation again disqualified the Slovaks, this time in the eyes of the Czech Communists. Not only cultural and economic backwardness, but now also political backwardness were attributed to Slovakia. Hence, although the concept of Czechoslovakism was abolished, the inequality of Slovakia persisted. The so-called aid for backward Slovakia did not heal the causes, but only the symptoms, of its delayed development.

The communist *coup d'etat* in 1948 was essentially only the logical result of the preceding development. The removal of the differences in the policies of the individual parties by incorporating them into a unified National Front deprived them of their defensive reflexes; the concessions made by Benes only finished this work of destruction. The repressive character of the regime deepened very early: the proclaimed democratic centralism liquidated all democracy in favor of centralism. The nationalization of industry and collectivization in agriculture were to create preconditions for the building of socialism. In the first place, it led the economy into dependence on Soviet economy and/or the other socialist countries of the Comecon. Political pressure also affected culture. The twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the USSR, which revealed the causes and implications of the personality cult in the USSR, did not lead to any essential changes in Czechoslovak politics. At a time when, logically, the greatest doubts about correctness of the current direction should have arisen, Czechoslovakia was proclaimed a socialist republic (1960).

At that time, however, certain powers began to appear demanding that the political direction be revised. At first, the critics concentrated on economic problems, though culture also was criticized, for instance in the Congress of Writers in 1967. These criticisms were voiced not only from among Communists, but also by the so-called citizens' incentives. The reformist wing of the Communist Party gradually managed to take control. The peak of these activities was the general assembly in January, 1968, where changes in the supreme party and state organs were carried out. However, then came August, 1968, and the occupation of Czechoslovakia by the Soviet and other armies. The communist leaders of Czechoslovakia failed to stand up to the pressure of Soviet politics, nor was the international situation yet ripe for such a confrontation.

In the following period of "normalization", those who had voiced their own opinions were persecuted, be they communists or representatives of other parties, intelligentsia or ordinary citizens. The result was a further devastation of the economy, the social sphere and culture. Since

the early 70s, all contacts with the surrounding world were rapidly broken. Czechoslovakia very consistently followed the Soviet model and isolated herself from the world. Czechoslovakia became a preserve into which it was very difficult to penetrate and even more difficult to leave.

Together with the tightening screws of "normalization", the weakness and inability of the leading politicians became more and more evident. Resistance grew, at home and abroad, particularly among the young, the intellectuals and the artists. The opposition to the regime this time was concentrated outside the Communist Party, in the spirit of a new Eastern Europe which set in 1989. For Czechoslovakia, November 17, 1989, was the date of the first step toward a new freedom.

On the 1st of January 1993, Czechoslovakia (the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic) was divided into two independent states--the Czech Republic (involving Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia) and the Slovak Republic.



## Chapter II

# Masaryk's Contribution to the Formation of Values in the Czech National Consciousness

*Lubomir Nový*

Tomás Garrigue Masaryk, the Czech philosopher, sociologist and politician (1850-1937), is one of the central figures in the general cultural history of modern Czechoslovakia. He played an active and important role in the decisive historical periods of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, the First World War, and the early years of the Czechoslovak Republic. Indirectly, through his lasting intellectual legacy, his influence extended through the Nazi occupation of Czechoslovakia (1939-1945) and the post-War era, to the Prague Spring of 1968 and the November Revolution of 1989.

### **The Four Returns of Masaryk**

The four stages in which Masaryk reemerged in the Czech national consciousness (1918, 1945, 1968, 1989) can be used to illustrate his history and its interpretations, as well as the development of Czech political and cultural history since the end of the nineteenth century. A consideration of these four returns necessarily poses the question of the modernity of Masaryk's philosophy (was he not a thinker of the nineteenth century whom the conflicts of the twentieth century rendered ineffective?), and the problem of his contribution to the formation of values which laid the basis for the ideas of Czech national identity and statehood.

Masaryk's long life, which until old age was highly productive in both politics and literature, was intertwined with Czech national and world history. This personal history, the different periods of his active involvement in public life at home and abroad, and his four reemergences in the Czech national consciousness can serve to illustrate the many initiatives and detours of Czech political and cultural history from the last third of the twentieth century, as well as the key turning points of European and world history.

The first return of Masaryk was, in fact, the culmination of his efforts to emancipate the Czech nation within the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. After decades of struggle to develop both national life within the monarchy as a professor of the Czech at Charles University in Prague and a member of Austro-Hungarian Parliament, Masaryk decided to leave the country in order to fight against the monarchy at the very beginning of World War I in 1914. Through intensive efforts in cooperation with other collaborators (above all with Eduard Benes and Milan R. Stefánik, the exiled legions and the home resistance movement) he attained his goal after complicated negotiations in Russia, France and, especially, in the United States in 1918. The war was over, Masaryk returned to an independent, democratic Czechoslovak Republic. This was "Masaryk's triumph."<sup>1</sup> He became the first president of the Czechoslovak Republic--President Liberator--and in the following years would be re-elected president three times. He was the leading intellectual authority of the interwar Czechoslovak Republic; under his leadership it was a member of the European and world democratic community in which there was place "neither for fascism nor for communism". The Munich Treaty in 1938 and the Nazi occupation in 1939 resulted in the fall of

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<sup>1</sup> Jiri Kovtun thus titled his work about Masaryk, *Masarykuv triumf. Příběh konce velké války* (Masaryk's Triumph. The Story of the End of the Big War) (Toronto, 1987).

this republic. In the public's opinion, the fall was as if prefigured by Masaryk's death in September, 1937.

During the occupation and World War II, Masaryk became a symbol of the lost democratic statehood. This integrated all the different members of the anti-Nazi resistance movement, including the communists, in a manner similar to the allies who were united by common interests.

With the liberation in 1945, Masaryk reappeared in the consciousness of the nation, including the communists, for a second time. Now he was the representative of the values which the new republic wanted to begin anew, though it was generally felt that a simple return to the pre-war society was impossible.

Memories of the Great Depression of the 1930s and of the failure of western democratic powers in Munich joined with the general leftist, radical movement occurring in the whole of Europe. This constituted conditions favorable first for the propagation of socialist ideas and then for a gradual Stalinization of Czechoslovakia as a country in East Europe and the "Soviet sphere". There followed the emergence of a divided world and the onset of the Cold War. A robust campaign against Masaryk was a part of the process of Stalinization in Czechoslovakia. At that time, he was portrayed as a representative of an "anti-national and anti-popular" policy. His "western" democratic orientation and his humanism were not compatible with Stalinism.

Several waves of destalinization, strengthening gradually under the pressure of the cruel experience of the trials of the 1950s, the analyses presented at the twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party, and the experience of Yugoslavia, East Germany, Hungary and Poland, evoked attempts to democratize and humanize the social system. This pointed once again to the significance and value of Masaryk's heritage. These attempts culminated in the effort to create "socialism with a human face" and to break through the rigid neo-Stalinist system in 1968. This was the third of Masaryk's returns, once more too short to penetrate to sufficient depth the national social consciousness.

After the Soviet military intervention in August, 1968, and the restoration of the totalitarian regime, Masaryk once again became *persona non grata* for official ideology. The research on Masaryk shifted mainly into the exile and samizdat literature. The ideological rulers did not bother to dispute: the official attitude was set against Masaryk. The more he was disowned, the greater was the discussion about him among the opposition, members of the Charter 77, the illegal Masaryk Society and exiled intellectuals. In the second half of the 1980s, his name appeared more and more frequently in demonstrations organized on the occasion of Masaryk's anniversaries: the establishment of independent Czechoslovakia (October 28), intervention (August 21) and the death of Jan Palach (January 19). The process culminated on November 17, 1989, when Masaryk returned for the fourth time into the wide national consciousness; this time, however, as a part of a resolute movement to establish not a reform socialism, but a thorough political and economic democracy liquidating completely the totalitarian society.

This extremely brief survey of Masaryk's four returns is presented not only to remind the non-Czech reader of some generally known historical facts concerning this country in the heart of Europe, but also as an introduction to the questions to be discussed in this study: Is it not possible that these historical paradoxes result in an unnatural situation in which Masaryk's work, so often prohibited and refused, never had time to be peacefully and organically absorbed and critically appreciated by younger generations? Could they have become even an artificially re-actualized myth, symbolized and glorified in this way, which obscures modern problems and acts retrogressively? Or are its real and permanent values now emerging from the spasms of historical

time; if so, then what are these values? Being completely aware of both continuity and discontinuity, we shall try to answer these questions or, at least, to present possible answers.

### **Masaryk's Intellectual Horizons**

In his cultural orientation T.G. Masaryk naturally followed the Central European traditions of thought in Germany and Austria (Kant, Herder, Brentano, philosophy and theology in Leipzig). At the same time, however, he contributed to a shift of the Czech cultural orientation from a one-sided dependence on German philosophy to a French-English orientation (Hume, Pascal, Comte, Mill) and inspired an interest in a critical appreciation of spiritual values of Russian culture (Dostoevski, Tolstoy) and of the "phenomenon of Russia" in general in relation to Europe.

This pluralistic cultural orientation had been present among the principles of Czech culture long before Masaryk. It reflected the Czech position in Europe and the specific historic destiny of a nation developing on the western border of the Slavs and on the boundary between western and eastern Christianity. It reflected also the conflict between Germanism and Slavism and between the Czech Reformation and the (German) Counter-Reformation. It was at the crossroad of cultural styles, and as epochs changed the country was either in the center of European states (Greater Moravia, the reign of Charles IV or George of Podbrady) or, on the contrary, only a subordinated part of the Habsburg Empire.

Masaryk did not create this plurality, but he did generate new impulses and initiate shifts in the cultural orientation. Until his arrival in Prague (1882) as a professor of a newly established Czech university, he had grown up in a milieu of central European, German-Austrian intellectual culture. He had studied at a German high school in Brno, and thereafter at universities in Vienna and Leipzig. Above all, Herder's philosophy reinforced his Czech (and Slavonian) feelings and provided a formulation of humanist ideals. A predecessor in this matter was the radical democratic Hegelian, Augustin Smetana.

Another important personality was Masaryk's teacher of many years, Franz Brentano, in Vienna, who supported his critical approach to the Catholic religion and served as an example of an ethical person. He stimulated interest on the part of Masaryk in psychology "on an empirical base" and in the philosophy of August Comte and his predecessor, David Hume (on whom he would later write: *Poet pravdpodobnosti a Humova skepse* (Calculus of Probabilities and Hume's Skepticism). In this paradoxical way Masaryk was stimulated from within "Austrian" philosophy to a growing interest in French and English thought.

Other elements emerged during his stay in Leipzig (1876-1877): contacts with the scientists at Leipzig University, studies of Protestant theology and, last but not least, his study of suicide, conceived to a great extent in the Comtean spirit. In Leipzig, Masaryk became friends with Edmund Husserl whom he interested in Brentano's philosophy. Husserl in turn initiated Masaryk into the mysteries of mathematics which he used later in his work about Hume's skepticism. His rejection of German philosophy focused above all upon classical German philosophy; nevertheless, later Masaryk came to a positive evaluation of Kant's philosophy, especially of his noetic criticism.

Masaryk's relationship to North America was an additional new element reinforcing his "western" cultural orientation. The major impulse here followed from his marriage to American Charlotte Garrigue (expressed externally also by the adoption of her family name Garrigue). She was a Unitarian in religion, which had a strong ethic but a looser relationship to dogma and to church organization. This stimulated his sympathy for a personal, non-church orientation of a more

Protestant type. Masaryk's relation to American culture was exemplified by his American lectures about Russia and the Slavonian problem, presented under the Carnegie Foundation at the beginning of this century. His intensive diplomatic activities during World War I were supported by American compatriots and political circles. This culminated in his almost symbolic journey from Russia (shaken by the October Revolution of 1917), via Vladivostok, to Washington to negotiate with President Wilson in 1918. One may also recall his factual and comprehensive information about the situation in Russia and, naturally, his negotiation about the post-war arrangement of Europe which culminated in the declaration of Czechoslovak independence in Washington.<sup>2</sup>

These outward political and diplomatic relations to the U.S.A. had a deeper philosophic background. The United States represented for him one of the important components of world democracy, a pillar of his philosophical democracy (philosophy of history) and in many regards an example of political order for the new republic. Beyond this were his sympathies for American factuality, pragmatism, industry, activism and individualism.

In Bohemia and Moravia, "Slavism" was traditionally a counterbalance of "Pangermanism"; sometimes it changed into a critical Russophilism which relied on a "Great Russia". Masaryk continued in the tradition of critical evaluation of tsarism, presented in papers by an outstanding Czech journalist and writer, Karel Havlíček Borovský. At the same time, however, he stimulated interest in an objective evaluation of the importance of Russian culture and Russian thought. He rightly paid increasing attention to Russia as it became an important allergic point of both European and world politics. Masaryk was prepared for this task through his long-term studies of Russia and its spiritual traditions (Kireïevsky, Dostoyevsky, Russian literary criticism, three visits to Tolstoy, contacts with Maxim Gorky, and studies of Russian religious philosophy). The results of these studies were published in his works *Russia and Europe* and *New Europe*. In his work, *World Revolution*, he analyzed the course and the consequences of World War I and of the Russian Revolution. In view of this Masaryk appears as one of the first pioneers of a complex and systematic research on eastern Europe and Russia (Slavonic and East European Studies, *Ostforschung*, *Sovietology*, etc.).

### **The Czech Question as a World Question**

Masaryk participated in the establishment of a national identity unifying the philosophy of modern democracy and humanistic ideals with democratic and humanitarian traditions of home origin. This dated back as far as the Czech Reformation in the fifteenth century and to Comenius. It culminated in the establishment of an independent Czechoslovak democratic republic as a part of democratic Europe and the world democratic community as a whole.

Neither Masaryk's statement that "the Czech question is a world question", nor all his philosophy of Czech history, nor his philosophy of a "small nation" formulated in a number of books (*The Czech Question* [1895], *Karel Havlíček* [1896], *Jan Hus, Our National Revival and Our Reformation* [1896], *Palacký's Idea of the Czech Nation* [1898] and *The Problem of a Small Nation* [1905]) meant, as could seem at first sight, that he wanted to make the Czech nation a center of the world, to hold its problems as the central theme of world politics, or to attribute to this nation an extraordinary mission in the world. The *raison d'être* of his efforts may be better characterized

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<sup>2</sup> Cf., J.B. Kozak, *Masaryk a Washingtonská deklarace* (Masaryk and the Washington Declaration) (Praha: Melantrich, 1968).

by his other formulations, e.g., "to formulate the idea of humanity in the Czech language", and "the Czech problem is a religious problem", etc.

These not very concrete formulations are built on several basic semantic contrasts: up-down (higher-lower), inside-outside (internal-external), small-big, we-they. Masaryk's concept of this problem may be summarized as follows: A small nation ("we") cannot, in comparison with big nations ("they"), base its existence, identity and importance on quantitative indices or the external power of economics, population, or military superiority. Its chance lies in internal value, intensity of output, everyday labor, scientific and cultural activities, moral strength and truth. A great history is not sufficient, national myths are inadmissible, as are any patrioteering, internal narrow-mindedness, trickery, martyr-complex, or waiting for external salvation by a mighty savior. The national identity cannot be built up on a superficial peculiarity or even on malice toward other nations.

The moral strength of a nation (as well as of an individual) is based on its awareness that the national feeling is subordinated to a higher, humanitarian principle which supports one's democratic world-view. The deference of one human being to another is possible only if they respect the principle of humanity which is based on the viewpoints of eternity and on equality of non-sovereign people before the sovereignty of God. Similarly, equal co-existence of nations requires a submission to higher principles. From this point of view "democracy is a way of living *sub specie aeternitatis*; hence, the Czech problem is a religious problem. In this matter it is possible to draw from the democratic and humanistic heritage of the Czech reformation (John Huss, Comenius) through whom our nation joined the general world trend toward democracy and humanism.

This means that for Masaryk the Czech problem is a world problem above all, in terms of breaking through the barriers of narrow-mindedness and of a closed patriotic approach. (For that reason it is not possible to agree entirely with Roman Szporluk who called Masaryk's conception "nationalism with a human face.")<sup>3</sup> For Masaryk, the national is always subordinated to the generally humanistic; the identity and rights of a nation are subordinated to the human and civil rights of all mankind.

However, it is true that Masaryk shows certain charismatic personal traits and that his philosophy of Czech history was a programmatic conception subordinated to political objectives. This induced numerous controversies among historians and philosophers due to its excessive selectivity, e.g., his one-sided emphasis regarding the Reformation on only one part, namely, the Czech Brethren, to the detriment of Hussite radicalism; his rejection of the period of the "counter-reformation" as an epoch of "The Dark Ages" due to his stylization of the National Revival, etc.

Many arguments, both in the 1930s and at present were induced by his idea of Czechoslovakism. In the interwar period this was an official conception according to which the Slovak nation should be only one branch of a single Czechoslovak nation. This conception had a pragmatic political meaning, viz., to create a majority Czechoslovak nation in the new republic (with respect to the strong minorities of Germans and Hungarians). This idea, however, contained a latent danger of future nationalistic conflicts which did indeed break out later and contributed to the disintegration of the Czechoslovak republic in 1938 and again in 1992. This idea also lurks in Masaryk's philosophic and legal background, i.e., in his conception that statehood should be built upon the principle of nationalities (which could not be realized under our conditions) and that nations as *de facto* great individuals can obtain democratic civil rights in this way.

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<sup>3</sup> R. Szporluk, *Political Thought of Tomas G. Masaryk* (East European Monographs; New York: Columbia University Press, 1981).

At present, some authors cast doubt on the "break-up" of the Austro-Hungarian empire, but the establishment of an independent Czechoslovak Republic was a positive historic deed. In spite of the unresolved internal conflicts of the interwar republic, Masaryk's philosophy of Czech history contributed to the establishment of Czechoslovak democratic statehood, and the republic was one of the most democratic states of Central and Eastern Europe. In the interwar period, it created a respectable economy, created great cultural values and tried to "formulate the idea of humanity in Czech."

## **The Crisis of Modern Man and Ways to Overcome It**

Masaryk's central problem was the crisis of modern man. He looked for its profound causes (disintegration of traditional values and of a comprehensive *Weltanschauung*, "superficial man"), diagnosed its symptoms (suicides, cultural snobbery, non-religiosity, social conflicts, revolutions), and tried to constitute such values as could overcome the crises ("inward man", a harmonic *Weltanschauung*, every day work, ethical and lived religion, education, a scientific and philosophical understanding of man, and a transcendent religious horizon).

In the 1880s the conflict between Protestantism and Catholicism seemed to be the most important for Masaryk on the world scale. "Catholicism" represented for him a unifying, theological *Weltanschauung* based on a myth supporting an authoritative state. Its expression was a monopolistic position for the Church as an institutionalized, political religion. It was seen to inhibit the development of science and philosophy, freedom of thought, and the development of man as an autonomous personality and a free citizen. On the other hand, "Protestantism" satisfied him due to its individualism, emphasis on non-ecclesiastical religion, on autonomous morality and industry. In his opinion, Protestantism opened a space for the development of modern science and philosophy. Catholicism was aristocratic while Protestantism was democratic.

Simultaneously, Masaryk saw the historical turning point conditioned by Protestantism as a collapse of traditional social values to be associated with subjectivism, skepticism and an incomplete *Weltanschauung*. In this sense the crisis of Man for him was always associated with a crisis of religion: "Modern--Man--Religion--behind each of these words I see a grimace of a triplicate sphinx . . .";<sup>4</sup> "God or a nail, religion or nihilism--this is a blood disjunction of our time."<sup>5</sup>

Religion remained for him a central instrument for overcoming our crisis, a factor which harmonizes both human personality and the global relationships within the society. This mission, however, can be fulfilled only by a new, non-ecclesiastical, personal, live religion without ecclesiastical institutions and respecting the importance of modern science and philosophy. Masaryk's approach is based on trust in a personal God and in the immortality of the soul ("Don't be lazy, but don't get excited because you are eternal"). His "dogmatics" consisted in the requirement of an effective love toward one's neighbor and in the viewpoint of eternity (life *sub specie aeternitatis*). This implied awareness that the humanitarian principle, respect of other people and oneself, has to emanate from the knowledge that we are non-sovereign beings subordinated to the commands of a higher moral code ("a man can be human to another man only *sub specie aeternitatis*").

However, as the crisis of modern man is total and many-sided, a transformation of the religious vision of the world is not sufficient. It is necessary to carry out deep social, political, economic and cultural reforms. Masaryk's emphasis on reforms and non-violence is inspired not only by the

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<sup>4</sup> This characterizes the approach to Masaryk in a study by Z. Nojedly, *T.G. Masaryk*, I-IV (Prague).

<sup>5</sup> *Moderní člověk a náboženství* (Modern Man and Religion) (Prague, 1934), 4.

ethical-religious point of view, but also by the conviction (based on historical experience) that all "external", radical revolutionary attempts result in the risk of unjustifiable victims, in the preservation of old evils or even in a restoration of old orders in a much worse form. Science, philosophy, profound education, culture, arts and every day intensive work are more effective and more positive tools.

Masaryk's method for the formation of national identity played an important role in the tradition of Czech society, although it was not always accepted by more radical political groups. It contributed to the prosperity of Czech science and culture before World War I and had a marked effect on the Czech educational system where teachers were strong and influential bearers of Masaryk's ideas for many years.

His contribution to the constitution of Czech sociology is a remarkable example of Masaryk's influence on Czech science, especially his works, *Suicide* (1881), *Principles of Concrete Logic* (1885) with a proposal of classification of sciences, and *A Handbook of Sociology* (1901). Among his followers should be mentioned, in the first place, a representative of structural functionalism, Arnost Inocenc Bláha, the main representative of the Brno School of Sociology. He began from Durkheim's concept of sociology and corrected it by using Masaryk's ethical and philosophical views. Another follower of Masaryk was Josef Král, a positivistically oriented representative of the Prague School of Sociology. Simultaneously, Masaryk contributed to the revival of discussions about the problems of religion, and paved the way for the development of the Czech "theology of crisis" (J.L. Hromádka) and the religious philosophy of Emanuel Rádl, one of Masaryk's few genuine philosophical disciples.

Masaryk's philosophy of crisis converged with many ideas of European "Lebensphilosophie": individualism, autonomy of human existence, aversion to large "speculative" systems of classical German philosophy and to the "capital letters" in general (History, State, Church, but also Man and Mankind). Some authors<sup>6</sup> classify him for this reason among the predecessors of existentialism in Czechoslovakia. Nevertheless, Masaryk understood the dramatic tension between man and nothingness--the alienated world--only as a symptom of crisis; his main efforts are oriented to the search for solutions. He was above all a charismatic personality, a man of order who "does not come to abolish the law but to accomplish it."<sup>7</sup> In a similar sense, Václav Cerný later compared Masaryk and Salda as two "erratic blocks," two clear-cut personalities with different approaches to religion. According to Cerný, Salda is a mystic who wants to create in harmony with the Deity, whereas Masaryk is a theologian, a man of order, who seeks above all to serve God by performing the imposed orders.

There is no doubt that Masaryk is a man of harmonization, consensus, order: "A great task of our time is to create religion and the religious organization of the society in such a way that it would comply with critical reason. To create does not mean to reconcile science and religion, but to create new religious and spiritual content for life."<sup>8</sup>

The emphasis put upon the words "create" and "make" indicates that there are certain "Salda-like" features in Masaryk's person: he agrees with synergism, with the concept of man as a collaborator or even a "friend" of God. According to Masaryk, nothing "happens" in the history but "I have to do it, . . . I am also history."<sup>9</sup> Politics is also a form of creation which can be compared

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<sup>6</sup> *V boji o nabozenstvi* (In the Struggle for Religion) (Prague, 1947), 42.

<sup>7</sup> Václav Cerný, "FXS-TGM," *Host do domu*, no. 12 (1967): 22-23.

<sup>8</sup> T.G. Masaryk, *Rusko a Evropa*, II (Russia and Europe, II) (Prague, 1933), 691.

<sup>9</sup> T.G. Masaryk, *Idealy humanitni* (Humanistic Ideals) (Prague, 1946), 47.

with poetry: "A politician must create in a way similar to a poet; as a poet, he is also . . . a seer and a creator."<sup>10</sup>

This internal tension in Masaryk aims toward an attempt to synthesize. This means that he tries to find the way from oneself without losing oneself, a complementarity of scientific and artistic knowledge, a lived religious relationship to man and world, a responsible rational behavior in a situation with a view behind the situation, an every day work *sub specie* of radical reform, an exact phantasy, a democratic way of living *sub specie aeternitatis*, i.e., a creation in order.

Masaryk is not only a philosopher of crisis but also a philosopher of sense. He analyses the crisis of sense and looks for the sense of crisis.

## Nonpolitical Politics

This sense situates Masaryk at his time in the conflict between democracy (anthropocracy) and theocracy. According to him, theocracy is a medieval way of ruling and thinking, a totalitarian, authoritarian state power based on a mythic (unscientific) way of thinking, a state religion (with the corresponding cast of messengers of revealed truths), and a secret diplomacy and bureaucracy. This is a society of aristocratic inactivity and of apolitical citizens who are mere objects of power and accept revealed truths. In contrast, democracy rejects a fetishization of the state; it carries out public policy, tries to persuade the citizens to participate in public decision and administration, is based on scientific and critical thinking, accepts humanitarian ideas which control and limit étatist requirements, rejects racism and nationalism, and justifies human and civil rights.

In this spirit he understands also the *raison d'être* of the struggle of the Czech nation and of the events of World War I (in his works *Russia and Europe*, *New Europe* and *World Revolution*) as a fight between democracy and theocracy; his political philosophy in the emerging Czechoslovak Republic is based on this vision of the world. The fall of Russian tsarism (the most rigid theocracy) and the victory over the Central Powers seem to support Masaryk's philosophy of history.

Masaryk's three principal theses of the philosophy of history were formulated gradually as a conflict between Protestantism and Catholicism, between reformation and revolution, between democracy and theocracy. If the relationships among Protestantism-reformism-democracy appear to be logical, the relationships among Catholicism-revolution-theocracy are less understandable. We shall try to explain Masaryk's train of thought.

As symptoms of a crisis of the old world (e.g., theocracy) and as accompanying phenomena of a still unconstituted democracy, it is possible to observe titanism, Faustism, revolt against the Supreme (during which subjectivists kill themselves and objectivists kill others), violent revolution, destructive and only superficial changes. These very changes are supported most in countries with the most rigid theocracy. They represent a violent revolt against violence, an aristocratic revolt against aristocracy; they are theocracy "inside out". (On the other hand, in Protestant, democratic countries, trends of reform socialism predominate.)

For that reason Masaryk published his critique of Marxism at the most sensitive point of its development, in the second half of the 1890s (*The Social Problem*, 1898). The "crisis of Marxism" was the beginning of a period of division which would be very important for the future, namely into a reformist wing (social democracy) and a revolutionary wing resulting later in the Russian Revolution of 1917 and in Stalinism. His critique was further intensified under the impact of the

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<sup>10</sup> T.G. Masaryk, *Rusko a Evropa*, II, 667-668. The term "old man" means here "a man of the old times."



October Revolution of 1917 when, in his opinion, the Bolsheviks "removed the Tzar but not Tzarism."

The thesis concerning the conflict between democracy and theocracy would appear to involve disputable aspects and inaccuracies; it omits the fact of the integration of Catholicism with democracy, and the existence of monarchistic regimes in democratic societies; it cannot explain completely such new phenomena as Fascism or Stalinism, etc. In spite of this, however, Masaryk's opinion had an indisputably positive effect in strengthening the democratic traditions in Czechoslovakia. In a certain way, it anticipated the criticism of some substantial features of later Fascism and Stalinism and even other forms of totalitarianism, e.g., his critique of "technological reason," consumer society, means for the mass manipulation of people, ideas about the technical "modifiability of history," and so forth.

Masaryk's idea of "non-political policy" is based on these conceptions. It rejects not only the policy in the form of a fundamentalistic realization of mythic truths, but also the policy reduced only to a technical manipulation of people. The appeal for a "non-political policy" involves also the demand to subject even the policy to the effect of ethical norms, to create a scientific, cultural and spiritual background of policy, to concentrate our efforts on the formation of internal, spiritual values, and to select non-violent methods. It would work to create a public consensus establishing a favorable climate for political culture and civil co-existence, and for higher norms which correct narrow, selfish interests of individual "parties."

It is understandable that these principles played an important role not only in the establishment of a democratic republic between the two wars, but also in the period of opposition to Fascism and Stalinism. They had marked influence in all stages of "Masaryk's comebacks," especially during the last decades of the fight for human rights (Charta 77 and other non-formal organizations). Their echo may be found in works by Václav Havel (*The Power of the Powerless*) and certainly in the slogans of the November Revolution. In this spirit Paul Ricoeur presented his lecture, "Homage a Jan Patočka," in Prague in September 1990. Ricoeur traced the evolutionary line in the history of Czech thinking from J.A. Comenius through T.G. Masaryk to Jan Patočka.

The idea of a "non-political policy" retains its relevance at present, although it can be said that the complexity of the problems in the transition to a new society (and of entry into a new world in general) poses the problem of the limits of this conception. There is a certain danger that the difference between the specific mechanisms of real politic life, the intransigent requirements of economics and the specific features of the sphere of civil society will not adequately be respected.

The versatility (or even the contradictory character) of Masaryk's influence on Czech thought in the interwar period, namely on the development of positivism, structuralism and religious philosophy, resulted in the fact that nearly every important philosopher felt the need to read Masaryk. Above all, at present, when Masaryk's works are freely available under absolutely different socio-historical, political, cultural and spiritual conditions, there is a real opportunity for new evaluations or re-evaluations of Masaryk.

It is necessary to fill the serious gaps in the historical studies of our past and, at the same time, to establish organic relationships between our philosophy, science and culture, on the one hand, and the new spiritual movements of the world, on the other. Therefore, it is not surprising that there are new views emerging especially with regard to the availability of numerous both exile and samizdat works about Masaryk. These are inspired especially by Catholic philosophy (K. Mácha, J. Nmec), contemporary Protestantism (L. Hejdlánek, O.A. Funda, J. Simsa), structuralism (F. Kautman, K. Chvatík), Marxism (K. Machovec, K. Kosík, R. Kalivoda), the philosophy of existentialism and phenomenology (J. Patočka, V. Cerný, E. Kohák), to say nothing of new

analyses in the social sciences or history (J. Opat, J. Kovtun), or of the arguments of postmodernism.

In any case, our introductory reflections about Masaryk's "returns" were only of a metaphoric nature: in fact, Masaryk never left us.

## Chapter III Czech Positivism

*Jiri Cetl and Jiri Gabriel*

In the chapter on T. G. Masaryk it was indicated that positivism became one of the most prominent trends of modern Czech thought and strongly influenced the consciousness of Czech society from the late nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century. More than any other trend, it aspired to gain a dominant position in the Czech national thought of its time. The preceding, dominant philosophy in our countries had been herbatianism, a product of the post-classical evolution of German philosophy which was accepted particularly in the Austro-Hungarian Empire and enjoyed as well a firm position during the nineteenth century in Prague at the University, which was then German.<sup>1</sup> In comparison, positivism represented a more complete form of "post-revolutionary" thinking. Its insertion into the consciousness of Czech society represented an attempt to "open the window" to West Europe, i.e., to overcome a certain provincialism in thought, to bring the Czech philosophical culture to a "contemporary level" and to incorporate it into the evolutionary logic of European philosophizing.

In this sense, it joined the European turn to positive philosophy begun in mid 19th century (Comte, Mill, Spencer). Without this as its theoretical and ideological basis and model, the Czech phenomenon would be incomprehensible. This was not a direct reception of any concrete system, but rather of a pervasively positivistic atmosphere. In Czechoslovakia, the positivistic tradition developed in a relatively specific manner, different from the evolutionary logic of Western European positivism. In Czechoslovakia the evolution can be divided into three historical epochs.

### **The Beginnings of Czech Positivism**

This took place in the last third of the nineteenth century. Compared with the classical positivistic countries this was late, but was not without certain domestic presuppositions and antecedents. These beginnings form a freely associated line of earlier Czech thought: the Enlightenment, whose immaturity and incompleteness invited positivism to substitute to a certain extent some of its functions; philosophy of common sense, with its empiricism and rejection of German speculation; English and French philosophy of experience, as formulated particularly by Karel Havlíček Borovský or Vilém Gabler around 1848 in the disputes about "the existence or non-existence of German philosophy in Bohemia;"<sup>2</sup> the tendency towards a natural-scientific

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<sup>1</sup> Among the Czech followers of J.F. Herbart (1796-1841), philosopher, psychologist and aesthician at the University in Prague were, in particular, Josef Dastich (1825-1870), the first to begin again to read philosophy at the university in the Czech language; G.A. Lindner (1828-1887), the first professor of pedagogics at the reopened Czech university; Josef Durdik (1837-1901), author of the first Czech compendium on the history of philosophy and the author of the Czech formal aesthetics; and Otakar Hostinsky (1837-1910), the most prominent Czech aesthician at the turn of the century.

<sup>2</sup> This dispute regarding the importance of advanced German philosophy for Czech philosophy proves how complex was the process in Bohemia of asserting philosophy at that time as an independent and irreplaceable component of the revival of national culture.

*Weltanschauung*, which appeared in the 60s and 70s along with the first reviews of Darwinism; and finally, some attitudes of Czech herbartianism in the 1860s through 1880.

The beginnings of Czech positivism itself not only were delayed but also were very inarticulate. The Czech lands of Bohemia and Moravia were retarded in their social development due to the failure of the revolution of 1848, the inability to realize Czech national demands within the Habsburg Monarchy, etc. This meant that the revision of the traditional picture of philosophy in the positivist spirit of scientism, etc., was asserted only gradually and with continuous delays. It is true that the consciousness of the Czech society began to feel the need for positivism, but for a certain period it was not able to accept it fully and so was unable to formulate a comprehensive theory.

In this first stage then, positivism appeared only in the attitudes of some Czech herbartians (Josef Durdík, Gustaf Adolf Lindner) as certain positivistic and positivising tendencies. This concerned the conception of philosophy as based on the special sciences and based upon some knowledge of West-European positivism. At about the same time, extensive information appeared in periodicals about West-European positivism, along with extracts and translations of some of its texts. In contrast to herbartian contributions, these works of Josef Miks, Emanuel Makovicka, etc., were positivistic and aimed at its propagation. But this did not constitute positivism as an explicit philosophical school.

After the 1880s, positivism was implicitly contained in the work of the special sciences which, having been nourished by the reopening of the Czech university in Prague in 1882, had entered a new stage of development overcoming the previous provincialism, "patriotic character", etc. The "positivist spirit" of this science, drawn rather from the spirit of scientism of the nineteenth century, than directly from some positivist doctrine, appeared rather negatively in the natural sciences, rejecting speculation and the romantic conception of knowledge, etc. It is manifested also in critiques, reviews and essays appearing in the critical periodical of Czech science, *Athenaeum*, founded in 1884 mainly through the initiative of T.G. Masaryk. The positivist spirit was more ambiguous in the humanities, particularly in the traditional (and thus also the most advanced) disciplines of Czech modern science, linguistics and historiography.

In the 1880s, Czech historical science laid out a program with an essentially positivistic methodology against the already degenerating politically liberal historiography and against romantic historical speculation. In the late 80s the article of Jaroslav Goll, who later became one of the prominent Czech historians, *Dejiny a dejepis* (History and Historiography) had the character of a manifesto. This was not a lineal transplant of a finished positivistic conception of history into historiography; the author was inspired more by the conception of the German historian Leopold von Ranke. Nevertheless, it constituted an emphatic rejection of the philosophical and educational importance of cognitive facts, stressing unengaged objectivism, etc., and thereby voiced the principles of the "positivistic spirit" of Czech science.

At that time, similar changes also took place in other branches of the humanities, for instance, in the legal sciences and somewhat later in literary science and literary history, etc. Some disciplines were only just being constituted in this new spirit, either by exiting the herbartian framework (as with psychology and pedagogics) or by being newly formed (for instance, sociology).

The beginnings of Czech positivism culminated in this "positivistic spirit" in which the modern Czech scientific activities were organized. At the same time it was symptomatic of Czech development that in its beginnings Czech positivism did not reach an explicit philosophical formulation. This may be due also to the ambiguous role of T.G. Masaryk in the preparation of

Czech positivism. In the milieu of that time, some of his studies could have been accepted as promoting positivism. At the same time however, Masaryk's own philosophical attitude was basically non-positivistic, even anti-positivistic. Masaryk criticized positivism as a type of scientific thinking and reprimanded it strongly from the position of a life-philosophy and man-centered position. Thus it came about that positivism in Czech thinking was subjected to massive criticism even before it was philosophically formulated. To a certain extent this stigmatized the development of Czech positivism, especially as its decisive representatives were close politically to Masaryk.

### **Explicit Theoretical and Philosophical Positivism**

In the early 1890s this philosopher, psychologist and ethicist became such a dominant figure in Czech thinking that his contemporaries, Frantisek Drtina and Frantisek Cída, who, together with Krejčí, were the founders and editors of the first Czech professional philosophical periodical, *Ceska mysl* (Czech Mind), receded into the background. Let us introduce first Drtina and Cída.

*Frantisek Drtina* (1861-1925), first docent and after 1899 professor of philosophy and pedagogy at Charles University, differed from the stringent, positivistic attitude of Frantisek Krejčí, particularly in striving to overcome agnosticism. He attempted to include in his work a strong humanistic orientation and devoted attention particularly to the history of philosophy and pedagogy. During his studies in Berlin in 1885 he attended the seminar of Eduard Zeller, historian of ancient philosophy. He also became acquainted with Friedrich Paulsen and was influenced by his effort to lay a philosophical foundation for pedagogy and his pantheism.

In his book, *Myslenkový vývoj evropského lidstva* (The Intellectual Evolution of European Mankind, 1902), later published under the title *Úvod do filosofie* (An Introduction to Philosophy), Drtina attempted to explain his conception of the development of European philosophy in a way comprehensible even to a philosophically untrained reader. He sought to make evident that the birth of philosophical conceptions and their mutual encounters had always been in response to the historical experiences of man which led to ever deeper knowledge. He concluded that European philosophy aimed, from ancient rationalism and naturalism through medieval suprarationalism and supranaturalism, to a new, more critical and more profound rationalism and naturalism, accompanied by a humanist idea and belief in evolution and progress.

He considered philosophy itself as a homogeneous system of scientific knowledge and, at the same time, as a view of the world and of life (with metaphysics, noetics and ethics). The culmination of the metaphysical endeavors of philosophy for Drtina is the question: "what is the world and being, what is the purpose and aim of its existence?" He himself assumed that philosophy cannot end in "a blind recognition of matter as the substance of being", that the world is not only a *res extensa* but also a *res cogitans*. Nevertheless, the greatest problem of philosophy remains "man himself with his soul", i.e., the understanding of man and his existence in the world. That is the reason why one of the important themes of Drtina was religion, which he considered to be a manifestation of the human spirit's dimensions of freedom in response to such feelings as astonishment, fear, and one's own insufficiency. He considered as important for modern man only such religion as is without dogmatic rigidity, prejudice and superstition, a religion primarily emphasizing moral values. The value of Christianity remains the idea of loving one's neighbor, understood in the sense of effective social duty.

The humanitarian ideas which Drtina professed as a philosopher were the starting point for his pedagogical works published in the books: *Ideály výchovy* (The Ideals of Education, 1930), *Reforma školství* (The Reform of the system of Schools, 1931), and *Univerzita a učitelstvo* (The University and the Staff of Teachers, 1932). It must be added that Drtina participated not only in the foundation of the *Ceská mysl* (Czech Mind), but also of *Athenaeum* (1884), *Nase doba* (Our Times, 1899)<sup>3</sup> and the *Books of Pedagogical Classics*. He was also the founder of the Comenius Pedagogical Institute in Prague.

*Frantisek Cída* (1865-1918), a colleague of Drtina and Krejčí, was a theist by confession, but a relativist and probabilist in his theoretical work. He was interested mainly in psychology (especially infant psychology) and the theory of knowledge. He was well-known among his students for his excellent survey of the world movements in those fields. Nonetheless, as Král wrote in *Ceskoslovenská filosofie* (Czechoslovak Philosophy), Cída "published very much but, except for *Noetická záhada u Herbarta a Milla* (The Noetic Mystery in Hebart and Mill, 1894) and monographs on Hyna and Zahradník, and perhaps his paper on the language of infants, his writings were scattered among a great number of pioneering, stimulative and mainly informative papers and articles."<sup>4</sup> Cída's "Rozhledy po systémech filosofických" (Outlines of the Systems of Philosophy) in *Ceská mysl* (1906-1910) dealt mainly with current noetic conceptions and were referred to even by anti-Krejčí critics.

The influence of Frantisek Drtina and Frantisek Cída in Czech philosophy should not be underestimated; nevertheless, the position of Krejčí was so outstanding that the entire second stage of Czech positivism may be called the epoch of Frantisek Krejčí. It extends to the early 1920s.

*Frantisek Krejčí* (1858-1934) was docent from 1898 and from 1905 professor of philosophy, specializing in psychology. Initially, he started from herbartism (as Durdik's pupil), as is reflected particularly in his psychology. At first, Krejčí drew also from the so-called folk psychology (*Völkerpsychologie*) of Lazarus and Steinthal. The development of his own six-part system extended nearly 25 years, from 1902 to 1926. After finishing his system he revised the basic starting points of his system in *Základy vedeckého systému psychologie* (Foundations of a Scientific System of Psychology, 1929). In principle, however, Krejčí's psychology remained the same: it wished to be empirical and developmental, was based on biology, and rejected the concept of the soul (Krejčí's opposers called it "psychology without a soul"). Krejčí considered mental phenomena to be conscientious responses of the organism, and he explained them using the theory of psychophysical parallelism (whose content he considered to be a scientifically verified fact). He presumed a so-called tripartition of all mental phenomena into the imaginative, emotional and free, which rendered the empirical character of this psychology very problematic.

Filled with the spirit of West European positivism of the nineteenth century, Krejčí wanted to construct his philosophy upon psychology conceived on a scientific empirical basis, probably closest to the conception of Herbert Spencer, though there was no direct relation. It was to be a scientific philosophy in the sense that it was limited to experience and "excluded all metaphysics". Krejčí formulated it in such a way that he made questioning the concept of transcendence (in many ways analogous to Spencer's conception of the "unknowable") to be the center of his philosophy. He considered knowledge of such a transcendent to be impossible and unnecessary for the construction of a philosophical view. this presumption that the transcendent was unknowable

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<sup>3</sup> Before the origination of the *Ceska mysl* (Czech Mind) in 1900, the periodicals *Athenaeum* and *Nase doba* (Our Era) provide the most space for philosophical studies and reports.

<sup>4</sup> Vincenc Zahradnik (1790-1836) and Ferdinand Hyna (1802-1881): both Catholic priests, published works in philosophy, ethics, psychology and logic, and belong among the first authors of modern specialized terminology.

enabled Krejčí--with a certain affinity to Spinoza, whom he highly respected--to formulate an essentially monistic position. This was neutral to the dualisms of the body and soul, matter and consciousness--a neutrality based on a psychophysical parallelism. At the same time Krejčí assumed that he was beyond the onesidedness of "metaphysics" and he did not mind (though he was non-religious, even anti-religious) coming very close to the clear consequences of pantheism. The agnostic scientism and "neutral monism" of Krejčí implied a conception of a strictly determined reality which admitted neither indeterminism and teleology, nor the possibility of the active intervention of man upon reality--though Krejčí would have liked to deny this.<sup>5</sup>

Indeed, Krejčí never did formulate systematically his philosophical views, though they penetrated all his work. This is indicated most distinctly in his essays on contemporary philosophy, in the works *Filosofie přítomnosti* (The Philosophy of the Present, 1904), and *Filosofie posledních let před válkou* (The Philosophy of the Last Years Before the War, 1918, second impression, 1930). He also defended it vehemently in numerous polemics. Towards the end of his life he even radicalized some of his theses, being convinced that he was defending the scientific *Weltanschauung*.

Krejčí's explicit philosophical formulation of positivism can be classified with European naturalizing positivism of the nineteenth century, which still had a synthesizing scope and aspired to provide a *Weltanschauung*. Krejčí, however, wanted to revise some of its parts under the influence of Masaryk's antipositivistic arguments, particularly by exceeding positivism's strict objectivism and lack of engagement. European positivism at the turn of the century veered towards empiriocriticism, abandoning the construction of a *Weltanschauung* in favor of a clear-cut orientation to gnoseological and methodological problems. In contrast, Krejčí took his positivism as a world and life view which, along with reason, should satisfy also "the heart of man" and should represent a kind of "humanistic" version of positivism.

What has already been stated generally for Czech positivism holds true for Krejčí as well: the "positive", i.e., post-revolutionary, cannot be expressed completely because at the time of Krejčí (at least till the constitution of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1918) the goals and demands of the Czech society had not yet been fulfilled, in particular, national demands for a democratic society (after 1918). This is why Krejčí emphasized the social importance of science (to a great extent an Enlightenment belief), i.e., its role in solving the problems of the Czech national existence. He was much less interested in the inner mechanisms of knowledge, specific methods of sciences and their valence; indeed, his conception of science or reason was somewhat archaic when compared with their evolution in Europe. That is why Krejčí wanted to stand resolutely with his positivism--and again with a quasi-enlightenment pathos--against extra-rational knowledge in science, theoretical thinking and general consciousness.

He was very enthusiastic in his struggle against irrationalism and "idealism" (his conception being rather confused), when, for instance, he argued with the philosophizing physiologist Frantisek Mares or fought for his "scientific psychology". He stood against religion and clericalism, using a radicalism probably evoked by a symbiosis of the throne and the altar in the old monarchy, though this had no analogue in Czech intellectual culture. Krejčí understood the program of laicization or scientification of general consciousness (again a more or less

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<sup>5</sup> This implies evident consequences also for Krejčí's ethics (see the chapter on ethics).

enlightenment program) mainly as the dissemination of a positivistic *Weltanschauung* and "natural, or lay, morality."<sup>6</sup>

The endeavors of Krejčí to establish a personal philosophy for an active human life, which would become a truly personal confession as a kind of scientistically based humanism, had to fail (as indicated above) if this philosophy were to be based on an impersonal observational conception of the world without mankind. The conflict of scientism and humanism which should be overcome within the scientific system appeared insuperable. This made both the scientism and the humanism of Krejčí illusory. Even so, at least in his intentions, Krejčí overstepped the old West European positivism, indicating what positivism lacked and the direction of the further development of positivism in Czechoslovakia.

Despite these discrepancies and weaknesses, the philosophy of Krejčí was at first well accepted. This was also because Krejčí did not cultivate philosophy in a merely academic manner, but had a great sense for problems of his time and nation and dealt with them as if applying only his own theoretical principles. Nonetheless, after 1918 (though the works of Krejčí were not yet concluded) the situation began to change. In the new conditions after the constitution of the Czechoslovak Republic and with the coming of new generations, Krejčí's philosophy--and with it the positivistic tradition as such--was felt to be out-of-date from the viewpoint of various non-positivistic and even anti-positivistic tendencies.

The dominant role in this critique seemed to be played by a group of philosophers associated with the periodical *Ruch filosofický* (Philosophical Action) which aimed to contrast with *Ceská mysl*, which was still controlled by the positivists. As will later be mentioned in detail, this indeed represented a relatively wide scope of attitudes formed by the "opening of windows to Europe", but to non-positivistic European thinking. Hence, we find here attitudes of irrationalism and intuitivism, inspired by philosophies of life, for instance of the Bergsonian type, idealistic interpretations of modern exact science, the humanities and philosophical interpretations of mystical conceptions; also found are intuitive realists from among the Russian emigrants, etc. Positivism (which at that time was politically situated in the "center", i.e., in what was called the official "castle" of Masarykian democratism) was frequently attacked politically by the right wing.

Criticism of positivism (or the creation of non-positivistic models of philosophizing) was also evident in the group of thinkers frequently quoting Masaryk, particularly those who stressed the religious aspect of Masaryk's thinking (for instance, Emanuel Rádl and Czech Protestant thinkers).

The positivism of Krejčí was somewhat isolated after the year 1918 even within its own positivist group. In philosophy Krejčí had virtually no pupils. What he had stated as being a negative character of pre-war European positivism, i.e., "the dissection of positivistic thinking" into particular specialized disciplines, befell his own school: his pupils became scientific specialists, namely psychologists, for instance, Vilém Forster, Frantisek Seracký, Cestmír Stehlík. Not only did they not continue in the general philosophical endeavors of Krejčí, but--being instructed abroad and observing the developmental rhythm of their disciplines--they did not remain orthodox positivists even methodologically. So not even Krejčí's own group continued in the intentions of its teacher.

A new situation, unfavorable for Krejčí's positivism, arose in the sciences. In the nineteenth century the special sciences had been in close contact, even in alliance, with the positivistic attitudes to such an extent that at a certain stage the special sciences were, in their "spirit", able to

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<sup>6</sup> Along with several other Czech philosophers, Frantisek Krejci was a prominent functionary in the Czech section of *Volna myslenska* (Free Thought, established in 1904). *Volna myslenska* existed in the Czech regions, except for the interval of World War I, until 1939. In 1907 a world congress of *Volna myslenska* was held in Prague.



substitute for positivism which was not yet theoretically and philosophically formulated. In the 1920s there began a gradual process of limiting, if not overcoming that model of science. This appeared, for instance, in the disintegration of the prior methodological unity of science which had been provided by positivism in the nineteenth century absolutizing the methodology of the natural sciences. The inclusion of the so-called humanities and the reconstitution of their specific methodology may be understood as an overcoming of positivism based upon conscious contacts with eminently non-positivistic, even anti-positivistic thinking, for instance, the irrational life philosophy and the German humanities. Since this movement was found not only in the representative disciplines of Czech science, i.e., in linguistics (which took up a structuralistic orientation) and historiography, but also in several other disciplines, for instance in psychology, legal science, aesthetics, etc., it became clear that positivism was losing its former strength in a very important group of sciences, that is, in those where at the beginning its position had been strongest.

### **The Third Period of Czech Positivism**

The third period began in the 1920s. At that time, the Czech positivistic traditions seemed to disintegrate but, in spite of this fact, positivistic activities continued throughout the whole period between the two wars. The positivistic group continued to dominate within Czech thinking (which was now more differentiated) and maintained its position in university life. In addition, at this time, there were attempts to create new or modified positivistic traditions. This third stage in the development of positivism in Czech thinking can thus be indicated as the disintegration of Czech positivism and attempts to regenerate it.

Frantisek Krejčí continued to publish and to polemize till the mid-30s, frequently radicalizing his attitudes and shifting to the left and even opening new subjects as in his attempt to cope with phenomenology. In the period between the two wars, several authors belonging to the positivistic group maintained the tradition, even though freely, e.g., philosophizing natural scientists, such as the "mechanistically" oriented biologist *Vladimír Úlehla*, *Otakar Matouek* and some others. The positivistic tradition was supported, to some extent, by the Czech minority in Vienna in the work of *Jiljí Jahn* (1883-1947), organizer and inspector of Czech schools in the period between the two wars. His "superhoministic", i.e., anti-anthropomorphic philosophy, formulated in his books *Stríbrný svět* (The Silver World, 1938) and *Poznání a život* (Knowledge and Life, 1948) which were written abroad, was less known in Czechoslovakia. There were some "defenders of positivism": *Václav Sobotka* (1887-1947), a typical but not very deep polemicist, and *Frantisek Fajfr* (1892-1955), philosopher and sociologist. He was a theoretician of broad interests and a pioneer in the history of Czech thought. Both its academic representatives, *Josef Král* and *Josef Tvrđý*, worked at the university in Bratislava in the 30s. Perhaps confronted with the less laicized Slovakian consciousness, even clericalism--the theoretical work there maintained its scientific priority.

*Josef Král* (1882-1978), philosopher and sociologist, later professor at Charles University, initiated the Prague Sociological Group. This had a strong objectivist orientation and in this sense was against the "insufficiently objective" Brno sociological school of *I. A. Bláha*; it published the revue *Sociální problémy* (Social Problems). *Král* devoted his research activities particularly to the history of Czech and Slovak thought and is the author of the first objectivistic account of this in his book *Ceskoslovenská filosofie* (Czechoslovak Philosophy, 1937). After World War II he

criticized Marxist philosophy, which was on the way towards its hegemonistic position, in his essay "Positivism, Dialectical Materialism and Philosophy" in *Ceská mysl*, 1946-1947.

*Josef Tvrđý* (1877-1942) is undoubtedly the most important figure of the period between the wars, linking up the positivistic tradition with a renewal of positivism on different bases. Before World War I he published only a few articles devoted to special psychological problems, studies on Moravian folk ceramics and an essay on the philosophy of J.M. Guyau. He entered Czech philosophical life with his book, *Filosofie náboženství* (The Philosophy of Religion, 1921). The year of this publication is significant in that it marked the culmination of the conflict between positivism (represented by Frantisek Krejčí) and the "younger idealistic generation" which declared a "fight for the freedom of Czech philosophy" in its revue *Ruch filosofický* (Philosophical Action). Tvrđý's compelling idea for creating a "*Weltanschauung* for the modern Czech man" was polemically directed against those tendencies of "idealistic" criticism of positivism, which latently supported not only theology, theosophy and spiritism, but also the "present conservative and reactionary socio-political orders". He attempted to provide new evidence of the viability of scientific philosophy, referring to both the domestic traditions (namely Masaryk's realism) and to information from the "enormous stream of the realistic world philosophy which arose as a reaction against idealism and pragmatism". However, he was not motivated merely by a desire for a critical dialogue with irrational conceptions. His attempt was an effort to overcome the backwardness, frequently attacked by the critics of positivism, of the conception of scientific philosophy which led to prohibiting going beyond the phenomena to the substance of the reality so that many problems of the *Weltanschauung* with which man at that time was faced were ignored.

Tvrđý saw philosophy as the "endeavor for a uniform *Weltanschauung*" in an independent cultural formation similar, for example, to the arts or religion. But wanting a scientific philosophy does not mean considering philosophy to be a science. The specificity of its subject matter implies some peculiarities in its procedures: "It will not be able to deal with everything in such a minute manner as a science, but will have to keep to mere probability in those instances where a science would call for more accuracy and certainty"; its method "will not be so strictly scientific as the methods of the particular sciences". The philosopher will have to bear in mind not only the results of scientific knowledge, but also what the arts and religion have to say about the world and about man, as well as his experience of his personal and social life. The philosophical picture of the world and the answer to the question of the sense of life ("what man is to do") are formed on the basis of a personal synthesis of the philosopher, exceeding scientific facts and material scientifically verified and verifiable at the given time.

In this release of the philosopher from the close bonds of the special sciences, Tvrđý approaches the problematic regions hitherto taboo or ignored by Czech positivism, namely, the philosophy of religion, the philosophy of values (Tvrđý may be considered one of the founders of Czech axiology), the philosophy of history and metaphysics which he considered to be the specific core and culmination of philosophy. In contrast to Krejčí, he objected that philosophy must set aside "its hermetic robe of resignation" and courageously create the metaphysical picture of the world. Only then will it be possible to confront a metaphysics which will be, in fact, heir to the old theology and the narrow scientism moving merely within the range of a special science. In his *Vývoj filosofického myšlení evropského lidstva* (The Development of Philosophical Thought of European Mankind, 1923), *Moderní proudy ve filosofii* (Modern Trends in Philosophy, 1925), *Úvod do filosofie* (Introduction to Philosophy, 1928), and in his *Průvodce dějinami evropské filosofie* (Guide Through the History of European Philosophy, 1932) and in other historical material, he showed that "the basic task of philosophy had always been called metaphysics". In his

book *Nová filosofie. Analýza dnešní filosofické situace* (New Philosophy: the Analysis of the Present Philosophical Situation, 1932), he finally came to reject the central notion of positivism, i.e., the unknowableness of the transcendent. He dealt with the noetic aspect of the problem of the possibility of scientific philosophy (after the philosophy of cognition, nature and values) in his works *Problém skutečnosti u Davida Huma a jeho význam v dějinách filosofie* (The Problem of Reality in David Hume and his Importance in the History of Philosophy, 1925), *Teorie pravedy* (The Theory of Truth, 1929), *Logika* (Logic, 1937) and the unfinished *Indukce a její význam* (Induction and its Importance).

Tvrdý considered the problems of monism-pluralism, body and mind, to be the principal metaphysical problems. In the first circle of problems he considers whether the world in which we are living and of which we are part is consistent or consists of some "independent centers". Tvrdý considered both extreme positions to be unacceptable (extreme pluralism leads to determinism). Each individual element of the world has two sides: on the one hand, it differs from the other and the world aims towards differentiation; on the other hand, it joins up with other elements so that the world aims towards continuity. World unity is a unity in diversity; it is an internally differentiated whole. In this "monopluralism" Tvrdý also laid the basis for inclining to the theory of emergent evolution which he indicated in his *Nová filosofie* (New Philosophy) as the best answer to the philosophical difficulties of current developmental theories. However, this was not yet accepted univocally.

He agreed with the English emergentists that emergence cannot really be anticipated in the true sense of the word; however, he did not explain it by referring to mysterious spiritual powers, but by a structural determinism: the qualities newly emerging in the process of evolution are given by the mutual association of the components of the structure. In his conception of emergent evolution Tvrdý advanced beyond the common positivistic quantitative conception of evolution and mechanical causality, and thus participated in the formation of Czech structuralism.

Tvrdý's solution of problems of relations between body and spirit (matter and consciousness) had its source in his conviction that the mind forms a specific layer of reality with specific regularities, but that the mind cannot be admitted to have an existence independent of matter (body). The well-known difficulties of the dualistic conceptions and some experiments in psychology led Tvrdý to a conception of the mind not as a self-sustaining substance, but as a special kind of energy. He also referred to Whitehead. If the electrons and protons, as Whitehead assumed, are the lowest carriers of organic activities, then, Tvrdý added, they might also be the carriers of the lowest forms of mental activities. Inorganic matter may contain the germ of what develops as mental energy, "which could be called mental elements". According to the concept of emergence, "conscious mental energy" could also originate through the synthesis of these elements.

Josef Tvrdý, in this way, exceeded the current Czech positivism (and in its way also positivism as such), but in a way that was not, in essence, contradictory to the polemic and unrealizable efforts of Krejčí. (Some efforts of the sociologist I.A. Bláha and the axiologist Blahoslav Zboil can be seen as loosely in the line of Josef Tvrdý.) In spite of all the above-mentioned reservations, Tvrdý remained tied to the domestic positivistic tradition in his emphasis on its democratic and social engagements, and on the *Weltanschauung* in philosophy as the source for the cultivation of a national consciousness.

In the period between the two wars, particularly in the 30s, there arose another tendency which would contribute in its way to the renewal and even modernization of the positivistic tradition. It was a tendency towards higher evolutionary degrees of European positivism. This was not, of

course, a clean-cut trend or group, but a few authors who worked in the sphere of epistemology, methodology of sciences or (modern) logics. They thus came into contact with problems and aspects of neo-positivism, and either adapted them or referred to them in scientific periodicals. Among these authors were Milo Materna, Otakar Zich and Vladimír Tardy who promulgated neo-positivism most sedulously and extensively.<sup>7</sup>

The Czech propagators of neo-positivism did not join the neo-positivistic movement immediately. Their activities can hardly be considered as an act which would bring the Czech positivistic traditions--despite the attempts at modernization--above the standard of European positivism of the 19th century. Their endeavors, even though prospective, did not evoke much interest within Czech spiritual life, especially as later historical development made these efforts impossible. After the war, the tradition of Czech positivism ended when, after February 1948 as the Communists came to power, the existence of positivism, as of all the other non-Marxist philosophical movements and trends, was administratively terminated.

## Conclusion

That the positivistic orientation left certain traces in the theoretical thinking of Czechoslovakia and that the issues and attitudes represented in positivism are inescapable in modern thinking was mediately proven by the fact that even in the ruling Marxist thinking of post-war Czechoslovakia, if not positivistic, then positivizing or scientific tendencies were found to appear again and again. They were, of course, indicated as "scientistic, positivistic revisionism" and, as such, rejected and pursued. These tendencies (as were the attempts to draw nearer to other movements of western thinking) were very strong in the late 60s. However, it must be mentioned that this was not any linking up with the original Czech positivistic tradition, which was too strongly anchored in aspects of the 19th century. Rather it emerged through modern positivism, analytical philosophies, philosophy and methodology of science, mathematical logic, etc., in short, in all modern reflexions of science. This process continues.

But what of the original Czech tradition of positivism which had accompanied Czech spiritual life in its gradual development throughout nearly a century (if we understand the adjective "Czech", not as a mere indication of the national environment in which it originated and acted, but as its true specificity)?

Positivism in Czech thinking represents an irreducible, non-interchangeable and inseparable tradition which substantially contributed to the formation of this thinking, as explicitly philosophical. It was positivism which, as had already been indicated, incorporated Czech theoretical work into the logic of European development, even though it did not share, for instance, the shifts in the development of European positivism. Positivism brought out many philosophical

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<sup>7</sup> It must be mentioned that the constitution and the first evolutionary steps of neo-positivism took place at that time not only near the Czech environment, in Vienna, but within German circles. Prague played an important role in the institutional and organizational construction of this trend. In mid-September 1929, the Prague meeting of the association of German physicists and mathematicians initiated the first organized presentation of the Vienna Circle as an independent group which organized (together with the Berlin association for empirical philosophy) a meeting devoted to the theory of cognition of the exact sciences. Shortly afterward the program of the Vienna Circle, "Wissenschaftliche Weltauffassung," was published. Rudolf Carnap worked in Prague from 1931 as extraordinary professor of the faculty of natural sciences of the German University. Until his departure for the USA in 1936, he was in charge of a kind of branch office of the Vienna Circle, together with P. Frank. Among others, a preliminary conference in preparation for the Congress of Scientific Philosophy, held a year later in Paris, was organized in Prague on the occasion of the VIIIth International Philosophical Congress.

problems which were legitimate both from the necessary internal development of the domestic philosophical culture, and from the requirements of the consciousness of the Czech national community, even though solving them from its own, somewhat one-sided, point of view. Among these problems were, for instance, the relationship between philosophy and special sciences, the balance of science and humanism, the postulate of the creation of scientific philosophy, the demand for the democratization of thinking, the cultivation of general consciousness, etc.

In this manner it became the tradition of rationalism and democratism, in many instances with some enlightenment tonality only somewhat sensitive to the problems of the transcendent and the demands of the non-rational and irrational, of religiosity and mystery. Nevertheless, this rationalism and democratism was able to form the consciousness of the society and theoretical thinking in such a way as to make it--for instance, in the period between the two world wars--resistant to the influences of the irrational ideology and myths of Nazism. Indeed, it appears to have closely approached, if not the "Czech national nature", then at least the spiritual situation of the wide national strata being formed at the very end of the last century (Jirina Popelová).

If not national, it was a widely spread and deeply felt mentality of the so-called Czech sobriety which as an ideal type may be reconstructed in the following way: a sober matter-of-fact aversion to illusions and reluctance to succumb to them; a realism and certain earthliness suspicious of everything transcendent and irrational, be it presented in a religious or metaphysical manner; subordinating the validity and usefulness of speculation and fantasizing and putting in its place respect for facts, for knowledge and activities (even if only "small work"); comprehending values and life goals without pathos; remaining "with both feet firmly in this world" and being completely secular.

But this mentality has also another face. Its sobriety and realism may very easily and seemingly imperceptibly change into an incapacity for emotional animation, into overcautiousness, suspiciousness and skepticism; earthliness may change into lack of inspiration, unwillingness to make sacrifices (even as concerns one's own comfort), cowardice and denial of noble ideal motives and of ideals as such; the reverse of aversion to speculation and fantasizing is the superficiality of "common sense", incapability of transcending the given palpable reality and situation towards the future; earthliness of values and targets may be seen as greed and egoistic exploitation, as the absolutization of material, i.e., consumer values, as utilitarianism, practical pragmatism, careerism, etc.

Of course, it cannot be assumed that between this mentality and Czech positivism there exists a causative bond: it was formed in the same way that it was not possible to create positivism as a theoretical philosophy. Nonetheless, "Czech sobriety" and Czech positivism belong to each other; in a certain way they complement each other and they strengthen each other. Positivism became useful to this mentality making it feel justified and theoretically legitimate; conversely, this mentality also became useful to positivism because by referring to it positivism could be considered as a "national philosophy", corresponding to the interests of all ranks of the society.

From this parallelism of Czech positivism and the "mentality of sobriety", some summary advice about the character and function of Czech positivism can be drawn. In its range and value, Czech positivism is as ambivalent as is this mentality. Any further development of this tradition on the level of theoretical philosophy will have to take this fact into account.



## Chapter IV

# Two Phases of the "Idealist" Czech Critique of Positivism

*Helena Bretfeldova, Jiri Gabriel and Jiri Svoboda*

As mentioned in the previous chapter, in the first two to three decades of this century, positivism was considered the "leading" philosophy in the Czech area. This is supported in reverse by existing documents concerning the fight for freedom of Czech philosophy whose aim was precisely to combat positivism and its followers. As we shall see later, this effort was carried forward by philosophers associated in the early 20s with *Ruch filosofický* (Philosophical Action) review. However, even in its highest point, positivism was not the only philosophy in the Czech lands. This chapter will deal with its several opponents from the group of "idealist" philosophy, i.e., philosophers who tried to overcome the positivistic designation of any transcendence as "unknowable" by cognitive means which went beyond the limitations of the positivist notion of "rationality". Older representatives of this stream were Frantisek Mares and Ladislav Klíma, later there were Vladimír Hoppe, Karel Vorovka, and others. The term "idealism" comes from the positivist, Krejčí, who used this term to define all non-positivists: according to their relationship to metaphysics he divided all philosophers into positivists and idealists.

### Before World War I

*Frantisek Mares (1857-1942)* was the first Czech critic of positivism, coming upon the Czech philosophical scene when Krejčí's positivism had only started to predominate over the then prevailing herbatism. (Mares was a year older than Krejčí.) His early works show him to be a definite religious opponent who saw reason as exceeding the limits of "scientific" philosophy. Later he was often cited by the younger, "idealist" generation. He argued that science and the so-called "scientific philosophy" were not sufficient for solving all the problems of modern society and individuals and for coping with the developing crises.<sup>1</sup>

Having completed his studies at the Roman Catholic High School in Ceské Budejovice in 1876, Frantisek Mares began to study philosophy at Prague University. Disappointed by the lectures, he changed to medicine and became a junior, later a senior lecturer and professor of physiology (1890) dealing with the metabolism, anergic changes in organisms, the newel and circulatory systems. He described his understanding of physiology as "a theory of life" in *Vseobecná fyziologie* (General Physiology, 1894) and *Fysiologie* (Physiology, in six volumes, 1906-1929).

Physiological investigations stimulated Mares's interest in philosophy.<sup>2</sup> They strengthened his conviction that life functions could not be explained on the basis of physics and chemistry only and that further investigations regarding life needed to be analyzed to identify their epistemological character. In 1894 he referred to Liebig and voiced a hypothesis or metaphysical postulate in the journal *Atheneum* on the existence of an independent force, by which he meant an original spiritual

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<sup>1</sup> He could refer to Tomas Masaryk, who in his book on suicide, hypothesized that religious laxness is one of the greatest evils leading to the disintegration of society.

<sup>2</sup> Physiology also led Mares's great predecessors, Jiri Prochazka (1749-1820) and J.E. Purkyne (1787-1869), to philosophy.

initiator of life processes.<sup>3</sup> He advocated this essentially vitalistic viewpoint in a number of philosophical treatises, several of which were then published in books entitled *Pravda nad skutečnost* (Truth Above Reality, 1918) and *Idealism a realism v přírodní vědě* (Idealism and Realism in Science, 1901).<sup>4</sup>

Mares's philosophy stemmed from Kant's "basis of cognition". In the study *O jednote života* (On the Life of Unity, 1894), the "requirement of restricting human cognition to what was potentially at least able to be experienced by the senses" was for him the basis for rejecting the "naive realism" he had formed in science and philosophy including the materialistic philosophy that "recognized matter-energy as the ultimate cause and reason for everything and thought that it could have given origin to life by a random configuration of natural forces." Mares's postulate of a spiritual life-principle manifested his dissatisfaction with the relativist science restricted to the sphere of phenomena. He looked for ways to deeper metaphysical truths in feeling, intuition, and an inner, direct (i.e., not mediated by the senses and brain) perception of the "true reality"; he often said that "truth lies in the feeling."<sup>5</sup> The references to "the direct experience of reality" were the background for his hypothesis of *avis vitalis*, a "metaphysical basis of life", an "entelecheia, the special autonomous, dynamic and teleological spiritual factor", which differentiated between non-living and living nature as well as between the body and soul.

In this respect Mares, beginning from his essay, "Mechanismus a mysticismus" ("Mechanism and Mysticism", 1897), often cited Driesch and Bergson.<sup>6</sup> He also had a great respect for Schopenhauer, like many other Czech followers of Kant. In the work of this "restorer of Kant's teaching" and in his concept of will as the principle of the living nature, Mares found "the roots of vitalism, from which stemmed the vitalism of Bergson and Driesch". His religious feeling, however, did not allow Mares to become Schopenhauer's unconditional follower, for Schopenhauer's metaphysics of a blind will was too naturalistic, his epistemology too subjectivistic, and his ethics too pessimistic. When Mares writes about "the creative global will"

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<sup>3</sup> Almost simultaneously with Mares's study, *O životní síle* (On the Life Force), one of the greatest Czech poets, Otokar Březina (1869-1929), wrote in a letter to Frantisek Bauer: "Nature affects man in a magic way; I myself experienced it during the long hours when I lay spread on the dry moss near big, weathered stones covered with lichen. For the first time in my life I felt that the force that lived, thundered, turmoiled, boiled, bubbled, beat, broke, disintegrated, and pulsed in the tree trunks that resembled white columns above my head, in the green charm of needles, in the sighing of the woods, in the insect buzzing, in the roaring of distant waters, was the same force that thought, mediated, made associations, suffered, and trembled in my body. I felt an intangible substantiveness in the surroundings that shone in the white and fair tones of the mature sun: a pure ground rooted in the depths of unknown mysteries." O. Březina, *Nebezpečí sklizně* (The Danger of Harvest) (Prague, 1968), 125, 147. Březina then deliberately looked "not for learning, but for his flash of light, his intuition, his image" in Plato and Plotinus, in German and French medieval mystics, in Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Bergson.

<sup>4</sup> Idealism is for Mares's philosophy that strives for metaphysics with the help of "super-rational ways"; all other philosophies are "realistic." Catholic reviewers accepted Mares's fundamental philosophical work, *Idealism a realism v přírodní vědě* (Idealism and Realism in Science) quite favorably. They saw in it primarily a support for the idea that "the force that moves nature is God," K. Cernocký, *Biologické záhady a křesťanský názor světovy* (Biological Mysteries and the Christian World View) (Museum, 1901), 146. E. Radl, however, opposed the book for its "indefiniteness, incompleteness, capriciousness and vagueness" in "O naladové skepsi" (On Capricious Skepticism), *Ceska mysl* (1901).

<sup>5</sup> Mares criticized the Neothomists for not recognizing feeling as "an original and separate experience," but only as an aspect of sensation; this corresponds to positive psychology. Mares's numerous works addressed to Neothomists testify to the fact that he considered the Neothomists closest to his concepts.

<sup>6</sup> Mares, like Driesch, recognized "metapsychology" as a meditation about man, his body and soul. "He viewed death as separation of the soul from the body...(and held) the existence of the soul after death."



he means the Christian God, who challenges man through Jesus as mediator to participate in the formation of God's Kingdom in mankind."

Frantisek Mares was essentially a polemicist in Czech philosophy. He continually criticized positivism, especially its application in psychology,<sup>7</sup> monism and materialism; he even attempted (evidently in vain) to advocate the authenticity of *Rukopisy* (The Manuscripts) and others. Mares also initiated the Czech "dispute about Kant."<sup>8</sup> In his opinion, Kant was a true Christian--even Catholic--philosopher; the Catholic church would be wrong to reject Kant's philosophy. He discussed this topic in his last work, *Soumrak duchovní kultury před svítáním* (The Dusk of Spiritual Culture Before the Dawn, 1939). In it he argued that Thomists relied too much on science and thus got into constant disputes with naturalist philosophers about what could be deduced from scientific findings about "the ultimate reason and cause of things." Kant may be the best weapon against materialism and atheism: as its primary condition the conception of reason leads to postulating the transcendental subject as the creator of rational categories ("in his reason man is the image of God"). Kant also promoted religion by "embedding faith in God's existence in the firm soil of the moral law which is grafted in the human soul *a priori*."

Leaving aside the historians of philosophy, the philosophical attitudes and views of Frantisek Mares may be of interest to readers concerned with relationships between science, philosophy and religion and who also seek to reinforce the justification of their religious beliefs by scientific and philosophical arguments. The paragraphs below will attempt to discuss the legacy of philosopher and writer, Ladislav Klíma, another critic of positivism. Today we witness a third wave of interest in Klíma, the first wave being after the Second World War and the second in the late 60s.

*Ladislav Klíma's (1878-1928) life and work defy the traditional image of the Czech philosopher of the end of the nineteenth century and the first three decades of the twentieth century. Klíma stood in sharp contradiction to positivism and all academic philosophy; by his way of life he rejected the norms of contemporary Czech society. Born to the family of a well-off lawyer, he soon wandered from the path one would expect. This began by his expulsion from high school after he had offended (at least in the judgment of the faculty) a member of the Habsburg royal family.<sup>9</sup> Klíma then relinquished not only all further education, but also the "normal" way of life. He never attempted to have a permanent job, after spending all the money inherited from his parents and sister he lived on occasional royalties and contributions from his friends. His premature death was caused partly by his attraction to alcohol and partly by a life in accord with his own extreme subjectivistic philosophy. His purely philosophical (in form, as well) first work, was *Svet jako vědomí a nic* (World as Consciousness and Nothing, 1904). From the philosophical point of view, Klíma said almost everything here; his later, more-or-less fictional, works focus on elements of his perception of the world and life.*

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<sup>7</sup> Mares's criticism focused mainly on the psychology of Frantisek Krejci which was based on a psychophysical parallelism, which he termed a "psychology without a soul."

<sup>8</sup> The dispute about Kant was initiated by Mares's note on his book, *Realism a idealism v prirodni vede* (Realism and Idealism in Science), in which he says that Masaryk's view of Kant's philosophy as an unsuccessful attempt to contradict Hume's skepticism is evidence that Masaryk misunderstood Kant. The participants in the discussion were, among others, Masaryk, Krejci, Vorovka. Cf. J. Kral, "Spor o Kanta. K dejinam ceske filosofie z pocatku stoleti" (Dispute about Kant: On the History of Czech Philosophy at the Beginning of the Century), *Ruch filosoficky* (Philosophical Action, 1924).

<sup>9</sup> The high school was in Zagreb, Yugoslavia. The sentence is mentioned in Klíma's biography: "Ferdinand, the foreign ruler who is remote from the Czech nation and cold in his approach, will always be hated by the Czech patriot, if for nothing else, then for his being the first member of the present ruling dynasty on the Czech throne."

The destructive tendencies that pervade the whole of Klíma's work reject absolutely all previous philosophies, culture, moral values and the world itself. This, however, does not mean that Klíma cannot be situated. His philosophy, which he called existentialism or omnism, may be ranked in the larger concept of the philosophy of man which was then current in Europe. Klíma was an enthusiastic follower of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche. Like Nietzsche, he not only advocated the idea of a man of a higher type, but also strictly rejected Christian morality.<sup>10</sup>

In his philosophy, Klíma postulates an absolute subject at the pinnacle of all reality. Having rejected everything external, this subject clearly understood his substance and became the bearer or creator of his own divinity (a notion he referred to as deoessence"). "Why did the gods become gods? Because they wanted to become gods!" The center of Klíma's philosophy is this subject, born by will and equal to God, the only existing one. It manifests his subjectivism, irrationalism, sophism and existential thinking oriented to the capabilities of the human spirit. Here Klíma not only "meets" his models in philosophy, but he goes beyond them.

He perceives reality as absurd, a prismatic world of will and image. Klíma considers the subject to be the condition of all existence, the bearer of the world. Where the highest, purely cognitive being for Schopenhauer is the man who denied his will, Klíma asks only one thing: the realization of his own will. This brings Klíma close to Nietzsche with his will to power liberating itself from the bounds of the bourgeois world and affirming itself. By the possibilities attributed to the subject as the bearer of existence, Klíma exceeds Nietzsche's theory of eternal return; in his book *Svet jako vědomí a nic* (The World as Consciousness and Nothing) he absolutely empties "the world" of its substance and claims the world to be a fiction.

The spiritual situation in Europe at the turn of the century and early twentieth century, when Klíma's philosophical outlook matured, favored Nietzsche's ideal of a new strong man. This phenomenon can be observed also in the Czech lands where Nietzsche's influence can be observed in the Czech literary men of the Decadence who were contributors to *Moderní* review; Otokar Brezina, a symbolist poet; Jakub Deml, a Catholic poet; J.S. Machar, a political lyricist; F.X. Salda, an aesthetician and literary critic; and Frantisek Krejčí, the most important representative of Czech positivism. Most clearly, however, this can be observed in Ladislav Klíma's existentialism.

Klíma's individuality lies not only in his conception of philosophy, but also in his attempt to conform to it in his personal life. His autobiographical and philosophical confession<sup>11</sup> illustrates his rises and falls, his attempts to grasp his own power and to shout his *Deus sum* (I am God). He tested his own deity in a life without any money, and in nonconformism that rejected all conventions, including a job. All this was to lead Klíma to control of self. Both this way of life and his thinking provoked the "official" Czech philosophers, many of whom openly rejected Klíma's works. However, Klíma also had friends and patrons who supported him in difficulties. Though none of them fully shared his views, they admired Klíma's dream of a new man who would not be bound by bourgeois moral conventions. Besides the above-mentioned admirers of Nietzsche's work, O. Brezina and F.X. Salda, there was especially philosopher Karel Vorovka, sociologist Emanuel Chalupný (who for a long time was the only reviewer of Klíma's first philosophical work), theater critic Josef Kodíček and Marxist publicist Jaroslav Kabes, who promoted the publication of Klíma's works.

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<sup>10</sup> For example, he mocks Christian morality in his blasphemous parody called *Bílá vlna aneb konečné rozřešení problému vzniku křesťanství* (The White Swine or the Final Solution to the Question of the Origin of Christianity); in his picture, Mary is the scum of the earth and Jesus a thief and swindler. His view of traditional morality is exemplified by the metaphor: "Stroke and caress every impure insect so that it may not bite you!"

<sup>11</sup> Klíma's *Autobiography* (Prague, 1937).

Klíma's philosophical heritage is found not only in his *Svet jako vedomí a nic* (The World as Consciousness and Nothing, second edition, 1928), but also in his books *Traktáty a diktáty* (Tracts and Dictations, 1922) and *Vterina a vecnost* (A Second and Eternity, 1927) which contain most of his contributions to magazines from the post-World War I period. His prose work, "Utrpení knížete Sternenhocha" ("Duke Sternenhoch's Suffering", 1928), has also a philosophical "flavor" and met with great disapproval from its readers. Through his fiction Klíma explains the basis of deoessence and disregards all contemporary taboos in literature. The reviews began to write about Klíma's expressionism, symbolism, surrealism, his great creativity and imagination, and also about his perversion and morbidity. Duke Sternenhoch moves from the normal life of a nobleman to a life filled with suffering, eccentricity, fits of madness and self-torment. This culminates in a morbid end when he fully realizes his own being and overcomes his "normal" past. Among other works, *Slavná Nemesis a jiné příběhy* (Famous Nemesis and Other Stories, 1932) and two volumes of his correspondence<sup>12</sup> are philosophically interesting.

If the absolute subject is at the summit of Klíma's philosophy, its beginning is marked by the complete negation of the bourgeois morality and culture. In Klíma's view the modern European chose the worst form of slavery by giving priority to a full stomach, fear and discipline rather than dangerous freedom and human pride. "Society is identical with total depravity." The fact that today's philosophy is unable to aver anything testifies to its inability to recognize unquestionable truth; "everything is true and false at the same time." The only thing one can base his view on is his own presumption that something exists; thus the outer world and nature are only reflections of a state of mind. In Klíma's conception the erroneous knowledge based on fictitious time, space and impermeability, etc., is to be overcome by new learning.

Emotion, ideas, and inspiration are dominated by the ecstatic dimension, which--*sub specie aeternitatis*--is the only connection between man and eternity, the only way to oneself. Uncertainty can be overcome by the certainty of deoessence. The mystical view may reveal man's complexity and finally his deity. The world, identified with knowledge, exists in the atoms of thought, each of which combines with others over time. The most intimate secret of the world is that the world has no value: at the end of a giddy cycle, after reviewing all the antitheses, everything ends in nothing. The one who is not an egodeist, who does not exclusively examine his inner feelings, does not understand his very substance, which will be affirmed only during the cycle of time; he does not understand the only truth, namely, that the world is consciousness and nothing. However, Klíma resisted absolute nihilism. His world is without any value, but his man lives; absolute negation lies within life; the human deity is prior to a world without any value.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Klíma's correspondence was published in *Boj o vse* (Struggle for everything, 1942), *Korespondence s O. Brezinou a E. Chalupným* (Correspondence with O. Brezina and E. Chalupny) and *Duchovní přátelství* (Spiritual Friendship, 1942). Together with Arnost Dvorak, he wrote a play called *Matej Poctivý* (Matthias the Honest) which was staged for a short time at the National Theater in Prague.

<sup>13</sup> Each of Klíma's works attempts to express his deoessence. His *Slavná Nemesis* (famous Nemesis) includes everything that Klíma needs for realizing his ego. The background to the important parts of the story is a mountainous area. Orea and Erata, women of mystical brightness, reveal themselves to Sider, the protagonist of the story. Especially Orea, a woman with the name of the Muse of romantic poetry, persuades the protagonist that all his ego relates to her and that therefore he has to gain her. The story is full of events moving from dream to reality. Basically, it is a conflict between weakness and the will to achieve one's innermost goal. The climax of the story comes at the moment when Orea, revealing herself as a fantastic phenomenon shining on the top of the mountain, lures Sider to come to her; he is to jump over crevice, which most probably will mean death for him. This is to test Sider's character and shows the division between life and eternity. His will forces him to reach for the

Ladislav Klíma's attention was focused on the heights of human spirit, on man's aiming at achieving inner freedom and his ability to make this change. He was a keen follower of all acts that liberated the spirit from false morality and calculation both in private life and in the life of the nation.<sup>14</sup> He did not challenge anyone to follow deoessence. Having put the era of ego-deism in the future millennia, he was able to view things from a distance. Ladislav Klíma is a philosopher of will, action, and free spirit; he was the forerunner of Czech existentialism in its Sartrean form and, like him, was a man of literature.

It is not a rhetorical question to ask whether Klíma's era of deoessence has come. The continuous massive crisis of today's civilization makes us meditate about its bases, progress, development in society and the position therein of the individual. This century is marked by a boom in science and technology--but also by hypertrophied social structures, war, catastrophes, dictatorship, all of which suppress human individuality. Klíma has something to say to the present man. In spite of all his esoterica, he situated his man in our world, which is the world of falsehood, dissimulation, and materialized values, and sought thence the way to spiritual independence and freedom. It is the reader's responsibility to experience "a glimpse of deoessence". In any case Klíma's works clearly convey the message that only a sovereign and individually free man can be the basis for modern society and the creator of new values.

### **Between the Two World Wars**

As mentioned above, the second phase of the "idealistic" criticism of positivism in this country was in the period between the wars. In the early 20s this criticism was part of "the struggle for the freedom of Czech philosophy", that is, it was focused against the supremacy of positivism.

The philosophers who associated in the newly established journal *Ruch filosofický* (Philosophical Action), such as Vladimír Hoppe, Karel Vorovka, Ferdinand Pelikán, Tomás Trnka, Josef Barto, R.I. Malý, did not want to be limited by local traditions and authorities. They were united in the idea that positivism, with its dogmatic stiffness and inability to adjust to post-war conditions, was a burden upon the Republic, hindering the development of Czech philosophical thinking, precluding solutions to metaphysical problems, and incapable of working out the questions of religion and of values. They saw in positivism "a danger of sliding into agnosticism

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goal, to abandon everything that disturbed his life, but his terrestrial dimension and will to live under any conditions prevents him from jumping and liberating himself from his nothingness.

Klíma's hero eventually jumps, with Erata's call on his mind: "Go to grace! Purify yourself from the earthly mud! It was this mud that sinned in you!" The last obstacles fall when Orea calls from the abyss: "Sider, be a god!" Thus Klíma puts his protagonist in an extreme situation of "either-or." The victory of his will brings Sider to deity and in death he identifies with eternity. This novella illustrates Klíma's philosophical anthropology and his distinction of two species of men: social man and the man of his own concept. By amplifying on the moment of transformation from one to the other Klíma makes it easier to understand the dimension of deoessence.

Again we would point out that Klíma was not addicted to absolute nihilism. "It is only for the sake of suicide that this life is here, but why hurry? The queen's arms are always wide open. The cowshed here remains only a stained piece of eternity's skin." Klíma "anchors" his new, free man, his Titan, in life in order to show that an eagle can also live in mud and that this is necessary for the mud to become dry: the eagle must take his talons to the blue sky.

<sup>14</sup> Klíma admitted that human society may have men of genius (Shakespeare, Goethe, Napoleon and others) but he did not admit that any of these corresponded with his ideal of a strong personality. In his idea, nations also lacked much of real greatness and virtue: he addressed many critical words specially of the Czech nation and its character.

and self-denial". In their opinion, philosophy must not believe in any limitations that would forever prevent mankind from extending its knowledge.

The disputes about the orientation of Czech post-war philosophy had already begun in 1919, in Vorovka's reviews of the works of I. Mavec, *Základy sociální energetiky* (Fundamentals of Social Energetics) and F. Seracký's *Teorie poznání a vedy* (Theory of Cognition and Science) which attempted to follow Krejčí. The disputes were largely stimulated by Emanuel Rádl's comments on "the post-war work of young Czech philosophers and the orientation of the *Ruch filosofický*".<sup>15</sup> A resolute opponent of positivism, Rádl argued that their philosophical studies did not stem from topical national, social, and political problems, but returned to "Durdík's method", which was to speculate about the abstract questions of primitive philosophy. He saw this as the reason for their lack of interest in Masaryk.<sup>16</sup>

The members of the movement around *Ruch filosofický*, as mentioned by Rádl, entered the philosophical sphere in the first or second decades of the century and by the early 20s had become mature thinkers. Karel Vorovka, only six years younger than Rádl, wrote about his attempts to deal with his tendencies to skepticism, which had been evoked as early as 1907 by the theories of eternal limits to human cognition. Only a little later Vladimír Hoppe tried to cope with the concept of "mechanically simplifying schemes" which were used both in exact sciences and in philosophy that attempted to be scientific. Ferdinand Pelikán published his contributions on freedom in physics, psychology and morality in *Ceská mysl* in the first years after the war.<sup>17</sup> After *Ruch filosofický*<sup>18</sup> had been established, these tendencies in Czech philosophy seemed to become more unanimous and therefore more significant: philosophers shared their efforts to find a way from "spiritual reality" to the absolute. Their opinions emerged markedly when Trnka tried to establish a new philosophical journal, *Filosofie* (Philosophy), at the turn of the 20s.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> *Ruch filosofický* was published from 1921 to 1941. In the 30s it came out irregularly; the number of the last volume was XIII.

<sup>16</sup> Rádl published his treatise on Czech philosophy—before and after the war—in *Cas* (Time) magazine and later (with replies to responses in the booklet, *O nasi nynejsi filosofii* (On Our Present Czech Philosophy, 1922). As J.L. Hromadka put it, philosophy had always been for Rádl "an instrument for the reform of life, a promise of faithfulness, a challenge to work." As early as the end of the war, Rádl tried to show the task of philosophy in the post-war conditions. He considered a close link between philosophy and social life to correspond to the spirit of older Czech philosophy, as well as to the new streams which began with Masaryk's coming to Prague University in the 80s of the last century. Rádl criticized the young idealistic philosophers for ignoring the contributions of positivism to both European and Czech ways of thinking.

<sup>17</sup> "Ruchovci," the people around *Ruch filosofický*, openly proclaimed that they did not consider Masaryk a philosopher, but a politician. They said they missed an elaborated system in his philosophy, and his opinions seemed to them incompletely to relate various streams and tendencies, "a syncretism of often radically contrasting opinions." In one of his answers to Rádl, Vorovka remarks that, devoting himself to the philosophical questions of mathematics and physics, he was disappointed to find little incentive in Masaryk's *Konkretní logika* (Concrete Logic) and *Pocet pravdepodobnosti a Humeova skepse* (Number of Probability and Hume's Skepticism).

<sup>18</sup> *Ruch filosofický* (Philosophical Action) was founded in 1921, thanks to Ferdinand Pelikán (1885-1952), a senior lecture at the Philosophy Department at Charles University. Josef Kral was influenced mainly by Renouvier, Boutroux, and Bergson to develop from pragmatism toward personalism. His major works were *Logika a etika zaporu* (Logic and Ethics of Negation, 1923), and *Fikcionalismus novoveke filozofie, zvlaste Huma a Kanta* (Fictionalism in New Age Philosophy, Mainly in Hume and Kant, 1929).

<sup>19</sup> The review called *Filosofie* (Philosophy) appeared in 1927-1929, under the editorship of J. Bartos, K. Vorovka and Tomas Trnka, who was a member of the "extra university opposition against positivism" (L. Kratochvíl). In 1917-1947 he was in the "Osvetovy svaz" (Cultural Union) and in 1947 a professor of pedagogy at Charles University. He published many books dealing mainly with man and his culture (What is the human being between two infinities, a

The following chapters of this study present other representatives of Czech non-positivist philosophy who were of various orientations, some of whom were mentioned by Rádl in the treatise cited on modern Czech post-war philosophers. Karel Vorovka and Vladimír Hoppe were the most famous personalities among the philosophers concentrated around the journals *Ruch filosofický* and *Filosofie*.

*Karel Vorovka (1879-1929)* was a senior lecturer and later a professor of philosophy at Charles University. His studies of philosophical questions concerning natural sciences and mathematics appeared both in numerous journal articles in *Ceská mysl, Casopis českých matematiku a fyziku* (Journal of Czech Mathematicians and Physicists) and *Ruch filosofický* and in a number of books: *Úvahy o názoru v matematice* (Considerations of Opinion in Mathematics, 1917) and *Kantova filozofie ve svých vztazích k vědám exaktním* (Kant's Philosophy and Its Relations to Exact Sciences, 1924). These studies dealt with such problems as conventionalism, probability and causality, the theory of relativity and the relationship between mathematics and logic. Taking into account the neoplatonic and gnostic philosophies and Mares's and Renouvier's insights, he formulated his own philosophical standpoint, namely, a theistic panpsychism: the world created and directed by God is a system of spiritual monads filled out with creative power. He does not consider philosophy to be a science but an expression of a philosopher's personal attitude towards the world. Philosophy is to be based on cognition (gnosis); it must transcend empirical, scientific understanding in varied ways, including intuition. His most important work, *Skepse a gnose: Vyznání filosofické* (Skepticism and Gnosis: A Philosophical Confession, 1921) was full of keen observations and awaits adequate evaluation. Vorovka summarized his contributions to the "controversy about Czech philosophy" in his book *Polemos* (1926). His *Americká filozofie* (American Philosophy, 1929), the first more detailed Czech survey of the history of philosophy in the U.S.A. from its beginning to the present, was published at the end of Vorovka's life.

*Vladimír Hoppe (1882-1931)* also sought a philosophical way to the transcendent which cannot be recognized by the intellect.<sup>20</sup> Plato, Kant, and the Christian mystics were his authorities and ideals. In his opinion, philosophy is the art of hearing one's own subconsciousness and thus the metaphysical depths of one's own person and of existence in general. In the end he was inspired by his religious beliefs to search for the spiritual rootedness of life and world and "their mysterious relation with the transcendent persons". From adolescence he saw an evidence of transcendent experience and the Transcendent primarily in his own "indubitable metaphysical experience."<sup>21</sup>

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being whose end is death?). He entitled his *chef do'oeuvre: Hledam tajemství života* (Search the Mystery of Life), and wrote also *Příroda a jeho dílo II* (Nature and Its Work, II. 1923), *Člověk a jeho dílo, III* (Man and His Work, III, 1926), and *Člověk a svět* (Man and the World, 1929). Josef Bartos attended mainly to esthetics and the theory of art as in his *Úvod do estetiky* (Art: An Introduction into Esthetics, 1911). His opinions were very close to those of Croce whose *Brevir estetiky* (A Manual of Aesthetics) he translated. The orientation of his work, *Illusionismus, skeptická nalada přítomnosti* (Illusionism, the Skeptical Character of the Present, 1927), is philosophical.

<sup>20</sup> After his studies at Charles University, Vladimír Hoppe spent several years at the universities of Berlin, Munich, Geneva, and Paris, where he met Bergson who published his *L'évolution créatrice* at the same time. In 1922 he was appointed a senior lecture of Charles University; from 1927 he was a professor at Masaryk's University.

<sup>21</sup> Hoppe explained this experience, which was decisive for him, in his book, *Přírozené a duchovní základy světa* (Natural and Spiritual Foundations of the World), 67-68. He is said to "have lost his capacity to perceive time" and this was to show him that "he consisted not only of his material body" but also of some being "behind and above him."

In the beginning, Hoppe criticized natural sciences and rationalism. In his books *Podstata, dosah a hodnota prirodovedeckeho poznání* (Substance, Limits and Worth of Natural and Scientific Recognition, 1914) and *Píroda a veda* (Nature and Science, 1918) he supports the opinion, with reference to Boutroux, Mácha, Poincaré, Vaihinger, James, and others, that science is not able to penetrate the substance of reality. Its terms, laws, and theories present "means for our orientation towards the world, but they are not able to express the world and its depth." Science is mainly at a loss to say something of man himself, his spiritual life, values, desires and goals. By enabling the development of mechanistic opinion and technical education, modern civilization has broken all connection with a spiritual and moral universe." Positivism, however, highly values this science and its facts: it neither wants to, nor can, be liberated from its rule: "scientific philosophy" is a *contradictio in adiecto*. Nevertheless, philosophy has to endeavor to reach the absolute and life therein, life *sub specie aeternitatis*, with all its consequences for both individual and social lives.

In the second stage of his philosophical development, Hoppe supposed "spiritual philosophy" to be the way towards the "Absolute"--or at least, into its environs. He formulated its epistemology, some postulates, and ethical principles in his books: *Základy duchovní filosofie* (Foundations of Spiritual Philosophy, 1921), *Prirozené a duchovní zaklady sveta a života* (Natural and Spiritual Foundations of World and Life, 1925), and *Úvod do intuitivní a kontemplativní filosofie* (An Introduction into Intuitive and Contemplative Philosophy, 1928). This philosophy attempted to enable man to be in contact with the "superindividual sphere", the "transcendental subject", and the "transcendental object", i.e., with spiritual, intellectual, transcendental worlds including the absolute Good, Beauty and Truth in the "center of the universe". Hoppe called this philosophy "transcendental idealism" or "transcendental realism".

He considered all the objections expressed against science to be valid as well for "intellectual transcendental consciousness" that gains experience through the *a priori* forms of sensuousness and the *a priori* intellectual categories which gather their content from sense data. Hence, Hoppe sought a way into the depths of the spiritual world through "affecting transcendental consciousness" in intuition and contemplation.<sup>22</sup> Thereby "we obtain irrational knowledge spontaneously as sudden inspirations and suggestions; these gush forth from our subconscious capabilities". Hoppe considered the recognition of the spiritual substance of essence to be a source for ethics as a theory about generally valid moral criteria and a source for aesthetics as a theory of beauty which is not only a subjective experience, but an objective entity.

Hoppe did not develop his own metaphysical opinion; his metaphysics is "propaedeutical and methodical in character". The epistemological and, mainly, psychological difficulties and antagonisms he had to face when explaining the ways of cognition in his spiritual philosophy supported his increasing orientation towards religion for which, as a matter of fact, he always found a fundamental need in our lives. In the end, philosophy was only a kind of religious propaedeutics for him. Hoppe's philosophical development culminates in "the leap of belief" mentioned by Kierkegaard and is described in Hoppe's book *Predpoklady duchovní filosofie a*

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<sup>22</sup> Becoming absorbed in the subject of our desire and the emergence of its images are, according to Hoppe, the dominant features of intuition: to daydream is to act in this process. Contemplation presumes a "special purgative process" consisting of three stages: meditation (concentration of mind), quietism (silence of senses), and contemplation itself, i.e., a state in which the transcendental consciousness prevails over the individual consciousness. Here Hoppe copies from Evelyn Underhill. Contemplation culminates in ecstasy. Hoppe connected contemplation with mysticism, which he studied carefully. He considered Christian mysticism to be its most developed stage. It provided him with evidence that longing for unity with God may have social influences as well.

*náboženské víry* (Presumptions of Spiritual Philosophy and Belief) published posthumously in 1935. He considered mysticism, related to the super-individual sphere, to cohere with the Christian religion. In this stage of belief it is necessary "to interrupt one's connection both to scientific and rational philosophical hypotheses and to proceed with one's own subjective experiences and cognitions" into "worlds distant from that comprehended by the senses": that is, towards God--the depth of salvation--who is the final cause of individuals and history; towards the ideal of man continuously united with God as with Jesus. Although religious belief does not solve the mysteries of the Absolutum, it assures man that he does not commit an error in his transcendental experiences, and it allows him to concentrate on completing his individual and social life.<sup>23</sup>

It should be added that, though the editors of *Ruch filosofický* were interested in problems of the natural sciences, others not very closely related to that orientation also co-operated.

*Albína Dratvová* (1892-1969) is the first woman mentioned in Czech history of philosophy.<sup>24</sup> She did not avow positivism--but called for an objective evaluation of the influence of positivism, including mainly Frantisek Krejčí's work--upon Czech philosophical history. After her studies of philosophy, mathematics and physics at Charles University, Dratvová taught in Prague's secondary schools for some time and hence was constantly interested in problems concerning teaching philosophy at secondary schools. She tried to increase the level of teaching by publishing a textbook intended to substitute for Krejčí's textbook. In 1931 she was appointed a senior lecturer of philosophy on the basis of her thesis, *Problém kauzality ve fyzice* (The Problem of Causality in Physics), and began to lecture at the Prague Faculty of Sciences. "The questions asked by natural scientists who are not satisfied with finding and describing phenomena, but who want to comprehend the substance of things more deeply"<sup>25</sup> represented the subject of her natural science philosophy. *Filosofie a přírodovědecké poznání* (Philosophy and Natural Scientific Knowledge) was her most important work (1939). It is a critical survey of present attempts at philosophical analyses of the process of understanding in the exact sciences. Dratvová finished her teaching career in the early 50s.

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<sup>23</sup> Inspired by J.A. Komenský (Comenius), whom he considered one of the most significant thinkers of the past, Hoppe suggested the founding of the *Mezinárodní akademie duchovního života* (The International Academy of Spiritual Life) and the *Liga duchovního míru* (The League of Spiritual Peace). In his last years, after his entering the Roman Catholic Church, abandoning philosophy and accepting belief, Hoppe praised the Church for its social influences in reforming our world.

<sup>24</sup> Jirina Popelová (mentioned elsewhere) was the second woman to make a reputation for herself among Czech philosophers in the 30s. Others joined them after World War II, when a general feminization of the Czech educational system was begun.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. A. Dratvová, "Předmět a úkoly filozofie přírodních věd" (Object and Goals of Natural Science Philosophy), *Ceska mysl* (1932), 321.



## Chapter V

# Czech Protestantism and Philosophy

*Petr Horak, Josef Krob, Lubomir Novy and Jiri Svoboda,*

In their works many authors related to Protestantism responded critically to positivism. However, in order to write about their attempt at a "complete" philosophy, i.e., at overcoming the boundaries given by positivism, we must return once again to T.G. Masaryk.

T.G. Masaryk is in many respects--in politics, sociology and philosophy--the point of entry to Czech thinking of the twentieth century. His fate, however, was very incongruous: though considered virtually the official ideologist of the first republic, he had no successor. There were several "Masarykists", but no true "disciple". His influence therefore must be distinguished from mere verbal professions, and true ideological association will have to be determined at a deeper level and in greater detail. Let us try to do so on the basis of an outline of philosophy connected with Czech Protestantism, i.e., with philosophy as represented by Emanuel Rádl, Jan Kozák and J.L. Hromádka. Masaryk converted to Protestantism, Rádl and Kozák tried to keep pace with him; Hromádka wrote a special monograph about Masaryk. Rádl was one of the few successors of Masaryk; Hromádka closely cooperated with Rádl, etc. Were these only personal ties and relationships, or do they reflect deeper ideological and historical associations?

Before we try to answer that question, any misunderstanding stemming from the title of the present chapter must be eliminated. Protestantism has no uniform philosophy, so neither has Czech Protestantism. The title is not meant to divide philosophers according to their religion, but reflects the fact that representatives of one important line of Czech philosophy and their *Weltanschauung* belonged to Protestantism. This fact deserves attention in a country whose history contains Protestant traditions which, in their time, had world-wide importance and which went through certain transformations in the twentieth century in close connection with the intellectual stream of world Protestantism. An outline of the road from Masaryk's "critical" religion to the theology of Hromádka and the analysis of some philosophical aspects of this process will contribute to a determination of the inner developmental logic of Czech thinking in the 20th century.

### **T.G. Masaryk (1850-1937)**

As has already been mentioned, the work of T.G. Masaryk, formulated in its basic outline in the period of the crisis of Czech society at the turn of the century, and developed in the period before World War I, is of key importance in the formation of Czech philosophy of the twentieth century. Masaryk's reformist concept of political and social problems, the fact that he defended the priority of a "revolution of heads and hearts", his attitude to the social crisis as a crisis of man and his *Weltanschauung*--all this could not but be close to the attitudes of Czech Protestantism at that time. In this way Protestantism succumbed to the general influence of Masaryk. The social pattern of the members of the Protestant churches, being mostly the middle classes, created a favorable ground for the Masaryk's influence on this milieu.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In the majority Protetants were wealthy farmer and middle class intelligentsia, tradesmen and clerks in the towns. Compare J.L. Hromadka, *The Ways of Czech Evengelists* (Prague, 1934), 41.

Some of Masaryk's personal ties with Protestantism played a role. In his youth, Masaryk was an ardent Catholic brought up under the influence of Catholic priests; however, he solved his religious doubts by converting to evangelism. This decision had also been motivated by his discussions with the evangelical clergyman, Ferdinand Císar, and his acquaintance with Protestants and with Protestant theology during his studies in Leipzig. Quite obvious, too, is the influence of Masaryk's wife, an American Unitarian. Nevertheless, in order to relate the philosophy of Masaryk to the philosophy of Czech Protestantism, it will be necessary to specify more closely its ideological content and to determine which aspects of Masaryk's thinking are demonstrably associated with the ideas of Protestantism or in which respect these affected him.

This can be said particularly of Masaryk's philosophy of history which became an ideological foundation for his reformist political concept and which, at the same time, fell within the ambit of the Protestant view of the history of modern times. In Masaryk's basic historical and philosophical pairs (Protestantism -- Catholicism, reformation -- revolution, democracy -- theocracy), Protestantism is always evaluated as an intellectual movement which stands on the side of a modern "permanently reforming democracy". Masaryk derived his modern thought, with its philosophy, politics and even capitalist economy, from the Reformation and from the evolution of Protestantism in the West. His preference for Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian literature (arising from a predominantly Protestant milieu) and his sympathy for "Protestant" (i.e., in Masaryk's terminology, English and Reformist) socialism also reflect, of course, a Protestant influence.

Masaryk's philosophy of Czech history was also favorable to Protestantism; it put in the fore the reformist legacy and, in association with this, emphasized the humanitarian and religious-ethical meaning of Czech history. From this he derived conclusions about the need for peaceful reformist tactics as corresponding to Czech traditions. In his concept of Czech history he related, for example, to Jan Karafiát,<sup>2</sup> although in many ways he did not agree with this representative of the older generation of Czech Protestantism. For these reasons--and also due to his critical attitude toward Catholic clericalism--he often supported the evangelicals as early as before World War I and during the period of the First Republic. Many evangelicals saw themselves as enabling the gradual realization of the heritage of Czech history as seen through Protestant eyes.

Masaryk's own religious-philosophical attitudes concur importantly with the Protestant *Weltanschauung*: pronounced religious individualism which drew him to Protestantism from the beginning, the combination of rational criticism and analysis rejecting the rationalism of the eighteenth century, aversion to forms of obvious mysticism, emphasis upon the vital and practical aspect of religion, and ardent rejection to outer manifestations of piety.

Masaryk never felt any firm spiritual bonds with Protestantism; he criticized sharply the practice and ideology of Protestant churches, their inability to cope with the social, political and cultural problems of that time; he accused the Protestant church of political clericalism and institutionalized religion: and he did not consider the Protestantism of that time to be a satisfactory form of religion. This, however, does not exclude Masaryk from Protestantism; similar criticism could be heard from among such Protestant theologians as Kierkegaard, Kutter, Ragaz, etc.--very frequently their criticism was sharper and more dramatic. Much more important was the way Masaryk's approach derived from his thinking, and here lie the main differences between his thought and Protestantism.

In his justification of the central role of religion in the life of man and society, Masaryk applied, in the first place, psychological argumentation. What is a transcendent matter in Protestantism (God as a being beyond world and man, revealed to mankind through the Bible) is

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<sup>2</sup> J.L. Hromadka, *Catholicism and the Struggle for Christianity* (Prague, 1934), 210.

for Masaryk a universal human fact. Religious faith is not a gift of the grace of God, but a psychic need of all people, an attribute of man's nature. Without religion man is dehumanized; a person with a well-developed humane character is thereby religious. Modern man with a disrupted *Weltanschauung* (i.e., a disharmony of reason, sentiment and will) should be cured by enabling religion to penetrate all the components of his mentality. Religion should help human reason to interpret the world theistically; theism should give to empirical facts their final sense or "intention."

Further, religion should be a strong emotional experience--enthusiasm, faith and love bear the seal of religion. Finally, religion must pass also into the sphere of the will to establish life "*sub specie aeternitatis*." From this basic "anthropological" function Masaryk derived also the social function of religion: to harmonize relationships among people, among the classes. From this point of view he considered religion to be a solid component of the earlier historical development, a permanent part of culture.

At the same time Masaryk called for a "new religion, a religion that would be in accord with modern science," a "critical" and "unrevealed" religion. Some of these features of Masaryk's concept of religion placed him outside the stream of undeniably Protestant thinking expressed by Rádl and particularly by Hromádka. However, if we abandon the sphere of mere abstract confrontation, these differences are not great enough to exclude Masaryk from the stream which we called the philosophy of Czech Protestantism.<sup>3</sup> Masaryk's direct effect on Czech Protestantism appeared in the religious-philosophical views of two significant representatives of Czech philosophy of the period between the two World Wars: Emanuel Rádl and J.B. Kozák.

### **Emanuel Rádl (1873-1942)**

The ideological connection between Masaryk and the philosophy of Czech Protestantism was reflected most evidently in the philosophy of E. Rádl both in the way he agreed and in the way he differed from Masaryk.<sup>4</sup> If Masaryk became predominantly a practical politician, then Rádl adhered primarily to philosophy and religion, even though he was also very active in public political and cultural life. Rádl published many pamphlets on various subjects and in this way he

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<sup>3</sup> In this respect the influence of Masaryk's views on religion is very important. They acted in two contrary directions: on the one hand, they supported the unreligious and anti-religious tendencies and, on the other hand, they cooperated in working some "modifications" in the religious doctrines of the traditional churches. In the first case, Masaryk inadvertently supported freethinking and anti-clerical endeavors in which the only thing that remained of religion was the term itself (cfr., for instance, L. Kunte, *The Origin of a New Religion*, 1920). This understanding was due to the fact that Masaryk participated in anti-clerical events (particularly at the beginning of the century) together with representative freethinkers and that he frequently resembled freethinking in his polemics and in his method of argumentation (cf. the title of Masaryk's pamphlet, "A Mirror for the Preacher," 1920). Along with the main political considerations, Masaryk led these disputes in order to defend religion against "indifferentism in the church." In his study, "The Development of Masaryk's Religious Philosophy" (1967). Jiri Bednar found that there were three periods in the development of Masaryk's religious philosophy: (1) the Pascal period (1881-1900), oriented to existential issue; (2) the period of free faith (1900-1914) with rational and scientific criticism of everything miraculous and mystical in religion; and (3) the providential period, incorporating the idea of synergism into the concept of historical logic, incorporating the idea of synergism into the concept of historical logic. (See also F. Kautman, *Masaryk—Salda—Patočka*, 1990, 16-22).

<sup>4</sup> As were many Czech philosophers of his generation, Emanuel Radl was first a secondary school teacher, then assistant professor (1904) and professor (1919) of methodology of natural sciences at the Faculty of Philosophy of Charles University.

became convinced also that true philosophy, the love of truth, is always an effort for the victory of truth, and that the philosopher must be prepared for a responsible role in society.

The differences between Masaryk and Rádl reflected not only different personal inclinations and preferences, but also differences between the pre-war and the post-war atmospheres. Rádl represented an attempt at a specific application of Masaryk's principles, suggestions and methods for the solution of matters associated with the new problems and crises of the Czech society between the two world wars, i.e., the world economic crisis, national conflicts, and the increasing threat of Fascism leading to the fall of Czechoslovakia. When we emphasize Rádl's relation to Masaryk, naturally we do not want to deny other influences on Rádl. There were, for instance, the vitalism of Hans Driesch (Rádl began as a biologist);<sup>5</sup> the complete disillusion with positivistic science and philosophy, and criticism of mechanism and naturalistic physicalism which culminated in Rádl's criticism of modern science as identified with its conception in Galileo and Descartes; the pragmatism of J. Dewey (accepted with reservations); and various forms of religious philosophy (including the philosophy of Hromádka). These various forces acted in different degrees at various stages of Rádl's life and philosophical development. It may be stated that after the first impulse toward philosophical reflection which Rádl derived from the natural sciences and from late nineteenth century classical philosophical literature, it was Masaryk's realism that had the strongest effect.<sup>6</sup>

Rádl joined Masaryk on the fundamental issues of his stand against the positivism of the nineteenth century. What is the relationship between one's personal convictions on which one shapes one's practical conduct, and the suprapersonal, objective and absolute world? Is philosophy a personal determination or is it an objective knowledge of the objective world? Whereas Masaryk finally resolved the tension between "subjectivism" and "objectivism" in favor of a "moderate" subjectivism-objectivism, Rádl sharpened markedly the tension in both directions. On the one hand, he was more subjective than Masaryk. In his struggle against the liberal positivistic conception of an "unengaged science" following the motto "*je n'impose rien; je ne propose rien; j'expose,*" he stressed conduct and decision; against the "objective science of the nineteenth century" he stressed contemporary "subjective science."

At first, he comprehended truth almost pragmatically considering it a matter of the moral decision on the part of the individual and as a matter of subjective allegiance to certain conceptions. In this spirit he drafted his *History of Biological Theories* and *History of Philosophy*. But along with this relativization of scientific truths, he laid much greater emphasis on the realm of absolute truth and morality than did Masaryk.

He attempted to create a philosophical system out of Masaryk's ideas without metaphysics and teleology ("actual teleology can be recognized only through the science"). He utilized biology, which was particularly favorable for this purpose, in connection with the fall of the mechanistic natural sciences and the assertion of historicism in biology. Where Masaryk had wanted to counterpoise the idea of the "purpose" of the world against the history of society; Rádl, on the other hand, tried to draft this "purpose" as a natural historical fact: "The purport of matters is an

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<sup>5</sup> As did Frantisek Mares, Radl began his scientific career as a biologist and physiologist. Many of his studies about the nervous system, sight, phototropism of lower animals, etc., were well received abroad. His book, *The History of Developmental Theories of the XIXth Century* (published in German in Leipzig, 1905-1909; in Czech, 1909; in English London, 1930; in Spanish in Madrid, 1931) reveals Radl the philosopher.

<sup>6</sup> Masaryk's influence on Radl was most obvious, for example, in his studies *Scientific and Philosophical Essays* (1914), *Masaryk and Nietzsche, On Our Contemporary Philosophy* (1922), and *On the Meaning of Our History* (1925).

objectively given natural fact, but can be perceived by the 'inner' eye only; it is an idea, as Plato said, a matter given objectively and is scientifically delimitable."<sup>7</sup> Here, the spirit is a supersensory essence appearing through individual material objects. On this basis, Rádl developed Masaryk's scheme about the abstract (laws, relationships), the concrete (the individual objects) and the practical (intentions) recognition of what exists, what is accepted and what should be accepted.<sup>8</sup> Rádl asserted these ideas against the positivistic demand of "unengaged science" and against its efforts to oust philosophy from the "positive" sciences.

An important result of Rádl's efforts is a philosophical defense of religion and theology. That is to say, he joined a number of pairs: a subjective conception of truth with the doctrine of a realm of truth above people; the expressly theological conception of faith that "all of a sudden truth is correct, moral and pious", with scientific knowledge in truth, but also "the truth of faith". Also by subjectivizing "the truth of science" he made it a believed truth" which man as scientist had decided. Thus, the relationship between science and the religion of faith was solved in favor of the integration of science and theology: theology becoming a component of modern science and, as a matter of fact, the supreme science.<sup>9</sup> In this way the issue of "true reality" as the realm of absolute truth, justice and morality which rules over people, their experiences and history increasingly preoccupied Rádl's attention.

Masaryk strove to derive the absolute, general, binding moral norms from universal relationships and characteristics, placing morals and religion in the heart of man. He traced his final outlook to "the light of eternity", to the importance of faith in God, and hence a psychological effect. In contrast, for Rádl, "the rule of morality depends on a moral center lying beyond our reach". While metaphysics cannot identify this true reality or provide objective knowledge about it, yet it can come close to it.

The problem of "Russia and Europe" was for Masaryk a question of the degree to which the West would manage to carry out social reforms and whether Russia, which was subject to a "revolutionism" which already had become antiquated in the West, would be "Europeanized" in this sense. For Rádl contemporary society was already a theater of competition between "West and East", and he believed in the victory of the West. He sought the way out of this polarity through religion: "It is true that the kingdom of God is not of this world, but it is for this world. Its laws are asserted in this world, as well as in internal and international politics. Only work will bring you to this!" From the aspect of a "philosophy of action", in many ways reminiscent of Masaryk, he criticized shallow ecclesiasticism and also considered the new theological movements (e.g., dialectic theology) as being detached from life. Though he agreed with Kierkegaard's emphasis on revelation and on the discrepancy between God and man, he rebuked Kierkegaard, as he did Barth, for his scholasticism and over-emphasis upon the contradictions between God and man: "Dialectical theology is as far from the daily troubles of the ordinary man as is dialectic materialism".

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<sup>7</sup> The following works show the stages of Radl's philosophical work proper: "Romantic Science" (1918), "West and East" (1925), "Modern Science, Its Principle, Methods and Results" (1926), "The Crisis of the Intelligentsia" (1928), "The War Between the Czechs and the Germans" (1928), "The History of Philosophy," I, II (1932-1933), "Consolation from Philosophy" (1946).

<sup>8</sup> Radl, *Modern Science*, 51.

<sup>9</sup> Radl wrote about the oneness of philosophy and theology and about the superiority of theology over science and philosophy, e.g., his article "Theology and Science," *Kresianska revue* (1927-1933), "Consolation from Philosophy" (1946).

In the conclusion to his "History of Philosophy", Rádl mentioned the disintegration and malady of Europe and posed the question of how to save civilization. In this he considered the only certainty to lie in the voice from the "supersensory": trust, fight, help; through you the truth will be victorious! Even if everything disappears, man's mission, which is not of this world, will remain. He saw the human conscience pulled taut by gaining absolute dimensions, so that it is the law which one possesses that becomes the only absolute, the only valid reality. "This world is a random tool for this ordained mission of ours."<sup>10</sup>

### **Josef Lukl Hromádka (1889-1969)**

This prominent representative of Czech Protestantism, and Rádl's collaborator of many years, was active particularly in the periods between the two world wars, during World War II and in the postwar period.<sup>11</sup> As a member of the younger theological generation he tried to cope with the opinions of Masaryk and Rádl and, in contrast to them, to transfer the infinitely more dramatic basic social problems to the theological-philosophical sphere.

Hromádka responded to the transformations of world Protestant theology: the traditions of liberal Protestantism and their historicizing approaches to harmonizing modern science and culture; the so-called social Christianity engaged in solving the "social problem"; and the "theology of crisis" of Barth's school, to which the above traditions and attempts appeared to be undue secularizations and pulverizations of religious faith and life.

Hromádka was very close to this attitude. His neo-orthodoxy involved a defense of the "classical line of Christianity", stressing the basic Biblical theses and the articles of Christian faith, a preemptory renewal of the main theological terms: "the grace of God", "sin" and "redemption". He again underscored the basic issue of theology as that of the relation of the transcendent God to the world, and of sinful man to God. In Hromádka's view, God is an objective, transcendent, super-individual being, completely supreme and revealed.<sup>12</sup>

Hromádka attached high value to Masaryk's political program and his stress on religion; he accepted his criticism of the church, welcomed his favorable statements about Catholicism, and the idea that religions should breed religion and should not interfere with the socio-political issues. However, he had many reservations about Masaryk's conception of religion about an "unrevealed" and "non-ecclesiastic" religion, and the demand for "synergism" or cooperation of man with God. He regarded highly Masaryk's emphasis on ethics; however, he objected to the dwindling of religion into ethics, philosophy and politics, to which religion was subordinated. He regarded Masaryk's philosophy as much too "anthropocentric" and "not very fertile religiously."<sup>13</sup>

This is the reason why Hromádka turned against all tendencies to subjectivize religion, to make it a mere psychological need or emotional experience. He objected to replacement of the "classical" (transcendent) conception of God by the immanent conception of philosophical gods

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<sup>10</sup> E. Radl, *The History of Philosophy*, II, 626.

<sup>11</sup> Following his studies at the grammar school in Valasske Mezirici and at the theological faculties in Vienna, Basle, and Heidelberg, J.L. Hromadka worked as a clergyman in the Lutheran church. In 1920, he submitted his habilitation thesis on Masaryk's philosophy of religion at the Hus Theological Faculty in Prague and immediately afterwards was appointed professor of theology. He spent the period 1936-1947 in the USA as professor at the Presbyterian seminar in Princeton. On returning home he lectured at the Komensky Theological Faculty and held several offices in Czech and foreign religious organizations.

<sup>12</sup> J.L. Hromadka, *Christianity and Scientific Thinking* (1922), 10-17, 36.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 35. Compare also Hromadka's monograph, *Masaryk* (1930) which continues to be considered one of the most stimulating studies of Masaryk.

subjecting religion to philosophy, ethics, aesthetics, science and modern culture. In this respect, Hromádka again asserted the right of theology to priority above all knowledge:

It is not a matter of happiness and blessedness in the first place, but of obedience to truth, to life in truth and to the victory of truth. The personal, practical and moral character of religious faith consists in this relationship to truth, in contrast to unprejudiced, purely theoretical scientific and philosophical thinking. Science recognizes reality, explains it, and thereby arrives at its own truth about the world, whereas faith (and I have in mind specifically the Christian faith) concludes that supreme truth is the norm of all relative human truth, that absolute truth is the master and legislator, the determinant of all human thinking, undertaking and desire. For faith is not only a matter of knowledge of the relations between things, nor is it a mere *weltanschauung*; it is the certainty that truth as a supreme living, personal norm exists and that it decides about my life and death.<sup>14</sup>

In his basic conception of truth and the relationship between philosophy, science and theology, Hromádka agreed with Rádl that the personal "truth of faith" and the absolute "truth of God" stand in contrast to the relative "truth of man". However, he separated science, as "unprejudiced, purely theoretical thinking", from theology more sharply than did Rádl. Rádl, the philosopher, is closer to Masaryk than Hromádka, the orthodox theologian, who was concerned primarily with the discrepancy between God and the world. Hromádka indicated brilliantly how the realm of responsibility, the conscious spiritual life, stands above the realm of nature and natural events.

However, Rádl appears to have indicated the path where synthesis might be sought, though this is not to suggest that Hromádka knew nothing about this path. The theologian does not distinguish between the realm of nature and the mind, but between the sin of the disturbed world and the true, original order of God. In this way the theologian makes man responsible for everything and seeks the final synthesis in the principle of redemption by God.<sup>15</sup>

In religion supported by theology, Hromádka saw the only means of intellectual synthesis which, in his opinion, Rádl, depending too much on philosophical means, had not solved, and which Masaryk too, had not managed to solve. For this reason, to the very end he blamed Masaryk for not having succeeded in overcoming positivism and naturalism, even though he had led a praiseworthy fight against them. In Hromádka's opinion, only religion can reach that goal.

Similar differences among Masaryk, Rádl and Hromádka can be found in their approach to ethics. Masaryk put "humanistic" ethics in the fore, expressed as all-human, natural standards, which appeal to transcendent religious aspects only in the last instance ("man can be man's ideal only *sub specie aeternitatis*"). Rádl mentioned the moral order governing man. Hromádka finished this process by stressing faith in God's supremacy to which everything else--responsible behaviors, ethics and morals--"will be added"; this was a resolutely theocentric attitude.

Hromádka's reaction to "social Christianity" and to the "theology of crisis" is his way out of expressing his attitude to the new historical transformations connected particularly with World War II and the post-war changes. If Rádl's judgment was that the battle between the "West and the East" would be won by the West, Hromádka found himself in a situation "between East and the West". He thought it out in exile in America and, particularly after returning to post-war Czechoslovakia,<sup>16</sup> in a difficult tension between, on the one hand, the defense of the genuine

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<sup>14</sup> J.L. Hromádka, *The Problem of Truth in Theological Thinking* (1928), *Theology and the Church* (1949), 59-60.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 70.

<sup>16</sup> For instance *From the Opposite Bank – Essays from the American Exile, 1940-1945* (with O. Odložilík) (New York, 1943; Prague, 1947); *Between the East and the West* (collection of articles from the period 1944-1945), 1946;

character and independence of Christian faith and, on the other, his effort to bear joint responsibility in the world and in his own country.

This, however, will be a special chapter. Let us only note that this intellectual tradition had its own distinguished successors, in a certain sense reinforcing and intensifying its theological-philosophical orientation (J.B. Soucek, A. Molnár, J. Lochman, L. Hejdánek, among others).

### **Jan Blahoslav Kozák (1888-1974)**

In the same way as Hromádka, so J. Kozák originally had wanted to be an evangelical clergyman. After his study of theology abroad, devoting much attention to philosophy as well, he worked as an evangelical vicar (1910-1914). Since he frequently disagreed with the traditional orthodoxy around him (he was under the influence of the radical religious-historical school and of liberal theology), he decided on a civil career as a teacher. He began his university career in 1921 after submitting his habilitation thesis in philosophy at the Faculty of Philosophy of Charles University in Prague; six years later he was appointed there professor of philosophy.<sup>17</sup>

Influenced by Mares and Rádl, Kozák soon began to come to terms with positivism; he objected to the way positivism disregarded metaphysical matters, and replaced the *quaestio iuris* for the *quaestio originis* when solving the validity of noetic and ethical principles, etc. In the process of knowledge, Kozák assumed that thinking as a biological function adapts to or accommodates objective reality: the more the statement refers to the concrete reality and is factually more comprehensive, the less is it certain, making it necessary to extend further its inductive basis.<sup>18</sup>

It is symptomatic for Kozák that his attention was directed mainly to the sphere of moral values and principles, particularly to the problem of how to decide the question whether endeavors to realize moral values are not a mere private matter of mankind, but the fulfillment of a higher principle, or, as Kozák put it, "the moral order of the universe."<sup>19</sup> He assumed that man could draw the greater certainty he needed for decision-making and behaviour from the moral experience of people, on the one hand, and from religious faith as the source of conviction about the validity and liability of moral values, on the other.

In his considerations regarding religion and its operation, Kozák bore in mind unrevealed religion, taking into account the world of contemporary man and the results of scientific investigations. He strove to contribute to this understanding of religion and hence also to the "re-discovery of Christianity. For example, in his book, *Jesus in the Faith and Skepticism of Our Times* (1920), he wrote:

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*Masaryk between Yesterday and Tomorrow* (1947); *Kirche und Theologie im Umbruch der Gegenwart – Ein ischekoslowakischer Beitrag zu den okumenischen Gesprächen* (1956).

<sup>17</sup> J.B. Kozak came from the family of Ferdinand Cisar; the well-known evangelical pastor and personal friend of Masaryk, was his uncle. He studied theology in Bonn, Vienna, Edinburgh and Halle.

<sup>18</sup> Compare J.B. Kozak, *About Certain, Probably and Problematic Thinking* (1921), *On the Issue of Religion* (1922), *Essay on Science and Faith* (1924). J. Kral and J. Bednar concluded that in this *Essay* Kozak came close to atheism. Kral (*Czechoslovak Philosophy*) saw this as the effect of Kozak's cooperation with F. Krejci at the University. Kozak's later "return to personalism and theism" was associated by Kral with Kozak's cooperation with "the theologizing Radl and orthodox Hromadka." (Compare also J. Bednar, on the eightieth birthday anniversary of J.B. Kozak, *Filosofichy casopis* (Philosophical Magazine), I, no. 5 (1968), 764.

<sup>19</sup> J. Kucera, "On the Eightieth Anniversary of J.B. Kozak," *Filosofichy casopis*, II (1968), 768.



The critical man must reject the resurrection, his (Jesus') own resurrection and all his other miracles. The meaning of the evangelical tidings about Jesus is that the genuine spiritual personality was killed by secular power. The herald of the supreme spiritual ideals was condemned by the world full of depravity and was nailed to the cross.

The life and death of Jesus are explained as a permanent appeal for the struggle for spiritual values. Kozák did not mean only the salvation of the individual man, he emphasized the social activity of the Christian: "Work in the world is his duty; it leads to the most difficult and most delicate moral tasks."

From Masaryk's conception of religion he stressed the idea of synergism or cooperation between man and God.<sup>20</sup> The moral, spiritual values should be "a warp onto which the true reformation of the society will be woven." At the beginning, Kozák interpreted the basis of religious faith--the idea of God--as a scientific hypothesis supported also ontologically; later he re-ontologized it: "God" was the inevitable spiritual ideal, "the meeting place of ideas" for which man decides and which should then lead him through life. "I know nothing about the essence of this necessity; I only know that it exists and that it imposes duties upon me."

Kozák's philosophical thinking, aimed permanently at the ethical, the anthropological and at matter, was expressed in the period between the two World Wars particularly in his books *The Present State of Ethics* (1930), *The Fight for Spiritual Values* (1930) and *Science and the Mind* (1938). In these works he elaborated particularly his conception of values and evaluation: values are objective qualities which man works gradually to understand and recognize on the basis of all his life experiences; these convince him also that it is necessary to care about "the call of values", i.e., the voice saying that something "should be".

Kozák's acquaintance with phenomenological philosophy (Husserl and Scheler), and his application of the method of phenomenological reflection associated with the characteristic conceptions of intention, horizon, meaning, opinion, etc., contributed to the profundity and refinement of his considerations in the '30s. (Elsewhere it was mentioned that Kozák was a co-founder of the Prague Philosophical Circle which dealt with the studies and diffusion of phenomenology.)<sup>21</sup>

He presumed that man's recognition and evaluation of reality stems from what is given immediately in his consciousness (in his lectures on knowledge he mentioned also "gnoseological transcendence"). Through his spirit, intentions and transcendent vision, man measures things not only in their phenomenality but in their "essence", thereby creating conceptions which are intentional but not unobjective. As a result of the activities of the individual spirit these may have many topical meanings which make them relative. Therefore, truth does not lie in a harmony between thinking and variable reality, but in the mutual agreement of the intentional objects effected. There is no reason to stop identifying the results of various spiritual intentions: "Thinking should harmonize in itself."

In accord with his philosophy, Kozák participated actively in public life in the period between the two World Wars, defending democratic ideas and resisting Fascism. He spent the war period in the USA as a teacher at Oberlin College, and worked for sometime in the diplomatic service. After World War II he again lectured at Charles University where he was Dean of the Faculty of

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<sup>20</sup> Compare J.B. Kozak, *Masaryk – Philosopher* (1925). Kozak also wrote the studies, *Masaryk as an Ethician and Religious Thinker* (1931), *Patriotism and Humanity in T.G. Masaryk* (1935) and *Masaryk and Metphysics: The Leader of Generations*, I (1930-1931).

<sup>21</sup> See the chapter devoted to the influence of phenomenology in Czech philosophical activities.

Philosophy. He followed very carefully and commented on the domestic social activities of the time. He himself tried "to go in Masaryk's direction, beyond and above Masaryk, to balance his theoretical dispute with Marxism," asserting that the solution of social problems must not be governed by false myths, nor should it be done to the detriment of the basic democratic principles.<sup>22</sup> After the *coup d'état* in February 1948, he was allowed to publish only his translations of Bruno, Voltaire, La Mettrie, etc.

After World War II, Kozák tried to elaborate the ontological basis of his philosophical standpoint. However, his "contextualism" (processual and causal ontology) is to be found only in the reports of his former university students.<sup>23</sup> The term "contextualism" corresponds to Kozák's understanding of temporal events. He saw them as changes which effect the quality of all things including specific methods of behaviour and their effects on subject. In these there endure the contexts or "dynamic structures of events which bear certain features of past events and, at the same time, contain as possibilities the features of future events towards whose realization they aim". The universe is an entity where infinite numbers of various narrower and broader contexts penetrate. Some of them, as Kozák was convinced, aim toward something higher and more perfect, toward something divine. Man should support such things, at least in spheres which he can, in some way, influence. Kozák's philosophy is optimistic: it does not pretend to make things easy for man, for it has high demands, however, it provides hope that human endeavors for spiritual values have a "higher meaning".

J.B. Kozák was a Protestant thinker in his orientation, in his emphasis on Christian activism his thought was akin to those tendencies in Protestantism already profiled by D. Bonhoeffer and transformed by many other Protestant theologians. This did not yield to the pressures of a secularizing world, but strove for a new, clear presentation of Christianity in this world. In this way, Kozák contributed to the formation of a tradition which would help Czech Protestants to find a position from which they would be able to address individual's problems in order to find a way out and a direction for all their efforts while, at the same time, providing for an adequate view of the global problems of contemporary society.

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<sup>22</sup> Kozák's books, *Roosevelt's America* (1946), *Along the Way* (1958) and *About the Population and People* (1948) refer to the war and post-war periods.

<sup>23</sup> Here we follow the reconstruction of Kozák's contextualism as given by his former student Jaroslav Kucera in his contribution in the *Filosoficky casopis*, 1968, quoted above.

## Chapter VI

# Czech Catholicism and Philosophy

*Jiri Gabriel, Stanislav Sousedik and Jan Zouhar*

This chapter will study the philosophical writings of Catholic-oriented Czech authors. In its practice, the Church offers its believers a comprehensive philosophical outlook on the world and man. Hence to be educated in a Catholic school, as was Masaryk, is to be opened to the philosophical dimension of human wisdom in its long sweep from the Greeks to the present. Thus, the pressures of the quasi-established positivism, which limited knowledge to the empirical and material and thereby evoked the “idealist” reaction described in a previous chapter, were particularly felt in Catholic circles. As noted in that chapter, it was natural that such a leading figure of that reaction as F. Mares considered the integrated classical philosophical tradition carried in neo-Thomism to be closest to his views and to provide the needed philosophical sources. V. Hoppe would draw upon the French Catholic tradition of Bergson and ultimately become a Catholic. Masaryk referred Husserl to Brentano, for the foundational insight that would prove crucial for the Czech development of phenomenology.

This chapter will look more closely at this Catholic dimension of the Czech philosophical heritage.

### Formal Philosophers

#### *Before 1919*

The foundational fact is that the original and basic intellectual tradition of Czech culture, as of the other European academic traditions, is scholasticism. In the twelfth century the scientific structure of Aristotle's works first became available to the Christian Platonism heretofore prevalent in Europe. This enabled Thomas Aquinas, Scotus and others to forge their academic philosophico-theological summaries (*Summa's*) as the first university scientific texts. These were the basic teaching tools in the set of such early universities as those of Paris, Prague, Krakow and Vilnius in which the intellectual traditions of Europe were forged.

Hence, the story of the development of the modern philosophical traditions of these countries, including the Czech regions, is the story of the interaction between the classical Catholic or scholastic traditions and the emergent themes of modernity. Indeed, as typified by Masaryk, Husserl and Patocka, the Czech philosophical horizon is perhaps most distinguished by its degree of positive continuity with the earlier Graeco-Christian sense of person and polity (see Chapter 6 and 7 by M. Bednar in the previous volume in this series: *Traditions and Present Problems of Czech Political Culture: Czech Philosophical Studies, I*).

In the Czech language context itself we find the first evidence of interest in neo-scholastic philosophy in the 1860s and 1870s. The representatives of the then prevailing Herbartism were not hostile toward this new philosophical direction and, thus, after the publication of the encyclical *Aeterni-Patris* (1879) the conditions were quite favorable for the development of neo-scholasticism. By the turn of the century, Catholics already had a relatively extensive, diversified, and well-grounded literature at their disposal. Among the authors representing the first generation of neo-scholastic adherents, the leading position was held by Josef Pospisil (1845-1926), a

professor in the theology faculty in Brno. His *Philosophy according to the Principles of St. Thomas Aquinas* (1883-1913) was a remarkable achievement at that time. Pospisil, however, dealt only with some disciplines but in an integral manner: cosmology covers 1,200 pages, i.e., two thirds of the whole work. In addition to Pospisil's treatise, a proportionally better designed *Analysis of the Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas* was published by a Proague grammar school professor, Vaclav Hlavaty (1842-1920), in 1885. Thus, it was compiled after the famous works by Albert Stock (*Geschichete der Philosophie des Mitltlers*, 1864; *Lehrbuch der Philosophie*, 1868, etc.). *De natura Entis* (1891), a Latin publication intended for the students of theology, was written by Josef Kachnik (1859-1942), a professor in the Faculties of Theology in Olomouc and in Prague. At the turn of the century, a number of monographs on individual philosophical disciplines were published by Eugen Kaderavek (1840-1922), a professor in the Faculty of Theology in Prague who originally had supported an Herbartian orientation.

The philosophical orientation of these works varied. Pospisil can be described as a neo-thomist in essence, while Kachnik's work *De Natura Entis* displayed a distinctly Suarezian orientation. Kaderavek assumed a neutral standpoint in his writings; on controversial issues he offered diverse solutions (Thomistic as well as Suarezian) and left the choice to his readers. Unlike some other countries, the Scotistic movement is not reflected in these or other writings, then or later,<sup>1</sup> probably as an aftermath of the Josephine reforms that led to a dampening of scholarly activities within the Franciscan order.<sup>2</sup>

The foundational fact is, of course, that the original and basic intellectual tradition of Czech outline, as of all the European academic cultures, is scholasticism. Integrating the heritage of Plato and Aristotle within the Catholic intellectual horizon Thomas, Scotus and others forged the academic philosophical theological summaries (*Summa*'s) which succeeded the commentaries on the Sentences as the basic teaching tools in the set of early universities such as those at Paris, Prague, Krakow and Vilnius in which the intellectual traditions of the various cultures were forged. Hence the story of the development of their modern philosophical traditions is the story of the interaction between the classical Catholic or scholastic traditions in this field and the emergent themes of modernity. Indeed, as typified by Masaryk, Husserl and Patocka, the Czech philosophical horizon is perhaps most distinguished by its degree of positive continuity with the earlier Graeco-Christian sense of person and polity (see chapters 6 by M. Bednar in the previous volume in this series: *Tradition and Present Problems of Czech Political Cultures in Czech Philosophical Studies, I*).

In addition to the systematic works, the revival and promotion of scholastic philosophy in Czech surroundings was supported also by writings regarding medieval philosophy. Otto Willman (1839-1920), a professor of pedagogy in the German University in Prague, published *Geschichte des Idealismus* (Braunschweig, 1894-1897), in three volumes. This work was later on referred to in the Czech countries by a number of historians of philosophy who favored scholasticism. One of them was the already mentioned, Josef Kachnik, whose informative *Historia Philosophiae* had a second edition (1898, 1909), and an extended Czech version in 1904. Czech medieval philosophy was studied by Jan Sedlak (1871-1924), a prominent expert in the writings of Jan Hus. Frantisek Hrachovsky (1879-1943), a Premonstratensian who died in the Auschwitz concentration camp,

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<sup>1</sup> The account of John Duns, D. Scott's "Distinctio Formalis" by J.K. Vyskocil in *Ceska mysl*, 1926, was an exception.

<sup>2</sup> The reforms in question were carried out between 1780-1790 by the Emperor Joseph II with the aim of limiting the privileges of the Church and bringing it (the reforms also included the abolition of a number of mansteries and the establishment of general seminaries).

endeavored to compile a register of the sources (manuscripts as well as published writings) for the history of Christian philosophy in the Czech lands.

In the history of every national philosophy, the translations of classical philosophical texts played a very important role and some of the Czech translations were compiled by followers of neoscholastic philosophy. Jan Votka and Vaclav Vokacek translated Aquinas' treatise entitled *De Ente et Essentia* and provided it with a preface and a commentary. Pavel Vychodil (1862-1938), a Benedictine from the Rajhrad monastery near Brno, translated Aristotle's *Categories*, *On the Soul*, *Nicomachean Ethics* and *Politics*. He was also the head of the theoretical review entitled *Hlidka* (The Guard) begun in 1884, in which many contributions on the history of philosophy were published.

This survey suggests that, for a certain period of time, Czech neo-scholastic philosophy lacked a more comprehensive interpretation of some philosophical disciplines. Eugen Kaderavek attempted to fill these gaps with his *System of Christian or Aristotelian-Thomistic Philosophy* in three volumes. In the first volume he expounded formal and "critical" logic, ontology and aesthetics. In the "critical" logic he concentrated on substantiating the possibility and reality of the degrees of knowledge, thus opposing the skeptics. His own answers to ontological questions were rather eclectic: in the spirit of the Scotist and Suarezian tradition, he characterized existence as something to whose being nothing opposes. In the question concerning the distinction between existence and being, he simply reviewed the Thomistic and Suarezian standpoints without siding with either. The second volume of the *System* covered the so-called special metaphysics: cosmology, psychology, and natural theology. Here the consequences of the author's eclecticism were most manifested. In the context of natural theology he defended Aquinas' five ways which he classified as "cosmological" and interpreted as such. The third volume of the *System* was devoted to ethics, divided by Kaderavek into general and special. First he examined the purposeful, formal, and material reasons for human action from the viewpoint of morals; then he considered the ways in which people should conduct themselves both as individuals and as members of a society. His numerous critical comments on socialism were based on V. Cathrein's work *Philosophia Moralis* (Freiburg, 1893). His treatise was a sort of final statement of the founding generation of the Czech neoscholastic philosophy synthesizing its development thus far. In this respect, it was only partially successful. Compared to Pospisil's older works, Kaderavek's writing was more integral, yet it lacked the incisiveness of Pospisil's analyses. Kaderavek's effort to introduce Czech terms everywhere as also somewhat detrimental to the treatise.

### *Between the Wars*

Soon after the foundation of the independent Czechoslovak Republic, there came a second generation of the followers of neoscholastic philosophy. This generation worked in conditions considerably different from the previous period. The overall cultural orientation of the new state was, especially at the beginning, utterly anti-Catholic.<sup>3</sup> And the positivist journal, *Ceska mysl*, published a number of fierce criticisms of neoscholastic philosophy. However, the followers of "idealistic philosophy," who from 1920 centered around the journal, *Ruch filosoficky*, took a much more moderate view. A certain upsurge of neoscholasticism, especially of Thomism, was recorded

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<sup>3</sup> Anti-Catholic sentiments, fed on the long-running cooperation between the Church and the ruling Habsburg monarchy, were also manifested by mass withdrawal from the Church after the war (many of these believers were then "detained" by the newly established Czechoslovak Church). Negotiations concerning the relationship between the State and the Catholic Church ended in accepting the *modus vivendi* in 1928.

as early as the 1920s, supported above all by the members of the Dominican order, but also by many laymen.

*Josef Kratochvil* (1882-1940) should first mention among the laymen. After his studies in Rome and Prague, he worked as a librarian, finally as a councilor in the State Research Library in Brno. His numerous writings included the *Philosophy of the Middle Ages* (1924), the first Czech treatise devoted to medieval philosophy, and four volumes of *Meditations of Ages* interpreting the development of philosophy from its very beginning up to the present time (this treatise had four editions: 1929, 1932, 1934, and 1937). In 1928, Kratochvil, together with Karel Cernocky, a psychologist, published the first Czech *Dictionary of Philosophy*. The last extensive work by Kratochvil, who died prematurely, was a four volume *Manual of Philosophy* (1939).<sup>4</sup>

Kratochvil described his philosophical standpoint as neoidealism, which term appeared for the first time in the article, "Neoidealism and Its Roots" in Vychodil's *Hlidka* in 1906. Kratochvil pointed out clearly that, with some other authors associated with the Roma Catholic Church of that time, he was interested in building a philosophy upon Thomas Aquinas' "solid fundamentals of the philosophia perennis."<sup>5</sup> However, he realized that attempts to follow the "Prince of Scholasticism" would be damned *a priori* to failure if their authors did not venture on "new analyses and syntheses," without which the only results would be "dry mummies" and "inert doctrines of the Middle Ages." He defined neoidealism as a movement that "does not trust the scientific and philosophical future of positivism and materialistic monism and intends to balance the disturbed equilibrium between the inner and outer world, and to determine precisely the borderline between these two."<sup>6</sup>

In 1927, he wrote in his *New Philosophical Essays* that the battlecry of "the present ruling philosophy," positivism, was "the fight against positive Christianity," starting with the separation of Church and State and culminating in the separation from the idea of a personal God and theism in general." Czech positivistic and realistic philosophers were said to have the intention of "laicizing, secularizing, anthropomorphizing, and humanizing everything."

Kratochvil maintained that faith was nothing if "it is not rationally substantiated; its worth consists in its content which must be true." He considered breaking through the positivistic thesis that the transcendent was unknowable to be the foremost task of neoidealism, for he saw this as the main source of the overall skepticism of the day" in religious thinking, resulting in "temporary

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<sup>4</sup> In the first volume of this book, Kratochvil explained especially the concept and methods of philosophy; in the second volume he offered a survey of philosophical disciplines; in the third he outlined the history of philosophical thought; the fourth volume was devoted to basic philosophical problems and the main directions of their solutions.

<sup>5</sup> Kratochvil vigorously defended neothomism against its critics who considered it a vain revival of ideas belonging to the 13<sup>th</sup> century. In doing so, he appreciated the Louvain school (the head of which was Cardinal Mercier) and the Milan school (centered round Agostino Gemelli). On the other hand, his relationship to the Czech neothomists round the journal *Filozoficka revue* (Philosophical Review) was rather reserved. When considering other directions he was more liberal; for example, in *An Introduction to Philosophy* we read that "all systems are singular sentence of a wonderful dialogue about truth. There is no reason for one philosophy to exclude *a priori* another one," 23.

<sup>6</sup> Kratochvil, *An Introduction to Philosophy* (Olomouc, 1922), 244. This extensive and rather vague initiation of neoidealism permitted him to introduce, as its representatives, such philosophers as Eucken, Boutroux, Solovjev, J. Newmann (*An Introduction to Philosophy*, 243-244), together with W. James (Kratochvil wrote about this "warrior of neoidealism," for instance, in his *Topical Philosophical Considerations*). In the 1920s, he regarded, for example, Mares, Hoppe, Vorovka, Pelikan, Maly and other philosophers round *Ruch filozoficky* as Czech followers of neoidealism.

ideational confusions.” From this point of view, Kratochvil’s article “The Idea of Agnosticism” published in *Ceska mysl* in 1908, represented an important addition to his programmatic treatise on neoidealism.<sup>7</sup>

Kratochvil considered as agnostic any epistemological or noetic conceptions that “excluded anything in the category of being from cognition,” or that “acknowledged a sort of reality, yet denied its knowability.” Concretely, the positivistic conception of transcendent was “the affirmation of reality and, at the same time, the denial of its knowability.” In his *New Philosophical Essays*, Kratochvil described Krejci’s positivisticism as “noetic agnosticism and ethical naturalism.”

Kratochvil regarded philosophy without metaphysics as a philosophical torso; such philosophy fails at the most critical moment, thus, betraying its very mission. This mission is to examine the “universal order,” both mind and reality, in order to develop a “universal idea about the world and life” that would correspond to the requirements of reason as well as sentiment. Its aim would be to establish “harmony between science and faith, culture and religion, the true and the good, meditation and art, between the philosophy of ancient times and the struggles of the modern age.”

Kratochvil’s rejection of agnosticism and defence of metaphysics cleared the ground for criticism of particular applications of agnosticism in theology: traditionalism (that the only source of knowledge of God is revelation or the Bible), ontologism (that God’s existence is not proved at all for everyone has an innate intuition and perception of God), symbolism (that all statements concerning God are, at the most, of symbolic value), and Ritschelianism (that we know about God only through Christ and his teaching).

Kratochvil’s “Christian philosophy” had as its basic truths the “existence of a personal God distinct from the world, the origin of the world created by God from nothing, human free will, moral dependence on God, immortality of the human soul and its goal in God.” He argued in favor of “God’s existence” (laying maximum stress upon the principle of causality, as “the inevitable basis of any scholarly construction” up to the “necessary first cause,” and upon the “teleological proof”), and exposed the “weak points” of other systems, especially positivism and materialism. Despite all his noetic optimism, Kratochvil’s philosophy left permanent place for revelation inasmuch as the philosophical concept of God was not “intrinsic and quidditative.”

Philosophical criticism often reproached Kratochvil for his superficiality and inaccuracy and for his frequent preference for extensiveness over profundity. However, due to the fact that he did not succeed in teaching in any of the Faculties of Arts (they were in Prague, Brno and Bratislava at that time), research in medieval philosophy in this country—in contrast to Poland, for example—did not develop for a long time.

*The Dominicans in Olomouc* began to publish the *Philosophical Review* in 1928 (it continued, with an interruption during the war years, until 1948). Under its editor, *Metodej Haban* (1899-1884), a circle of Czech neo-thomists gathered around it, among whom, besides Haban, were

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<sup>7</sup> This article is one of the first attempts in this country to provide a comprehensive account of agnosticism, which was the reason why the strict positivist, Frantisek Krejci, published it in *Ceska mysl*. Later in his *Introduction to Philosophy*, Kratochvil repeated that agnosticism should be discussed only in cases where something that exists in the category of being is excluded from the category of cognition, or where “the relationship of non-transferability between the real and cognition” was stated. Agnosticism was not, therefore, in question when the very existence of something is disclaimed, for example, the existence of the supernatural. In this way, he also argued against the identification of “agnosticism” with “skepticism,” because agnosticism was related to “objects purely rational” (i.e., objects of metaphysics) while skepticism extended its doubts over “all the objects of human cognition.”

people like Silvester M. Braito, Antonin Cala, Reginald Dacik, Emilian Soukup, J.M. Vesely, etc. Such foreign authors as J.M. Dochenski, H. Boskovic, M.S. Gillet, among others, also contributed. An international Thomistic Congress was held in Prague in 1932, in which a number of representatives from abroad also took part, including, for example, K. Kowalski, J. Bochenski, E. Przywara, and R. Jolivet.<sup>8</sup>

The most significant accomplishment of the Olomouc Dominicans was the translation of Aquinas' *Summa Theologica* (the last volume was published in 1940), under the guidance of Emilian Soukup (1888-1982).<sup>9</sup>-10 Haban's works included, among others, *Psychology* (1937) and *Natural Ethics* (1944). Reginald Dacik (1907-1988) also focused upon ethics; his *Ethics* (1948) interpreted Aquinas' teaching on virtue. One of the contributors to the *Philosophical Review* was Josef Matocha (1888-1961), a professor in the Faculty of Theology in Olomouc, who later became the Archbishop of Olomouc. He wrote an extensive monograph entitled *The Individual Person: Historical Development and Significance* (1929) and a work called *Critica* (1940), the third volume of a projected *Compendium Philosophiae Christiannae*. Jaroslav Hruban (1888-1934), a layman, devoted himself mainly to aesthetics, Konstantin Miklik (1895-1966) from the point of view of the "noocratic" system in his book entitled *A Book of Good State Establishment* (1931).

*Jaroslva Benes* (1892-1963), a Prague theologian, was initially engaged in the history of medieval philosophy. After an unfortunate analyses of Freud, he concentrated on the study of Descartes' philosophy. In his work, entitled *Rene Descartes or Thomas Aquinas?* (1935), he traced the most profound source of Descartes' subjectivism to a confusion of evidence and certainty. Two laymen, Artur Pavelka (born 1903) and Miloslav Skacel (1914-1974) worked in neothomistic philosophy of nature, the former in his *The Order of Nature* (1941), the latter in his *Matter and Form* (1944). The Dominican, Jan Skacel, published a compendium of *Thomistic Philosophy* (1944, 1947). Before the war the Czech Dominicans often referred to the work of a well-known Christian psychologist, Johannes Lindworski (1875-1939), at the German University in Prague.

Despite all these activities, however, the neothomists remained a relatively secluded group during the interwar period and stood apart from the main currents of Czechoslovak philosophical and cultural life of that time.<sup>10</sup>

*Alois Lang* (1869-1957), a Catholic priest, also worked in neothomism. He deserves attention for his portraits of the "ecstatics of art" (D'Anunzio, Strindberg, Przybyszewski, Rosseger, Arcybasev, Dostoevski, and others) and especially for his works concerning the representatives of Catholic mysticism: Saint Francis of Assisi, "the fool for Christ" Jacapone da Todi, "the cherubic pilgrim" Angelos Silesia, "God's miner" Jindrich Sus, "the philosopher of the German Romanticism" Novalis, "the father of the desert" Hieronymus, etc. In the first third of this century, when Catholicism searched for a means of regeneration, Lang was fascinated by the religious genuineness and concern of the mystics. He assumed that true mysticism and ecstatic experience

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<sup>8</sup> The papers delivered at the congress were published in the Miscellany of International Thomistic Conferences in Prague, 1932 (Olomouc, 1934, ed. Haban).

<sup>9</sup> E. Soukup and A. Pavelka wrote an Introduction the translation of the *Summa Theologica* that was published in Olomouc in 1941. Antonin Kriz continued Vychodil's activities with his translations from Aristotle.

<sup>10</sup> Toward the end of the 1930s, neoscholasticism in Slovakia was being developed by A. Spesz, C. Dudas, and others. This was in confrontation with Blondelism which was mediated by Stefan Polakovic, and the intuitivism of the Russian philosopher, N.O. Losskij, who lived in Czechoslovakia and was called to Bratislava University when the Czech teachers had to leave.



multiplied the religious gentiments of man and were reflected throughout one's entire life; their best result would be the evocation of the state of "Christian devotion of God." On the other hand, Lang proved that mysticism did not bring forth any new, rationally expressible knowledge of the transcendent. The "noetic outcome of the mystics" efforts aiming at a personal union with God were either their own statements concerning their own psychological states, feelings, moods, and relation to God, or "speculations" completely dependent on contemporary religious notions (even though the mystics referred to their subjective "seeing"). A series of Lang's works on outstanding religious philosophers (initiated by a comparative study of Buddhism) was concluded by books on Cardinal J.H. Newman—"a philosopher, sharp logician and penetrating psychologist" (1939)—and on Dostoevski (1947).

### *After World War II*

During the first years following World War II, an ideological confrontation between the Thomistic and Marxist philosophy occurred in the Czech countries. After a carefully designed lesser work by J. Benes entitled *Spirit and Matter in the Theory of Cognition* (19408), Antonin Cala (1907-1984), a Dominican, brought out an open criticism of Marxism in a booklet, *The Basis of Communism* (1948) and in a systematic treatise; *Marxism in Thought and Life* (1947). Timotheus Vodicka wrote a similar book.

The political coup in February, 1948, brought about the suppression of religious life, the abolition of orders, and the overall restriction of church schools, journals, etc. In this way, neoscholastic philosophy lost its institutional basis. Life became difficult for its representatives, in some cases even tragic. New works, nevertheless, appeared, even though they remained in manuscripts or were published abroad.<sup>11</sup> Miloslav Skacel's extensive Course of Aristotelian and Thomistic Philosophy was an example of the former, while, for instance, a three-volume treaties entitled *Man* by Dominik Pecka (1895-1981) was published in Rome between 1970 and 1971. Pecka thus followed up his earlier works such as *The Meaning of Man*, *The Face of Man* (1939), *The Way to the Truth* (1940, 1947, 1969), *The Modern Man and Christianity* (1948), treating the issues of modern philosophical anthropology from the Thomistic point of view.

### **Catholic Intellectuals and Integral Catholicism**

In the course of the second and third decades of this century, innovative tendencies were being developed within the framework of Roman Catholicism. They appeared not only in official Church documents, Papal Encyclicals, and the works of Catholic theologians and philosophers, but also in the cultural endeavors of Catholic artists and publicists. Czech Catholicism, of course, was not outside these European endeavors of the Catholic intelligentsia. Pius IX's pontificate is associated with an extensive Catholic Action launched by his very first encyclical *Ubi arcano Dei*. The idea of the Catholic Action was soon widely publicized and developed in the Czech region.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Here, too, the overall political and cultural relaxation toward the end of the 1980s was manifested; Pecka's book, *The Way to the Truth* was published in a new edition in 1969.

<sup>12</sup> Its central idea was unambiguous: "We shall attempt to create understanding and cooperation with the intellectuals of Europe who are active in accordance with the Catholic Action. If we, the Czechs and Slovaks, succeed in dveloping cooperation with these islands, so far islated, of Catholic intellectuals of Europe, holy orders could be established here that would operate, in the intentions of the last popes, toward the de-secularization of

When examining the factors that created the new profile of Czech Catholic thinking in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, we must take notice of its activities in the field of cultural and political essay writing and artistic production, because these had much greater effect and wider acceptance than the specialized philosophical works already mentioned.

Apart from the papal documents, translated and published mainly by the Olomouc Dominicans, especially the Catholic philosophical production from abroad influenced and interwar development of Czech Catholic thinking, particularly the works of Maritain, whose treatises and essays were translated industriously during the 1930s. It was evident, not only in the *Philosophical Review*, but also in other journals, such as *Akord* (Accord) and *Na hlubinu* (On the Depth), that both in Bohemia and Moravia a group of Catholic lay intellectuals was drawing upon influences from abroad and, at the same time, trying to establish their own approach to domestic conditions. This was not intended, especially at the beginning, as an organized association, but was rather as an application of the same viewpoints and methods.

This was reflected in two ways, one of which, especially in the 20s, tended to be extreme and iconoclastic; the other and main thrust in the 30s contributed some of the most valued elements of the culture of the times. The first was based on the assumption that contemporary society and reached a state of deep crisis caused by rationalism, liberalism, democracy, nationalism, socialism, communism, i.e., by abandoning Catholic universalism and the order characteristic of medieval Catholic society. The way to overcome this crisis consisted, therefore, in the restoration of that order, and in reclaiming these values of Catholic universalism. A number of Czech Catholic authors applied this model to Czech conditions, while having in mind the European dimension of the problem. Their criticism was directed also to their own ranks, rejecting within Czech Catholicism any opinion not in accord with their conception.

Catholic literature continued to criticize the contemporary increase in brutality, violence and moral decadence.<sup>13</sup> The questionable technical progress and the development of material culture, on the one hand, was contrasted to the retardation and disruption in the spiritual and moral sphere, on the other. The situation deteriorated with the Great Depression of 1928-1934, which heavily affected Czechoslovak society. Feelings of catastrophe also appeared. A leading Czech Catholic writer, Jan Cep, wrote: "We are definitely living in the time of apocalyptic and infernal flashes in the sky."<sup>14</sup> One of the frequently repeated ideas was that man had entered the modern age with many proclamations, goals, and worldshattering technical inventions, which, as years went by, brought only deeper political and social oppression, lack of freedom, alienation, and the threat of a new war.<sup>15</sup> An economic interpretation of the crisis was not sufficient; the real basis of the present situation was the spiritual state of the society. Capitalism was no less non-Christian and anti-Christian than socialism; indeed, the philosophical basis of both was the same materialistic world outlook.<sup>16</sup>

At the same time, Catholic authors noted new spiritual tendencies that were said to herald a new age, for they saw history, not as linear "progress," but as a constant alternation of two epochs: one was synthetic and ascendant, the other destructive and decadent. The tragedy of modern times was in the split between the "material order" of industrial, technical and economic development,

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Catholicism in the thickening nightfall of this age." Cf. A. Stork, *The Idea of the Catholic Action*, *Na hlubinu* (1932); J. Strakos, "To the Slovak Brethren," *Akord* (1930), 99.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. J. Vrchovecky, *The Church and Our Age* (Olomouc, 1932), 260.

<sup>14</sup> J. Cep, "Some Ways of Poetry," *Akord* (no. 1, 1934), 10.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. J. Cep, "Factors and Bondage," *Listy pro umeni a kritiku* (Pages for Art and Criticism) (1934), 14-15.

<sup>16</sup> E.K. Mauler, "Notes on the Social Question," *Akord* (1931), 87.

and “formal order” of spiritual life. As a matter of general principle, they insisted that “new realities cannot stem from the presumptions established by the modern age; what matters is to override these basically incorrect and perverted principles.”<sup>17</sup>

This condemnation of contemporary civilization included criticism of democracy as rendering all values relative, dissolving order, and generating merely abstract equality and freedom. For instance, S. Berounsky understood even Othmar Spann, Nikolai Berdyaev, and Jacques Maritain as critics of democracy, and as looking forward to a revision of the ideals for the organization of society and to a restoration of the natural order of values.<sup>18</sup>

Beyond these extremes, a recurrent problem was the re-evaluation of Czech history especially as rendered according to the historical and philosophical conceptions of Palacky and Masaryk which tended to be more critical of the Catholic contribution. Based on the works of the historian Josef Pekar, Catholic authors tried to depict the role of Catholicism in Czech history in a more favorable way. They reduced the historical significance of Hussitism and emphasized the periods of the Counter-Reformation and Baroque, in which they perceived the basis of all Czech spiritual life, as the supreme period of the Czech national history. Jaroslav Durych represented an extreme of this tendency. Nevertheless, the revival of interest in the period of the Counter-Reformation and in Czech Baroque in general, initiated by Catholicism, led to profound research and the rediscovery of this important period of the history of Czech culture.

Another interesting element in the overall profile of Czech Catholic thinking was the conception of the country and peasant life. Catholic authors in this sphere often reflected a social conservatism. The myth of land and peasant work as the source of the only permanent values and certainties in the world was disintegrating under the impact of the technical urban civilization. The rural tendency, of course, had existed even outside Catholic circles but adapted well to the postulates of Christian morality: religious family upbringing, obedience to the father, chastity and motherhood as the basic mission of woman, and bread-winning as the mission of man, union with land, native soil, etc. In some contrast to Church documents on labor (Quadragesimo anno), some authors stressed the need to arrange the future society according to an order based in the estates,<sup>19</sup> which in Czech conditions meant on the life of the peasantry conceived conservatively.

The main Catholic thrust in the process of re-evaluating Czech history and the relationship to the village closely related Catholic political and theoretical writings to the artistic endeavors of Czech Catholic authors. Concerning the relationship between religion and art, Czech Catholicism drew from the writings of Maritain, Guardini and other authors from abroad. While at first considerably defensive, as late as the beginning of 1930s Jaroslav Durych claimed, though with a

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<sup>17</sup> R. Vorisek, “The Task of Our Age,” *Akord* (1932), 178.

<sup>18</sup> This criticism and the rejection of democracy leads to the question of the way in which the Czech Catholics expressed their relation to the fundamental denial of democracy presented by the dictatorship and called the total state. In *Akord* (No. 9-10, 1934), 20, they published the standpoint formulated by Ch. Dawson in his essay “Religion and the Total State” “There is no reason why the extinction of parliamentary democracy and economic individualism should be met with opposition on the side of Christian principles and Christian sentiments. On the contrary, it is theoretically quite possible that the limitation of political and economic freedom through social control could be favorable to spiritual freedom.” We cannot say that this opinion met with a general approval in Catholic circles. The idea of a Socialist state, Communism, and Marxism was, however, fiercely rejected. N. Berdyaev was very influential on this point; cf. e.g., D. Pecka, “Nikolai Berdyaev, the Philosopher of Freedom,” *Akord*, 1935. Some of the Catholic authors made it clear that the influence of Marxism should not be ignored; they admitted that it has a role in breaking up the “socially sentimental idealism.”

<sup>19</sup> J. Durych, *The Hope of the Catholicism in the Czech Countries* (Prague, 1930).

certain exaggeration, that “nearly all of Czech literature, poetry, fiction, philosophy or theoretical sciences, is almost completely atheistic.”<sup>20</sup>

Soon several Catholic literary magazines came out, e.g., *Tvar* (form), *Rad* (order), *Poezie* (poetry), and Catholic writers contributed to other important critical and artistic reviews, some with another world outlook. In a number of essays they explained the mission of Catholic artists, the place and role of so-called Catholic art.<sup>21</sup> Gradually, in the course of the 1930s, awareness of the high quality of some of the Catholic authors was established.

Indeed, the Catholic critic, Bedrich Fucik, considered Jan Cep a better story writer than Karel Capek; the Marxist theoretician of art, B. Vaclavek, found J. Durych to be a better artist than Karel Capek; the most significant Czech critic of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, F.X. Salda, held the artistic qualities of J. Durych’s novel, *Bloudeni* (Fumbling), in higher regard than the historical novels by Alois Jirasek, etc.

In this context, sentiments appeared in Czech fiction which could be denominated as Catholic spiritualism, including themes dealing with the metaphysical questions of death, destruction and eternity. Issues of the crisis and threatening catastrophe of contemporary civilization were related to the individual, his fate and personal experience. The problems of religion in contemporary society appeared in the form not only of the relation between God and the world in crisis, but also in the relationship between God and man in a world of crisis. We should add that Czech integral Catholicism also paid great attention to the phenomenon of contemporary science, especially in the second half of 1930s.<sup>22</sup> Above all, the question of the relationship between religion and science and the value of scientific work was dealt with. Science was not considered a value by itself, but only in connection with faith; scientific knowledge was regarded as derived and secondary.

These movements appeared as early as the turn of the 1920s, and served as an ideational starting point for the cultural activities of Czech Catholicism, not only in the 1930s but also later. The starting point was the acknowledgement of the crisis of contemporary society and the disintegration of its spiritual life and morals. Catholicism intended to play one of the leading roles in overcoming this state. Its proposal for solving this situation stemmed from traditionalistic ideals, either in whole (the New Middle Ages), or in part (the solution of social problems, the conception of the village and peasantry, the approach to the national history, and reversations regarding democracy).

As already mentioned, the period after 1948 brought a violent interruption in the continuity of Czech Catholic thinking. The tradition, however, continued in different forms and structures. Gradually, it has also appeared in the public, recently, for instance, in the grand project of the Decade of Spiritual Regeneration of the Nation, prepared from the middle of the 1980s and declared at Easter 1988. The tradition has also been supported significantly by literature published both abroad and in various samizdat publication. Of the many achievements let us mention at least the journal *Studie* (Studies), published by the Christian Academy in Rome, and the project, *Opus bonum*.

Since November, 1989, the traditions of Czech Catholic thought have appeared in the bi-monthly *Teologicke texty* (Theological Texts), the quarterly *Souvislosti* (Connections—a review of Catholic culture), *Dialogue Europe XXI* (a Christian-oriented quarterly of science, technology and culture), *Proglas* (a monthly of politics and culture), the quarterly *Stredni Evropa* (Central

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<sup>20</sup> Compare J. Durych, “Collected Notes,” *Akord* (1930); “Praise for the Jesuits,” *Akord* (1930); “The First of the Baroque,” *Akord* (1932); J. Berounsky, *The Idea of the Estates* (1936).

<sup>21</sup> Cf. e.g., S.M. Braitto, “The Catholicism of Art,” *Akord* (1931).

<sup>22</sup> Cf. M. Haban, “Religion and Scientific Thought,” *Akord* (No. 3, 1934).

Europe) and the magazine *Akord* (a review of literature, arts and life). They present important personalities, Czech as well as foreign, in Catholic thought and culture, expressing views on a number of contemporary problems (the relationship of Christians to the world, the relationship between faith and science, Central European cultural orientation and tradition, nationality questions, etc.). Several new publishing houses, such as Zvon (Bell) and Rad (Order), offer religious literature in the same spirit. Some of the monastic orders and organizations have been reestablished. It is interesting that publications whose authors admit an inclination to so-called “scientific creationism” have appeared recently.



## Chapter VII

# The Methodological Heritage of Czech Structuralism

*Ivana Holzbachova, Petr Horak, Jaroslav Hroch*

Structuralism, as a distinctive methodological theory in science, humanities and philosophy, began to develop in the Czech region in the mid-20s of this century. It derives from the broad current of European structural thinking which aimed to overcome the crisis of traditional metaphysics and substance ontology by working out the categories of structure and function: cf. E. Cassirer, *Substanzbegriff und Funktionsbegriff* (1910), N. Hartmann, *Grundzüge einer Metaphysik der Erkenntnis* (1921). Like German Geisteswissenschaft and hermeneutics of nineteenth century (J.G. Droysen, W. Dilthey) Structuralism rejected the attempts of positivism to apply the laws and principles of inorganic nature to the sphere of social phenomena, especially language, culture and art. In this regard it has opposed conceptions which comprehend the whole as merely the sum of its parts. On the contrary structuralism stresses the analysis of individual facts in the context of the whole and comes to understand that the quality of a system depends on its inner structure.

In addition, to mention the special role of Russian Formalism, the development of structuralism in the social sciences and humanities was influenced by the methodological conceptions of W. Dilthey, F. de Saussure and K. Mannheim. Under the influence of E. Husserl, W. Dilthey in his later works began to employ the notions of structure, sign and meaning. According to Dilthey not only particular manifestations of life, but also cultural and historical forms have a structural character. The historical world is understood as the entirety of life manifestations realized in their "meaning connections."

Dilthey also criticized associational psychological theory against which he postulated a so-called Comprehending Psychology of Understanding ("Verstehen") aimed at overcoming the mechanistic conception of causality in research on psychic processes. At the end of nineteenth century, the notion of structure was applied also in Form Psychology ("Gestaltpsychologie"), conceived by Christian von Ehrenfels (*Über Gestaltsqualitäten*, 1890). By uniting concepts from Form Psychology with Dilthey's Psychology of Understanding, Mihailo Rostohar (1879-1966), professor at Faculty of Arts in Masaryk University, Brno, in the mid-20s of this century worked out the first comprehensive structuralist theory in the Czech regions. In his book, *Essays on Developmental Psychology* (1928), he distinguished between the notion of shape (*Gestalt*) which he considered to be static and the notion of structure, signified by its dynamic character. The notion of structure was comprehended from the dynamic point of view also by associate professor of psychology at Masaryk University, Ferdinand Kratina (1885-1944), who characterized inner structured psychic processes as "complex qualities."

The main representative of the Czech structuralist concept in sociology and social philosophy was Arnost Inocenc Bláha (1878-1960). From a methodological point of view he was influenced by T.G. Masaryk and especially by E. Durkheim whose structural-functional conception of society he assumed. Bláha's conception of society as the "rule of rules", conceived in the '20s, was very similar to later ideas of C. Lévi-Strauss' cultural anthropology. In his book *Filosofie mravnosti* (Philosophy of Morals, 1922) Bláha understood morality as the "function of order", but--under the influence of T.G. Masaryk--he laid stress on the specific role of the individual in ethical relations

and social reality. Though in Bláha's conception man is determined by social norms, at the same time he is their co-creator.<sup>1</sup>

In the further development of his sociological and philosophical thought A.I. Bláha developed the conception of federative functionalism which--contrary to the theory of the other Czech structuralist philosopher and sociologist, J.L. Fischer--rejected a hierarchical order to social functions, considering them all to be equally important.

However, it was especially the works of structurally oriented literary scientists and aestheticians which found acceptance abroad, so we will introduce Czech structuralism through their thought.

In aesthetics, two parallel antipositivistic streams could be considered in the history of European thinking: the Anglo-Saxon line (the Cambridge School and American New Criticism) and the Slavic Formalism (Russian Formalism, Czech Structuralism, the Polish Integral School). Some researchers, such as V. Erlich,<sup>2</sup> have unilaterally accented the connection of Czech structural thinking with Russian Literary Scholarship Formalism (V. Sklovskij, V. Zirmunskij, R. Jakobson), but they substantially underestimated the continuity of Czech Structuralism with the tradition of the "Prague Aesthetic School" in the nineteenth century (Josef Durdík, Otakar Hostinský), which proceeded from J. F. Herbart's Formal Aesthetics.

The movement from Herbart's Formalism, to the structural approach, to art characterized the aesthetics of Otakar Zich (1879-1934), who created his own conception of form as a set of meanings. He elaborated this in connection with the German aesthetician, Johannes Volkelt's psychological semantic conception of aesthetics (cfr. his works: *The Aesthetic Reception of Music* (1910) and *Concerning Poetic Types* (1917-1918)). Zich's emphasis upon sound and rhythmic qualities as substantial and constitutive values of poetry have had special influence upon the formation of Czech Literary Formalism.<sup>3</sup>

### **Jan Mukarovsky (1891-1975)**

Jan Mukarovsky founded Czech Aesthetic and Literary Scholarship Structuralism. He was the author of pioneer works on the history of Czech literature, the theory of verse and on general problems of aesthetics, especially the questions of aesthetic norm, function and value. (See his *Structure, Sign and Function*.)<sup>4</sup>

His first papers were based on the analysis of significant Czech authors in the nineteenth century: K. H. Mácha, Boena Nmcová, Vítzslav Hálek. Through them he sought the formal character of the work of art which makes possible its aesthetic activity. To this he added knowledge of the Russian Formal School and of functional linguistics as developed in the Prague Linguistic Circle during the second half of the 1920s. The circle had originated in 1926 in discussions by such philologists and literary scientists as Vilém Mathesius, Bohuslav Havránek, Bohumil Trnka, Josef Vachek, Jan Mukarovsky, N.S. Trubeckoj and R.O. Jakobson.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. J. Macku, "K vyvoji strukuralizmu v ceske filosofii a v humanitnich vedach," *SPFFBU* 17, B 15 (1968), 79-91.

<sup>2</sup> V. Erlich, *Russian Formalism* (The Hague, 1955).

<sup>3</sup> O. Sus, "Geneze semantiky umeni v ceske tvarove estetice," *Literaria IX* (O literarnej avantgarde) (Bratislava, 1966), 196-224; "Ke vzniku semantické typologie v estetice Otakara Zicha," *Ceska literatura*, c. 4 (1966), 393-415.

<sup>4</sup> J. Mukarovsky, *Structure, Sign and Function*, John Burbank and Peter Steiner, eds. (New Haven, 1978).

<sup>5</sup> R.O. Jakobson (1896-1982), a native of Moscow, was a literary historian and critic who represented the Slavic heritage in linguistics. He lived as a national in Czechoslovakia from 1920 to 1939, and became a professor at Masaryk University in Brno. His works dealt with ancient Czech literature and Czech verse and rhythm. After 1939 he lived in the USA.



The thesis of Mukarovsky for the Prague Slavic Congress in 1929 contained the first complete elaboration of his structuralist methodology. He was evidently influenced by the 1927 thesis of J. Tynanov and R. Jakobson which underscored the need to research the relations between the separate levels of historical phenomena in literary research.

Mukarovsky began to elaborate the problems of the evolutionary dynamics of literary structure in the 1930s under the influence of Marx's and Hegel's dialectics, as well as Husserl's phenomenology. In the paper, "Polak's Sublimity of Nature", he rejected an immanent conception of literary evolution and saw aesthetic purpose as inspiring this evolution: "The development of poetry is a continuous self-development, carried by the dynamics of development itself and controlled by its own immanent order."<sup>6</sup> Critical suggestions by significant representatives of the left-oriented Czech *avant garde*, as well as his own theoretical approach to the conception of a work of art as an autonomous sign, enabled him to overcome this immanent conception of the literary process.<sup>7</sup>

In the 30s Mukarovsky turned his attention to problems of the semantic organization of literary works. His efforts to create a dynamic conception of literary structure were expressed by his conception of the so-called semantic gesture, elaborated in the paper "Genetics of Sense in Mách's Poetry" in 1936.<sup>8</sup> This was understood as the principle organization of the meaning of a work of art, which could not be identified with any clearly concerned relation to reality on the part of the author.<sup>9</sup>

The conception of semantic gesture expressed at once both the dynamic semantic unity and inner differentiation and the human significance of the concrete work of art. But the founder of Czech Structuralism did not understand this semantic unity in the sense of an integration, which "is gradually realized only by reading with the help of a compositive ground plan", but as the unity "of a dynamic structural principle, which is valid in the smallest part of the work and consists in a homogeneous and unifying systematization of levels." This conception of semantic gesture manifests Mukarovsky's problem regarding the relation between the inner energy of a work of art and its actual effect on the public. He has overcome the conception of a text as a non-human, logicized relation between empty structures. Mukarovsky's sense of the structure as neither a feature of things nor a matter of individual psychic processes within man's consciousness impacted upon the further development of Czech structural thinking. He defined structure as "a stream of forces existing in the collective consciousness" through continuous time, but persistently reorganizing.<sup>10</sup>

The recent resurgence of the Prague School of Structuralism occurred in a situation in which "Classical" Structuralism was taken over critically by Post-structuralism, Neo-structuralism, Deconstructionism, Post-modernism. As before, structural methodology has a contribution to make. Especially Mukarovsky's conception of semantic gesture, dealing with the problems of an inner dynamic meaning creating the energy of a work of art, can help in overcoming the traditional logocentrism.

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<sup>6</sup> J. Mukarovsky, *Kapitoly z ceske poetiky II. K vyvoji ceske poesie a prozy* (Praha, 1948), 91.

<sup>7</sup> Josef Ludvik Fischer read a lecture in the philosophy union "On Double Order" in 1930. Here, he understood Structuralism not only as a methodological principle, but also as "a new cultural orientation, philosophy and world outlook, which can comprehend the whole of social life." Cf. J. Zumr, *K pocatkum ceskeho strukturalistickeho mysleni. In memoriam Oleg Sus 1924-1982* (Brno, 1984), 156-157.

<sup>8</sup> J. Mukarovsky, "Genetika smyslu v Machove poezii," *Kapitoly ceske poetiky*, III (Praha, 1948).

<sup>9</sup> M. Jankovic, "K pojati semantickeho gesta," *Ceska literatura*, c. 4 (1965), 319.

<sup>10</sup> Comp. J. Mukarovsky, *Structure, Sign and Function*, 78.

The specificity of Czech Structuralism consists in its concern for the evolutionary, dynamic conception of cultural and historical processes. Sartre's criticism of French Structuralism as static and unable to take account of evolutionary dynamics has not been true of Czech Structuralism since the 40s.<sup>11</sup> A comprehensive attempt to elaborate a dialectical conception of the literary process is found in Mukarovský's 1943 paper, "The Individuum and Literary Development". Here, Mukarovský based the dynamics of the literary process on the dialectical contradiction between literature and personality, i.e., between immanent evolutionary regularity, on one hand, and random individual creative action, on the other: "an immanent evolutionary line, though very strong, always allows full freedom of chance--an individuum--not in the sense that the individuum could break an evolutionary direction, but in the sense that this is broader than its concrete realization."<sup>12</sup>

However, Mukarovský did not reflect deeply on the conception of development which he comprehended as continuous action, without considering the possibility of discontinuity or, let us say, motivated regress. At the same time, he reduced the complicated dialectics of literary process to a contradiction between personality and the immanent regularity of literary development. Also Mukarovský's conception of a continuous evolutionary line, retaining its continuity even when deformed by the interventions of a personality, did not provide for the complexity of the motion of the separate levels of literary structure and their relation to cultural and social structures.<sup>13</sup>

In "Intentionality and Unintentionality in the Arts" (1943) Mukarovský suggested, an antisociological and antisaussurian turn. Joining phenomenology he approached the work of art as a non-sign in a real world, that is, as a message about human beings.<sup>14</sup>

*Felix Vodicka (1909-1974)*, Mukarovský's disciple, in his "Literary History: Its Problems and Tasks" (1940), made a significant attempt to integrate the immanent evolutionary dynamics of literary structure in the actual social process. He pointed out the mutual penetration of literary structure and the category of time connected with a live tradition, to which he added elements of causality and teleology. The teleological conception of social relations of Czech economist and philosopher, Karel Engliš, enabled Vodicka to comprehend works of art as the result of the author's intentional effort "to reach an aesthetic effect in the literary realm." In his *Struktura Vývoje* Vodicka, took account also of the teleological and causal aspects of literary development, and of cultural and social processes: "There is no cause in the sense of the natural sciences, i.e., the state of culture does not lead to one effect but to a number of possibilities, which condition successive development and exist in inner tension."<sup>15</sup>

Undoubtedly Czech Structuralism, by taking account of the inner dynamics of contradictions, and the multiple possibilities of further development, overcame a vulgar conception of causality and contributed to the development of dialectical methodology in the social sciences. On the other hand, positivistic Evolutionism was not effectively overcome in Vodicka's 1942 paper for lack of a deeper analyses of the concept of development and of such specific categories as e.g., change, time classification, historical line, evolutionary process, and dynamics.

The structurally oriented activity of the Prague Linguistic Circle was terminated at the end of 1948; from the beginning of the 50s Structuralism was unambiguously rejected by the official

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<sup>11</sup> Comp. V. Karfik, "Struktura vyvoje" in *Orientace*, c. 4 (1969), 92.

<sup>12</sup> J. Mukarovsky, *Studie z Estetiky* (Praha, 1971), 327.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. M. Cervenka, "O Vodickove metodologii literarnich dejin," in F. Vodicka, ed., *Struktura vyvoje*, 341.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. H. Schmidova, "Trifazovy model cskeho literarnevedneho strukturalismu," *Ceska literature*, 39 (1991), 193-219.

<sup>15</sup> F. Vodicka, *Struktura vyvoje*, 19-20.

Stalinist ideology, and Mukarovský disclaimed Structuralism in 1951.<sup>16</sup> However, objective papers on Czech theoretical and methodological structural thought were written in Czechoslovakia at the end of the 50s. The book of *Květoslav Chvatík* about literary theoretician and historian Bedřich Václavěk (*Bedřich Václavěk and Development of Marxist Aesthetics*, 1958) dealt with the relation of Czech Structuralism to the left-wing avant garde.

*Oleg Sus* (1924-1972), after 40s at the University in Brno, published many excellent papers dealing with semantic problems in the history of Czech aesthetics based on the heritage of Czech Structuralism. Sus rejected a unilateral deduction of Czech Structuralism from Russian Formalism; at the same time he showed Czech Structuralism's own evolution from the traditions of Form Aesthetics of the nineteenth century. He elaborated a deep and complex analysis of the category of development from the point of view of the literary process. In the article "Point and Field,"<sup>17</sup> he demonstrated the need to differentiate regarding the concept of development between the broader sense of every change in literary structure and the narrower sense of motion from lower to higher, from simple to more complicated, from "less" to "better" function--in order to devote particular attention to development that involves real innovation. In those innovations new procedures and new relations between levels and connections with the non-literary world occur and energize which have a relatively high level of improbability and involve surprise. They are distinguished by the low level of probability that they be deduced from existing structures.

The conception of development, according to Sus, also involves the gradual realization of certain possibilities from a certain complex of potentialities. Here, the degree of innovation is smaller, the higher the level of predetermination (like a flower developing from a flower bud). The scientifically founded conception of literary development must take into account of feedback process changes, the so called motif's regress, like an antipode of innovation's progress. With recent literary and scientific Neo-structuralism and Post-modernism, Sus includes in the notion of structure even moments of discontinuity and destructuralization.

### **Robert Kalivoda, et al**

*Kalivoda's* philosophical thought represents a characteristic synthesis of some methodological conceptions of Czech Structuralism, engaging suggestions from Freudian psychoanalysis and from Marxist Avant Garde Art--as is noted in the chapter dealing with Czech Marxism. Mukarovský's definition of structure as the energy of objectivized meaning led him to look for certain parallels with Marx's thesis about the "essential powers" (*Wesenskräfte*).

Kalivoda underscored that the anthropological constant has nothing in common with man's metaphysical essence. What is constant in man is comprehended as man's constant structure. Kalivoda's use of psychoanalysis accented the conception of biopsychical energy, which is objectivized in a work of art and whose character is determined by its structure. Kalivoda considered biopsychic energy as ultimately a material factor, "the energy of this inner instinct drives a person into permanent conflict with reality". Hence, man's being is not only "a point of intersection of various influences, but it functions as a basic motor unit". Consequently, Marx's conception of freedom appears as "libertarian", directed to the versatile liberation of man's personality.

Some suggestions regarding the structuralist conception of relations between a work of art, on the one hand, and the creative activity of the human subject, on the other, were elaborated in the

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<sup>16</sup> Cf. M. Cervenka, "Jana Mukarovskeho rozchod se strukturalismem," *Tvar*, c. 36 (1991), 1, 4, 5.

<sup>17</sup> O. Sus, "Bod a Pole," *Host do domu*, c. e (1970), 37.

60s, particularly in the works of Kvečoslav Chvatík and Milan Jankovic. Milan Jankovic enriched the heritage of "classic" Czech Structuralism through writing about Kant's aesthetics and Heidegger's philosophy of the being of the work of art.<sup>18</sup> Jankovic drew upon Kant's well-known thesis that the world is not simply given to us, but it is opened for us by our activity, by a performance of the human subject. In this light he tried to overcome the formalistic early structuralistic orientation to pure analysis of the formal structure of the text through attending to its relation to reality: "This contact with reality comes in the moment of creation, which allows us to feel the reality imagined in a work, formed by a work as the beginning or foundation of a sense."

Man finds his own freedom in an aesthetic experience, based on a purposeless view of things. In the experience of freedom the productive imagination returns to the existence of things before cognition: to the accord between the being of man searching for its determination and being itself. Inspired by the aesthetic meditations of M. Merleau-Ponty, M. Heidegger and J. Patocka, Jankovic formed the conception of a work of art as a sense activity which opens man's being before the whole of being.

Contrary to Gadamer's conception which substantially underestimated the aesthetic function of a work of art, Jankovic demonstrated the specific and irreplaceable value of the aesthetic attitude which, in its assumption of thing and form, "saves for man the moment which is lost in other attitudes: the moment of stopping before a pure phenomenon where we renew our primary contact with the being of things and with our primary question." The combination of the methodological conceptions of Czech Structuralism with the philosophical suggestions, especially Jan Patocka's aesthetic attitude as our capacity to enable being to appear, enabled Jankovic to develop a substantially deeper comprehension of the basis and sense of a work of art than that afforded by the traditional formalist and structuralist theories in the inter-war period.

In this context, it is possible to treat problems relating to the concretization of a literary work and the suggestions of Czech Structuralism for a contemporary hermeneutically-orientated aesthetics of perception. It was Roman Ingarden, the excellent representative of Polish phenomenological philosophy, who first articulated the concept of concretization. But, as he comprehended the structure of a work of art statically and in isolation, he did not take into consideration either the dynamics of the total literary process or the changes of social structure in the various periods of its reception. Felix Vodicka added these dimensions in his paper, "The Literary History, Its Problems and Tasks in Our Time". Thus, in its theory of reception, Czech structuralism, in contrast to Ingarden, showed the need to conceive the structure of a work of art as part of a higher structure of literary development and, at the same time, in connection with the so-called collective awareness of the literary public.

*Miloslav Cervenka* has shown, that in interpreting a text we must take into account the meaning of collective awareness, cultural wholes and supra-individual cultural contexts.<sup>19</sup> We must take account of semantic interpretation at all layers and levels of a work of art and in intersubjective codes and tendencies, and we must join both the levels of a text and the corresponding elements of collective consciousness in an homogeneous structural, theoretical model within the process of semantic unification. At the same time, it is evident that not only modern hermeneutics, but also Czech Structuralism admits a significant function for the so-called

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<sup>18</sup> M. Jankovic, "Ohlednutí ke Kantovi," *Orientace*, c. 1 (1968). M. Jankovic, "Estetická funkce a dynamika významového sjednocení," *Estetika*, c. 3 (1989).

<sup>19</sup> M. Cervenka, "O Vodickove metodologii literarnich dejin, in F. Vodicka, ed., *Struktura vyvoje*, 330.

collective awareness and traditions in the interpretation of the work of art, as was shown in Mukarovský's paper "Aesthetic Function, Norm and Value as Social Facts."

The theoretical conceptions of literary tradition and the concretization of a work of art in the works of J. Mukarovský and F. Vodicka made basic intellectual contributions to the post-modernistic aesthetics of reception of the noted German literary historian, Hans Robert Jauss. Under the influence of these representatives of Czech aesthetic thought, Jauss evolved his basic thesis about the process character of a work of art and in consequence of this formed his opinion that the reality of a work of art is inseparable from its effect upon its readers.<sup>20</sup>

Karel Kosík's book *Dialectics of the Concrete* also contributed to Jauss' aesthetics of reception. The social dimension of a work of art, according to Kosík, consists in its ability to be not only "a witness to an era", but also "a constitutive element of man's social being": "The life of a work of art depends on mankind's life as a producing and perceiving subject. . . . The work proves its vitality by communicating the relations and conditions of its origin. The work lives as long as it has influence."<sup>21</sup>

In his book *Dialectics of the Concrete*, Kosík understood the problems and life of the work of art, or let us say of the life of a philosophical text as consisting in its ability to be a source of new interpretations in various historical periods. H.R. Jauss, under Kosík's influence, underscored the need to conceive the history of arts as a process of the creation and reception of works of art, where "dialectical structures of question and response mediate between the past and the present."

Kosík's reflections in *Dialectics of the Concrete* have contributed not only to the development of the aesthetics of reception, but have shown also the mutual inspiration of the hermeneutic and structural conception of the influence of action on literary works and works of art. The actuality and life of a work of art consist, according to Kosík, in its dialectic character, in the analogy between social, cultural and individual psychological contradictions and conflicts in various historical periods, and indeed, in the continuous enrichment of art and theoretical cognition, of historical and everyday experience, through objective activity.

Transferred and traded information, motifs, symbols and archetypes also promote the text's understanding in different historical periods. But these supra-individual cultural wholes are once again being interpreted and over interpreted. They obtain new meaning and concretization in connection with the structural development of society, as well as with changes in aesthetic attitudes, man's imagination, sensibilities and emotions. There appears, at a text's reception, a specific intermediation between its meaning's structure, on the one hand, and, on the other, the vision of reality or "world vision" of the concrete subject in the understanding process.

At the same time, the theoretical conceptions of Czech structuralistic literary and philosophical thinking show that the so-called social dimension of the text is not only an external factor. It is the result of a complicated interaction between the author's creative activity, the ability of the text's reader to understand the dialectical relation between the social and cultural structures of the period of the text's origin's, on the one hand, and the concrete social situation, on the other. The comprehension of the text's social dimension also enables one to find its inner dynamic organizing principle, creating both the meaning structure of the literary work and the cultural activity of man.

Western literary science and aesthetics first took over the theoretical suggestions of Czech structuralism in the sphere of the interpretation and reception of a text or of art in the 70s and 80s of this century. It is regrettable that the works of J.L. Fischer, F. Vodicka, R. Kalivoda, O. Sus, K.

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<sup>20</sup> H.R. Jauss, *Towards an Aesthetic of Reception* (Minneapolis, 1982), 16.

<sup>21</sup> K. Kosik, *Dialektika konkrétniho* (Praha, 1966), 96.

Kosík and other representatives of Czech structuralistic thinking were withheld from the official scientific and cultural life of Czechoslovakia itself during this period. In spite of that fact, Czech Structuralism, by its world, scientific and national connections, as well as by its own Czech contribution, maintains a prominent place in the development of modern European thinking.<sup>22</sup>

One must then consider the '30s as a turning point in Czech Structuralism's development, because it reached its significant formulation in that period, especially in the works of J.L. Fischer. In another place the orientation of Josef Tvrđý to the theory of emergent development is noted.

### **Josef Ludvık Fischer (1894-1973)**

Josef Ludvık Fischer participated in Czech philosophical life in the early '20s.<sup>23</sup> He intended to relate his criticism of Positivism to an effort to reach his own philosophical position, which focused not only on epistemology and ontology, but also on sociology.<sup>24</sup>

This was confirmed by Fischer's publications in the 1920s and 1930s: *Über die Zukunft der Europäischen Kultur* (Münich, 1929), *O neklidu dneska* (*On Current Unrest*, 1930), *Zrcadlo doby* (*Mirror of the Era*, 1932), *Tetí íe* (*The Third Empire*, 1932), *Rád kapitalistický a skladebný* (*Capitalistic and Structural Orders*, 1933), *Krise demokracie I-II* (*The Crisis of Democracy I-II*, 1933). His most systematic book, *Základy poznání* (*Foundations of Knowledge*, 1931), was intended as the first volume of *Soustava skladebné filosofie na podklade zkusenosti* (*Principles of a Structural Philosophy Based Upon Experience*). All show Fischer absorbed in the social problems evoked by the great economic crisis of the capitalist world and connected to the moral and institutional crisis of the democratic countries. He traced these to the mutual relation between modern European rationality in general and philosophy in particular, on the one hand, and, on the other, the formation of a world by the conscious subject acting in society. Fischer considered that the narrow, mechanistic manner of thinking had fatefully marked not only philosophy (positivism and other orientations of thought at the beginning of this century) and natural science, but also technology and above all the entire realm of social praxis.

Fischer's work between the Wars had five main dimensions: first, it was above all a sharp criticism of the one-sided "quantitative" rationalism (naturalism) to which positivism also succumbed; second, it was then necessary to defend philosophy from the naturalistically conceived science; third, it was necessary consequently to advance the "qualitative" over the "quantitative"; fourth: in the social sphere Fischer identified Capitalism as corresponding to the "quantifying" mechanistic philosophy"; finally he tried to overcome these philosophical and social problems.

Socialism could not overcome capitalism because it itself is a product of quantifying thought and naturalism. Hence, it was necessary to turn to structural philosophy and to adapt the structures of society. Thus, an emphasis upon the dynamic structure of reality became the unifying

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<sup>22</sup> Comp. F. Kaufman, "Strukturalismus v dile Jana Mukarovskeho," *Filosoficky casopis*, c. 4 (1967), 512.

<sup>23</sup> J.L. Fischer studied Czech and German; his interest in methodological questions led to the study of philosophy. After working as a professional in scientific libraries, in Prague until 1923 and then in Olomouc and in Brno till 1935, he did his habilitation at A. Blaha in sociology, and after three years added the history of philosophy. He was appointed extraordinary professor in 1935, and ordinary professor of philosophy in the Faculty of Philosophy in Brno in 1945 (with retroactive validity from 1939). In 1946 he was elected rector of Palacky University in Olomouc.

<sup>24</sup> *Philosophy, Its Basis and Problems* (1922), *Schopenhauer, the Genesis of His Work* (1921), *About Consciousness* (1921), *Meditations and Confessions* (1922), *Saint Simon and August Comte, Contribution to History of Sociological Rationalism* (1925), *Remarks on the Czech Question* (1926), *About Truth and Philosophers* (1926). The bibliography of J.L. Fischer was published was published by Jarmila Fischerova in a memorial volume, *J.L. Fischer—Personality, Work, Reflections* (Olomouc, 1990).

framework of Fischer's philosophy. This appeared at the beginning of the '30s, when Fischer, in connection with his structural philosophy, rejected noetic subjectivism which had brought him close to Pragmatism and had characterized his early works.<sup>25</sup> This change enabled him to take the idea of order and structure as a logical hypothesis, even though subjectivism never quite disappeared from Fischer's works.<sup>26</sup>

Fischer sharply rejected the mechanical character of European naturalism; hence, with Husserl, he held a substantially negative evaluation of Descartes and of post-cartesian science and philosophy. Naturalism impoverished reality and abandoned the effort to explain the origin of anything new. Following Bergson he saw this rationalism as becoming effective only after something new had appeared, for the natural laws it developed were but the statistical averages of action which already had taken place.

Fischer understood science and philosophy, including his own, instrumentally. He used conceptual instruments other than classical mechanistic science and its related philosophies, building upon structures, relations, wholes, hierarchies and the conception of order.<sup>27</sup> In these terms he interpreted the world in a dynamic and qualitative manner as permanently creating new order from chaos.<sup>28</sup> Fischer assumed a dynamic ideal for the development of separate levels and forms.

Some possibilities contained in individual levels are to a certain extent transferred in the sense that new possibilities and new levels of development can arise after an at least partial fulfillment of the possibilities contained in older and lower levels of development. These individual levels or "existential modes" are not mutually transferable, but are connected as parts in a whole. That is how we can speak about the entirety and unity of reality. Each lower sphere creates the conditions for a higher sphere; each sphere has its own order, but does not negate the order of lower spheres; higher spheres as richer are bound by a greater number of relations and are more fragile. As all parts fulfill specific functions, the discovery of reality's static and dynamic moments is a task of analyzing junctures. Thus, the conception of junction should be added to such often central concepts as system, entirety and structure.

Fischer conceived reality structurally; but in contrast to modern structuralism, he stressed its qualitative and dynamic character. He found a way out of conceiving society and culture simply as fixed structure by emphasizing the process of cultural development "as a consequence of spontaneous activity directed primarily to the qualitative development of mutually realizing individuals."<sup>29</sup> He introduced the conception of "developing" and "conserving" principles, as forces immanent to every social formation, which try to maintain and if possible to extend the existence of this formation. To a considerable extent these forces appear to be blind; the unity of a society is created either unconsciously by their mutual tension or consciously by human influence. Fischer's interpretation of society's development was an effort to identify this conscious influence.

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<sup>25</sup> Fischer preferred Pragmatism as a philosophy of action over "positivistic spectator's philosophy" but it was for him a transitional view of inner contradictions. Its attraction lay in its ability constantly to shape reality in response to its development. Nevertheless, he saw philosophy as needing as well an ontology and a conscious metaphysics.

<sup>26</sup> Fischer's permanent study of social problems enabled him to overcome "Marxist Subjectivism." He saw all individuality as deeply marked by the social context in which the individual is placed. Hence the crisis of European culture after the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century led him to search out all sources, cultural, political and economic, which led to this state.

<sup>27</sup> J.L. Fischer, *Zaklady poznani* (Praha, 1931), 28.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

<sup>29</sup> J.L. Fischer, *Tri stupne* (Blansko, 1948), 125-127.

On this basis, he constructed his idea regarding the possibility of influencing society's development in the future. His dynamic and to a certain extent pluralistic point of view brought him to a certain, though not absolute relativism. It enabled him to evaluate the development of culture and to state that European culture is in a crisis whose source is its mechanistic conception of the world aimed at economic efficiency by means of abstraction. In contrast to many other philosophers and culturologists, Fischer thought that Europe must overcome this crisis by itself rather than by adopting the values of foreign culture.<sup>30</sup>

Fischer's ideas about overcoming the European cultural crisis are closely connected with his idea of structural philosophy. Although he considered Socialism in the postwar period--in contrast to the prewar period--to be a possible new society, and although he was obliged to use Marxist terminology in the '50s and '60s (which facilitated some aspects of his philosophy), he considered a structurally conceived society to be the way out of crisis. This must be done by science which is able to overcome its quantitativist and Mechanist character in order to attend to the qualitative dimension. This will lead to replacing impersonal relations by personal ones, to deepening man's perceptions of personal relations in the society. It will enrich man's perception of the world in both qualitative and quantitative manners and lead to establishing new techniques more in keeping with the new manner of thinking.<sup>31</sup> These meditations from 1967 showed that crisis was the permanent theme of Fischer's work and that he was convinced that the solution to this crisis lay in a new structural comprehension of the world and of the society based on a newly conceived science. According to Fischer, the European cultural crisis cannot be solved by simply applying mechanistic science or by escaping, e.g., into religion.<sup>32</sup>

Comparing Fischer's philosophical thinking with Modern Structuralism, on the one hand, we see convergences and connections, above all in his ability to see all reality as complexly structured and hierachical, and at the same time as a whole entirety controlled rather by its own inner laws than by external impulses. On the other hand, J. Fischer's conception of reality seems more dynamic and richer, due to his attention to a qualitative dimension to the world, in which he agrees with many critics of classic science. Whereas French structuralism works with that quantitative model of science, and in a certain sense was subsidiary to positivism, Fischer turned definitely against it. But like Bergson and the other critics of the ideal of classic science, he was obliged to confess an inability to explain novelty, and his model suffers from a certain indefiniteness and some errors.

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<sup>30</sup> With a great sense for "social reorganization," Fischer devoted much attention to Marxist theory even in the 30s. He belonged to a small group of social scientists who criticized Marxism, while undertaking an analysis of capitalistic society. He collaborated in a restricted manner with representatives of Marxist intelligentsia of the time, e.g., in the Left-wing Front of Brno and the journal, *Index*, which he edited with J. Mahen and Bedrich Valavek.

<sup>31</sup> J.L. Fischer, *Filosofické studie* (Praha, 1968), 134. This volume contains Fischer's important postwar papers, in which he tried to rethink more deeply some aspects of his system: "The Limits of the Qualitative Method," "About Categories" and "Quantitative Cosmos." It is necessary to add the articles "Philosophical Foundation of Science" and "Ganzheit, Struktur und Kausalität" (The Entirety, Structure and Causality), *Acta Universitatis Olomucensis* (1970). After the end of the war, Fischer returned to his old and permanent philosophical love, ancient Greek philosophy; he tried "to describe who the real, nonlegendary, Socrates had been: in his book, *The Nonlegendary Sokrates* (1965).

<sup>32</sup> J.L. Fischer, *O neklidu dneska* (Praha, 1930), 28-29.



## Chapter VIII

# The Role of Phenomenology in Czech Philosophical Life

*Merie Bayerova*

Within the Czech philosophical tradition, phenomenology gradually gained a place. It aimed simultaneously at the achievement of an absolutely certain and verifiable knowledge through its apriorism and at constituting an interpretation of the whole and an approach to the world. Beginning from a primitive grasp of phenomenology Czech philosophers proceeded to a better comprehension of its nature and methodology, to attempts to establish its theoretical-cognitive limits. The roots of its interpretative possibilities for understanding the world and life were examined and the premises were created whereby phenomenology, a discipline which concentrates on the phenomenal aspects of reality, could be grasped as such. In this way Czech philosophy maintained a critical distance from phenomenology, as well as a quite high level of comprehension.

In any attempt to determine the place of phenomenology in Czech philosophical life it is, of course, necessary to take into account the temporal coincidence of the main streams of Czech philosophy with developing phases in phenomenology. From the outset, phenomenology constituted a structured whole, with more or less shifting internal boundaries; by European standards it was a differentiated movement with markedly distinct approaches.

According to Husserl, its founder, phenomenology was to provide a way in which philosophy could be realized in the context of the actual state of science; phenomenology itself should have become a scientific philosophy with a certain approach to scientific character. However, the clash of phenomenology with the form of understanding reality (being) which characterized modern science, led Husserl to create a philosophical program, which basically revised the understanding of how the modern status of science served humanity and led to an understanding of nature and its conditions. This led to the gradual development of the phenomenological method. The origin of this discipline arose from within the streams of European philosophy, from Cartesianism as much as from Kantian philosophy. These render comprehensible the logic of Husserl's work, his phrasing and choice of paths, his transitions, ruptures and crucial changes of interest, and his introduction of an element of historicity into the final phase of his work.

### **The Origins of Phenomenology: Edmund Husserl and His Times**

In an attempt to find the roots of knowledge, Husserl formulated the imperative "to the things themselves!", i.e. to that which is given as direct evidence. This meant a sharp rejection of any positivist ideal of science, while retaining the descriptive-psychological methods. This was done in Husserl's celebrated "Logical Investigations", in which he identified the Czech mathematician and logician, Bernard Bolzano, as "the greatest logician of all times". At the same time he laid the basis for a critical resolution of questions regarding the relationships between psychology, phenomenology and linguistics. This was done through clashes with Prague University's professor Anton Marty, the founder of the philosophy of language in the Czech lands.

After elaborating the idea of "pure logic" (understandable to a significant degree through Husserl's links to Bolzano), it was as if, in a single block of time, an important correction to the original logical investigation was carried out. The first explanation of the idea of phenomenology as a basic *a priori* theory of knowledge was given, and, in preparing the first edition of *Ideas*

*Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and a Phenomenological Philosophy*, a stage of so-called transcendental idealism, the notion of pure phenomenology, was formulated.

Edmund Husserl, a native of Prostejov in Moravia, began his scientific career as a mathematician. His dissertation was concerned with variable numbers, and his doctorate was on the notion of number. In 1891 his *Philosophie der Arithmetik* (whose psychology was criticized by Frege) appeared and further essays on logical calculus and psychological studies for elementary logic followed.

Towards the end of his life, Husserl embarked upon a grand lecture tour, linked with a deepening elaboration of phenomenological themes. In Paris he led phenomenology to a purely egological level through his meditations on the Cartesian model and laid the basis for a theory of intersubjectivity. He also led French philosophical thinking towards a creative grasp of the idea of intentionality. In 1935 he lectured in Prague on *Crisis of the European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*. This had crucial significance for some aspects of the new approach due to its interest in regaining the forgotten natural foundations of knowledge. In a period of tense international relations, he reached out to the critical situation of European humanity.

Husserl's reputation was established by his *Logical Investigations*, which was prompted by his effort to provide a "logical foundation for an objective theory of knowledge"; it was the construction of a "pure theory of diversity" which could serve as a basis for the whole system of sciences. This work was not without response in the Czech academic world. It was reviewed almost immediately after its appearance for its problems responded to a great interest on the part of Czech philosophers and paved the way for a better understanding of phenomenology.

Czech philosophy at the time of the first reception of phenomenology also represented a structured whole. The first and foremost was Emanuel Rádl, one of the most significant of the Czech philosophers and a proponent of intuitive realism, who chaired the Eighth International Philosophy Conference in Prague in 1934. He was sympathetic to Husserl and phenomenology. According to Rádl, Czechoslovakia had two basic trends in philosophy; on the one hand, Masaryk's realism and, on the other hand, positivism.

Masaryk and Husserl enjoyed a long personal friendship. In an earlier chapter it was noted that they met in Leipzig and how Masaryk influenced Husserl's return to philosophy and his journey to Vienna to meet Brentano. Their relationship on the level of philosophy can be understood only through the position of Brentano's philosophy and its basic status in the Austrian empirical tradition.<sup>1</sup> These facts, which have significant theoretical importance, are documented in a series of studies by Czech philosophers on the origins of Masaryk's philosophy and its links to Viennese sources, above all to the philosophy of Franz Brentano as teacher of both Husserl and Masaryk.

J. L. Fischer traced Brentano's anti-Kantian viewpoint,<sup>2</sup> thereby providing one of the most important motives for the anti-phenomenological arguments from the pens of Czech philosopher. He also traced the relationship of Brentano to Comte, concluding that Brentano had deviated from the principles of positivism. The force of his argument led to the frequently repeated opinion that Brentano led Masaryk towards positivism, resulting not only in the special features of Czech positivism, but also in several features such as its realism. But Fischer documents that on the theoretical level he did not find in Masaryk either Brentano's realism or his methodological principle of evidence. It would seem, therefore, that Masaryk never reached the philosophical level of Brentano.

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<sup>1</sup> E. Utitz, *Masaryk als Volkserzieher* (Prague, 1935).

<sup>2</sup> Anti-Kantianism had been present in Austrian philosophy since Bolzano.

As a representative of "clear optimistic theism" Brentano influenced Masaryk's religico-ethical principles, but for his philosophy Masaryk was forced to look elsewhere for his various empirical principles.<sup>3</sup> It has already been pointed out that the most productive group of positivist philosophers in Czechoslovakia were centered around the journal *Ceská mysl* (Czech Thought), whose moving spirit was Frantisek Krejčí. Emanuel Rádl valued Krejčí's philosophy as an integration of positivist elements in a special Czech system in which high value was placed on applying philosophy to everyday life. Krejčí's philosophy as a whole responded to the tradition in Czech philosophy of progressing soberly, empirically and non-speculatively--in contrast to the systems of German idealistic philosophy from Kant to Hegel.

Frantisek Krejčí's criticism of phenomenology can be divided into two chronological periods. At first he was quite limited by what was actually accessible to him of Husserl's work, but nonetheless he expressed himself on the problem of evidence. Krejčí thought that the problem of the evidence of certain judgements can be explained "psychologically from empiricism"; therefore he criticized Husserl's construction of "pure logic" in his *Logical Investigations* as an irrelevant and merely illusory victory over psychologism. In his opinion, which otherwise does not differ from the common framework of evaluations of Husserl, phenomenology remains psychology, albeit of an empirical nature. However, based on his special receptivity towards the methodological postulates applied in Husserl's celebrated arguments against psychologism Krejčí voiced the singular opinion that, in spite of the aforementioned limitations in the high theoretical pretensions of Husserl's phenomenology, in his struggle against psychologism Husserl entered into Hegelianism and, thanks to him, "Hegel again stepped to the forefront of philosophical interest."<sup>4</sup>

In 1931 Krejčí made a second attempt to come to terms with the so-called *Gegenstandsphilosophie* from the point of view of his own parallelist phenomenology. In his "Reflections on Modern Czech Philosophy,"<sup>5</sup> by using positivism, he attempted to construct a framework with which it would be possible to judge "the new-fanged tendency to establish ontology and epistemology as specialized independent sciences". He came out against the epistemological subjectivism, ontological realism and scientific idealism which marked Husserl's phenomenology, which he saw as desperately complicating problems of being and knowledge with its concept of consciousness. Krejčí correctly sees Husserl's apriorism as in philosophical tension with the destructive skepticism of positivism, but he rejects the attempt to overcome skepticism by a Kantian line of thinking. In his reflections on Husserl's concept of the given, he comes back to the opinion that phenomenology belongs "under the principle of the basic propositions of a biologically oriented psychology that mental actions are the realized reactions of the psychophysical individual."

The best Czech philosophers of the 1930s took the understanding of phenomenology to a new level. For that group, Husserl's phenomenology was seen as an attempt to get beyond the "natural positivity of life and science" and build a completely new theory of experience and knowledge. Thus, it became on Czech soil a weapon against the application of the movement of positive philosophy in modern logic. This movement maintained a strong position above all in Prague's German University, where Rudolf Carnap and P. Frank were active, whence it influenced Vienna and the so-called *Wiener Kreis*.

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<sup>3</sup> J.L. Fischer, *T.G. Masaryk: Pocátky a vlivy* (T.G. Masaryk: Beginnings and Influences), *Ceska mysl* (Czech Thought), II (1930), 132-160.

<sup>4</sup> F. Krejčí, *Filosofie posledních let před válkou* (The Philosophy of the Final Years before the War) (Prague, 1918).

<sup>5</sup> F. Krejčí, *Paralelistická fenomenologie: uvahy o současné filosofii* (Parallelistic Phenomenology: Reflections on Contemporary Philosophy), *Ceska mysl* (1931), 115-129.

It is important to note these circumstances, because aspects of logical positivism (which, though criticized in Czechoslovakia, to a lesser degree were also accepted) led to the creation, by those who had a deeper understanding of phenomenology and its methods, of a special variant of the anthropological approach of Heidegger and of existential philosophy in general. This was a period when the tendency toward the construction of epistemology as an independent discipline had been fulfilled by at least a few Czech philosophers, partly as a consequence of their leaning towards Kantianism and neo-Kantianism. In connection with this, the demand for a unity of the ethical and theoretical elements of the Kantian spirit--"the primacy of practical reason over theoretical"--was subsequently used as an argument against Husserl's "phenomenological idealism" with its theoretic-cognitive limits. Only a much higher level of the critical approach permitted the preeminence of activity and praxis, characteristic of the development of European philosophy since Kant, to contribute the most important historico-philosophical consequences for the almost completed system of phenomenology, including the relationship of Husserl's philosophy to Heidegger.

With clear critical distance, we can suppose that Josef Tvrđý did not by chance work his way to an understanding of the meaning of phenomenology in his *Logics* (1937). Similarly it was surely not a chance consideration that led to his choice of themes for his Paris contribution in the Congress on Descartes in 1937: "Descartes and Czechoslovak Thought" where he highlighted the relationship of Bolzano to Descartes among others.

His logical framework enabled Tvrđý to give system to his opinion on phenomenology, specifically its theories of judgements, concepts and categories, while simultaneously defining the logical principles or character of science and its basic propositions. His view originated from his interest in the relations between science and philosophy. This forms the background of his evaluation of Husserl's logic as "the purest form of metaphysical tendencies epistemologically and logically" and his tracing its roots to the Bolzano school. He argues that Husserl did not distinguish between epistemology and logic. Tvrđý considered the phenomenological method as metaphysical--actually as metaphysical psychology--which, from a logical point of view, is nothing more than pure hypothesis; rationalized intuition, according to him, should play no part in science. It should be emphasized that there was a progression in Tvrđý's understanding of Husserl's work, as is evident from his widely repeated opinion about the contradiction between the objectives of the phenomenological program and its real achievements. "Nobody has so misused the concept of evidence as has Husserl, securing for him all kinds of metaphysical presuppositions on which he proceeds to build his logic."<sup>6</sup> Likewise, in Husserl's concept of abstraction, he sees a clear danger, and reproaches him for his preference for the ideal sciences.

What we have termed the breach by phenomenology of the structure of Czech philosophical life is in our opinion supported by two important factors. The first one concerns Husserl's origins; he was born to a Jewish family in Prostějov in Moravia, and received his secondary education in that region, which then belonged to the Austro-Hungarian Empire. This made possible many personal relationships and contacts, among them his relationship to Masaryk, facilitated by Brentano's role in the Austrian philosophical tradition. The second factor is that it is useful to trace the theoretical progress of Husserl's phenomenology in philosophy, which at that time in this region was basically German. Thus, a whole series of problems comes to the fore, whose roots would otherwise have remained hidden or would scarcely have been traceable. To these problems belong: Husserl's concept of sensuality, including the phenomenological resolution of the relation of reason to direct experience; corporeality; the role of so-called kinesthetic feelings in the

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<sup>6</sup> J. Tvrđý, *Logika* (Logic) (Prague, 1937), 137.

constitution of space and the concept of movement; and, finally, the phenomenological approach to the problems of matter, to which Husserl devoted special attention in a broader context. Further questions become apparent, for example: the problem of time and temporality, the problem of the given and of the absolute self-given, in other words, problems of evidence which, as we have seen, were always in the foreground of interest. Ernst Mácha (twice elected rector) was the uncontested founder of the Prague school of the psychology of the senses; Carl Stumpf, Brentano's student and the teacher of Husserl, wrote the first volume of his *Tonpsychologie* in Prague; the discoverer of the so-called "shape quality", Christian von Ehrenfels, professor at Prague University until 1932, had links to the Brentanian school in Graz. Among others we have already named Anton Marty, who, by means of his linguistic philosophy, had reopened the question of Husserl's relation to Bolzano. All this can aid in understanding Husserl's phenomenology from the subjective point of view, although obviously the question of the two traditions as a special problem of Czech-German relations remains open (and not only on the philosophical level).

An historic point in the process of understanding Husserl's phenomenology in Czechoslovakia was reached in 1934 with the convening of the 8th Philosophical Congress in Prague, and with the founding of the Czech-German *Cercle philosophique de Prague pour les recherches sur l'entendement humain*, which named Husserl an honorary member. This group arose with the aim of the "intensifying scientific work" as a result of various stimuli from the Congress itself and on the initiative of Prague philosophy professors, Emil Utitz and J.B. Kozák. The activities of the circle were characterized by an impressive seriousness of approach to phenomenological philosophy. Its members organized discussion seminars at the university for a narrow circle of erudite philosophers. As far as the domestic philosophical tradition is concerned, they referred back to Jan Amos Komenský, Bernard Bolzano and T.G. Masaryk; their methodology originated from a thorough study of the concrete by means of strict analysis after the manner of Husserl.

Due to the initiative of the Cercle and other philosophical societies, Husserl gave his lecture cycle "die er dann zu einer eigentlichen Krisis-Arbeit erweiterte."<sup>7</sup> Documents showing the real number of Husserl's lectures as compared with what he had planned allow one to see his choice of themes and the singular circumstances of his stay in Prague. Husserl's lectures were aimed at several philosophical groups and met with deep philosophical interest. Husserl gave seminars on aesthetics, even in the "Cercle Linguistique de Prague", which shows the decisive relationship of the tradition of the Prague structural school to phenomenology.<sup>8</sup>

The Cercle's first publication appeared in Liebert's journal, *Philosophia*, Vol 1 (Beograd, 1936), and consists of a series of essays among which the first and the second part of Husserl's *The Crisis of the European Sciences* can be found. All the essays are connected by the unifying idea of investigating the essence of mind. It began with an explanation of the essence of mind as a transcendental project and by a parallel paper addressing this problem. In Emil Utitz's article, "Geist als Gerechtigkeit", the starting point is characteristically complemented and widened, because "we have in mind not only pure thought but also, for example, behavior". Jan Patočka, by then the secretary of the Cercle, in an essay about dual intentionality, pronounced against narrowing concepts and declared his opinion that the essence of mind was objectifying active intentionality and that a mental act was at the same time to be understood as a personal act. In this concept of intentionality, the approach leaned towards the conviction that "the concept of mind

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<sup>7</sup> E. Husserl, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie* (Haag, 1956); *Husserliana*, Band VI, Einleitung des Herausgebers, XIV.

<sup>8</sup> See also K. Schumann, *Husserl-Chronik* (Haag, 1977).

and its task in the whole of life is not only of theoretical concern", a thought to which the author later devoted much attention.<sup>9</sup>

To the wider spectrum of the Cercle's activities in the 1930s belong the attempts to preserve Husserl's manuscripts and their preparation for publication, which "had to be completed."<sup>10</sup> The Prague edition of Husserl's *Erfahrung und Urteil* stands as a lasting monument to the cooperation on Husserl's works. It was published in 1939 by *Academia* thanks to the efforts of the German secretary of the Cercle, Ludwig Landgrebe.<sup>11</sup>

In 1936, the same year that Husserl's *Crisis of the European Sciences* appeared, Patočka's work *The Natural World as a Philosophical Problem* was published. Its author attempted to exploit philosophically Husserl's concept of the "Lebenswelt" (the life world) and to demonstrate its necessity as an explanation of the practical, natural incorporation of man into the world in "co-existence" with others.

In this way an approach to phenomenology was born which fulfilled and even exceeded its intentions by broadening the parameters for phenomenological writings. As far as philosophy itself is concerned, this approach follows the Czech tradition, which can be described in one word as humanistic. We are convinced that phenomenology itself was able to become a philosophy through the means and from those sources through which its decisive methodological principles were reached. We are also convinced that in each situation, and hence in the reception of phenomenology (which carries within itself metaphysical presuppositions for the building of systems which one may or may not accept), the general intellectual climate, which the new philosophical tendency entered, played a great role.

## **After World War II: Jan Patočka**

It is as though two intellectual climates pervade the philosophical personality of Jan Patočka, reflecting two social levels of approach. It is necessary, therefore, to say something about the new *postwar interest in phenomenological philosophy*, an interest which Patočka called the "renewal of phenomenology". The bearers of this interest were the generation which, during the so-called Protectorate, had been deprived of study at the universities and had to wait until the situation changed and enabled them to familiarize themselves with phenomenology.

Despite the general importance we have recognized for the role of social consciousness in each nation's expression of phenomenological philosophy according to its own particular situation,

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<sup>9</sup> Here we give the order and precise working of the individual essays in this collection titled *Abhandlungen. Untersuchungen über das Wesen des Geistes*, J.B. Kozak, E. Utitz, "Vorbemerkung"; J.B. Kozak, "Das Wesen der geistigen Intention: das transzendierende Meinen"; Ludwig Landgrebe, "Geist und Transzendenz des Bewusstseins"; Jan Patočka, "Der Geist und die zwei Grundsichten der Intentionalität"; Edmund Husserl, "Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie"; Emil Utitz, "Geist als Gerechtigkeit"; Oskar Kraus, "Über die mannigfache Bedeutung des 'Geistes'." On the last title we would remark that this concluding essay is made understandable by the strong position of the Brentanoists in the Prague German University during three successive generations, and the activities of the Prague Brentano-Gesellschaft (founded in 1931 due to the efforts of Masaryk and directed by Oskar Kraus). It held that only the psychological-analytical method is useful and that all phenomenological questions can be seen as purely psychological questions.

<sup>10</sup> H.L. van Breda discusses the history of the transportation of Husserl's manuscripts from Prague and of the origin of Husserl's Archives in Leuven, "Die Rettung von Husserl Nachlass und die Grundung des Husserl-Archivs," in *Husserl et la Pensée Moderne. Husserl und das Denken der Neuzeit* (Den Haag, 1959).

<sup>11</sup> From the same publisher, *Edmund Husserl zum Gedächtnis. Zwei Reden gehalten von Ludwig Landgrebe und Jan Patočka* appeared in 1938 in the series "Schriften des Prager Philosophischen Cercles."

we are forced to think of phenomenology within certain boundaries, that is, on a theoretical, academic level. This is in keeping with the fact that we have demonstrated its content through its constants and its shifts in the context of the above-mentioned concentration of philosophical activity around the Philosophical Congress in Prague and the Cercle's attempts to explain phenomenology. We shall now aim at a profile of Prague University and its activities in the humanities, especially philosophy, after 1945.

After the war, those who had been the bearers of the prewar phenomenological inheritance returned to the philosophy faculty of Prague University. J.B. Kozák, after his return from exile in the U.S.A., lectured on epistemology and on the history of political theory. Emil Utitz came back from the Theresienstadt ghetto and turned to an elucidation of the relationship between the theories of Husserl and Brentano and their tradition in Czechoslovakia in his book, *Erinnerungen an Franz Brentano* (1954). Above all, however, it was Jan Patočka, who began to lecture and hold seminars, becoming the most authentic mediator of phenomenological philosophy to a younger generation. One may speak of the wider theoretical setting of Patočka's efforts, which includes all kinds of phenomenological writings with a clear preference, at least at that time, for the structuralist school. This was composed mainly of the former members of the Linguistic Circle, representatives of the Prague school with its central concept of function; they managed at least in a few cases to achieve a new application of phenomenology on the level of scientific methodology.<sup>12</sup>

The renewed interest in phenomenological philosophy could not in any case mean a return to some of the prewar attempts at its interpretation. Many of these attempts, which at that time had guided the new intellectual streams of European philosophy which gave birth to phenomenology, had simply collapsed. During the sharply left-oriented period from 1945-1948, phenomenology once again (and in new ways) strove for its restitution in the newly reconstructed Czechoslovak state. After the consolidation of the Communist regime, it had to contend with an open confrontation with Marxism linked with new interpretive attitudes, and had different aims than before the war. This process was aided by the fact that new interpretive levels of Husserl's philosophy had been reached on the international scale, mainly due to the philosophers whose work Patočka had been following. Merleau-Ponty considered Husserl's method of viewing essences to be a rational advance comparable to the experimental approaches; the Vietnamese philosopher, Trãn-Dúc-Thao, in his book, *Phénoménologie et Materialisme Dialectique* (Paris, 1951), stated that due to the technique of variation Husserl's concept of eidetic intuition had nothing in common with a metaphysical hypothesis (we are reminded here of Josef Tvrđý who had thought that this concept was pure hypothesis, unusable in science). Husserl's phenomenological explanation was corrected in many respects by a whole series of European philosophers, including Ludwig Landgrebe.<sup>13</sup>

Within the context of the political development of the state in the postwar years, phenomenological philosophy was suppressed, yet it survived in its own special form. In 1965-66 Patočka again presented publicly his lecture series, "An Introduction to Husserlian

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<sup>12</sup> See E. Holenstein, "On the Poetry and the Plurificationality of Language," in *Structure and Gestalt Philosophy and Literature in Austrian-Hungary and Her Successor States*, edited by Barry Smith (Amsterdam, 1981). It states that the specific thematization of the phenomena of multifunctionalism was a contribution of the Cercle Linguistique de Prague to the general philosophy of science.

<sup>13</sup> Ludwig Landgrebe lectured in Prague in 1964, a fact to which Patočka referred in his article "Dve filosofické navstevy v poslední době" (Two Philosophical Visits in Recent Times), *Filosofický časopis* (Philosophical Journal), no. 2 (1964).

Phenomenology," with its pure phenomenological themes.<sup>14</sup> The activities of Husserl's students, namely of Heidegger with his anthropological phenomenology and ontology, had resulted in further interpretative waves in Europe. As a result of Patocka's problems with the authorities, interest in phenomenology again shifted to an unofficial level. New forms of action were necessary, such as studying and research, linked with the copying, publishing and distribution of philosophical texts. (This deserves separate evaluation as the political significance of these activities is clear.)

In the postwar decades phenomenology was imprinted upon the whole structure of the social development of the country. During the early years a pure interest in pure phenomenology dominated, albeit with different intensities, from different motifs and in different depths (this can be illustrated by dissertations, publications and studies). During the 1950s, despite the then official Marxist-Leninist orientation with its struggle for 'ideological purity' and its struggle against 'reactionary philosophical opinions', phenomenology gained a certain space within the framework of the critical analysis of 'modern bourgeois philosophy' where its inquiry was situated in historico-philosophical contexts. Even here we can recognize high and low points. For example, studies of phenomenological problems were possible because of the intensive return to work on monographs and funded studies based on philosophical analysis; fortunately these works matured approximately in the mid-60s. At the same time, an opportunity to work on anthropological problems arose due to historical problems susceptible to the application of the phenomenological method. The analysis of the 'philosophy of man' with its ambiguous definition in Karel Kosík's book *The Dialectic of the Concrete. The Study of the Problematics of Man and the World* (1965), provided a breakthrough into a period of open interest in world philosophical writings. In addition to Husserl, attention was directed towards Heidegger, Jaspers and French existential philosophy.<sup>15</sup>

In the confrontation between Marxism and phenomenology, particular aspects of the phenomenological concept of the subject as meaningful responded to Marx's radical theory of man. This enabled an understanding of man in terms of pure philosophy. But, at the same time, it constituted a revolutionary social theory capable of 'realizing' man in his human essence, historically, revolutionarily and practically, and thereby negating the official philosophy. The antithetical character of both these theoretico-cognitive approaches furthered research into the methodological possibilities of phenomenology, the understanding of phenomenology as a method, and interest in what can be called Husserl's concept of objectivity, objectification.

This opportunity to explain Husserl's method of final clarification, excluding any kind of argumentative approach, constituted a challenge to make this method scientifically defensible in the spirit of descriptive psychology. This was turned to advantage in Czechoslovakia. Although there was a certain primitivism in the argumentation which reached only relatively shallow depths, it was nevertheless part of the probes into Husserl's philosophy. There were some positive results; for example, despite the problematic character of particular results, it became apparent how important were explanations of transcendental reduction and the methodological elements of

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<sup>14</sup> J. Patocka, "Uvod do Husserlovy fenomenologie" (An Introduction to Husserl's Phenomenology), *Filosoficky casopis*, nos. 5-6 (1965), nos. 1, 3, 5 (1966).

<sup>15</sup> Patocka evaluated Kosík's work as "Czech Philosophy for Our Time," for this philosophy "succeeded in doing what whole generations had failed to do, namely to work out in an original way the basic themes which matter in today's thought." If Kosík refuses to be a phenomenologist and seeks in phenomenology only the "rational kernel," then, according to Patocka, this is only a matter for regret.



"epoché" (with which phenomenological philosophy still struggles). Hence, at least in its intentions, this orientation was correct and hopeful.<sup>16</sup> This is shown by the recent appearance of Patocka's works from archival material, e.g. his hypothesis concerning the relations between two great phenomenological thinkers, Husserl and Heidegger, namely that the ontological phenomenology of Heidegger grows directly from Husserl's well thought-out motives undergirded by his explanation of the relations between 'epoché' and reduction.<sup>17</sup>

In a time of hopeful activity--at least as far as phenomenological studies are concerned--attention was given also to the problem of intersubjectivity, that is, to the question in the phenomenological movement which was strongly criticized shortly after the war (generally from a sociological standpoint) and which today is still an issue of topical interest in the works of Husserl's student, A. Schuetz.<sup>18</sup> This is the notion of the subject in constituting the world in itself, expressly laid out in Husserl's book, *The Crisis of European Sciences*. The presentation of this problem in Czechoslovakia manifested the possibility of a phenomenological conception and, at the same time, clarified the approaches of the phenomenological method with the special aim of discovering the sources and possibilities of a critique of phenomenology in its relation to the approaches of Heidegger and Sartre (see Antonín Mokrejs, *Phenomenology and the Problem of Intersubjectivity*, 1969). The studies of Ivan Dubský, who elaborated the Heideggerian motif of path as a path of thinking, probed in the direction of the point at which Husserlian and Heideggerian problematics meet and are themetised both as a question of home and homelessness and as a problem of temporality. He was interested also in the philosophy of Jan Patocka.<sup>19</sup>

The exceptional fate and work of Husserl's student, Jan Patocka (1907-1977),<sup>20</sup> is reflected in his philosophical writings, his pedagogical activities in both Czech and foreign universities, his rich and extensive publications on the problems of philosophy, art, Czech history and culture, and also in his superb translations. It is reflected also in his activities springing from a spirit of moral responsibility, particularly when he became the spokesman of Charter 77. As a consequence of this action, Patocka, who was twice forced to leave the philosophical faculty of Charles University after the war (always in situations which became turning points in the consolidation of Communist

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<sup>16</sup> J. Cibulka touched upon this problem, "Kritické a dogmatické tendence fenomenologické filosofie," (The Critical and Dogmatic Tendency of Phenomenological Philosophy), *Filosofický časopis*, no. 6 (1990).

<sup>17</sup> J. Patocka, "Muze zaniknout filosofie? Filosofický časopis" (Can Philosophy Fade Away?), *Philosophical Journal*, nos. 1-2 (1990). See also J. Patocka, "La doctrine Husserlienne de l'intuition eidétique et ses critiques récentes," *Revue internationale de philosophie*, nos. 71-72 (1965).

<sup>18</sup> On the subject of Husserl's relation to his "Viennese pupil," A. Schuetz, and Schuetz's part in copying Husserl's "Cartesian Meditations" and other links such as Schuetz's participation in Husserl's lectures in Prague, see K. Schumann, *Husserl-Chronik* (Haag, 1977). We refer also to the material given in the Husserl-Schuetz Symposium, which took place in Vienna under the direction of M. Benedit and R. Reickhart, November 15-17, 1990.

<sup>19</sup> I. Dubský, "Svet, domov a cesta u Jana Patocka" (The World, the Home and the Path of Jan Patocka), *Filosofický časopis*, no. 5 (1967).

<sup>20</sup> As a supplement to this chapter, we include a copy of Patocka's own curriculum vita, which he wrote in 1947 as an appendix to his request for the initiation of his habilitation in the Pedagogical Faculty of Masaryk University. We add that Patocka was also employed at the T.G. Masaryk Institute (1950-1954), The Pedagogical Institute of J.A. Komenský (1954-1957), and the Philosophy Institute of CSAV (1957-1968). In 1968 he was named a professor of philosophy at Prague University. During the 1960s he lectured abroad in universities in France, Germany, etc. After his forced retirement he continued to lecture on philosophy in private groups.

power), was frequently interrogated by the state security police after one of which long interrogations he died.

The essence of Jan Patočka's work lies within the framework of Husserl's phenomenology, which can be followed from his 1931 dissertation on the concept of evidence and its significance for epistemology, through the themes he worked out in the context of the Philosophical Circle, up to his 1936 habilitation on the natural world.

Here, before any monograph on his life and works has been written, we can give only a short bibliographical overview, point towards a synthesis of the studies from abroad<sup>21</sup> and interpretations in Czechoslovakia, and attempt to trace the thematic continuity in Patočka's life achievements and his fate. Against the background of his writings, Patočka appears as a man intrinsically bound up with philosophy, wholly devoted to his interest in revealing the theoretico-cognitive sources of truth, and at the same time seeking practical existential ways to grasp the world and life in the spirit of phenomenology. He treated phenomenology critically, seeing it as having been saved by Heidegger's ontological explanation. He employed the complex of means he derived from it in order to pass a final judgement on the relationship between Husserl and Heidegger, thereby presenting his own philosophical conception.

Jan Patočka had a good philosophical education. His orientation towards this field was demonstrated very early in his work: *Descartes and Bergson*.<sup>22</sup> During the occupation, which painfully affected the whole Czech nation, he concentrated on translations and interpretations of the thoughts of important German philosophers, such as Herder with his idea of humanity, and Kant with his concept of moral philosophy in *A Critique of Practical Reason*.<sup>23</sup> When he became an associate professor in the philosophical faculty of Charles University in 1945, he began his preparations by studying texts in ancient philosophy, contributing outstanding explanations of Socrates and Aristotle. His further studies of Aristotle resulted in the work, *Aristotle: His Predecessors and Heirs*, 1964. It was the only work he was allowed to publish after the war. As far as a role of an explanation of Aristotle's categories is concerned in Patočka's philosophic output of his work, the concept of three movements of human existence, we refer to corresponding literature which includes the essay "On the Prehistory of the Science of Movement: World, Earth, and Sky and the Movements of Human Existence." (1965)<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> I. Srubar has been intensively engaged in studying the development of Patočka's phenomenological thought and in determining his place between Husserl and Heidegger (and his relationship to art); Srubar assisted in publishing the *Collected Works of Patočka* in Vienna. At the local Institute for Human Sciences, a project for the research and the publication of Patočka's philosophical worlds was developed.

<sup>22</sup> See the postscript to Descartes' "Rozprava o metode" (Discourse on Method) (Prague, 1933) and his introduction to Bergson's book *Dvoji pramen mravnosti a naboženství* (The Double Stream of Morality and Religion) (Prague, 1936).

<sup>23</sup> See J. Patočka, "J.G. Herder a jeho filosofie humanity" (J.G. Herder and His Philosophy of Humanity), his postscript of Herder's book: *Vyvoj lidskosti* (The Development of Humanity) (Praha, 1941); *Dvoji rozum a příroda v německém osvícenství* (Double Reason and Nature in the German Enlightenment) (Prague, 1942); *Doslov ke Kantově Kritice praktického rozumu* (The Postscript to Kant's Critique of Practical Reason) (Prague, 1944).

<sup>24</sup> Of Patočka's work we would mention at least "Přirozený svět a fenomenologie" (The Natural World and Phenomenology) in the collection: *Existencialismus a fenomenologie* (Bratislava, 1967), in which the origin of the problem of the natural world is laid out in a positivistic philosophical background; "Co je existence?" (What Is Existence?) *Filosofický časopis*,

Patocka's interest in Hegelian philosophy was of great significance because of certain possibilities offered regarding the meeting of the two levels of phenomenology and of the search for their point of contact. This is, of course, a philosophical task which can be undertaken only by a philosophy deeply rooted in Hegelian philosophy. Patocka had lectured on Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind* as early as 1950 and set the seal on his Hegelian research in 1966 with his unrivalled translation of Hegel's *Aesthetics* and *Phenomenology of Mind*, which greatly contributed both to Czech philosophical translations and to Czech philosophical life in general.

Patocka's interest in European philosophy was matched by his interest in Czech philosophy as a deep source from which he took his concepts of the primacy of activity by following motifs of the natural world, of the life world and of the world in its significance for an explanation of the behaviour of man in this world. After 1953, Patocka worked in the Research Institute of Pedagogy where he was engaged in explaining and publishing the works of Jan Amos Komenský: he contributed substantially to a deeper understanding of this figure of world renown.<sup>25</sup> After his move to the Philosophical Institute of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, his interest in his native philosophical tradition (here his own relationship to Masaryk is a more or less open question)<sup>26</sup> was reflected particularly in his work on "the greatest philosopher on Czech soil," Bernard Bolzano,<sup>27</sup> and in a series of essays on the problems of the Czech nation and on the philosophy of Czech history, done mainly during the tense years of 1968-69.<sup>28</sup>

In 1969, when Jan Patocka brought the contemporary orientation of Czechoslovak philosophy to worldwide attention, he wrote that, despite all contrary efforts, this philosophy had retreated from Husserl and attacked Husserlian thought from the standpoint of Marxist criticism.<sup>29</sup> In 1968, during his "Die tschechische Philosophie und ihre gegenwartige Phase" lecture in Freiburg, he stated that, at least tentatively, it was possible to outline certain positive results reached by the

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*Philosophical Journal*, nos. 5-6 (1969); "Der Subjektivismus der Husserlschen und die Forderung einer absubjektiven Phänomenologie," in the collection of the works of the Philosophical Faculty of Brno University (Brno, 1971), where Patocka is concerned with the relationship between Husserl and Heidegger and is of the opinion that Heidegger's changes of Husserl's concepts are perhaps closer to the intentions of phenomenology than the concepts of the founder himself in his "transcendental" period. To this line of thinking belong the works being published at present from the legacy of Patocka, above all *Kacířské eseje o filosofii dejin* (Heretical Essays on the Philosophy of History) (Praha, 1990). In the literature mentioned in these Heretical Essays we read a reference to the collection called *Jan Patocka—His Personality and His Work*, ed. A. Müller (Köln, Index, 1980) and to the work of Erazim Kohák, *Kříze rozumu a přirozený svět. Pokus o nastínění smyslu a pohybu v myšlení a díle Jana Patocky* (Crises of Reason and the Natural World; An Attempt at an Outline of the Meaning and Movement in the Thought and Works of Jan Patocka), expedité edition.

<sup>25</sup> See K. Schaller, "Die Comeniana Jan Patocka," *Phänomenologische Forschungen*, 17 (1985).

<sup>26</sup> See J. Patocka, "Masarykova a Husserlova pojetí duševní krize evropského lidstva" (Masarykian and Husserlian Concepts in the Intellectual Crisis of European Humanity) (Kvart, 1936), c. 2, 91-92.

<sup>27</sup> Let us mention at least his introduction and commentary on Bolzano's text in the *Antologie z dejin československé filozofie* (Anthropology of the History of Czechoslovak Philosophy) (Praha, 1936).

<sup>28</sup> See M. Rohánová, "Soupis prací Jana Patocky" (An Inventory of the Work of Jan Patocka: 1928-1967), *Filosofický časopis*, no. 5 (1967).

<sup>29</sup> J. Patocka, "La philosophie en Tchécoslovaquie et son orientation actuelle," *Les études philosophiques* (Année, no. 1; Janvier-Mars, 1948; Nouvelle Série, 3).

efforts of the postwar generation. Jan Patočka's "Meditations after 33 Years" in his book about the life world attempted "a constitutive sketch of the genesis of the naive world". This constituted notably a creative transposition of the Husserlian motif, in which figure the polarity of theory and what the author terms the natural world and human life. This revised his original opinion and that of Husserl himself, rejecting absolute reflection and, as such, an explanation of phenomenological reduction "which makes it the gate way to the absolute." This method of reflection is based on an understanding of the 'three basic ecstasies of temporality and the movement of existence which springs from it'. This has ontological significance because of Patočka's development of the idea of life as movement which must be understood as a tendency towards a practical grasp of man in the world and his anchoring therein. He sees praxis as an element of human life and history for which modern philosophy, whether covertly or openly, has been striving during the entire epoch since the time of Kant.<sup>30 31</sup>

The abandoning of Husserl's contemplative reflection and its replacement with the concept of reflection as part of praxis, 'as a component of internal behaviour and conduct', is, of course, an idea which asserts itself in the structure of all the author's works and would demand a special study. Only the preliminary foundations are now being laid for an evaluation of the essence of Jan Patočka's work.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> J. Patočka, "Přirozený svět v meditaci svého autora po triaticeti letech" (The Natural World in the Meditations of Its Author Thirty Three Years Later), in *Přirozený svět jako filosofický problém* (The Natural World as a Philosophical Problem) (Praha, 1970). The second edition of this basic work of Patočka was never made available to the public after the intervention of the agents of normalization.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 169, 170, 212.

<sup>32</sup> We expect good results in this respect, as the study of Patočka's works and their publication have become a matter of pressing urgency for the Archives of Jan Patočka and the younger of Patočka's participants in his home seminar. *Summary of a Curriculum Vitae by J. Patočka in 1947*: Studied philosophy and Slavonic and Roman philology at the Philosophy Faculty of Charles University; doctorate in the Philosophy Faculty of Charles University, June 20, 1931; active in philosophical literature from 1929; a member of the editorial board of *Ceská mysl* (Czech Thought) and its editor; from 1934 a member of a committee of Philosophical Unity in Prague; from 1935 secretary of the Cercle Philosophique de Prague. From 1937 a docent in the Philosophy Faculty of Charles University until its closing in 1939. Returned in May 1945. In 1946 an extraordinary member of the Learned Society. From summer 1947 Foreign Consulting editor and member of the editorial board of *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*. In addition to his own independent translations he has written numerous philosophical articles in both Czech and foreign journals, collaborated on the *Pedagogical Encyclopaedia*, commented on foreign and domestic philosophical works in the journal *Ceská mysl*, and took part in international philosophical meetings, congresses, and other working events. From 1945-46 has taught philosophy in the Pedagogical faculty of Masaryk University.

## Chapter IX Czech Marxist Philosophy

*Jiri Gabriel and Slavomil Strohs*

Czech Marxist philosophy, if perceived as implicitly contained in Marxism, has its roots in the beginnings of the reception of Marxism into the Czech territories. This history started in the second half of the nineteenth century, while both Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels were still alive, and was a very complex process. For a long time, it depended mainly on the activities of culturally mature workers who acquired Marx's teaching at least fragmentarily. They used its spirit in their cultural and organizational work to promote self-awareness on the part of labour as an organized political power.

### The Nineteenth Century

In the Czech milieu, the beginning of social democratic ideas, which some historians date back to 1869, was connected with the activities of the so-called pioneers of socialism. Among these were, above all, Josef Boleslav Pecka (1849-1897), Ladislav Zápotocký (1852-1916), Pankrác Krkoska (1861-1888), and Josef Hybes (1850-1921).

Practical steps toward self-awareness on the part of labor appeared in 1847 when the workers of Austria founded their party, within which the Czech workers then established the Czechoslovak Social Democratic Party in 1878. Later, during its Brno Convention in 1887, this party initiated the establishment of an international unity of the party in the whole of Austria, which came into existence in the Hainfeld Convention in 1889.

Each of the Czech pioneers of socialism contributed in his own way to the understanding of Marx's teachings. For example, J. B. Pecka, through the mediation of Joseph Dietzgen, interpreted the principles not only of scientific socialism but also of Marx's philosophy. At the turn of the 1970s and 1980s, Ladislav Zápotocký published parts of Marx's *Das Kapital* as well as other of his writings in the magazine *Budoucnost* (The Future). Pankrác Krkoska worked on the translation of Marx's *Das Kapital* and published its extracts in a Brno newspaper, *Rovnost* (Equality) in 1886. Josef Hybes also published extracts from *Das Kapital* in *Rovnost* in 1896, along with his popular interpretation of Engels' *On the Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* under the title, "*How the Oppression of Man by Man Came About*". The first edition of a complete Czech translation of Marx's *Das Kapital* was published as late as 1913-1929, translated by Theodor Smeral, the brother of Bohumir Smeral, a prominent personage of both the 2nd and 3rd Internationals.<sup>1</sup>

### Early Twentieth Century

From the second half of the nineteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth century the social democratic movement in the Czech territories was a significant democratizing factor in

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<sup>1</sup> It is, nevertheless, remarkable that the first to point out that Marxism implicitly contained a certain philosophical view of the world and man was its opponent and critic, T.G. Masaryk, *Otazka socialni* (1898).

Czech society and influenced the democratization processes throughout the whole Austrian kingdom.

The shaping of Czech Marxist philosophy in the twentieth century originated as part of the wider whole of Czechoslovak Marxist philosophy. This wider whole involved Czech and Slovak participation as well as other nationalities, especially German and Hungarian. We shall not deal with the whole here, but we must bear in mind that it brought the Czech Marxist philosophy into a wider international context that implied by the nationally varied nature of the Czechoslovak state, as well as from the very nature of Marxist philosophy. The Czech "Marxist philosophy", however, often was a shortened form for Marxist-Leninist philosophy, because the study of Lenin's writings, and, later also of Stalin's works, long substantially influenced the contemporary interpretation of Marx's philosophy. In the interwar period, it is necessary to take the very term philosophy with a pinch of salt for it meant rather only a tendency to philosophy, a striving for philosophic explicitness, or an endeavor create a philosophic climate.

From the present viewpoint, the course of the Marxist philosophy in Czech countries during the twentieth century appears to be completed. The frequently quoted Marxist thesis about universal developmental laws can be applied to the very history of the Czech Marxist philosophy—it came into existence, developed, and arrived at an existential crisis.

This dramatic development occurred on an European and worldwide scale, as well; in this country its specific source was shaped by external interventions dividing the whole of Czech Marxist philosophy into several periods. Among the most serious external interventions were the disasters of the First and Second World Wars, which revolutionized the postwar situation in the sphere both of ideas and of political practice. After the First World War the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia was established, which took up revolutionary Marxism; in 1948, after the Second World War this party assumed totalitarian power.

## **The Interwar Period**

In the interwar period Czech Marxist philosophy established itself as a relatively autonomous part of Czech Marxism. Its stimuli came, roughly speaking, from three spheres:

1. Politics and ideology. This sphere included problems of political activities, decision-taking, and basic ideological orientation (Bohumír Smeral, Josef Skalák, Karel Goliat-Gorovský, and others), as well as political-economic analyses (Jaroslav Procházka, Antonín Kamenický). Numerous ideological and political manifestations were connected with the approach to revolution (Kurt Konrad), the conception of class struggle and the problems of nationhood (Jan Sverma), cultural politics (Karel Teige), creating the anti-Nazi front (Jaroslav Kabes, Pavel Reiman, Jaroslav Cecháček from the left wing of the Social Democratic Party), and the problems of social revolution and its legal basis (Vladimír Procházka).

2. Ideological and philosophic aspects of culture, especially of literature, the graphic and plastic arts, architecture, theater and music. This sphere also produced the ideological and even philosophic stimuli for the development of proletarian poetry (S.K. Neumann, Josef Hora, Jirí Wolker), avant-garde currents (Karel Teige, Vladislav Vanura), as well as a wider conception of Socialist Realism (Bedrich Václavek). These stimuli appeared within Marxist criticism in clarifying the relation between traditionalism and *avant-gardism*. Their effects appeared in the attempts to solve the problems of modern architecture (Jirí Kroha, Karel Teige), in the search for the orientation of working-class theatre (Frantisek Spitzer) as well as of professional *avant-*

*garde* theatre (E.F. Burian, Jindrich Honzl), theatre criticism (Jindrich Fleischner, Julius Fucik, etc.), and also in individual ideological positions (Josef Hrdina, Ivan Hálek).

3. Ideological and philosophic problems of the sciences: the transition from promoting revolutionary ideas to scientific activities in particular spheres of Marxist philosophy and its history. At this level the specifically cognitive aspects of the Marxist reflection on the world, society, and thought were stressed. The problems dealt with were those of universal and national history, cultural history, historiography of both universal and Czech philosophy, sociology, pedagogy, and lay morality. Complex relations of materialistic dialectics to the development of modern theories of natural science were considered, especially the theory of relativity.<sup>2</sup> This third circle included Alois Adalbert Hoch, Frantisek Albert, Otakar Chlup, Jaroslav Kabes, Závís Kalandra, Arnost Kolman, Kurt Konrad, Zdenek Nejedlý, Ludvík Svoboda, Karel Teige, Eduard Urx, Josef Vagenknecht, Bedrich Václavek and Václav Cedík. Many of them influenced the Marxist-oriented students of philosophy who finished their university studies in Prague, Brno, Olomouc or Bratislava after the Second World War.

Before the seizure of power by the Communist party, i.e., in the period from the 1920s to the 1940s, Czech Marxist philosophy was of a distinct autodidactic nature. After the seizure of power by the Party (1948), the external conditions for its professionalization and institutionalization were created. One of its currents was oriented towards an anti-totalitarian, creative conception which contributed to the "philosophy of the Prague Spring". August 21, 1968 proved to be a disastrous milestone because, among other things, a substantial number of creative intellectuals, including the philosophical intelligentsia, was deprived by the Brezhnev regime of the possibility of practicing its profession.

The destructive side of the Communist totalitarian regime as regards Czech Marxist philosophy manifested itself in different forms, as when new creations were immediately destroyed or when somebody who had gained personal status was presently fired, illegitimately imprisoned, or even sentenced to death. This annihilating mechanism became a hidden, yet substantial dimension of the development of Czech Marxist philosophy.

Let us begin with some of the personalities whose life and work contributed most to unveiling this mechanism in the first half of the 20th century. These were, above all, such philosophically educated Marxist intellectuals as Karel Goliat-Gorovský, Závís Kalandra and Vladimír Clementis. By assuming critical attitudes which had ideological impact on the history of Marxism and Marxist philosophy in Czechoslovakia. They contributed to the fact that, Czech Marxist philosophy had a history of anti-dogmatic, anti-Stalinist resistance, expressing more or less clearly the need for a structural reform of the Communist system.

*Karel Goliat-Gorovský* (1901-1985), a lawyer, was one of the founders of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. Towards the end of the 1920s he opted out of the Party and explained the reasons for his break with despotic Communism in the name of democratic socialism, in the essays "Katastrofa leninismu v Evropě" (Disaster of Leninism in Europe, 1927), "Dneni stav KSČ. Diktatura aparátů nebo demokracie dělníků?" (Present State of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. Dictatorship of the Apparatchics or Democracy of the Workers? 1927), and "Zpověď evropského komunisty" (Confession of a European Communist, 1928). In the 1930s he retired from public activities, but at the beginning of the Second World War he joined a

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<sup>2</sup> Josef Winternitz wrote *Die Relativitätstheorie und Erkenntnislehre* in 1923, after consulting Albert Einstein and the Infeld brothers.

Czechoslovak military unit, which was then being formed in Poland; after its transfer to the Soviet Union, he was arrested and spent 17 years in prison.<sup>3</sup>

*Závis Kalandra* (1902-1950) was a Communist journalist, author of a dissertation on Parmenides, and of the historical studies: "Znamení Lipan" (Lipany Omen, 1934) and "Ceské pohanství" (Czech Preagnism, 1947). He was interested in Surrealism and a critical interpreter of Freudianism in his unpublished work "Skutecnost snu" (The Reality of Dream). Above all, he was a critic of the Moscow show-trials. In the treatise "Odhalené tajemství moskevského procesu" (Unveiled Secret of the Moscow Trial, 1936), written in cooperation with J. Guttmann. Kalandra saw the purpose of the Moscow trials in Stalin's intention "to terrorize Leninist revolutionaries and to bully all honest Communists throughout the world who could not agree with the anti-Leninist course of the Comintern". His ability to take a critical view of his contemporariness was probably connected with the subject matter to which he was attracted philosophically, i.e., "the problems of the rise, metamorphoses and extinction of ideological systems and anthropological problems. Závis Kalandra survived the Nazi concentration camp in Sachsenhausen, but did not survive the first two years of the Communist government in Czechoslovakia by which he was illegitimately tried and sentenced to death.

*Vladimír Clementis* (1902-1952), Slovak Communist intellectual, lawyer, diplomat, and political writer, expressed, among other things, this disapproval of the Soviet-German Pact in 1939. After February 1948, as an alleged nationalist and traitor, he was sentenced to death in an illegitimate Communist show-trial.

These personalities understood and experienced Marxism as critical thought. Early on they acknowledged, evidently and verifiably, that if Marxism (despite its bureaucratization) were to renew itself as critical thought, it would have to analyze step by step the reasons for the liquidation of Marxism's basic attribute as critical thought.<sup>4</sup>

The premise for such progress in thought consisted in becoming acquainted with Marx's philosophy and even from the beginning when Czech Marxist philosophers were self-taught they displayed interest in the history of Marxism from its origin to the present day. In this field contributions were made especially by Jaroslav Kabes, Ludvík Svoboda, Pavel Hrubý, and Václav Vlk.

*Jaroslav Kabes* (1896-1964), the author of many articles on the Hussite revolutionary movement, in 1925 wrote a collection of essays for the magazine, *Komunistická revue*, the theoretical organ of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, which could be summarized under

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<sup>3</sup> The first detailed information about the failure of the working-class democracy in Soviet Russia, the failure occurring in connection with J.V. Stalin's takeover as the Secretary-General of the Russian Communist Party, reached the Czechoslovak Left via an American poet and writer, Max Eastman, whose tiny book, *After Lenin's Death*, was published (translated by Mila Grimmich at Karel Votava's expense in Karlin) in the same year as its English original, 1925.

<sup>4</sup> In this respect the work of *Karel Teige* (1900-1951) was very important, especially his polemical essay "Surrealismus proti proudu" (Surrealism up Stream, 1938). Teige was a co-founder of an association of avant-garde artists, Devetsil (Butterbur, 1920), and an organization of leftist intellectuals, Leva fronta (Left Front, 1929). He cooperated with the Prague Group of surrealists in the Czechoslovak Republic (after 1934), and he edited the *Miscellnies Devetsil* (Butterbur), *Zivot II* (Life II, 1923), *Surrealismus v diskusi* (Surrealism under Discussion, 1934), *Socialisticky realismus* (Socialist Realism, 1935), *Surrealismus* (Surrealism, 1936), the magazines *Disk*, *Pasmo*, *Stavba*, *Red*, *Zeme sovetu*, *Doba*, *Praha-Moskva*, etc.



the common title "The Philosophical Development of the Young Marx". In his conception of the class struggle he stressed, much as had Marx, the politico-economic side of Marx's teachings. What was new in Kabes was that he posed the question of the subjective aspects of the origin of Marx's teachings. Approaching Marxism as the work of a certain individual, he interpreted it as the product of a certain current way of thinking reflecting a subjective intellectual development of a person of a certain type. Kabes' collection of essays exceeded Mehring's work on Marx in many ways. Not being satisfied with Marxism, he studied Hegel and the Hegelian Left in order to search for the genesis of the philosophy of Marx and Engels. Kabes declared himself to have "been always an autodidact" and "a rambler on his own course". He became, among other things, a pioneer publisher of the philosophic legacy of a significant Czech philosopher of absurdity and "radical anarchism", Ladislav Klíma. Kabes was also an interpreter of the poetry of Otokar Brezina and of the mystical sculptures of Josef Bělek. His interests and personality set him entirely at variance with the common ideology of party officials.

*Ludvík Svoboda* (1903-1977), originally a grammar school teacher of classical philology, also went beyond the official position to a considerable degree. Of his prewar work, it is especially his *Filosofie v SSSR* (Philosophy in the Soviet Union, 1936) which deserves attention. On the international level he wrote the first thorough monograph on Soviet philosophy based on a review of the Soviet philosophic writings for many years. He stressed the anti-simplistic significance of the so-called Deborin school in the struggle with mechanistic materialists, and, towards the end of his work, posed the rather disturbing question, whether the so-called struggle on both fronts (against "menshevikizing idealism" and against mechanistic materialism) in the first half of the 1930s, would lead to creative thinking or degenerate into mechanistic and materialistic vulgarizations.

Svoboda introduced Lenin's book, *Materialism and Empirio-criticism*, to the Czech public (1933); later he also translated Lenin's *Philosophical Notebooks* (1953). He took for granted that Czech culture should be fully informed about these books and considered that interpretation of Engels, according to which only formal logic and dialectics pertained to philosophy, to be too narrow and too closely linked to positivism. He saw Engels as conceiving dialectics in a broader sense and including all the problems which used to be treated in ontology (metaphysics) and noetics (philosophy of knowledge and epistemology).

In the interwar period Ludvík Svoboda was also a very active reviewer. Besides the literature written in Russian, he regularly reviewed the contemporary Czech philosophic production, especially in the *Brno Sociological review*. In 1936 he wrote a careful and insightful review of the work of Jan Patočka, *Přirozený svět jako filozofický problém* (Natural World as a Philosophic Problem).<sup>5</sup>

*Pavel Hrubý* (1914) and *Václav Vlk* (1910-1962) were authors of *Základy marxistického myšlení* (Basics of Marxist Thought) 1946. The concept of the book had been initiated back in 1937, when Václav Vlk wrote brief passages on dialectics and Pavel Hrubý, in his lectures,

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<sup>5</sup> After the war Svoboda taught at Charles University for many years. From that period we should mention at least his monograph on F.X. Salda (1967). He attempted to approach the personality of Salda in the spirit of the words with which Salda opened his anniversary essay on the poet, Macha: "A work of art is not completed by the moment it has been finished...Another part of the task, and often greater and less easy, still awaits it (literary history): to write how the work has altered in the minds of the following generations who were preoccupied with it, lived on it, took it as food and drink."

complemented these with gnoselolical elements based on Svoboda's essays. During the war, Vlk and Hrubý prepared a popular book on dialectical materialism. Its aim was to offer an interpretation of dialectical materialism that would take into account the scientific discoveries of the twentieth century, especially the theory of relativity. For this purpose they studied modern authors: both Czech (e.g. Vladimír Úlehla) and foreign (Albert Einstein, Leopold Infeld). The course of their life was also symptomatic. After expressing their disapproval of the Moscow trials, Vlk was expelled from the Communist Party, and Hrubý from the Communist Student Movement. Both rejoined the Communist Party after the war. Vlk was arrested and sentenced illegitimately three years into the Communist regime in 1951; released from prison in 1960 he was rehabilitated in 1963. Hrubý was arrested illegitimately in 1952, released in 1960 and rehabilitated in 1963. As late as 1974 Pavel Hrubý published *Metody ekonomického času* (Methods of Economic Time), in which he made use of the conceptions of Einstein's theory of relativity for making more accurate economic analyses and prognoses.

Though not its sole dimension, an interest in the problems of the history of philosophy was characteristic of Czech Marxist philosophy, even in the period of its professionalization and institutionalization.<sup>6</sup> At that time this dimension assumed the form of a progression from Czech philosophy to world philosophy (from classical times to the present day) and toward contemporary trends in Western philosophy.<sup>7</sup> A similar tendency was displayed also by the relatively extensive work of translation which, even under great obstacles, sought out important elements in the history of Czech and world philosophy.<sup>8</sup> It was in such an intellectual climate, especially following the impetus of the twentieth Convention of the Soviet Communist Party in 1956 which criticized the personality cult of Stalin, that the philosophy of the Prague Spring was gradually formed. This included participation by a great number of outstanding philosophers, both Marxist and non-Marxist.<sup>9</sup> In the course of the '60s, many Marxist philosophers transcended the Marxist horizon

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<sup>6</sup> The Institute of Philosophy of the Czechoslovak Academy of Science (founded in 1953) and its *Philosophical Journal* (also published since 1953) was meant to cultivate and promote Marxist philosophy. In the second half of the '50s, and especially during the '60s, the Institute of Philosophy, however, endeavored to enable philosophers professing other philosophical conceptions to present their views as well.

<sup>7</sup> In the past four decades, however, authors of various philosophical orientations contributed to the historical-philosophic production. Besides the authors mentioned elsewhere in this study, the following also wrote about the history of world philosophy or Czech philosophy: Marie Bayerova, Josef Benes, Karel Berka, Jiri Cetl, Jiri Cerny, Pavel Floss, Vilem Herold, Petr Horak, Milos Juzl, Jan Kamaryt, Frantisek Kautman, Jaroslav Kudrna, Jaromir Louzil, Olga Louzilova, Dusan Machovec, Milan Machovec, Ladislav Major, Ladislav Menzel, Karel Michnak, Irena Michnakova, Milan Mraz, Jana Novozamska, Lubomir Novy, Miroslav Pauza, Jiri Pesek, Jaroslava Peskova, Milan Sobotka, Stanislav Sousedik, Jindrich Srovnal, Rudolf Steindl, Ivo Tretera, Jindrick Zeleny, Josef Muzr, and others.

<sup>8</sup> The majority of Czech translations of philosophical works were published in *Filozofická knihovna* (Philosophical Library) of the Academia publishing house or in the series of classical philosophic texts from the Svoboda (Freedom) publishing house. The Czech public, however, made full use of the translating activities in Slovakia as well.

<sup>9</sup> In the '60s stimulating works were published by, for example, Jaromir Bartos (1927-1972), *Kategorie nahodileho v dejinach filozofickeho mysleni* (The Category of the Contingent in the History of Philosophic Thought), and *Problemy kauzalni metody a historickeho vykladu pojmu* (Problems of the Causal Method and the Historical Interpretation of Concepts) published from a manuscript posthumously in 1977; Josef Cibulka, *Spory o dialektiku* (Controversies on Dialectics); Jiri Cvekl, *Filozofie a soucasnost* (Philosophy and the Present Time); Bretislav Fajkus, *Existence, realita, materie* (Existence, Reality, Matter); Jiri Hermach, *Uskutecnovani soucasneho cloveka* (Realization of the Contemporary Man); Miroslav Kral, *Pojem hmoty v dialektickem materialismu* (The Concept of Matter in Dialectic Materialism); Antonin Mokrejs, *Umeni, skutecnost, poznani* (Art, Reality and Cognition), and *Fenomenologie a problem intersubjectivity* (Phenomenology and the Problem of Intersubjectivity); Vojtech Tlusty,

and elaborated their own, individual philosophic conceptions. After 1970, however, this had to be outside the official Czech philosophic world and also outside their employment from which they were forcibly separated. Let us mention a few names as *pars pro toto*.

*Ivan Dubský* (1926) began characteristically from the historiography of Czech philosophy and, at the same time, related to world philosophy. His works appeared to reproduce the "return to Marx" at a professional level, the interest in the genesis of Marx's philosophy which we mentioned in the auto-didactic period. After publishing *Raná tvorba K. Marxe a F. Engelse* (Early Works of K. Marx and F. Engels, 1958), *Hegels Arbeitsbegriff und die idealistische Dialektik* (Hegel's Concept of Work and Idealistic Dialectic, 1961), *Pronikání marxismu do českých zemí* (Penetration of Marxism in the Czech Countries, 1963), he reflected on works by Franz Kafka, Martin Buber, Martin Heidegger and Jan Patočka, which he expressed in writings on the position of man in the world, his homelessness, etc.<sup>10</sup>

*Karel Kosík* (1926), too, began from the problems of the history of Czech philosophy, as indicated in his treatise *Ceská radikální demokracie: příspěvek k dějinám názorových sporů v české společnosti 19. století* (Czech Radical Democracy: a Contribution to Controversies in 19th Century Czech Society, 1958). In the book *Dialektika konkrétního: Studie o problematice člověka a světa* (Dialectics of the Concrete. A Study of the Problems of the Man and the World, 1963), he transcended his original Marxist inspiration in the direction of philosophic questioning: on the basis of Marx's philosophical development, he came to terms with contemporary German and French philosophy. He arrived at a view of philosophy as "a necessary activity of humankind", and "a systematic and critical attempt at revealing the structure of the thing, at unveiling the being of existence. In his view "the philosophic problems of the twentieth century, the destruction of pseudoconcreteness and various forms of alienation, became one of the most pressing questions". Individual philosophies "differ in their way of solving problems, but the problems are common both for positivism (Carnap's and Neurath's struggle against real or alleged metaphysics), phenomenology and existentialism". It goes without saying that this is true even for modern materialistic philosophy. Kosik's philosophical questioning shook the certainties of the ordinary conscience in everyday fetishizes, including the police-bureaucratic system, whose authority and "sensibleness" it questioned.<sup>11</sup>

*Robert Kalivoda* (1923-1989), the author of a significant work on the history of philosophy, *Hussite Ideology* (1961), arrived from the Marxist historiography of Czech philosophy to a general theory of being. He elaborated his own *Weltanschauung*, which encompassed Marxism in the contexts of modern currents of thoughts, especially Czech

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*Prostor a čas* (Space and Time); Ladislav Tondl, *Problémy semantiky* (The Problems of Semantics). The following publications of Brno philosopher and playwright, Vitezslav Gardavsky (1923-1978), met with a wide reception: *Fenomen Německo: Studie ke konkrétní dialektice universalismu a partikularismu* (The Phenomenon of Germany: A Study in Concrete Dialectics of Universalism and Particularism); *Bůh není zcela mrtev: Uvaha o křesťanském teismu a marxistickém ateismu* (God Is Not Completely Dead: Reflections on Christian Theism and Marxistic Atheism); *Naděje ze skepse* (Hope from Skepticism). Till 1969 Gradavsky was associate professor of philosophy in the Military Technical Academy; then he was employed by the water works and at the the end in an agricultural cooperative.

<sup>10</sup> After November 1989 Ivan Dubsky published, for example, *Filosof Jan Patočka* (Philosopher Jan Patočka, 1991), and *Diskurs na téma jedné Klimovy věty a jiné eseje* (Discourse upon Klima's Sentences and Other Essays, 1991).

<sup>11</sup> In recent years Kosik's *Dialectics of the Concrete* has been published in German, French, Italian, Spanish, Catalan, Hungarian, Serbian, Slovenian and Japanese.

Surrealism, Structuralism and Freudianism, as well as the Frankfurt School. The purpose of his work, *Moderní duchovní skutečnost a marxismus* (Modern Spiritual Reality and Marxism, 1968), was to transfer Marxism into an avant-garde horizon. For him, this meant placing it in the value hermetic circle of "poetry, love and freedom", i.e. of structuralism, Freudianism, and liberty, above Marxism, and subordinating class struggles to universal human values. With this redefined avant-garde attitude toward Marxism, Surrealism became the culmination of the avant-garde movements as a special philosophic sphere of a certain species of ontological and noetic problems with its own history and development.<sup>12</sup>

Dubský, Kosík, Kalivoda and many others in the field of philosophy were among the great number of philosophers who, in consequence of the "normalization" of 1968, lost the possibility of working in philosophy as professionals and were barred from publishing. The philosophy of the Prague Spring was formed by a large group of other philosophic personalities, not only from Prague, and not only of Marxist orientation. We have mentioned here only a few personalities that illustrated the way of building up individual *Weltanschauung* as a creative answer to the expansion of the "world outlook of the Soviet Union", and to the aggressive police-bureaucratic ideology of official Marxism-Leninism.

Ideological oppression in the '70s and '80s, as part of the general psycho-terror in the conquered territory, suppressed creative philosophic activities in official Czech philosophical institutions. Even under these conditions, however, some of the philosophers who could continue to work in these institutions after the great purges tried to resist and to go on with free philosophic thinking.

The long epoch of setting up and forming Czech Marxist philosophy ended in the peaceful revolution of November 17, 1989. The controversy between the democratic and antidemocratic interpretations of Marxist philosophy was decided historically on the side of the democratic tendencies. Today, these tendencies could become the source of a new stage of Czech Marxist philosophy in the present transformation of our society. They could contribute to the intellectual formation of a new Left, primarily because they shared in preparing this metamorphosis.

### Three Portraits

To complete the present survey of Czech Marxist philosophy, we add three "portraits" for, in the years following the Second World War, some of the philosophers who had attracted attention before the war also avowed Marxism.

*Ladislav Rieger* (1890-1958), the prominent expert on Kantian and neo-Kantian philosophy, began from the standpoint of Jacob Fries, *Poznání skutečnosti* (Cognition of Reality, 1930).<sup>13</sup> The notion of the instability of the basis of the sciences directed his attention to noetic problems. In his

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<sup>12</sup> In the '70s and '80s Kalivoda published abroad a revised version of *Revolution und Ideologie. Der Hussitismus* (Hussite Ideology, 1976), and a series of studies devoted to the Czech and German Reformation, Comenius and Comeniology, the relation between Marxism and Freudianism, Czech aesthetic thought, etc. After 1983 Kalivoda's articles were published by the reviews of *Communio viatorum* and *Studia Comeniana et historica*.

<sup>13</sup> Ladislav Rieger studied philosophy, physics and chemistry at universities in Prague and Vienna. After receiving the doctorate in chemistry (1914), he worked in an experimental department of the Nobel Institute in Stockholm for three years. In 1930 he did his habilitation and as a private associate professor lectured on noetics, logic and history of philosophy at the Faculty of Arts in Prague Philosophical Circle. In 1945 he was appointed to the post of professor of philosophy at Charles University. He was also the first director of the Philosophical Institute of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences and the first editor in chief of *Philosophical Journal*.

book, *Idea filosofie* (The Idea of Philosophy, 1939), he "defended philosophy in the struggle for the superiority of spiritual authority". He observed the basic stages of the process of the self-constitution of philosophy and philosophical noetics from the pre-philosophic period up to the present time. He paid special attention to Kant and the more recent forms of transcendentalism, to Husserl's phenomenology, and to Heidegger's hermeneutics of existence, asking how they could help philosophy to achieve "the clearest, deepest, basic and universal orientation". As early as the '30s, there was a growing emphasis in works on the social function of philosophy. In his notes on Rádl's commentary on the German events in 1933, for example, he wrote that self-reflection in philosophy is the presupposition for its becoming the starting point for a program of progressive social reform. The question of human existence during the Second World War led Rieger to existentialist philosophy, "to Heidegger as to the problems, to Jaspers as to the result". He thought that in existentialism, philosophy entered a new stage of self-reflection.<sup>14</sup> The intense social movements from the middle of the '40s, however, led him from existentialism to the study of Marxism where he believed that he found the solution of his noetic problem of perceiving the reality, genesis and nature of human consciousness. In the last years of his life he was engaged, particularly, in cosmologic matters (*Prolegomena ke kosmologii* [Prolegomena to Cosmology], 1958), with which he had already been concerned in connection with Einstein's theory of relativity. He related in an exemplary manner the problems of science to the basic fields of philosophy: ontology, noetics, and ethics.<sup>15</sup>

*Mirko Novák* (1901-1980), an aesthetician and philosopher, during the interwar period was one of the Prague left-wing intellectuals who did not conceal their sympathies for the Czech and European *avant-garde*; whence he drew guidance for his theoretical studies.<sup>16</sup> As a theoretician of the fine arts (he started as a musicologist) he wanted to support the view of "objectivizing scientism": that scientific thought in art should not be liable to any changing artistic programs and tendencies. He understood art to be a specific spiritual value whose origin was in the biophysiological sphere, which developed in the intellectual sphere, and which found its meaning in the social sphere.

At first, he reduced aesthetics to the history of the fine arts; later he defined it as the discipline concerned with "aesthetic reality", or, as the case may be, with "the reality of aesthetic values". In his Marxist-oriented works from the '60s, he strained to clear up some misunderstandings concerning the interpretation of art as the "reflection of reality"; he stressed the active side of the artist's attitude to reality as "a specific interaction of subject and object". A series of his works focusing on fine arts and aesthetics include "Vznik tvurci osobnosti Beethovenovy" ("The Origin of Beethoven's Creative Personality") (1924), "Le Corbusierova prostorová estetika" (Corbusier's Space Esthetics, 1929), *Základy vedy o umění se zvláštním zretelem k vedeckému studiu hudby* (Basics of the Science of the Arts with Special Regard to the Scientific Study of Music,

<sup>14</sup> In 1946, *J. Popelova in iStudie o současne ceske filosofii* (Study of Contemporary Czech Philosophy) ranked L. Reiger, together with J. Patocka and V. Navratil, as "a group of Czech philosophers" which could be identified as existentialist. In this connection she referred to his "so far unpublished" *Metaphysics of Human Existence*.

<sup>15</sup> Rieger's unpublished works include a manuscript of *Cerveny posuv: Novy pokus o vyklad cerveneho posuvu fotoelektrickým jevem* (Red Shift: A New Attempt at Interpreting the Red Shift by Photoelectric Phenomenon) (1957).

<sup>16</sup> Mirko Novak studied philosophy and esthetics at the Faculty of Arts of Charles University in 1919-1923; then he spent several years studying at universities in Paris, Bordeaux, Bonn and Vienna. As an associate professor of esthetics he taught at the Comenius University in Bratislava; as a professor of philosophy he taught in Brno (1938-1953); as a professor of aesthetics he taught in Prague (after 1953).

1928), *Vznik pojmu krásna v recké filosofii* (The Origin of the Concept of the Beautiful in Greek Philosophy, 1932), *Ceská estetika* (Czech Esthetics, 1941), *Otázky estetiky v přítomnosti a minulosti* (Issues of Esthetics Present and Past, 1963), and *Od skutečnosti k umění* (From Reality to Art, 1965). In the field of philosophy Novák was oriented especially towards axiological problems; he worked on questions of historical development and the purpose of history. In 1936 he published a book, *Kantův kriticismus a problém hodnoty* (Kant's Criticism and the Problem of Value). He collected his studies from the '30s and '40s in the book *Hodnoty a dejiny* (Values and History, 1947); later contributions were published in a miscellany *Být národem* (To Be a Nation, 1969).

*Jirina Popelová-Otáhalová* (1904-1985) began her philosophic career with the search for answers in the crisis to which the course of Czech and world philosophy had arrived.<sup>17</sup> She saw an extraphilosophical aspect of this problem in the crisis of society and thus put special emphasis on the analysis of its gnoseological dimension. Popelová did not deny the historical significance of European as well as of Czech positivism (as her 1942 book on Frantisek Krejci witnessed), but she did not agree with its dissolution of philosophy into the sciences and its splitting of the *Weltanschauung* into fragments of popularized natural science. In contrast to many other critics of positivism, she did not move toward any form of irrationalism or towards religion. She balanced especially the impulses she found in contemporary intellectual literature with those she found in Marx (whom she defended against simplified criticism). In her works she focused on the problems of noetics and on the methodology of the so-called cultural sciences, historical reality, and the purpose of history, values and evaluation: *Poznání kulturní skutečnosti* (Cognition of Cultural Reality, 1936); *Dejiny a hodnoty* (History and Values, 1940); *Pravda a jistoty* (Truth and Certainties, 1942); *Tri studie z filozofie dejin* (Three Studies from the History of Philosophy, 1947). Her post-war works dealt with some periods of European and Czech philosophy and with ethical matters: *Studie o současné české filozofii* (A study of Contemporary Czech Philosophy, 1947); *K filozofické problematice Marxova Kapitálu* (On Philosophical Problems in Marx's *Das Kapital*, 1954); *Cesta J.A. Komenského k vsenáprave* (Comenius' Road to Universal Rectification, 1958); *Etika* (Ethics, 1962); *Rozpad klasické filozofie* (Break-up of Classical Philosophy, 1968); *Zrození filozofie* (Birth of Philosophy, 1981); *Étos a práce* (Ethos and Labour, 1981); *Problém norem* (The Problem of Norms, 1981); and *Filozofia Jana Amosa Komenského* (The Philosophy of Comenius, 1986).

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<sup>17</sup> Jirina Popelova studied philosophy and classical philosophy in Charles University in 1923-1928. Her teacher was Karel Vorovka, to whom she later dedicated the study, *Skeprese a gnose v dile Karla Vorovkky* (Skepticism and Gnosis in the work of Karel Vorovka) (1934). Before the war she taught in several grammar schools; after her habilitation in 1947 she lectured on philosophy at Charles University and in 1949-1953 also in Palacky University in Olomouc, where she also held the position of Rector. She was appointed a professor of philosophy in 1947.

## Chapter X

# Czech Exile and Underground Philosophy

*Jiri Gabriel, Lubomir Novy*

Some representatives of Czech philosophy, who after the 1948 *coup d'etat* were silenced for not wanting to give up their philosophical views and civic attitudes, have been mentioned in several preceding chapters. These include names like I.A. Bláha, J. Král, J.B. Kozák, A. Dratvová, K. Englis, V. Kubes, J. Patocka, V. Navrátil and many others.

### The Emigrés

Faced with this situation, some Czech philosophers decided to emigrate. Emigration, i.e., "a voluntary or forced leaving of one's country in order to live abroad for economic, political or religious reasons," is by no means an exceptional phenomenon in Czech history. The beginnings of the history of Czech emigration, motivated culturally and politically, date back to the very beginnings of Czech history in the period of the Great Moravian Empire. At that time, after the death of Archbishop Methodius, his disciples who advocated the Slavonic liturgy were forced to leave the country. Recently, Jaroslav Kadlec published a book about Czech Catholic exiles in the Hussite period. In the period after the Thirty Years War, Comenius, a member of the Order of Czech Brothers, became an internationally renowned Czech exile. The political situation in the country after the revolution in 1848 forced Josef Václav Fric, a radical democrat, to leave for abroad (he could not return home until 1879). Frantisek Matou Klácel, an Augustinian from the city of Brno, left for America in 1869 in order to try to realize, at least with the Czechs living in America, some of his dreams about the new life of the *vesměrník* people as affirming a national identity, yet aware of broader and ultimately of universal contexts. T.G. Masaryk, a philosopher, and E. Benes, a sociologist, were leading Czech politicians who, during World War I, supported the interests of their nation from abroad. There were also philosophers among the numerous emigrants who left the country before the German occupation.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> We have mentioned that some of the philosophers who, after the German occupation stayed "home," later perished in Nazi prisons or in concentration camps. One of them was Josef Fischer (1891-1942), a professor of philosophy at Charles University. Before the war, he published an important two volume monograph, *Myslenka a dilo Frantiska Palackeho* (The Works and Ideas of Frantisek Palacky, 1926-1927), and a number of studies on the philosophy of morals and politics, e.g., *Valka a mir v klasické filosofii* (War and Peace in Classical philosophy), 1935. In a chapter showing the relationship between philosophy and social events, one must mention Fischer's significant contribution to a voluminous program, *Za svobodu* (For Freedom), which in 1940-1941 expressed the views of a resistance group called *Peticni vybor Verni zustaneme* (Petition Committee "We Will Remain Faithful"). This "most important document of political thought during the war" treated not only the current situation, but the tasks of the free Czech society after the war, in its various aspects, Vacla Cerny characterized it in his *Pameti* (memoirs) as views of "a document of thought of whose standards the resistance need not be ashamed. At the same time, it is an excellent piece of evidence that our own national resistance conceived a program of a socialist state. While keeping the entirely native tradition of progressive humanism, it was never willing to abandon the ideals of political, civic, and spiritual freedom for social justice; on the contrary, it strove for their synthesis." (Cf. Vaclav Brabec, "Dokument nedoceněného významu" (A Document of Underrated Importance) in *Lidové noviny* (June 22, 1991), 8.

As far as Czech philosophy in the twentieth century is concerned, the waves of emigrants connected with February, 1948 and August, 1968, appear to be the most important. Their characteristic features have been explained in Pavel Tigríd's *Politická emigrace atomového věku* (Political Emigration in the Nuclear Age, 1974 and 1990). The emigration after February, 1948, occurred as the "direct effect of the failure of peaceful coexistence between Communists and democrats in the socialist Czechoslovak state in 1945-1948"; it was "basically an intellectual" emigration. Tigríd divided the emigrants after August, 1968, into three groups: 1. people persecuted or discredited by the regime; 2. the "expert labor force discriminated against from the point of view both of their careers and of subsistence and which often was even pestered by the regime's levelling personnel policy"; and, 3. "active participants in the reform movement, former state and political officials, journalists and writers, university professors."<sup>2</sup>

As far as philosophical personalities are concerned, it was above all some of the religious thinkers who emigrated after February, 1948, e.g., the philosophizing theologians of the Roman Catholic Church (some of them, however, only after having spent several years in prison for alleged "espionage", "sabotage", etc.).

*Ferdinand Peroutka* (1895-1978, New York) is one of the best known emigrants after February, 1948. A leading Czech journalist, in the period between the wars he was an editor-in-chief of the weekly *Prítomnost* (The Present) and political editor of *Lidové noviny* (People's Newspaper), a columnist, and a writer.<sup>3</sup> From the point of view of philosophy, his major works were his book, *Jací jsme: Pokus a národní charakteristiku* (What We Are Like: An Attempt to Evolve a National Identity, 1924), and his treatise, *Budování státu I-V* (The Building of the State, 1933-1939), analyzing political events in the first four years of the republic. After World War II, which he spent in a concentration camp, and owing to his contributions in *Svobodné noviny* (The Free Newspaper) and a weekly *Dnesek* (Today), he was designated one of the most categorical adversaries of Communism and the Communist press. Peroutka criticized the Communist ideas as early as the 1920s. In the first volume of *Prítomnost* he began to elaborate *Proc nejsem komunistou?* (Why Am I Not a Communist?).<sup>4</sup>

*Pavel Tigríd* (born, 1917) became a double exile. The first time he emigrated to England in 1939, where he broadcast Czech programs on the BBC. In 1948 he emigrated for the second time, first to Munich where he worked for Radio Free Europe, and then to the U.S.A., and afterwards to France. In 1956 he founded and later edited *Sevdectví* (Testimony), a political and cultural magazine. This review, designed not only for exiles, but for readers in Czechoslovakia as well, also published texts by Czechoslovak dissidents. After November, 1989, besides the aforementioned *Politická emigrace*, he published in Czechoslovakia a book reflecting on recent Czech history called *Kapesní průvodce inteligentní ženy po vlastním osudu* (A Young Woman's Pocket Guide of Her Own Fate, 1990).

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<sup>2</sup> P. Tigríd, *Politická emigrace v atomovém věku* (Prague, 1990), 67, 92.

<sup>3</sup> Peroutka's first book was a collection of narrative leaflets, *Z deníku zurnalistova* (The Journalist's Diary), 1922. As a journalist, he started his career in Herben's *Cas* (Time) and on the editorial board of a liberal weekly, *Tribuna* (Tribune). He edited *Prítomnost* in 1924 through 1939. In 1991 Peroutka's "fictitious historical novel," *Pozdejší život Panny Orleanské* (The Last Phase of the Life of the Virgin of Orleans) was published in Prague.

<sup>4</sup> Several authors contributed to the inquiry: the Capek brothers (Josef, Karel), Frantisek Langer, Frana Sramek, Josef Kopta, Jan Herben, Jaroslav Kallab, Jaroslav Krizenecky, Richard Weiner, and Peroutka himself.



*Jirí Kovtun* and *Erazim Kohák* emigrated after February 1948. Jirí (Georg) Kovtun (born, 1927) studied law after the war and at the same time was an editor in Tigris's weekly, *Vývoj* (Development). Since the 1970s he has been employed at the Library of Congress in Washington, where he has been doing research for his works on Masaryk: *Slovo má poslanec Masaryk* (Deputy Masaryk Will Now Take the Floor; Munich, 1985), *Tomas G. Masaryk, 1850-1937* (Washington, 1981), *The Czechoslovak Declaration of Independence* (Washington, 1985).<sup>5</sup> *Erazim Kohák* (born, 1933) studied philosophy and theology in the U.S.A. where he is now a full professor at Boston University. He concentrates, above all, on problems of "pure philosophy", i.e., on the questions arising from "the timeless actuality of our general humanness". From the standpoint of Husserl's phenomenology, he attempts to face postmodern skepticism with a rationality conceived as "an ability to understand the sense of things and events" (whence he also views the problems of ecology). He wrote *The Victors and the Vanquished, Na vlastní kuzi* (Living it Through), *Jan Patočka*. Some of his studies have been published in the exile magazines *Sevdectví, Studie* (Studies), *Promeny* (Metamorphoses). In 1991 he published his lectures as visiting professor at Charles University: *Zivot v pravde a moderní skepse* (Living in Truth and Modern Skepticism).

The situation of philosophers who did not keep their non-Marxist and non-Communist views secret is well-documented, e.g., in the biography of *Ladislav Hejdánek* (born, 1927). In 1952 he completed his studies at the Faculty of Arts of Charles University where he was a student of Patočka, Kozák and Rieger. However, he held only a corresponding "philosophical position" in 1968-1971 at the Philosophical Institute of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences (CSAS). Before 1968 he could publish only in the religious and literary magazines *Kresianská revue* (Christian Review), *Tvár* (The Face) and *Plamen* (The Flame); and, after 1970, only in the foreign and samizdat press: *Expedice* (Expedition), *Svazky pro dialog* (Volumes for a Dialogue) and *OIKOUMENÉ*. He was a member of Charta 77, and became active as its spokesperson after Jan Patočka's death. In 1985 he was awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of Amsterdam in recognition not only of his publications but also of the philosophical seminars he held in the 1980s in which foreign philosophers participated.

Since 1990 he has been teaching at the Theological Faculty and the Faculty of Arts of Charles University. Most of Hejdánek's works to date concentrate on the relations between philosophy, myth, faith, and theology. They attempt to answer the fundamental question: "what is philosophy", the possibilities of its various dimensions, and the place of religious faith in the lives of people today. Historico-philosophical interpretations abound in his studies, and special attention is paid to the philosophical and theological tradition (he considers most important the work of Masaryk, Rádl, Kozák, Patočka, J.B. Soucek, J.M. Lochman, etc.). In a number of articles he reflects on philosophico-political subjects, especially on the conditions for "living in truth". Hejdánek's publications abroad include a translation of his samizdat *Pražské dopisy* (Letters from Prague) and *Wahreit und Widerstand* (Munich, 1988); in Czechoslovakia he published *Filosofie a víra* (Philosophy and Faith; Prague, 1990).<sup>6</sup>

Among the authors who had no possibility to publish after February, 1948, were Václav Navrátil and Josef Safák.

*Václav Navrátil* (1904-1961) studied philosophy at Charles University with J. Král and J.B. Kozák. From the late 1920s when he became an editor at *Orbis* publishing house he published articles in *Kvart, Kritický měsíčník* (Critical Monthly), *Volné směry* (Free Directions), *Ruch*

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<sup>5</sup> In 1991, Kovtun's novel, *Pražská ekloga* (A Prague Eclogue), was published in Prague.

<sup>6</sup> Hejdánek's studies are now available in a new philosophical quarterly, *Reflexe* (Reflections).

*filosofický* (The Philosophical Action), *Ceská mysl* (The Czech Mind), etc. These include penetrating essays on philosophical subjects, mostly in the fields of aesthetics, ethics, and the theory of fine arts. He published the studies *Filosofie a umění* (Philosophy and Arts, 1935), *Myslení obecné a myšlení dialektické* (General Thought and Dialectical Thought, 1937) and *O sociálním myšlení* (On Social Thought, 1939) and a collection of essays *O smutku, lásce a jiných věcech* (On Sorrow, Love, and Other Matters, 1940). (In her *Studie o současně české filosofii* [A Study on Contemporary Czech Philosophy], J. Popelová mentions another book by Navrátil as "being prepared for publication" and devoted to the "metaphysical aspects of writing poetry". She includes Navrátil among the group of Czech existentialists.) One of the themes to which Navrátil often returned was the myth (its development, functioning and end) in mundane events and in everyday stories of the mind.<sup>7</sup> Among foreign philosophers he drew inspiration above all from Bergson, Rickert, and Jaspers.

In 1947, *Josef Safarik* published a collection of seven essays, *Sedm listů Melinovi* (Seven Letters to Melin), dealing with what "jeopardizes the foundations of human existence" in the modern world; thereafter, however, he wrote only for "himself and his friends". At the end of the 1960s he published several articles in a miscellany called *Podoby 2* (Appearances 2) and in *Host do domu* (The Guest in the House), and a magazine published in Brno in 1982-1984 in the samizdat miscellany, *Moravská čítanka* (A Moravian Reader). Since 1990 Safarik's philosophical essays have been appearing in *Proglas* and other magazines published in Brno, e.g., *Člověk a stroj* (Man and the Machine, No. 8, 1990).

## Marxist Philosophers in Exile

In the chapter dealing with Czech Marxist philosophy, it was mentioned that, in 1969-1970, many philosophers whose names appeared on the covers of important publications of the 1960s were forced to leave their universities and scholarly institutes. Some of them found an opportunity to pursue their philosophical research abroad.

*Ivan Sviták* (born, 1925) was among the philosophers in Czechoslovakia most frequently criticized for "revisionism" in philosophy and the theory of fine arts.<sup>8</sup> He dealt mostly with the history of philosophy, the science of religion, and relations between philosophy, science, and ideology. In 1970-1989 he lectured at the University of California; and since 1990 he has once again been living in Czechoslovakia. He continues acknowledging the ideals of socialism and the legacy of Marx's philosophy. Of course, he points out that, in his approach, Marx is "not identical with Marxism, or Lenin, let alone Stalinism". After November, 1989, in Czechoslovakia, he published books like *Kulatý ctverec* (A Round Square) which is a collection of articles from 1968-1973; *The Unbearable Burden of History of the Sovietization of Czechoslovakia I-III*, *Velký*

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<sup>7</sup> This is the basis for Navrátil's profound relationship to Josef Capek's novel, *Kulhavý pouťník* (The Lame Pilgrim) and Karel Capek's "Pragmatic Trilogy." In contrast with the lame pilgrim who in his hesitation and prudence is always late because he walks slowly, Navrátil's man in his neurasthenia and timidity is always late because he is in a hurry—as he walks hastily, he often "runs a nerve ganglion against a sharp object and gets hurt." (H. Waldhauserova, *Navrátilova etika* [Navrátil's Ethics], unpublished.)

<sup>8</sup> Sviták associated himself with the surrealistically oriented authors grouped around a journal *Analogon* (1968-1970), founded by the theorist and poet Vratislav Effenberger (1923-1968), a leading representative of the Czech surrealist movement. Among other things, the group organized an international exhibition called *Princip slasti* (The Pleasure Principle) and published a collection of texts entitled *Surrealistické vychodisko, 1938-1968* (The Surrealist Point of Departure, 1938-1968).

*skluz* (The Great Carry-Over), images of people from the Czechoslovak political scene in 1938-1948; *Budoucnost komunismu* (The Future of Communism), about the roots of bureaucratic dictatorships; *Nesnesitelné břemeno dějin* (The Unbearable Burden of History), about the limits of reformist communism; and in August, 1968, *Ztracené iluze* (Lost Illusions), about the political developments in Czechoslovakia after November, 1989, etc.

*Karel Mácha* (born, 1931) is currently a professor of social philosophy at Gustav-Siewerth Akademie in Germany (in 1978-1988 he was a visiting professor at the University of Munich and in 1988-1989 at the Polytechnic University in New York). Until 1966 he was a research worker at the Philosophical Institute of the CSAS, then a docent (an associate professor: This docentship was gained at the Philosophical Faculty in Brno) and later a full professor of the history of philosophy at the Faculty of Social Sciences at Charles University--however, in 1970, he had to leave. In the 1960s he published works on ethics and the history of philosophy, e.g., *Ke kritice buržoazního individualismu* (On the Critique of Bourgeois Individualism), *Etika a dnešek* (Ethics Today) together with K. Marusiak and L. Hrzal, *Problém člověka* (The Problems of Man), *Mladá generace známá a neznámá* (The Young Generation Known and Unknown), etc. Abroad, his publications include *100 Thesen zur einer integralen Anthropologie* (A Hundred Theses on an Integral Anthropology), *Die Menschliche Individualität* (Human Individuality), and *Zweifel und Einsamkeit* (Doubt and Loneliness) which evidence his conversion from Marxism to Roman Catholic religious faith. From this point of view, he also attempted to interpret the history of Czech thought (philosophy, theology, *political science*) from its beginnings in the Great Moravian Empire up to the present.

*Kvetoslav Chvatík* (born, 1930) has been mentioned in the chapter on structuralism. After finishing his studies of philosophy at Charles University, Prague, he worked at the Philosophical Institute of the CSAS and as a docent (associate professor) at the University Philosophical Faculty. He studied, above all, aesthetics and the theory of art (especially literature): *Bedřich Václavěk a vývoj marxistické estetiky* (Bedřich Václavěk and the Development of Marxist Aesthetics, 1958), *Smysl moderního umění* (The Purpose of Modern Art, 1965) and *Strukturalismus a avantgarda* (Structuralism and the Avant-Garde, 1970). Dismissed from his post in 1970, he has since been working at the University of Konstanz. In Germany, he published a monograph on the aesthetics of Prague structuralism (1981), and a book of studies, *Kunst und Struktur* (1987), and edited an anthology of J. Mukaovský's work entitled *Kunst-Poetik-Semiotik* (1989).

*Lubomír Sochor*, a Marxist philosopher and sociologist, and an historian of Marxism, spent the last of his life abroad. He studied philosophy and law at the Faculty of Arts at Charles University and for years lectured at the Faculty of Law. He became a docent in 1966, but a promotion to professor was turned down in 1969. In 1960 his main interests were the dark phases of the history of Marxist philosophy and the lines of development in the thought of leading Marxist or leftist authors (Adorno, Deborin, Fromm, Goldmann, Gramsci, Horkheimer, Korsch, Lukacs, Marcuse, Trotsky, etc.).<sup>9</sup> He also dealt with the relationships between Marxism and Freudianism, and with the subject of bureaucracy. In his polemics with dogmatic Marxists who had "fallen prey to an institutional logic" he showed that abroad

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<sup>9</sup> Cf. e.g., Socho's introduction to A. Labriola, *Eseje o materialistickém pojetí dějin* (Essays on the Materialistic Approach to History, 1961), and his epilogue to L. Goldman's *Humanitní vědy a filosofie* (Human Sciences and Philosophy, 1967). He prepared also a text on Stalinism and on the Soviet society in general.

there are scholars and philosophers who adopted the main theses of Marxist philosophy without being included in a political movement based on a Marxist program; further, there are individuals and even whole currents in the world Communist movement that remain very far from Marx's views and from the method of Marxist scientific thought.

In 1979 he left for Paris where he was active as a political writer, for which he lost his Czechoslovak citizenship in 1981. Some of his studies were published in exile in a book called *Úvahy o ideologii a praxi reálného socialismu* (Some Thoughts on the Theory and Practice of the Real Socialism, 1987).

*Milan Prucha*, after being a member of the Philosophical Institute, left in 1968. From the end of the 1950s he had published a number of articles in journals as well as some books: *Filosofické problémy existence cloveka* (The philosophical Problems with the Existence of Man), *Existencialismus* (Existentialism), and *Kult clovéka* (The Cult of Man) which dealt with the problems brought about by "the man-centered current in philosophy". He was concerned mainly with an analysis of its points of departure and at the same time with overcoming it by "raising more original and fundamental questions than those that can be asked from the anthropological point of view."

*Václav Blohradský* belongs to a younger generation of philosophers in exile. Having published articles in *Literární noviny* (Literary Newspaper), *Tvar* (The Shape), and *Mladá fronta dnes* (The Young Front Today), he became more publicly known after November, 1989. After his studies of philosophy and Czech (and military service), he became a teaching assistant at the Faculty of Arts in Prague. In 1970 he found a new teaching position at the Rosmini Philosophical Institute in Genoa, where he is now a professor of sociology. Abroad, he published the essay "Krise eschatologie neosobnosti" ("The Crisis of the Eschatology of the Unpersonal") in a samizdat publication, *Expedice* (Exposition); he published a collection of his texts called *Prirozený svet jako politický problém* (The Natural World as a Political Problem) in 1984 and later, in Prague (1991). In 1990, as a visiting professor at Charles University, he presented a course of lectures, *Demokracie po vymření světlušek* (Democracy After the Extinction of Fireflies).<sup>10</sup>

Both *Rio Preissner* (born, 1925), a literary critic and writer, and *Bedrich Loewenstein* (born, 1929), an historian and political scientist, emphasized the philosophical aspects of their work. After leaving for abroad, Rio Preissner published the trilogy: *Kritika totalitarismu* (The Critique of Totalitarianism), *Ceské existence* (The Types of Czech Existence) and *Az na konec Ceska* (To the End of Czech Lands).<sup>11</sup> Bedrich Loewenstein (in the 1960s a research worker at the CSAS and later, a professor at Frei Universität in Berlin) published the works *Der Entwurf der Moderne, Vom Geist der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft* (1987, 1990) and *Problemfelder der Moderne* (1990), wherein he deals with the ideological, social and historical foundations of modern society, its crises

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<sup>10</sup> With this name of course, Belohradsky wants to recall A Passolini's article "The Vacuum of Power" wherein the extinction of fireflies in Italy is taken as the "Symbol of the mutation of European democracy," and the "announcement of a period in which forces that can no longer be influenced by human speech are set into motion beyond the grasp of our reason." See "Rozhovor s Vaclavem Belohradskym" (An Interview with Vaclav Belohradskym) in *Literarni noviny*, no. 8 (1991).

<sup>11</sup> A number of Preissner's studies were published in a literary and philosophical review based in London, called *Rozmluvy* (Dialogues). Many of the crucial works of Czech exile and dissent literature were published in *Rozmluvy*.

and deformations. In 1991, his book *O nacionalismu a revolucích* (On Nationalism and Revolution) was published in Prague.

## Interior Exiles

Some of the philosophers who were forced to leave their positions in 1969-1970, remained in Czechoslovakia and were concerned mainly with the history of Czech thought. Among them were Oleg Sus, Milan Machovec, Josef Zúmr, Jirí Bednár and Zbynek Fiser.

### *The History of Czech Thought*

*Oleg Sus* (1924-1982) has been introduced in the chapter discussing Czech structuralism. Here it is necessary to add only that after studying philosophy and Czech he was employed at the Faculty of Arts in Brno and, after 1960, as an associate professor of aesthetics. After 1970 he was forced to become a "freelance domestic researcher". Towards the end of the 1960s, rather than continuing his previous analytical approach (in works dealing with the theory and history of aesthetics and philosophy), he began to adopt a more synthetic approach. He not only focused on individual studies, but also prepared whole collections which, however, were never published: *Estetické problémy pol napetím* (The High Voltage Aesthetic Problems), *Geneze sémantiky hudby a poezie?* (A Genesis Without Gods?).<sup>12</sup> After 1970, he was published only abroad and in samizdat literature. From his earlier works one should note at least: *Metamorfózy smíchu a vzteku* (The Metamorphosis of Laughter and Anger, 1963) and studies published in *Sborník prací brněnské univerzity* (Brno University Studies).<sup>13</sup>

*Milan Machovec* (born, 1925), after 1968 a professor at Charles University, was among the initiators of systematic research into the history of Czech thought with his *Husovo učení a jeho význam v tradici českého národa* (The Teachings of John Huss and Its Significance in the Tradition of the Czech Nation, 1953), *František Palacký a česká filosofie* (František Palacký and Czech Philosophy, 1961), *Josef Dobrovský* (1964), *Tomás G. Masaryk* (1968).<sup>14</sup> He dealt also with ethics in *Smysl lidského života* (The Meaning of Human Life, 1957 and 1965), and the relationships between philosophy and theology in *Utopie blouznivců a sektáru* (The Utopias of Lunatics and Sectarians) in collaboration with Markéta Machovcová (1960), *Novotomismus* (Neo-thomism, 1962), *O tzv. "dialektické" teologii současného protestantismu* (On the So-called "Dialectical" Theology of Contemporary Protestantism, 1962), *Sv. Augustin* (St. Augustine, 1967), and *Theologie und Revolution* (Hamburg, 1969). After 1970 he accepted a position as organist, but had to give this up after signing Charta 77. Of all his works published abroad after 1970, only *Evangélium pro ateisty* (The Gospel for Atheists, 1991) has been published in Czechoslovakia so far.

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<sup>12</sup> Cf. L. Soldan, "Oleg Sus o Otakaru Zichovi" (Oleg Sus on Otakar Zich) in *Universitas*, no. 3 (1991), 17.

<sup>13</sup> Other texts include *O funkcích umění* (On the Functions of Art, 1961), *K počátkům sémantiky umění v české estetice* (The Beginnings of the Semantics of Art in Czech Aesthetics, 1964) and *Metodologické problémy psychologie umelecké a literární tvorby* (Methodological Problems of the Psychology of Artistic and Literary Production, 1963).

<sup>14</sup> Machovec renders Masaryk as a personality who "in fact was always—in all his famous fights—concerned with the authenticity of life, the moral authenticity of the inner human personal existence." He ascribed to him "an important role both in the history of the Socratic dimension of philosophical endeavors and in foreseeing the problems and attitudes of the twentieth century existential-anthropological philosophy."

*Josef Zúmr* (born, 1928) was a research worker at the Philosophical Institute of the CSAS in 1957-1969. After being dismissed from the academy, he made a living by translating. Later, in 1988-1989, he worked in the Bureau of Greek and Latin Studies. After November, 1989, he became the director of the Philosophical Institute. He concentrates above all on the history of 18th-19th century philosophy (J.F. Herbart) and on the history of Czech thought (Herbartism, structuralism, the classical traditions) and its important figures (A. Smetana, O. Hostinský, T.G. Masaryk, L. Klíma, J.L. Fischer, J. Mukarovský, J. Patocka, and others). Together with Robert Kalivoda, he edited *Antologie z dějin českého a slovenského filosofického myslení* (An Anthology From the History of Czech and Slovak Philosophical Thought). Zúmr's texts from 1970-1989 were published anonymously, e.g., some Czech texts in *Antologie z dějin českého a slovenského filosofického myslení I* (An Anthology from the History of Czech and Slovak Philosophical Thought, I, 1982), in samizdat miscellanies, or abroad. After 1989 he has been publishing mostly in *Filosofický časopis* (The Philosophical Journal).

*Jirí Bednár* (1935-1973), a research worker at the Philosophical Institute of the CSAS, focused his attention on the leading figures of world and Czech history. Works by Camus, Dostoevski, Kafka, Masaryk, Salda, and Rádl were stimuli to carry out his own analyses on the place of man in the world and the meaning of his life. Until 1970 he published mostly in *Filosofický časopis*.

*Zbynek Fiser* (born, 1930), a philosopher and writer, who also used the pen-name Egon Bondy, became a distinct figure of the Czech "underground cultural movement" of the 1970s and 1980s. After studying philosophy (1957-1961), he worked at the National Library. In his books *Otázky bytí a existence* (The Questions of Being and Existence, 1967), and *Utěcha z ontologie* (The Consolation of Ontology, 1969), he attempted to outline a non-essentialist theory of being, considering ontology to be a field of "basic philosophical research". In a monograph called *Buddha*, he pointed out that Eastern philosophy, especially Buddhism, often served as a source of inspiration for European thought. After 1970, his work was published mainly abroad and in samizdat sources, especially his poems and fiction, e.g., his novel *Invalidní sourozenci* (This Disabled Brother and Sister, Toronto, 1981)--he had become disabled in 1967. He associated himself with "left Marxism" which provided his method for philosophical work.

### *Literature and the Arts*

The level of philosophical thought in the Czech milieu has also been maintained and further cultivated by persons who focused their attention largely on special fields of knowledge or on their own literary endeavors.

*Václav Cerný* (1905-1987), a literary critic and historian, in 1936 became an associate professor and in 1945 a full professor of Romance literatures and comparative literary history at Charles University. He caught the attention of Josef Král who, in his *Ceskoslovenská filosofie* (Czechoslovak Philosophy, 1937), mentioned Cerný's *Ideové kořeny současného umění* (The Ideological Roots of Contemporary Art, 1929), *Bergson a ideologie současného romantismu* (Bergson and the Ideology of Contemporary Romanticism, 1929), and *Essai sur le titanisme dans la poésie romantique* (Essay on the Titans in Romantic Poetry, 1935). Cerný's attitude towards

Western philosophy is reflected clearly in his translation of Ortega y Gasset's "The Rebellion of the Masses". When Král edited a new edition of *Ceskoslovenská filosofie* (which was never published) he noted Cerný's essays on baroque thought, the *Esey o básnickém baroku* (Essay on Baroque Poetry, 1937), and *Baroko a jeho poezie* (Baroque and Its Poetry), an introduction to a miscellany called *Kéz horí popel muj* (May My Ashes Burn, 1967), and on existentialism, *První sesit o existencialismu* (The First Volume on Existentialism, 1948). Of crucial importance for Czech culture was Cerný's journal *Kritický měsíčník* (Critical Monthly). In 1970, he had to leave the university for the second time (in 1954-1968 he worked in various academic institutes for a long time as a librarian), and afterwards he could be published only abroad and in samizdat publications. It is necessary to note at least his reflections on recent Czech history, *Pláč koruny české* (The Crying of the Czech Crown, Toronto, 1976), his studies on Masaryk *Podstata Masarykovy osobnosti a čím nám TGM zastává* (The Nature of Masaryk's Personality and What TGM Means for Us Nowadays), *Výročí smrti T.G. Masaryka* (The anniversary of T.G. Masaryk's Death), *Nekolik poznámek o Masarykovu moderním pocitu náboženském* (Some Notes on Masaryk's Modern Religious Feeling)<sup>15</sup> and his *Pameti I, II* (Memoirs I and II, 1983). In 1983 he published an essay, *O povaze naší kultury* (On the Character of Our Culture).

The characteristic feature of the work of *Jindřich Chaloupecký* (1910-1990) was his effort to provide a "philosophical grounding for the interpretations of modern art". As an art and literary critic and theorist, his work is essential not only for the theory of fine arts, but for philosophy as long as it takes artistic production as a specific statement about man and his world. The historian of Czech philosophy must mention not only Chaloupecký's work, *Svet, ve kterém žijeme* (The World We Live In, 1940), which was the ideological point of departure for Group 42, and *Umení dnes* (Art Today, 1966), and essays on the character and tendencies of contemporary art, but also his journal *Listy* (Letters) that introduced to Czechoslovakia "all that was crucial in the world of philosophy, aesthetics, art, and literature after World War II, and that could, in the arid 50s, be drawn on insatiably."<sup>16</sup> In 1980, the Jazz Section managed to publish Chaloupecký's study, *O dada, surrealismu a českém umění* (On Dada, Surrealism and Czech Art). Otherwise, after 1970, Chaloupecký could only be published abroad and in samizdat. Under his own auspices, he published his "philosophical diary", *Portrét umělce v moderním svete* (Portrait of an Artist in the Modern World, 1982).<sup>17</sup>

Among the younger generation of artists and writers who, while being involved in their confrontation with the regime also dealt with philosophical issues, is playwright *Václav Havel* (born, 1936). Along with Jan Patočka, he is generally considered the most important representative of Czech independent culture in the 1960s and after the so-called "normalization" in 1968. After taking his finals at an evening high school, Havel spent two years at the Technical College, for he was not allowed to study at the university. After finishing his military service, he worked as a stage hand from 1960 at the *Divadlo na Zábřadli* (the Theater on the Balustrade), where his best-known play *Zahradní slavnost* (The Garden Party) was staged for the first time. His plays *Vyrozumění* (The Memorandum) and *Ztížená možnost dorozumění* (An Aggravated Possibility of Communication) also date back to the 1960s. In the late 1960s he publicized his ideas for a democratic society through numerous political and organizational activities, e.g., in 1968 he was voted chairman of *Kruh nezávislých spisovatelů* (The Circle of Independent Writers).

<sup>15</sup> These studies were published in a samizdat edition, *Studnice* (The Well) in Prague in 1978 and in Brno in 1987.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. J. Hlavacek, "Ztratili jsme kritickou osobnost" (We Have Lost a Critical Personality), *Atelier*, no. 15 (1990), 2.

<sup>17</sup> Selected texts by Chaloupecký dating from 1934-1948 were published in a miscellany *Obhajoba umění* (The Defence of Art, 1991).

He continued along the same lines in the 1970s and 1980s, both in the events organized by Charta 77<sup>18</sup> and as a dramatist, with: *Zebrácká opera* (The Beggar's Opera), *Audience* (The Audience), *Vernisáž* (Private View), *Protest* (The Protest), *Largo Desolato*, (The Desolate Square), *Pokusení* (The Temptation), and *Asanace* (Slum Clearance), and as an essayist. His works dealing with philosophical and political issues, published in exile magazines or in samizdat, not only analyzed the state of Czech society but also expressed his opinions about the tasks of those citizens, above all intellectuals, who did not want to give in to the totalitarian political power. These include *Dopisy Olze* (Letters to Olga) written in prison where Havel spent some six years, and *Dálkový výslech* (Long Distance Interrogation) as well as interviews with Karel Hvizdala, and the essays: *Moc bezmocných* (The Power of the Powerless), *Politika a sevdomí* (Politics and Conscience), *Anatomie jedné zdrženlivosti* (An Anatomy of Reticence), *Príbeh a totalita* (The Story and Totalitarianism), *Slovo o slov* (A Word About the Word), etc.<sup>19</sup> The positive reception Havel's work met in Czechoslovakia as well as abroad and the role he played in the events around November, 1989, logically made him a leading figure of Czechoslovak political life and led to his becoming the president.

Finally, it should be noted that the unofficial philosophical life in the 1970s and 1980s did not consist solely of works published in the numerous samizdat editions. Its significant components were also "household" lectures and seminars that attempted to create an environment for free philosophical thought. In Prague these were organized, according to Patočka's example, by Ladislav Hejdlánck, Zbynek Fiser-Bondy, Milan Machovec, Julius Tomin, Zdenek Neubauer, and others. In 1984-1989 similar seminars also took place in Brno, supported by the John Huss Foundation.<sup>20</sup> The important thing was that these seminars were frequented by young people interested in philosophy who could not (or did not want to) study philosophy at the university, or who had to terminate their studies prematurely.

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<sup>18</sup> "Charta" (Carta) was the first important movement in the era of Husak's regime. It associated writers, former politicians, communists as well as non-communists, Catholics, Protestants, intellectuals and writers, university professors and non-conformist young people. They did not unite on a political basis but for more inward reasons, human rather than political. Their motive was largely moral. Charta came into existence out of a desire to get free of the demoralizing pressure of the times, to reject the enforced schizophrenia, and to step beyond the horizon of individual interests and personal fears: to come out of the trenches of one's private life and to ask for participation in public issues. Vaclav Havel, "Co je Charta 77?" (What is Charta 77?).

<sup>19</sup> Havel's essays and political articles dating from 1983-1989 were published in the collection *Do ruznych stran* (In Various Directions).

<sup>20</sup> Cf. a column called "Podzemni univerzita" (The Underground University) in the journal, *Proglas* (1991).



## Chapter XI The Positivist Tradition in Czech Ethics

*Karel Hlavon*

This chapter will not attempt to present a well-rounded picture of the development of modern Czech ethics. To accomplish that, much more work will have to be done. We will concentrate on the positivist tradition in the humanistic social orientation of Czech social thought (noting what preceded and prepared it). In chapter III of this volume, it was shown that positivism had an important position in the Czech philosophy of the first half of our century.

The nature of national philosophical thinking cannot be explained solely on the basis of the specific historical conditions of a given nation, but neither can these be ignored. This applies particularly to ethics which is closest to the day-to-day life of people and reflects not only the actual situation of any given society, but also its needs and aspirations. It applies even more to a small nation which has lived under national, political and social oppression for long periods of its history, and has to struggle for its cultural, political and social rights, and even for the preservation of its existence as a nation. This situation influenced, both positively and negatively, the moral life of the society and had an impact on its thinkers.

### **The Czech Ethical Tradition**

The overall conditions for the development of the Czech community help us understand why, in Czech philosophical and religious thinking, the practical orientation was more pronounced than the theoretical. They explain why Czech ethics, whether it has flourished in the context of religious movements, pedagogy, historiography, political movements, philosophy, or moral teachings, has had a conspicuously democratic, humanistic, social and socially critical character. This basic tendency had formed as early as the Czech Reformation (Jan Hus, Petr Chelcický) and continued in the teachings of Jan Amos Komenský (Comenius), as well as in the works of Czech Humanists, National Revivalists and Czech Revolutionary Democrats.

Although ethical thinking has had a long tradition in Czech lands, ethics in the narrowest sense of the word began to be cultivated only in the first half of the nineteenth century. The first original treatise in ethics was published by the Catholic theologian and philosopher Vincenc Zahradník (1790-1836), who supported Bolzano's liberal Catholicism. Zahradník associated the Roman Catholic ethical teachings with socially eudaimonist values (its highest ethical principle being the expansion of the general welfare). Some of his works were not published because they did not receive the church's "imprimatur."

In the 1840s, Czech philosophical thinking was influenced to a certain degree by Hegelianism. Ignác Jan Hanus (1812-1869) published his German textbook *Handbuch der philosophischen Ethik* in 1846. The first systematic Czech ethics was written under the title *Dobrovedá* (Knowledge of the Good, 1847), by Frantisek Matou Klácel (1808-1882), a free-thinking Augustinian friar who introduced socialist ideas to the Czech public. He attempted to found a brotherhood that would follow principles of mutual love, but was deprived of his professorial position in an Episcopal seminary and in 1869 departed for the United States where he had found more understanding for

his utopian social ideals.<sup>1</sup> The ideal of a society governed by love played an important role in the historical and philosophical treatises of the most renowned Czech Hegelian, Augustin Smetana (1814-1851), who was excommunicated from the Order of the Knights of the Cross.<sup>2</sup>

The anti-absolutist, democratic, humanistic and socially critical pathos of the stormy 1840s and 1850s expressed itself more in the political writings of the Czech Radical Democrats than in ethical and philosophical treatises. National, social and ethical views were integrated during this period and Czech thinking absorbed ideas from the wider European realm, particularly from the German and French Enlightenment and, to some extent, socialist ideas as well.

After the decline of the revolutionary wave of the 1840s and the rise of a strong absolutist reaction, it was necessary to find different foundations for life. Instead of the humanistic orientation of the Enlightenment, historical, religious and philosophical hope for the improvement of social conditions was anchored in the ethical perfection of man. We have said earlier that this transformation was mediated by ideas of Herbartism, which was most influential between the 1860s and 1880s. Josef Dastich, in his book *Základové praktické filosofie ve smyslu vseobecné etiky* (Foundations of Practical Philosophy in the Sense of General Ethics) 1863, took over almost completely Herbart's conception of practical ideas. Gustav Adolf Lindner, the most influential representative of Herbartism in Bohemia, associated his teacher's viewpoints with the new influences of Darwin, Spencer and Mill. In his most important work, *Das Problem des Glücks* (The Problem of Happiness, 1868, and in Czech in 1931), Lindner criticized the conflict between the generally proclaimed "idea of love" representing "the center of gravity of the ethical world system" and the social situation characterized by a "battle for survival" stemming from uncontrolled wants and egoism. He saw the solution of the "social question" primarily in overcoming egoism by love, in strengthening the moral character, and in personal emancipation: "social freedom can grow only from internal, spiritual liberation."

This turn from the political and legal conception of the democratic humanist ideas of the Enlightenment to the idea that human and social progress is possible primarily through moral revival needed a more general philosophical support. Ethics pointing to the supernatural and the absolute could no longer suffice. At the end of the century, the deeply religious Frantisek Drtina expressed it in this way:

People of our era are turning most of all to naturalism. Even though they may think as Christians, they no longer look toward life after death beyond this world. They do not expect help and support from a supernatural blessing but rely on their own strength, wanting to find realization and bliss in this world.<sup>3</sup>

This change in the understanding of the world found its expression in the ethical content of religiosity. We can find it in the philosophy of Czech history (Frantisek Palacký, T.G. Masaryk), in which the foundation of typical humanist efforts for the Czech nation lie in essential religiosity. This was understood primarily as an effective love of neighbor and derived from the religious and ethical tradition of the Czech Reformation. Masaryk's assertion that the specific Czech form of the

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<sup>1</sup> On the tombstone of Klacel's grave in Belle Plain, we can read Klacel's credo *Osmelme se!* (Let Us Be Bold!).

<sup>2</sup> One can read about the lives and work of the Czech followers of Hegelianism in monographs from *Odkazy pokrokových osobností naší minulosti* (Bequests of Progressive Personalities of Our Past) published by Melantrick; Irena Michnakova, *Augustin Smetana* (1963), Jaromir Louzil, *Ignac Jan Hanus* (1971); Zora Dvorakova, *Frantisek Matous Klacel* (1976).

<sup>3</sup> F. Drtina, *Myslenkový vyvoj evropskeho lidstva* (Development of Thought in Europe, Prague, 1902), 368.

general humanist ideals lies in their "religious character" evoked both agreement and disagreement. In Czech philosophical thought, however, this concept is traceable to an ethically understood religion. Masaryk himself is proof that, even for those thinkers who considered religious faith necessary for an anchoring of ethics, traditional metaphysics no longer sufficed; they searched for a foundation in empiricism and evolutionist science. Masaryk also provides evidence that pure positivism could not satisfy our philosophers either. J. Popelová expressed it pointedly:

Everybody here talked so much about the division of the Czech philosophy into positivism and idealism perhaps because many of our important thinkers do not fit either definition. We have always had a positivism nostalgic for idealism; they cannot give up certain idealist preconceptions, but neither can they organically integrate them into the nucleus of the positivist system. This dual root of Czech thinking was integrated in Masaryk more through the power of his moral personality than in his theory. Masaryk points a way toward the positivist orientation which diverges from myth toward scientism, sociology, and in politics toward democracy and socialism, as well as toward an accentuation of the religious.<sup>4</sup>

These characteristics of Czech philosophical thinking apply to ethics which, on the one hand, is strongly and extensively influenced by positivism and, on the other hand, transcends its basic principles. It can be said that various transformations of "inconsequential positivism" represent one of the main lines of Czech ethical thinking that reaches from the end of the past century until today. It seems that it was exactly this need for ethical discourse that opened wide the door for positivism.

### **The Turn to Positivism as Humanism**

Let us repeat again then that during the period of strong absolutism, national oppression and growing social conflicts in the last third of the nineteenth century, the Czech intelligentsia needed some philosophical anchoring for their hope in the gradual improvement of national and social life. Because they could not see the solution in a revolutionary change of social conditions, they sought philosophical support against pessimistic thinking, as well as a philosophical support of ethics for the gradual moral cultivation of individuals in their every day life. For the following reasons these needs hardly could have been satisfied by anything other than a positivist orientation.

1) Positivism, with its ideas of evolution and progress, supported Czech ethical thinking against pessimism. The strong influence of evolutionism on the Czech ethics had been apparent from the 1880s. In this connection, at least Emanuel Makovicka and Petr Durdík can be mentioned. It is worth noting that one of the most influential representatives of "inconsequential positivism" in ethics, Arnost Inocenc Bláha, was fascinated by the idea of "Evolution" at the beginning of our century.<sup>5</sup>

The potentialities of a philosophical guarantee of moral, social and political progress offered by evolutionist positivism were most extensively and effectively manifest in the ethics of Frantisek Krejčí, the most important representative of Czech positivist ethics in the interwar period. His

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<sup>4</sup> J. Popelova, *Studie o současné české filosofii* (Study of Contemporary Czech Philosophy, Prague, 1946), 368.

<sup>5</sup> See Blaha's articles in *Ceska mysl*, 1903-1904: "Pesimismus a jeho prekonani" (Pessimism and Its Overcoming) and "Analyza a skepse" (Analysis and Skepticism).

unfathomable "transcendental" presents "the sole primal cause of everything", e.g., "cosmic law" and, at the same time, "historical justice-Nemesis". According to Krejčí, societal development conforms to this law. Everything that disagrees with it must bring itself, *ad absurdum*, to collapse and fall apart. Because this law is expressed in moral norms, everything that conflicts with the ethical law is abolished by natural development, for nothing that conflicts with moral principles can last. A politics that is in disagreement with the moral point of view must be bankrupt: goals cannot be attained by ethically unacceptable means; everything built on lies must collapse; dictatorship and terror must lead *ad absurdum*. "The transcendental", the unknown cause of morality, fulfills the role of power that realizes moral principles and provides guarantees for their inevitable victory.

The ethical ideas of Krejčí are examples of two relatively general and lasting tendencies in Czech ethical thinking that are probably associated with the above-mentioned specific conditions within Czech society. These are, first, the tendency to search for "metaphysical guarantees" of progress, evident even among thinkers who otherwise have rejected metaphysics. Second, there is a general and constant tendency toward an ethical view of society, social relations and societal events. Both these tendencies apparently were present in the perception of Marxism in the Czech lands after the Second World War. The moral evaluation of social conditions also played a decisive role in November, 1989. The dominant role of moral attitudes toward social reality is no less apparent in the post-November developments.

2) The reception of positivism in Czech ethics was relatively strongly motivated by the need to develop, next to religious ethics, also an ethics based on nonreligious philosophical foundations. Development toward nonconfessional "natural" religion, toward anti-clericalism, free thinking, and to a certain extent even atheism, can be observed in Bohemia as early as the last third of the nineteenth century. This development was stimulated not only by philosophy and science, but also through the leftist activism of the Young Czech Party and the Social Democratic Party.

The young Czechs saw in the Roman Catholic Church the main defender of the reactionary conditions in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Among German and Czech workers in urbanized industrial centers, atheism was quite extensive. On the other hand, there was considerable impact from the foundation of the Czech section of Free Thought (1906), from the publication of the proceedings of the Free Thought Congress in Paris (1905) devoted to questions of lay ethics, as well as from the intensive activity of the free thinking movement in the prewar and postwar periods. We cannot ignore the French example of the secularization of schooling and the Czech translations of French writings concerning lay moral education.<sup>6</sup>

Attempts to develop nonreligious ethics and to implement lay moral education in the schools have a long and extensive tradition in Czech society. In the interwar period they gained much support in pedagogy, and among teachers. Although they cannot be associated only with positivism, that philosophy did play an important role in their development. Perhaps the most lasting influence was exerted by Spencer's evolutionist and organic ideas, Mill's utilitarianism, the German positivist ethics (Friedrich Jodl for instance) and also the French positivism of Durkheim's sociological school.

From among the most important positivist adherents of nonreligious ethics and moral education let us mention at least Frantisek Krejčí and his *Filosofické základy mravní výchovy* (Philosophical Foundations of Moral Education, 1920), *Positivní etika* (Positive Ethics, 1922), and *Politika a mravnost* (Politics and Morality, 1933). Despite his inclination toward Catholicism,

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<sup>6</sup> See, for instance, A. Lalande, *Rukovet praktické moralky* (Handbook of Practical Morality, Prague, 1908).

Frantisek Cída based his *Etika individuální* (Individual Ethics) 1920, on a positivist approach. Arnost Inocenc Bláha was influenced by Masaryk and the French sociological school in his *Mravní výchova se stanoviska sociologickho* (Moral Education from the Sociological Standpoint) 1921, *Filosofie mravnosti* (Philosophy of Morality, 1922), and *Vedecká morálka a mravní výchova* (Scientific Morality and Moral Education, 1940). This was true also of Miloslav Skorepa, *Úvod do přirozené morálky* (Introduction to Natural Morality, 1922), Jiljí Jahn, *Stríbrný svět* (Silver World, 1931) and Emil Svoboda who sought the foundations of morality in feelings of human solidarity, justice and love in *Myslenky o právu, etice a náboženství* (Thoughts about Law, Ethics and Religion, 1920), *Clovek a společnost* (Man and Society, 1926), and *Demokracie jako názor na život a svět* (Democracy as Ideas about Life and World, 1927). Among teachers of pedagogy should be mentioned at least Otakar Chlup in his *Rukovet přirozené mravouky ve škole* (Handbook of Natural Moral Education for School, 1922), along with Otakar Kádner and Václav Píhoda.

The proponents of positivist scientific ethics, natural morality and nonreligious moral education did not have the same attitude toward religious morality. Some considered it outdated and unsuccessful; others valued its contributions while stressing the need for a morality which would be valid independent of religious faith; still others understood morality as a form of religion.

Parallel to this development and in sharp opposition to the positivist conception of scientific ethics and natural morality, there was another tendency stemming from the Catholic philosophical tradition and from Protestant philosophy. Among Catholic authors let us recall at least Jan Stárek, *Katolická mravoveda* (Catholic Moral Teachings, 1884), Eugen Kaderávek, *Morálka filosofická* (Philosophical Morality, 1906), Josef Vrchovecký, *Přirozená mravouka* (Natural Morality, 1929), and, in particular, the Dominican Metodej Habán, *Přirozená etika* (Natural Ethics, 1944) and R.M. Dacik, *Mravouka* (Moral Education, 1946). Among Protestant authors, there are at least Josef Lukl Hromádka, *Základy teologické etiky* (Foundations of Theological Ethics, 1929), Emanuel Rádl, whose religious and moral credo is most consistently expressed in his *Utecha z filosofie* (Consolation in Philosophy, 1946), Jan Blahoslav Kozák and Alois Spisar.

## Religious and Nonreligious Ethics

The development of Czech ethics cannot be expressed only in terms of the differentiation between religious and nonreligious orientations. Within both, one encounters many nuances in the solution of philosophical and ethical problems. It can hardly be predicted how these two tendencies will continue to develop in the future. The conflicting process of current social change will undoubtedly bring with it a great disequilibrium of moral consciousness among many citizens, with tendencies toward individualism and egoism, moral relativism or moral skepticism. Sooner or later however, there will appear attempts to restore moral certainties and to develop a generally acceptable conception of moral education for the schools. The role of religious ethics and morality undoubtedly will grow.

In the Czech lands, however, there is a large number of irreligious citizens. The fifty-year old argument of A.I. Bláha will arise once again: "What are we going to do with those who do not believe and cannot believe, because to believe, after all, means, as Masaryk used to say, to believe in somebody? Everybody can be moral, irrespective of whether he believes or not. It is, therefore, necessary to base morality on such principles which would bind even those who do not believe and cannot believe."

The most important role in this sense has been played by the positivist ethics. But a simple return to it is no longer possible, because the development of philosophy and ethics has progressed

a great deal since the ascendancy of positivism. It is a tradition from which Czech ethics, however, can draw even today because the main representatives of Czech positivism did not remain bound to an uninvolved neutral science of morality.

F. Krejčí denied the possibility of a science of values, but did not concede that norms could be established scientifically. A norm to him was an "apodictical imperative expression of law", allowing one to design a relatively detailed normative ethics. I.A. Bláha, who otherwise defended a positivist sense for facts, reality, sobriety, discipline, patience and responsibility, was not satisfied with the "extreme objectivism" of the French sociological school and strove to overcome the passive "pure science of morality" with his "philosophy of morality". In it, he stressed the role of values, ideals and norms as order-giving spiritual principles, and conceived the "realm of man" as the "realm of creation, constant re-creation, constant self-creation and self-improvement." Morality for him was a "conscious, joyful, spontaneous creation of the spiritual ties in society, the creation of a spiritual atmosphere in society in the name of truth, love, and justice."

Czech positivist ethics wanted to anchor morality in the authority of science, but the means by which its different representatives wanted to achieve this were quite dissimilar. F. Krejčí, in his *Positive Ethics*, wanted to substitute the one authority (religion) by another (science) in the relationship "scientific law--norm". Later, in his *Politics and Morality*, he became skeptical regarding the practical importance of ethics and leaned toward the Durkheim conception of ethics as a non-normative, non-evaluative science, although he himself never fully accepted this approach. In contrast, A.I. Bláha, due to the influence of Durkheim's sociology, became aware quite early that ethics as a science of morality does not have immediate meaning for practical morality. This meaning is mediated, on the one hand, by philosophy and, on the other hand, by the most complex illumination of the origin, character, elements and functions of morality. For this reason Bláha's approach is methodologically more acceptable today than Krejčí's. These great personalities of Czech ethical sensitively reflected the moral problems of the social and political developments in the young Czechoslovak Republic, although from different positions: Krejčí from a social democratic ideology, Bláha from a "personal humanism" inspired by Masaryk. We can draw many important lessons from the work of both. Even the most critical opponents of positivism have not denied the democratic and humanist social concern of the positivist writers.

At present, Czech ethical thinking is reexamining its historical roots and looking for a new philosophical anchoring. The development illustrated above can be neither revived in its original form nor ignored.

## Chapter XII

# The Czech Philosophy of History

*Ivana Holzbachova*

When thinking about the philosophy of a nation one cannot omit the fact that we are entering the domain in which objectivity, with which nearly every sphere of human knowledge has to deal, is most problematic. Jirina Popelová wrote that history, both as what is retained in the memory of a nation and what is written in textbooks (which orients its historical interest) is linked with problems faced by the nation at the present time. In Popelová's approach this is not a classical presentism, but rather the reason why the pressing question of the objectivity of historical research is raised. With this question there is associated a group of problems concerning not only historical scholarship as such, but also the philosophy of history. If we, therefore, take the philosophy of history as asking and attempting to answer such questions as: what is the course of historical development or is there a sense of history, and if so what is it, then the philosophy of history must be related to the present time, perhaps much more than to historiography.

### **Before 1900**

These aspects of the philosophy of history come forward above all in the case of a nation which had to fight for its very existence for centuries. The question of the role of such a nation in history is closely associated with the question of whether its very existence is legitimate. This question emerged in the development of Czech philosophy of history in connection with the relationship between the Slavic and Germanic nations. It appeared with full urgency in the nineteenth century when the modern nations evolved in Europe and when the problem of the character of the Central European area was put quite seriously. In this area the Czech countries were closely linked with the German environment due to the fact that, with few exceptions, only Austrian and German emperors were Czech kings after 1526. Beginning with Maria Theresia, who ruled from 1740 to 1780, the Germanization policy of the emperors was not motivated initially by explicitly anti-Czech goals, but by enlightened rational efforts to simplify the administration. Undoubtedly, it is much easier to rule an empire with one language than one which has two or even more languages.

Germanizing efforts, however, appeared also in connection with the centralization of administration, which had ancient traditions. Although the Czech Kingdom was a part of the Austrian empire, it had not been formally nullified. So it happened that two factors, not significantly associated with one another could be unified in resistance against Viennese centralization: the resistance of the provincial and mostly German speaking nobility against the restriction of its historically inherited autonomy, and the resistance of the rural population and of the lower urban classes against the increased language pressure. So it happened that both constitutional and language movements appeared at the heart of the revival of Czech patriotism. In consequence, up to the present day<sup>1</sup> the definition of a nation has been associated in the Czech consciousness with the existence of an independent state and of an advanced language.

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<sup>1</sup> For that reason, we are even now sensitive to the problems of language, even when other nations are deprived of rights for which the Czechs had to fight for several hundreds of years.

In the nineteenth and later also in the twentieth century, a question occurred mainly on the German side which undoubtedly has a certain degree of rationality: would it be better to have a unitary national and language (i.e., German) formation in the Central Europe than a diversified conglomerate of language enclaves which would advance ever new demands, based on some more or less doubtful historical claims. A still well-known statement of the historian Frantisek Palacký: "We existed prior to Austria: we shall also exist after it!" indicates, eventually, the response of the Czechs to such questions. From their point of view, it was necessary to solve two problems under these conditions. The first was to demonstrate that, in spite of the fact that it undoubtedly fell behind the languages of the classical cultural European nations, the Czech language was able to express in a cultivated manner all that could be said in English, French or German. This problem concerned, above all, linguists and writers. The second problem, for historians and philosophers of history, was to justify the existence of an independent Czech state from its origin until the present time and into the future. This problem, too, had to be solved in opposition to the German approach to the role of Germans and Slavs in the territory of Central Europe.

In this struggle, Czech history and philosophy of history could reassume to a certain extent the idea of Slavic solidarity and the idea of "The Great Slav People"; in this context, the problem of Czech identity within the Slavic mass could reappear, although rather with regard to future development. Herder's ideas about the role of the Slavic nation in world history were a second support for Czech philosophy of history in the nineteenth century. In this context there emerged the problem of the character of Slavic nations and, above all, of the Czech nation. This is the source of a relatively long-lived legend about the "dove-like" (i.e., calm and peaceful) nature of the Czech nation.<sup>2</sup>

In this context, however, a more serious question arises for the Czech philosophy of history, i.e., the problem of the structure and character of Czech society. In opposition to the rather feudal structure of the Germans, Palacký emphasized the democratic character of the Slavs and, although it was in the period when Bohemia was again predominantly Catholic, he pointed also to the democratic efforts observable mainly in some phases of the Hussite movement and in the Czech Reformation. Thus, the Hussite movement, as a permanent and valued factor, re-centered discussions about the philosophy of Czech history. The question of the sense of the Czech Reformation appeared at the turn of the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. This characterized above all the so-called controversy about the sense of Czech history which blazed between the historian Josef Pekar (1870-1937) and Tomas G. Masaryk. This controversy determined to a great extent the dynamics of Czech philosophic-historical thinking in the period of the first republic and its echoes also could be observed later, as we will see below.

This outline of the basic range of the problems of the nineteenth century Czech philosophy of history already indicates two components of this philosophy: one is of purely national character, the other is an increasingly remarkable integration of Czech history and historiography into the context of the world philosophy of history. The latter component became stronger in that period when the right of Czechs to a national and state existence had been firmly accepted and the priority

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<sup>2</sup> In the period when linguistic problems predominated in the Czech Revivalists' philosophy of history, only Bernad Bolzano tried to approach the philosophy of history with regard to global problems and create a utopic vision of a new society. But, due to the very fact that he put the problem of language in a secondary position, he was not taken very seriously by later commentators. Jan Patocka, however, pointed out that Bolzano's insight into things was acceptable and indeed influenced Palacký. Patocka sought a synthesis of Bolzano's program with a national program which emphasized more the linguistic aspects of the Czech problem. Cf. J. Patocka, *Nas program* (Our Program) (Prague, 1990), 57.



task of the Czech philosophy of history became integrating specific national problems into the context not only of European, but also of world development.

In this period Czech philosophy of history was reacting with increasing frequency and sensitivity to different stimuli from abroad. When speaking about Palacký, we referred to Herder, but even earlier there are indications that Czech historical and philosophical-historical thinking was not isolated from other West-European thought.

## **Pekar vs Masaryk**

These tendencies intensified at the turn of the century. Geo-political factors created a rather ambivalent situation for the Czech philosophy of history: Bohemia was both a direct neighbor of Germany and also a part of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire. This proximity of itself generated a strong impact of German thinking, which was further supported by the very high level of German historical science at that period. On the other hand, this same political context and the political disagreement with German ideas forced many Czech philosophers and scholars to seek to counterbalance this German influence by looking to France, England and, under certain circumstances, also to Russia. In this brief survey, however, it is not possible to discuss all the personalities and problems which were significant for recent generations of the Czech philosophy of history.

Goll's school has remained an important concept in Czech historiography. This school formed a whole generation of Czech historians at the beginning of the twentieth century; its indisputable success lies in the development of methodologies for, and the realization of, empirical work. Belonging to the positivistic stream, it was characterized by a certain distance from the greater historical concepts extending to the philosophy of history.

The controversy usually specified as "Pekar contra Masaryk" was very important for the development of the Czech philosophy of history. Although this was, to a great extent, a controversy concerning the sense of Czech history, it was also a dispute between two different personalities; while Pekar was a historian with enormous erudition, Masaryk's strongest point was his philosophic thinking. When comparing Pekar and Palacký, the philosopher Mirko Novák emphasized that Palacký was accustomed to thinking in a wider, European context and was prepared for far-reaching generalizations. In contrast, Novák viewed Pekar as only a very competent special historian, but nothing more. This insufficient capacity for philosophical thinking left Pekar with no understanding for what Masaryk called the sense of Czech history (i.e., the reformation and democratic traditions) and with rather simplistic political attitudes. In this context, Novák wrote of Pekar that "this outstanding historian paid for his unsettled bills with historical noetics, philosophy of history and sociology."<sup>3</sup>

Historian, Jan Slavík, expressed a similar opinion about this controversy. While not denying Pekar's excellent erudition, he blamed him for the anachronism of putting modern content into the concepts of religion, democracy, nation, etc., which he used in his studies.<sup>4</sup> Pekar was not able to rebut either Palacký's or Masaryk's statements<sup>5</sup> and Slavík agreed with Novák's opinion that incompetence in Pekar's scientific methods was directly associated with his inability properly to estimate the current development.

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<sup>3</sup> M. Novak, *Hodnoty a dejiny* (Values and History) (Prague, 1947), 70.

<sup>4</sup> J. Slavik, *Husitska revoluce* (Hussite Revolution) (Prague, 1934), 15-16.

<sup>5</sup> J. Slavik, *Novy nazor na husitstvi* (A New View on Hussitism) (Prague, 1928), 34.

However, this very fact indicates that the disputes concerning Pekar, which resulted in his condemnation after World War II, were influenced also from the ideological point of view. In contradistinction to Slavík, e.g., Frantisek Kutnar stated that Pekar's revision of Palacký's opinion concerning the importance of Hussitism was not an anachronism. Pekar retained the crucial historical importance of the Hussite movement in Czech national development as a period of the greatest upsurge of Czech thinking and aspirations. But, simultaneously, he incorporated it organically into the Middle Ages as a social and intellectual movement which, in spite of some new elements, did not exceed the limits of that time and, therefore, did not open the way to modern social and political thinking and to a modern economic and social structure.<sup>6</sup>

Masaryk's view was much broader, also in the field of the philosophy of history. This fact corresponded with his interest in global political events and with his education. In Masaryk's thinking we find a synthesis of historical, political, sociological and cultural knowledge and opinions. This explains his efforts to understand the sense, not only of Czech, but also of European and perhaps even world history to the limited extent characteristic of European science of that time. This can be demonstrated also with regard to his interest in Russia. Masaryk, as Czechoslovak President, demonstrated his ability as a realistic and successful politician. As for the philosophy of history, his interest in the spiritual factors of historical development predominated: hence, his emphasis upon the elements of reformation and democracy in the Czech national tradition, which was expressed in the slogan: "revolution of heads and hearts" (formulated in partial opposition to the methods of the Russian revolution). However, this was also a basis of his evaluation of the causes of suicide in his work *Suicide*. In this paper, which is among the fundamental works in Czech sociology, appear some of his basic working methods as mentioned above. This reflects, on the one hand, his ability to study concrete material, and, on the other, his tendency to look for crucial factors of the phenomena under study among the cultural, moral and, therefore, generally spiritual component of both the individual's personality and society as a whole.

## Jan Slavík

The correlation between Czech and world philosophy of history became clearly evident in the period of the first republic. *Jan Slavík* (1885-1978) was one of the historians who very expressively--and also polemically--emphasized this correlation. Above all he opposed an earlier achronic positivistic concept and emphasized recent methodological trends, above all, in German and Russian historiography. He was, therefore, influenced both by Marxist, i.e. Russian and Soviet, historical and theoretical literature and by the methodology presented by M. Weber and, in the Czech milieu, by Masaryk.

Slavík blamed earlier historical science for the use of obsolete concepts and priorities (especially of terms "State" and "Nation"<sup>7</sup>) and for insufficiently systematic research. In his opinion the knowledge of sources represents a pre-requisite of the historian's work, but must be supplemented by knowledge of the human approach to history and of our criteria for evaluating historical events.<sup>8</sup> For that reason, he recommended the introduction into historiography of methods of social sciences which, in his opinion, were based above all on perception and the analysis of concepts. He also welcomed the interest in philosophy and philosophy of history which

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<sup>6</sup> F. Kutnar, "Na okraj historického díla Josefa Pěkara" (A Comment to the Historical Work of Josef Pekar), in J. Pekar, *Postavy a problem českých dějin* (Prague, 1990), 9.

<sup>7</sup> J. Slavík, *Vznik českého národa* (The Origin of the Czech Nation) (Prague, 1946), 11-12.

<sup>8</sup> J. Slavík, "Masaryk a Pekar" (Masaryk and Pekar), *Dějiny a přítomnost* (1937), 121.

forced other sciences to move forward by raising new questions and formulating methodological problems. First of all, however, Slavík criticized Czech historiography for its lack of interest in noetics which he defined as "a theory of historical cognition explaining which are the principal historical concepts and their historical structure."<sup>9</sup> In this context Slavík mentioned, above all, representatives of the German philosophy of history and some historians of the Russian school: Dilthey, Windelband, Rickert and, above all, M. Weber, Milyukov and Kareyev.

Referring to these authors, Slavík treated, for instance, the concepts of objectivity and of historical fact. In contrast to the above philosophers and methodologists of history, he did not elaborate noetic concepts in greater detail; he was satisfied to introduce them from their foreign environment into Czech historiography and to use them within the framework of concrete historical research. For instance, he did not resolve the problem of the essence of values, although he knew and sympathized with Rickert's theory of historic fact. So it happened that he often interpreted values in the spirit of subjectivism, although he acknowledged the important role of evaluation in historical studies and proclaimed the end of "gnoseological innocence."<sup>10</sup>

Here we encounter a certain paradox between Slavík's philosophy and his methodology of history. Probably due to the fact that his endorsement of historical epistemology was, to a great extent, merely declarative in nature, we observe his opinions oscillating not only as regards the problem of evaluation, but also with regard to the relationship between nomothetism and idiographism. In some stage of his development, Slavík also promoted the Marxist concept of history, though for him Marxism was reduced to a mechanical deduction of social structure from the state of the economy. For this reason, he had considerable trouble when he tried to join this opinion with Masaryk's concept of evolution as a tendency to ever greater perfection, i.e., to democracy.<sup>11</sup> Slavík's greatest merit was the fact that he emphatically directed the attention of his contemporaries to the necessity of introducing general reflective concepts and procedures into historical science. This was, among other things, associated also with his fight against anachronism in historical science. Slavík was characteristically strong in his criticism; even in the period of the First Republic he was considered by many to be confrontational. After World War II, he could not reconcile himself to the gradual simplification of history and, for that reason, was silenced after 1948.

### **Mirko Novák: Philosophy of History and Aesthetics**

No one dealt exclusively with the philosophy of history in the Czech milieu in the twentieth century. Thus, it is necessary to extract philosophic-historical opinions from works of theorists, whose main interest was directed elsewhere, even if they are historians, politicians or philosophers. *Mirko Novák (1901-1980)* was above all an aesthetician, but his interests were broader and the aesthetic problems led him to an interest in history. Here the question of values and evaluation was the connecting link.

In Novák's opinion the origin and development of human society are quite natural. Social life creates a certain super-structure above natural life. Cultural reality is developmentally superimposed on the original natural reality and has its own structure, development and rules,

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<sup>9</sup> J. Slavík, "Pekar contra Masaryk" (Prague, 1929), 7, 13.

<sup>10</sup> J. Slavík, *Dejiny a přítomnost* (History and the Present Time) (Prague, 1931), 4.

<sup>11</sup> This can be documented above all in Slavík's concept of "revolution" which was one he treated most, both in association with Hussitism and with the Russian revolution (from 1925 to 1939, he was the director of the Russian archives at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs).

though it is conditioned by the original natural reality.<sup>12</sup> Novák strongly criticized attempts to explain biologically social and historical facts which he found, for instance, in racism and, more concretely, in Nazi racism.

Although Novák accepted that an impulsive desire for life was transferred from natural to historical reality, in contrast to Bergson or Scheler he amended this opinion with a positive evaluation of reason.<sup>13</sup> Novák considered the philosophy of life to be in agreement with unconscious life feelings, but attributed a high position to the act of knowledge mediated by conceptual thinking. Thinking and reason are not created by life to be its own antagonists, to weaken or kill it; they are the natural culmination of life's activities and mediate not only its survival, but also its further qualitative development. Novák's theory of society and its development thus extends quite genuinely into axiological theory which involves a response to the question of the sense of human history. In Novák's opinion, the sphere of spiritual reality represents a culmination of human history. This sphere involves the highest social values, which deserve to be improved and protected by all mankind. His emphasis on the problem of values brings him near those German philosophers of history who based the concept of history on values, i.e., Windelband and Rickert. He shares their opinion concerning the difference between natural and spiritual sciences.<sup>14</sup> This, however, introduces a certain contradiction into his work for an idiographic conception of history could hardly be integrated with the opinion that society develops in a certain direction, i.e., toward humanization.

### **Jirina Popelova: Philosophy of History and Czech Literature**

A book by *Jirina Popelová* (1904-1985), *Tri studie z filosofie dejin* (Three studies of the philosophy of history; Prague, 1947) is one of very few works dealing specifically with the philosophy of history in Czech literature.<sup>15</sup> Although, in her further work, Popelová focused predominantly on problems of ethics and on the history of philosophy, she analyzed here three cardinal questions of the philosophy of history: the relationship of being and events, the problem of historical relativism, and the question of time and temporality. This was done on the basis of an analysis of world literature dealing with these topics. This was not easy during World War II when the book was written. However, she was able to relate to the most important personalities of European philosophy of history of that time, e.g., with Fr. Meinecke or E. Troeltsch, or on questions concerning relativity.

Popelová defines ontological history as a dialectical tension between being and events. In her understanding, history is a reflection not only of the flow of history, but also of the being which becomes in history.<sup>16</sup> She raises the question of continuity and discontinuity within the framework of a specifically historical context, and discusses the problem of historical time in this context. She demonstrates a wide scope of knowledge when discussing some effects of historical time on the conceptions of time in the works of H. Bergson and A. Carrel, as well as in works of non-classical

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<sup>12</sup> M. Novak, *Hodnoty a dejiny*, 107-107.

<sup>13</sup> M. Novak, "A Review of P. Lersch, *Lebensphilosophie und Genenwart*," in *Ceska mysl*, no. 1 (1933), 58.

<sup>14</sup> M. Novak, *Hodnoty a dejiny*, 106-107.

<sup>15</sup> *Three Studies* was linked up with her earlier studies; *Poznani kulturni skutecnosti* (Understanding of Cultural Reality), 1936; *Dejiny a hodnoty* (History and Values), 1941 and *Pravda a jistoty* (Truth and Certainties), 1942. Her study *Rozjimani o ceskych dejinach* (Meditation on Czech History), 1948, was written above all for youth, as a supplement to *Three Studies*. She also translated Croce's *Europe in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century* (1938).

<sup>16</sup> J. Popelova, *Tri studie*, 285.

physics, the history of the arts and existentialist philosophy. The problem of continuity and discontinuity becomes in this context also the question of homogeneity and non-homogeneity which finally is resolved in favor of the homogeneity of mankind and history:

The principal problem for us will be the question of whether we can speak about a simple historical time or if there are several times which belong to different races, nations, cultural epochs, etc. As we discuss the concept of time in history from our historiographic point of view (i.e., as a scientific term and not as a metaphysical reality) we shall therefore decide on only one historical time or a single time concept *sui generis*, which is, however, elaborated both horizontally and vertically.<sup>17</sup>

If we realize that Popelová raised this question at the beginning of the 1940s, we see how congruent was her work with the philosophy of history (in which this problem was formulated through the Annales school), above all to the works of Braudel. Popelová, who sporadically cited Febvre, could not have known Brandel's work at that time, for his book which explicitly formulates this problem (i.e., *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II*) was published only after the war.

In this case, however, we are already in the time of a significant change in Czech philosophical life, i.e., in the period when historical materialism became the sole official philosophy of history. We must again state that it cannot be said that the origins of this change were not grounded socially, politically and intellectually. Between the two wars, there was a strong group of thinkers with a critical social orientation in Czechoslovakia who were aware of the limits of the capitalist social and political régime of that time and who tried to find possible alternatives.

Czech philosophy (and historiography as well) returned to some traditional problems in the 1960s when a certain improvement in the general social situation took place. The problem of national character and of the historical importance of some periods of Czech history was treated, together with the problem of the position of the Czech nation within the framework of both European and world history.

Simultaneously, the problem of Czech baroque also reappeared. Since the end of the 1940s, this problem was interpreted in a simplified way, unilaterally because the period of baroque occurred in Czech history after the battle of White Mountain, i.e., in the period of forced antireformation, of a decline of the Czech state, and of the beginning of the efforts at Germanization. As early as the nineteenth century, the baroque period was considered decadent by nationalistic historians. This is illustrated by the fact that Alois Jirásek, who was considered to be an "official" Czech historian, called his novel on that historical period *Temno* (The Dark Age). After 1948, Jirásek's depiction was further supported by references to the social and economic oppression of the rural population during that period. During the First Republic, this interpretation was counted above all by Catholic authors who recalled the high repute of baroque art in Bohemia (the major part of the architectural monuments in Prague originate from that period). Till late in the 1960s it was possible for historians, forcibly silenced during the period of Stalinism, to publish their opinions (e.g., Z. Kalista); however, this was nullified by events of 1968.

Nevertheless, August of 1968 did not bring an abrupt break. At least some books prepared for print by nonconformist authors up to the late 1960s were published as late as 1971, and the illusions evoked by the slogan about socialism with a human face, coined by the men of 1968, still survived. For instance, Jan Patocka answered with a vision of Czechs and Slovaks as nations realizing a

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<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 238.

synthesis of western (individualist and liberal) and eastern (socialist) programs, even after August, 1968;<sup>18</sup> the sharp break came by 1970.

Due to the ideological and political pressure existing in Czechoslovakia after 1970, very few works dealing with the world philosophy of history were published officially and all had to contain a Marxist critique. It was considered an achievement in Slovakia that it was possible to continue publication of *Filozofické odkazy* (Philosophical Heritage) (thought in insufficient numbers of titles and copies) in which studies written by such philosophers as Dilthey, M. Weber and Foucault were still published. A Czech edition, *Filosofie a současnost* (Philosophy and the Present Time), was abolished.<sup>19</sup>

Important historical studies published in the 1970s and 1980s concerned mostly earlier history (e.g., Sepvácěk's monograph about the fourteenth and fifteenth century rulers of Luxembourg) and more or less avoided wider problems of the philosophy of history. However, there are some indications that, under present conditions, publications which will fill this gap will appear. These can be observed in issues of the *Ceský časopis historický* (Czech Historical Journal) and *Dejiny a současnost* (History and the Present Time) in which now appear papers about the philosophy of history in the works of professional historians (e.g., by Jaroslav Marek), and about some themes which had been "prohibited" in the framework of Marxist Czech historiography (for instance about psychohistory), etc. The fact that there was a relatively rich production outside the "official" historiography in recent decades, until now known only to a relatively small group of "samizdat" readers, is being reflected in the editorial activities of our publishing houses. However, these works are of different qualities; some are unbearably ideological, although the ideologies are different. As a whole, they indicate that Czech philosophy of history must return to both of its principal problems: (1) the position of the Czech and Slovak nations in European history (including the importance of individual events); and (2) those general problems of the philosophy of history which for ideological reasons were ignored and/or solved only unilaterally.

Books by authors who were not allowed to publish (or even to work professionally) after the year 1970 now are being published. As an example, we can mention the book *Bílá místa v našich dějinách* (White Spots in Our History) by J. Kren (Prague, 1990). In this author's opinion, these "white spots" are associated not only with the evaluation of Czechoslovak history after the year 1945, but also with problems reaching more deeply into our history. This corresponds with efforts to re-evaluate the work by Pekar and to publish at least parts of it. In this case it can be said that the process which developed in our country up to the late 1960s is now being repeated.

The review of the problem of Central European space also appears-linked with the problem of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The experiences associated with developments after its disintegration, i.e., with the occupation of the so-called successor states by fascist Germany, and, thereafter, with the transition of a great part of them into the sphere of Soviet influence, rendered considerably problematic convictions about the possibility of their absolutely free development. For that reason, at the political level efforts are being made to find ways to integrate the interests of the Central European states. This is supported by the fact that, due to historical development, it is possible to find certain common traits in the culture of this region.<sup>20</sup>

It should be mentioned in this context that the entrance of some persons from the Czech dissents into political office results in their considerations concerning the philosophy of Czech

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<sup>18</sup> J. Patocka, *Nas program* (Our Program), 39-40.

<sup>19</sup> Sartre's book, *Marxism and Existentialism* was published as the first volume of this publication of the Svoboda Publishing House in 1966.

<sup>20</sup> See, for instance, J. Kroutvor, *Potize s dejinami* (Troubles with History) (Prague, 1990), 54-55.

history sometimes being reflected directly in governmental statements. This concerns above all Petr Pithart who, as prime minister of the Czech government, was principally interested in problems of statehood and in questions associated with the institutional foundation of democracy. To a certain extent, it can be said that after November, 1989, the Czech philosophy of history becomes from time to time a *politicum*, for instance, in association with the problem of the displacement of Germans after World War II or with the problem of the constitutional organization.

It seems, therefore, that the present explosion of interest in the philosophy of history concerns, above all, Czech or Czech and Slovak affairs and, thus, also their place in the European space and in the new international relationships in general. An older book by Jan Patočka, *Kacířské eseje o filosofii dejin* (Heretic Essays about the Philosophy of History), published in Norway, Italy, France, Germany, Spain and Poland and, in 1990, as well as in Czechoslovakia, represents a rare exception. In this book, Patočka links up with the world philosophy of history, above all with its phenomenological and existentialist heritage. In six essays and in his own glossaries to them, Patočka presents an authentic philosophy of history on the basis of selected problems. He looks for the beginning of the historical in policy as a free and responsible activity based on the ability of being to appear (especially through philosophical reflection) and, thus, to problematize the natural (non-historical) world. Patočka treats the concept of history using the problems of the sense of history, Europe of the nineteenth century, technical civilization and the relationship between the war and the twentieth century. While J. Ken and other historians set forth more or less the set of problems which should be solved, Patočka defines the level at which it will be necessary to find the balance for solving historiosophic problems (from the viewpoint of any philosophical movement.)

Czech philosophies of history stand at the very beginning of a radical reevaluation. This does not mean that it is necessary to start from nothing. Even in the official production of the last 40 years, it is possible to find works which must be taken seriously into account. Not only is the whole structure of Czech and Czechoslovak history changing, but also the theoretical framework of history in which this structure could be placed. It seems that this framework will be much more flexible and open than hitherto, which means that we will have to learn once again the art of polemic.





## Chapter XIII

# Technology and Czech Philosophy

*Josef Smajs*

As is well-known, technology has not been a very popular theme in philosophy. The great authority of ancient times, Aristotle, considered "*techné*" a lower stage of practical reason, along with "*phronésis*" or reasonability of a mostly political kind. Since "*techné*" taught control rather than analysis of cause and understanding, it was not deemed very respectable by speculative philosophers.

The non practical character of theoretical knowledge in antiquity was the reason why technology was dealt with so inadequately. If technology is conceived as a deliberate use of natural and man-made systems and structures for human cultural purposes, it is easy to understand that its philosophical reflection has, from the beginning, been confronted with serious conceptual difficulties due to the ambiguous status of material culture, of which technology is a constituent part.

This is, the nature of technology cannot be understood from technology itself. Philosophical reflections which identify technology with human skillfulness and dexterity, on the one hand, or with artificial technological means, on the other, cannot explain the nature of technology. As is the more apparent to us nowadays, technology is characteristic not only of man as a species, but also as a significant global structure of culture, the most active element of its ecological opposition to the machine.

The biological line of technological programs, which began with a deliberate use of the functions and metabolisms of living systems and which nowadays culminates in modern biotechnologies, has not drawn much theoretical attention. Hence, a more fruitful philosophical approach to technology seems to have been the analysis of the evolution of the non-biologic technological means (tool, machine, automatic system). Such an analysis has contributed to an understanding of the place of man in the technological system, indicated the role of experience and science in the evolution of technology, and suggested a host of technological and natural aspects of technology.

### **Before 1950**

In the Czech philosophy of the first half of this century, i.e., before the arrival of the official Marxist philosophy, the subject of technology was very rare and was understood mostly in the line of the traditional Greek conception of "*techné*" as the skillfulness and dexterity of man. Outside philosophy, within largely popular and immediately didactic approaches, e.g., in university lectures given by technicians and sociologists, the focus understandably enough was more empirical. More attention was paid to the utilitarian subject of technology, its history, complexity, function, influence on man, etc.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., E. Benes, "O smyslu a významu moderní techniky" (The Sense and Meaning of Modern Technology), in *Průvodce světem techniky* (A Guide to the World of Technology) (Prague, 1937); B. Pour, *O nové inženýrství* (A Kind of New Engineering) (Prague, 1946); A.S. Batek, "Dejiny mechaniky" (The History of Mechanics), in *Triumf techniky* (The Triumph of Technology) (Prague, 1928).

Significantly, in the 1930s, neither *Ceská mysl* (The Czech Mind), nor *Ruch filosofický* (Philosophical Action), nor *Filosofie* (Philosophy) published a text of major importance or a review of a book dealing solely with technology. In 1927, however, an article by J. Barto entitled "Umni a technika" (Art and Technology) appeared in *Ruch filosofický*. The author, in accordance with the Greek tradition, understands technology as dexterity, capability, or assurance in execution. "Technology is that which time and again keeps being repeated. There are rhythms which through some mysterious way time and again penetrate into works of art so as to function as a basis for the production of unique artistic creations."

Král's *Ceskoslovenská filosofie* (Czechoslovak Philosophy), dating back to the 1930s, makes an indirect mention of technology, recalling the work of Jindrich Fleischner entitled *Technická kultura* (Technological Culture, 1916). J. Král goes on to say that

the technological component of culture and its rational perfection is being researched by Václav Verunác, the editor of the miscellany *Racionalizace, vedecká organizace a sociální otázka* (Rationalization, Scientific Organization, and the Social Issue), 1930, where he himself contributed an article on the scientific management of work.

Král then adds that Karel Smejkal (1903-1933), who, by a fateful coincidence, died prematurely, made small contributions to the sociological approach to technology, on which the article "Podmínky možnosti: predvídání v technice" (The Conditions and Possibilities of Foresight in Technology) was meant to be delivered at the Sociological Congress in Geneva in 1933.

Emanuel Rádl's *Moderní veda* (Modern Science), a collection of texts originating from the author's university lectures for students of natural sciences, makes another indirect mention of technology, namely, in the section: *Mechnický názor sevtový* (The Mechanical Worldview). The author says, e.g., that

mechanics studies events through 'machines'; the machine is the measure of the world. The idea of the machine brought about a worldview that developed while this branch of science was thriving. Its starting point is a conviction that the machine (in the broad sense of the word) is the basis of all natural events ("mechanism" and "machine" mean one and the same thing). The machine (the term "automation" is sometimes used, and perhaps more aptly) is understood as a typical configuration of physical components whose operation causes a typical effect. In an even wider sense, machine events are those entirely determined by their starting conditions. Therefore, the lever, water mill, clock, engine, and dynamo are machines: it is possible to imagine solid, liquid, or gas machines, machines in which mechanical, chemical, electric, thermal, and light energies are in operation. It is only necessary that the course of events should be automatic and should in fact depend on the inner arrangement of the machine. Solutions prepared by biologists are machines of a certain kind.

Rádl's text evidences not only his broad conception of technology, which constitutes a positive value nowadays, but also certain hesitations involved in attempting to identify its philosophical characteristics. Rádl's biological position also lacks a clear philosophical conception of the role technology plays within material social culture.

The absence of a general philosophical concept of technology also marks several works on the subject published in 1940s.<sup>2</sup> It can, thus, be concluded that the phenomenon of technology and material culture was but a peripheral part of the subject of Czech philosophy in the first half of this century. In striking contrast to the attention paid to the subject in foreign scholarly literature of that time (L. Mumford, S. Lilley, F. Dessauer, J.D. Bernal, and others), in Czech philosophy it was reflected upon only occasionally and with inadequate philosophical background.

Lack of tradition and an inadequately pronounced, almost romanticized, approach to technology, all this, along with other factors of a political and ideological character, had negative consequences in the period of Marxist philosophy of technology, after World War II.

### **Since 1950: Radovan Richta**

Although the evaluation of the determining influence of Marxist philosophy in the Czech region over the last 40 years is still far from being complete, we will attempt here a brief preliminary critique of the overall philosophical concept of technology. This appears useful because of the fact that, in the course of the 1960s (during a certain ideological relaxation following the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union), this issue was a topical theoretical innovation in the ruling Marxist philosophy; it became an important ideological argument in the Marxist critique of the so-called bourgeois concepts of the scientific-technological revolution.

Even though more authors expressed their views on the philosophical dimension of technology in the 1950s and 1960s (Radovan Richta, Jindrich Filipec, Ladislav Tondl, Miloslav Král, Frantisek Kutta, and others), Richta's approach was apparently the most significant. His work, *Clovek a technika v revoluci nasich dnu* (Man and Technology in the Revolution of Our Day), 1963, was an important source of ideas for a significant monograph, *Civilizace na rozcestí* (Civilization at a Crossroads), 1966, written by a group of authors headed by Richta who was the director of the Philosophical Institute of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences since 1968.<sup>3</sup>

For several reasons, Richta's conception of technology had a profound influence on other authors, as well as on the general public. As stated above, there had been no tradition of technology in Czech philosophy, nor was it even an important philosophical issue. A second significant circumstance was Richta's thorough knowledge of Marx's theoretical work. Marx's *Capital* and Grundriss' *Manuscripts* (still unpublished at that time in Czech) were viewed as a thorough theoretical analysis of mechanical industrial technology from the position of a radical revolutionary critique of capitalism. The third theoretical circumstance was the author's ample knowledge of contemporary philosophical literature on technology.

Richta's philosophical concept of technology had strong impact also owing to a favorable ideological atmosphere: a certain sense of liberation after the cult of Stalin had been disclosed at the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, though, still marked with a black-and-white mode of viewing and evaluating social issues. Last but not least, the influence of Richta's concept of technology was greatly enhanced by the gripping journalistic style of his works.

Here, we will attempt to outline the general theoretical premises and consequences of Richta's concept of technology.

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<sup>2</sup> A.A. Hoch, *Vynalezy, ktere zmenily svet* (The Inventions that Changed the World) (Prague, 1941); B. Koutnik, *Technika duševni práce* (The Technique of Mental Work) (Prague, 1941); A.A. Hoch, *Umeni vynalezat a technicky myslet* (The Art of Inventing and Thinking Technologically) (Prague, 1950).

<sup>3</sup> *Civilizace na rozcestí* was published three times in the '60s and was translated into several languages.

1. Perhaps under the influence of Marx's thorough social analysis of the industrial revolution, Richta accepts his view of technology as being the predominantly non-biological industrial technology of production. Technology is a part of the means of production, though its evolution is relatively independent of the relations of production. Nevertheless, since there is an historical correlation between the means and relations of production, there occurs an overall temporal synchronization of technological and social revolutions.

2. Social revolutions are superior to technological revolutions: the Communist revolution is above the technological-scientific revolution. This view was perhaps conditioned partly by a fear of technological determinism, of extrapolating the forms of cultural life from the movements of technology and science, or perhaps of diverting theoretical attention from social class aspects to general human and technological issues. This, of course, is a classical Marxist scheme: relatively autonomous technological progress is again subjected to the traditional *a priori* concept of the social liberation of man. Therefore--in keeping with Marx and Engels--Richta comes to the conclusion that the highest level of technological progress will be feasible only at the most advanced level of worldwide social organization, the Communist society. "Automation represents such a level of technology that all its material forms and consequences correspond--as does only automation--to the standards of Communist life."<sup>4</sup>

3. The phenomenon of technology--full of contradictions, and ecologically ambiguous from the start--is but an instrument for the unification of workers throughout society, and hence a positive social force. Technological progress catalyzes the growth of the productivity of labour and the increase of social wealth; it creates conditions for the overall fulfillment of human needs.

Furthermore, the objective logic of the evolution of technology is, after all, identical to that of human history: it opposes capitalism, which will be overcome in a short time span, since it prevents the development of technology:

In fact, capitalism--just as Marx has foreseen--has become a major hindrance to the progress of technology. In accordance with Lenin's analysis, the monopolies set about opposing the progress of technology, stamping on it severely wherever monopoly prices could be asserted and legalized, suppressing it for monopoly profit. In close keeping with the conclusions of Marxism, contemporary capitalism has turned an incredible portion of the means of production into forces of destruction and military devastation, as though it wanted to prove Marx's idea that the victory of socialism would once prove to be an act of human self-preservation.<sup>5</sup>

4. In Richta's speculative approach, technological progress appears as a linear step-by-step ascent: from tool, to machine, to automaton. This is reminiscent of Hegel's dialectical negation where each higher evolutionary step proves superior to the one that immediately precedes it, and everything that is higher evolutionally is, at the same time, better and more perfect. In that scheme of things everything seems clear and transparent. Tools, i.e., crafts, proved inferior to the machine, i.e., to big industry. This, in turn, clarified class relations by creating capitalists as the owners and workers as the progressive social force. The scientific-technological revolution turns the machine into an automaton (fully automatic factories), and the technological liberation of workers occurs. "Where the machine required *control*, the automaton applies itself and forces man to master new

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<sup>4</sup> R. Richta, *Clovek a technika v revoluci nasich dnu* (Prague, 1963), 13.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 20-21.

conditions of natural processes, i.e., to prove his creative power with its penetration and versatility."<sup>6</sup>

The actual logic of the historical evolution of technology is, of course, more complex than Richta thought. Technology grows not only vertically but also horizontally, and that which is higher on the scale of evolution never prevails entirely. Hence, real technological progress with all its historically achieved levels and forms, which do not cancel each other but tend to complement and positively influence each other, is reminiscent of the functional organization of the biosphere. Within the biosphere there appears an equally global technosphere which functions and grows. In spite of being its creators, people conform to this on both the individual and collective levels; they function in this as its specific elements and subsystems.

Such a concept of technological progress, where the old remains beside the new and where the "monarchic tendency of time joins with the liberalism of space" (Feuerbach), better corresponds to reality. It protects against the mental construct which gives priority to forms of social life over material content. This concept of technological progress could hardly have conditioned the slogans which for 20 years kept appearing on some public buildings: "the scientific-technological revolution is a process that the world is being forced to accept only by Communism."

5. It is characteristic of Richta's concept of technology that he did not take into consideration the natural dimension of technology. Technology is, as stated above, a deliberate use of natural or man-made systems and structures for human cultural purposes. In a naturally ordered world, the technological order (and culture) grows at the expense of the natural order, most of all of biospheric order. Undoubtedly, the productivity of labour keeps increasing, as does social wealth, and conditions now are emerging for an adequate fulfillment of the needs of the majority. Life systems, on the other hand, keep being damaged, repressed, reduced. These are the systems which we have not created, nor are capable of creating, and which we therefore have no right to destroy. The illusion of total control over nature and over the conditions of socialization itself appears to be the most disputable point of Richta's concept of technology. "People cannot become masters of all the conditions of their own lives until they themselves have created and processed them, until all their relations have been produced by a society, not determined by nature."<sup>7</sup>

From the present-day point of view, the overall evaluation of Richta's concept of technology is, therefore, ambiguous. It is to Richta's credit that, as early as the early 1960s, he turned the attention of Czech Marxist philosophers to technology and the scientific-technological revolution. His concept of technology inspired a host of other authors, aimed the focus of the social sciences towards analysis of real social issues, and met a wide reception abroad. The collective monograph, *Civilization at a Crossroads*, written under Richta's supervision, remains one of the most significant achievements of postwar Marxist philosophy. On the other hand, Richta's schematic approach to technology and technological progress as a linear ascent towards what is better and more perfect, ultimately carried along the whole society and enforced the utopian elements of the Marxist social theory within which it operated and to which in the end it conformed.

To return back to the first statement above, technology has not been a very popular theme in philosophy, but times are changing. The world has become technology-ridden and organized into a functional whole. Within the global biosphere there is a technosphere which is just as global and

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 6. Richta's book includes a number of remarkable thoughts on the relationship between man and his work, on the wider cultural context of technology, etc.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 49.

developing at a dangerous pace. Czech philosophy, while fully aware of the fact that it owes more attention to the phenomenon of technology, hopefully will have something to say in future discussions on the subject.



## Chapter XIV

# Philosophical Themes in Czech Fiction

*Jan Zouhar*

As early as the nineteenth century the constitution of the modern Czech nation and the efforts towards its gradual emancipation brought about certain specific conceptions of the place and role of fiction and its authors in the life of the Czech nation. The impact of these conceptions made themselves felt well into the twentieth century. Generally speaking, fiction played an important social role in the Czech nation as early as the era of National Revival, and its evaluation often was based upon its potential to perform other than aesthetic functions.

In certain phases of the evolution of the Czech nation politics were virtually non-existent; this often led to writers themselves taking an active part in political life. Sometimes perhaps this was the intention of mystifying (e.g., Jaroslav Hasek in "Mild-Progress-Within-the-Limits-of-Law Party"), but mostly with serious and earnest intentions (from K. Havlíček and J.K. Tyl as deputies, to the Kromeríz Reichstag in 1840, to Václav Havel as the president of the Republic). Consequently, politics tended to be made ethical, political measures tended to be judged by high moral standards, and artists and writers tended to enjoy great moral authority, At the same time, however, and paradoxically enough, politicians lacking responsibility and tolerance sometimes found themselves unable to make sound political decisions, and myths about writers embodying the conscience of the nation were created.

In certain periods, Czech philosophical thought was complemented by the works of authors of fiction. There certainly are differences between philosophy and fiction, as defined, e.g., by Jan Patočka:

A poet and the one who philosophizes experience the world and thought in a quite a different manner. Both try to penetrate as deeply as possible into the matter, to the very sources of being. For the philosopher, however, the most important thing is to clarify and constitute them within a specific and firm conceptual standpoint. The poet, however, is drawn towards visions whose subjective unity is his poetic experience itself, whereas for him the objective unity is meaningless.<sup>1</sup>

At the same time, it is certainly true that some tendencies of thought "are not always necessarily actualized in philosophy but are found in some periods in art and literature or in the general cultural awareness and its multiple manifestations."<sup>2</sup>

There can be no doubt that some authors do belong to the history of Czech philosophical thought, not only because they wrote essays or theoretical works but in view of the character of the questions and issues they put forth. Of these, among the modern Czech writers of fiction let us mention at least F.X. Salda, O. Brezina, S.K. Neumann, and K. Capek. They contributed significantly to creating the intellectual atmosphere, from the turn of the century to the period between the Wars, and their work has remained influential up to the present.

Salda, Brezina, and Neumann began creating their works in the 1890s. In that period, Czech culture was profoundly influenced by intellectual currents that the academic philosophers either

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<sup>1</sup> J. Patočka, *Symbol zeme u K.H. Machy* (The Symbol of the Earth in K.H. Macha's Writing) (Prague, 1944), 5.

<sup>2</sup> J. Popelova, *Rozpad klasické filosofie* (The Decay of Classical Philosophy) (Prague, 1968), 157.



refused to take into consideration or did not reflect at all. Nearly all strata of Czech society were marked by a deep crisis which, even on the European scale, was characterized by disillusionment with all the unactualized ideas and hopes they had invested in the modern period. There was nostalgia for the vanishing tranquility, the well-known "end of the century sadness", feelings of impending disaster and pessimism, as well as efforts to discover new values.

In the Czech lands this had its proper specificities. The economic and social causes of the crisis coincided with complicated ethnic and political conditions. The complex social situation was reflected in Czech thought and gave rise to increasing criticism. Much of it was connected with the wave of irrationalism found especially in the arts and literature. The new Czech literature of the 90s, characterized as Modernism, was an extremely varied phenomenon. It dealt with issues that by and large maintained their relevance until much later, e.g., the relationship between popular and esoteric literary production, the issue of modern art as the expression of the inner feelings of the modern man, the problem of the loneliness of people in the modern era, the critique of bourgeois morals, religious attitudes and social issues. Its features were subjectivism, profound pessimism, aestheticism, and extreme psychologizing. The effort to comprehend and grasp subjectivity was, however, a part of the endeavor of Czech society to come to an intellectual emancipation.

The way in which the awareness of the social crisis in the 1890s was overcome, in a period when conceptions and opinions collided and the general atmosphere was marked by extreme criticism, had an important influence upon later Czech thought.

#### *F.X. Salda (1867-1937)*

A literary critic and journalist, Salda was an influential figure from the 1890s until his death. From 1892-1900 his texts appeared regularly in *Literární listy* (Literary Papers). In 1908-1912 he edited *Novina* (The News); in 1912-1914, together with Z. Nejedlý, he published *Ceská kultura* (Czech Culture)", in 1917-1919 a review, *Kmen* (The Stem)". After the War he founded *Kritika* (Criticism) and *Tvorba* (Creative Production), 1926-1927. When the Communist press was abolished he gave it to J. Fucik, a Communist editor, and in 1928 founded his own review, *Salduv zápisník* (Salda's Diary), written exclusively by himself until 1937. He made important contributions to *Ottuv naučný slovník* (Otto's Encyclopedia): he was a member of its editorial board and wrote a number of its entries dealing, among other things, with Western literature. In 1916 he became a docent (associate professor), and in 1919 a full professor of modern literature in the Faculty of Arts at Charles University. He is mentioned in handbooks of the history of Czech literature, criticism, and aesthetics, especially for his works: *Boje o zítřek* (The Fights for Tomorrow), 1905; *Duse a dílo* (The Soul and the Work), 1913; a novel *Loutky a delníci boží* (The Puppets and Workers of God, (1917); and the tragedies: *Zástupové* (Multitudes), 1921, and *Dítě* (The Child), 1923.<sup>3</sup>

Salda's work is extremely versatile and deals with a wide variety of topics. From the point of view of the Czech philosophical tradition there remain important, especially, his methodology of the social sciences for the way in which he reflected contemporary social and political issues, his approach to the philosophy of history, his search for new attitudes towards religion, and his reflections on the Czech national character.

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<sup>3</sup> In this text, Salda is dealt with as a literary critic and theorist. He is seen as one of the most distinguished representatives of Czech literary criticism, who transcends criticism into the sphere of philosophy. Among other important critics and theories were: Arne Novak, Vacla Cerny, Bedrich Fucik and others.

The exceptional character of Salda's work is evidenced by the fact that he is very often quoted by the representatives of nearly all currents of Czech aesthetics. However much he appreciated positivism at first, Salda came to clear solutions of the methodological problems of the history and sociology of literature, of the dispute between the positivist approach to social sciences, on the one hand, and Dilthey's distinction between the natural sciences and the social sciences, on the other hand. He stressed the role of the literary critic as an important cultural authority who assists in a normal, "healthy" social evolution. According to his views, the difference between modern and earlier criticism consists in the fact that modern criticism takes as its point of departure the poet as a creator and reconstructs the poet's creative process. Thus, criticism performs a scholarly function (structural criticism), as well as a literary and a social function.

The first editorial in Salda's diary was entitled *Znova a znova: tradice a revoluce* (Again and Again: Tradition and Revolution). In it, Salda professed his faith in tradition, but could not agree to the traditionalist approach characteristic of those advocating national particularism. He adhered instead to a humanist universalism. He takes tradition for "something forever open, moving and changing, which keeps being revitalized by means of explosive revolutionary processes." In that sense, he considers revolution to be a means of cultural renewal, not of annihilation of cultural continuity. Salda's thoughts on tradition were also conditioned by the special situation during World War I and the period after the Czechoslovak Republic came into being. In that context, he emphasized the requirement of evolutionary continuity based on the national character, as well as the requirement, of a conscious service to higher national aims. The traditional thus means for him that which lies beyond the personal and the present.

Salda's philosophy of history is aimed against historicism, against positivist objectivism. He attempts to divide the evolution of history into clear-cut periods, and searches for the characteristic features of individual cultural periods and wholes. These he distinguishes according to different artistic styles and lifestyles, and according to the spiritual tendencies of a particular period. He understands the historical event as an act or deed, which at the same time constitutes a value; historical cognition must be accompanied by an evaluation. He considers historical epochs unique; nevertheless, he looks for historical continuity. In order to render it truthfully he creates historical types, whose function it is to disclose a correlation. At the roots of European culture, Salda discovers the Classical Age, Judaism, and Christianity.

Salda's novel, *Loutky a delníci boží*, expressed his viewpoint about social changes, which was identical to that of Masaryk. It puts an emphasis on "social statics as opposed to dynamics, that which is essential, constant, that which remains, as opposed to that which is changeable or evolutionary". As a universalist and a humanist, F.X. Salda believed in the implementation of universal ideas. New society must be built on the basis of civil liberty; it must respect human dignity and defend conscience against violence.<sup>4</sup>

### *Otokar Brezina (1868-1929)*

A symbolist, O. Brezina ranks among the greatest Czech poets of all times. He worked as a teacher in the Czech-Moravian Highlands and gained wide knowledge and horizons studying philosophical and scientific works on his own, following the latest literary production, and keeping in touch with leading cultural figures of that time.

The early collections of his poems, *Tajemné dálky* (Mysterious distances), 1895, and *Svítání na Západě* (Dawning in the West), 1896, were marked by deep pessimism, which Brezina

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<sup>4</sup> L. Svoboda, *F.X. Salda* (Prague, 1967), 160.

managed to overcome in his third collection of poems, *Vetry od pólu* (Winds from the Poles), 1897. It is poetry with a cosmic vision in which the whole Universe is controlled and governed by the Supreme Will and united by Love. The subject of his fourth collection of poems, *Stavitelé chrámu* (The Builders of a Temple), 1899, is the human situation and mission, that of strong personalities and geniuses, as well as that of ordinary people in this world. The harmony of Brezina's image of the world sounds strongest in his last collection, *Ruce* (The Hands), 1901. O. Brezina's poetic work is complemented by books of essays and poetic texts, *Hudba pramenu* (Music of the Sources), 1903, and *Skryté dejiny* (Hidden History), first published in 1970.

In his poetry, under the influence of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, Brezina makes extensive use of the idea of the will as a cosmic principle. This is an attribute found especially in leading personalities, a unifying principle in the universe and the driving force of its evolution. This results in a kind of voluntaristic fatalism in which the will ceases to be a human feature and becomes a cosmic impersonal principle.

Nevertheless, Brezina balances the will as a cosmic principle with his faith in the power of love. Love becomes a manifestation, and mainly a correlative, of will: it is a means of reconciliation, of finding harmony in the world and consolation in the pains of creation.

Brezina caused much attention and controversy with his attitude to religion. Although he followed the contemporary criticism of religion, he unambiguously stated that "neither Nietzsche nor anybody else will convince me that there is no other world, inaccessible to the senses, bound up with thousands of connections and metamorphoses which play the game of the ages before our eyes." Brezina needs these "symbols disguising the beginnings of life" so that life may make sense to him. This opinion, however, does not mean that Brezina professed a religious affiliation. He emphasized the fact that his work is "independent of any dogma; it touches only on the esoteric fundamentals of religion and nothing else." He explained that the notion of the Eternal One, the Supreme One, is a symbol of the Mystery of the Invisible World, his Law of Love. He highlights the importance of idealist philosophy as opposed to a genuine scientific approach to the world, but his vision does not coincide with any official religion.<sup>5</sup>

Many authors consider the book of essays, *Skryté dejiny*, especially the essays "Prítomnost" (The Presence), and "Skryté dejiny" (Hidden History) to be the climax of Brezina's intellectual legacy. They express his conception of the history of the world, his vision of the individual and of humankind arranged in a universal context, and his concept of the social function of art and literature.

#### *Stanislav Kostka Neumann (1875-1947)*

Neumann emerged as a poet in 1890s. After being released from prison in Plzen (Pilsen), where he had served the sentence passed on him during the trial over *Omladina* (The Youth), he became acquainted with people around the *Moderní revue* (The Modern Review). In 1897-1905 he preached extreme individualism and published a journal, *Nový kult* (The New Cult). He was influenced, among others, by M. Stirner and Grave; he published translations of Nietzsche and Przybyszewski and was interested in Satanism.

The figure of Satan as the opposite of God was then for the poets a symbol of evil, sin, and vice. For Neuman, however, he also embodies " a god of life, earth, and nature, freedom and strength, pride and revolt, passion and delight, knowledge and progress." It is a god not only of

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. *Dopsy Otokara Breziny Anne Pammrove* (Otokar Brezina's Letters to Anna Pammrova) (1936), 142, 147-148.

individual, but also of collective rebellion; Neumann's Satanism is above all a belief in man's capabilities. *Nový kult* became perhaps the most important journal of Czech anarchism, especially of that part which met the greatest response in Czech society.

In the first part of this century, the artistic and literary endeavors of leading Czech writers and artists, more often than not, were linked to anarchism. They were attracted to anarchism by its radicalism and individualism, as well as by its proclaimed revolt against the establishment, religion, clericalism, nationalism, and the centralist state. Apart from S.K. Neumann, tests by F. Srámek, F. Gellner, J. Mahen, K. Toman, R. Tesnohlídek, J. Hasek, and others were published in the anarchist press, especially in *Nový kult*, *Sibenický* (The Gallows Man), *Záduha*, *Práce* (Work), *Komuna* (The Commune), *Anarchistická revue* (The Anarchist Review), etc. Note, however, that even the direct participants in the anarchist movement were involved in it only temporarily; anarchism was more like an episode in their literary and ideological evolution.

Neumann overcame the exclusive anarchist individualism with feelings of joy, longing for a fulfilled life, a celebration of nature and life, vitalism, and admiration for technological progress. Together with K. Capek, O. Fischer, O. Theer and others, he made a statement in *Almanac 1914*, which became a manifesto of new literary and artistic endeavors even before the outbreak of World War I.

After Neumann returned from the front in 1918, he adopted a new ideological and political position, that of so-called Czech socialism. In 1920, under the influence of Lenin's work, he gradually adopted a Marxist-Leninist position. He took part in the founding conference of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia in May 1921, as well as in the ideological, political and educational activities of the Communist Party in *Proletkult* and in *Komunistická revue* (The Communist Review). After Gottwald became the leader of the Communist Party in 1929, Neumann was expelled from it (his membership was renewed in 1939); nevertheless, he continued to deal with the issues of a proletarian, socialist culture.

### *Karel Capek (1890-1938)*

Capek was one of the most important and influential Czech writers of the twentieth century in whose fiction and dramas philosophical overtones kept emerging. Capek had a degree in philosophy and in some periods dealt with it quite intensively. One of his essays, supervised by Frantisek Krejčí, was published twice (1918, 1925) under the title of *Pragmatismus cili Filosofie praktického života* (Pragmatism or the Philosophy of Practical Life). His dissertation was in aesthetics. His constant interest in philosophy is evidenced by numerous essays, articles and reviews dealing with Czech as well as other philosophers and various philosophical issues.<sup>6</sup>

For the study of Capek's work one can draw on Capek's own notes, the accounts of his contemporaries, contemporary critical responses, numerous studies on Capek of a later date, and works of a synthetic character. As a whole, the literature on Capek would seem to suggest that everything of importance had been said, but the constant vitality of Capek's work time and again calls for up-to-date analyses from the point of view of both literature and philosophy.

Karel Capek's work is often considered an example of the way pragmatic philosophy exercised a profound influence on fiction. On the other hand, he is often said to occupy a relativist

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<sup>6</sup> Capek's philosophically oriented texts were all published in *Spisy Karla Capka* (The Collected Works of Karel Capek), in volumes *Od cloveka k cloveku*, I-III (From One Man to Another, I-III) and *O umeni a kulture*, I-III (On Art and Culture, I-III). Capek's analysis of pragmatism was last published (together with other student essays of his) in *Univerzitni studie* (University Essays) (1987).

philosophical position, often wrongly confused with pragmatism. Capek himself explained his poetic and axiologic opinions more than once. At least the collection of his texts, *Krize intelligence* (The Crisis of Intelligence), 1934, should be noted. He wrote these texts in the period in which he wrote his "noetic trilogy", *Hordubal*, *Povetron* (The Meteor) and *Obycejný život* (Ordinary Life). Here, Capek says, he knows that he is often labeled a relativist and feels this to be a slight. On the other hand, he points out that relativity is an attribute of each evaluation since each one is made always in relation to something. The subjectivity of an evaluation follows from the fact that nobody gives up his or her right to a personal point of view. If agreement on evaluation cannot be reached, it appears necessary to come to an agreement on the field of cognition: "Things are not disputable, only our opinions are disputable; there would be fewer controversies among us if there were fewer attitudes and more knowledge in our relationship to things." According to Capek, knowledge is a way of cultivating the world, a way of removing the conflicts and collisions between people, nations and states.

In contemporary society, however, there is more evaluation than objective, critical knowledge; all this has something to do with the chaotic conflict of opinions, the tendency to respect and serve only one value and radically to refuse everything else. Pragmatism with its relativism, individualism, and activism could have been a resource as well as a starting point for Capek while he was depicting and solving social and interpersonal conflicts; it could have helped him discover ways of finding mutual understanding, reconciling antagonisms, and defending the human being. At the same time, however, Capek was searching for a way out of a relativism of values; he strove for a guarantee of the objectivity of knowledge and a hierarchy of values and knowledge.

Besides pragmatism, Capek was influenced by other philosophical conceptions, e.g., by the thought of Henri Bergson and, above all, of T.G. Masaryk.<sup>7</sup> Capek took up Masaryk's conception of humanism, democracy, social justice, and freedom; under Masaryk's influence he evaluated the Russian and Soviet social situation, Marxism, and Communism. Masaryk represented a great political and intellectual authority for Capek; even the existence of an independent Czechoslovakia appeared linked to Masaryk. This friendship often led to confusing his positions with the official presidential political line with the result that, in some periods of the First Republic, Capek was attacked from both the political left and right.

The essential basis of Karel Capek's *Weltanschauung* is humanism; Capek was a follower of the humanist tradition in Czech thought in the best sense of the word. For him, man has always been a basic measure of all values, things, phenomenon, and processes. Regardless of the evolution in Capek's work, this "man" of his can be characterized as an active subject, often pursuing his goal rather vehemently, confronting obstacles, and cooperating with other people. In this concept, that which is individual is subordinated to that which is generally human; individuality, however, does not disappear altogether. The sum of subjective views should eventually lead to an objective opinion on man, but this must be corporate. One point of view, however matter-of-factly describing man's behaviour, is not enough, and neither is his own self reflection: only a juxtaposition of several standpoints and views may objectivize human personality, behaviour, acts, and thoughts.

In Capek's work, one often finds both thoughts on concrete "real" people, and thoughts on "what they should be like", or, "what they could be like". This ideal of Capek's is not a project for a titanism of any kind, for a "superman"; rather, it is actualized in "ordinary life" with its "plainness", "mundaneness" and "little joys". The plainness and mundaneness of everyday life seems to disguise the real greatness of man. In that respect, fiction should also help man to attain

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<sup>7</sup> K. Capek, *Temer kus noetiky* (Almost a Piece of Noetics) (Pritomnost, 1934), 23. See also *O umeni a culture III* (Praha, 1986), 566.

corresponding knowledge and thus make him more perfect and cultivated. Man and woman are, of course, exposed to a great deal of danger; one has to face a number of enemies. To put it simply, Capek's defence of man focuses on the relationship of man to technological civilization and his fight against violence, his relationship to other people and to the human community.

Capek reacted to the coming of the technological civilization even before World War I. He entered Czech literature as a member of Generation-1914 (he was one of the initiators of *Almanac 1914*) embodying a new attitude to life, admiration for the new age, and for a civil sense. From that same point, however, there appeared in his work traces of a fear of uncontrolled industrialization and of a dehumanization of society, later expressed in his novels *Továrna na absolutno* (The Absolute Factory), *Krakatit* (Kratatit), and the tragedy *R.U.R.*<sup>8</sup> Here, Capek does not repudiate technological progress, he does not oppose it with a "back to the nature" doctrine; he only warns against losing genuine human values. He links the defence of the humanist ideal of universalism, peace, and freedom with the development of a spiritual culture and of means of understanding between nations, with a balance of the "spirit of knowledge" and the "spirit of control", of spiritual culture and technology.

Capek feared that a one-sided development of technology makes possible its misuse as a means of violence against people. Violence, repression, and war are the gravest dangers for a free development of the individual and his capabilities, and thus the chief danger for humankind altogether. In Capek's works, a note of protest against Fascism and war sounds the strongest. A number of his works were devoted to this, among which *Válka s mloky* (The war with Salamanders), *Bílá nemoc* (The White Disease), and *Matka* (The Mother) are perhaps the most representative. In his notes to *Bílá nemoc*, Capek says that the world "we live in" is "a world of feverish arms races, wavering on the division line between war and peace, jeopardized by states striving for success, expansion, and subjugation of other nations."<sup>9</sup> Violence, liquidating the values of human culture, emerges in society in the form of intolerance which, in the name of enforcing one's own idea, programme or position, leads to negating and canceling such crucial values as "law, freedom of thought, equality before the law, sacredness of human life, and so on."<sup>10</sup>

Capek's philosophy and Weltanschauung were born out of a search for a modern philosophical position to overcome positivism, mechanical materialism, and determinism, and out of reflection on the crisis of the technological society. Nowadays, we must share with Capek, the philosopher, through efforts to preserve basic human values in the world and to be rid of war and all other forms of violence, as well as through awareness of the fact that bringing these efforts to successful realization is by no means an easy task.

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<sup>8</sup> In *RUR* (Rossum's Universal Robots). Under the force of technology man is driven to an extreme, but is saved from annihilation by love bearing new life. For this drama, Capek created a new word "robot".

<sup>9</sup> K. Capek, *Bílá nemoc* (The White Disease), cf. *Poznamky k tvorbe* (Notes on the Works) (Praha, 1959), 110-111.

<sup>10</sup> When Ortega y Gasset's "The Rebellion of the Masses" was published in Czech for the first time, Capek rejected Ortega's undemocratic views of society. Nevertheless, he recognized Ortega's fears of a mass manipulation of people characteristic of the institutions of modern society, his fears of its "Barbarization": "Like himself, we have to note the precarious tendency of the masses to repudiate the higher instances of reason and to enforce mass opinions, prejudices, and ideas in a violent way...The real danger is not the rebellion of the masses, but the weakness of minds and characters, the pathetic failure of people in response to their specific lots and missions as individuals. K. Capek, "Vzpouora davu" (The Rebellion of the Masses), *Pritomnost* (3, 1934). Cf. *O umeni a culture III* (Prague, 1986), 521-522, 524.

## Chapter XV Philosophy at the University of Brno, 1919-1939

*Jiri Gabriel, Jan Zouhar*

Philosophy as a specific cultural form had previously been studied mostly at the academic or universities and in theological seminaries and some religious orders. Until the early post-World War I years, the history of Czech "academic philosophy" is associated with the University of Prague. Students of the Faculty of Arts could major in philosophy; students from other faculties could at least audit philosophical lectures. The act of founding another Czech university in Brno in 1919 named after its founder, T.G. Masaryk, was a necessary prerequisite to establishing other centers of scholarly research.<sup>1</sup>

### The Early History

The Department of Philosophy of the Faculty of Arts in Brno is listed along with the Departments of Classical, Slavonic, Germanic, and English philology, and History, in the 1920-1921 Summer Semester Catalogue of Professors and Departments of Masaryk University in Brno. The department had special concern for the philosophy students, but, at the same time, provided philosophy lectures for all other students of the Faculty.<sup>2</sup>

The first Ordinary Professor at the Department of Philosophy was Professor *Otakar Zich* (1879-1934). Previously, he had taught at Charles University in Prague, where he returned four years later.<sup>3</sup> Following his interest in aesthetics and the history of fine arts (musicology, the theory of fine arts and drama), he focused his lectures on specific issues of aesthetics, the theory of fine arts and psychology. His discussions of psychology were informed by his "psychological" approach to aesthetics: he considered "the great role of psychology (and physiology) in aesthetics," along with continuous attention to aesthetic and artistic experience, to be a basic feature of a scientific approach to aesthetics and to the theory of fine arts. Josef Tvrđý characterized Zich's philosophical position by ranking him with "the large group of students of Frantisek Krejčí's general philosophical thought, without any dogmatic program." In the context of the history of Czech aesthetic thought, Zich belongs to the line running from Hostinský to Mukarovský.

Early in the history of the Faculty, A.I. Bláha and J. Tvrđý began giving lectures to students of philosophy. *A.I. Bláha* (1878-1960) came to the Faculty from the Czech Technical University in Brno and in 1922 was appointed an associate professor and in 1925 full professor of sociology.

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<sup>1</sup> In the 1950s, as the fight against Masarykism continued, Masaryk University was renamed J.E. Purkyne University. After an unsuccessful attempt to return to its original name in the late '60s, the University resumed it after November 1989.

<sup>2</sup> Before they could take their final state examination, students were required to take an oral examination in philosophy: to get the degree of Doctor of Philosophy it was necessary to take a doctoral oral examination.

<sup>3</sup> Otakar Zich became an associate professor of aesthetics at Charles University. After he returned to Brno he became the Head of the Department of Aesthetics. His principal works include *Estetické vnímání hudby* (The Aesthetic Perception of Music); *Estetika dramatického umění* (The Aesthetics of Drama); *Estetika hudby* (the Aesthetics of Music). He is also the author of several operas, cantatas, and other musical works. His son, Otakar Zich ml. (Jr.) (1908-1984), professor at the Faculty of Arts of Charles University, ranked among leading Czech logicians, mathematicians, and methodologists of science, cf. e.g., his *Úvod do filosofie matematiky* (Introduction to the Philosophy of Mathematics).

At the Faculty he was the Head of the Department of Sociology, which, under his leadership, became a center of extensive sociological research. In 1930 the first Czech professional sociological journal, *Sociologická revue* (Sociological Review) was published there.<sup>4</sup> His *Sociologie delníka a sedláka* (The Sociology of the Worker and the Peasant, 1925), *Sociologie dtství* (The Sociology of Childhood, 1927), and *Sociologie inteligence* (The Sociology of Intelligentsia, 1927) rank among the best works of Czechoslovak sociology in the period between the Wars.

In those works, Bláha conceived his own view of social reality and managed to

avoid both the extremes known in the history of philosophy, i.e., one-sided objectives denying the importance of subjective factors in history, and excessive subjectivism; within the confines of his determinist approach he thus managed to demonstrate the role played by the individual in the course of social events.<sup>5</sup>

Bláha labelled his system "federative functionalism", since he understood the so-called global society, the "order of orders", as a multifunctional organism whose functions aim at securing the needs of the social whole, each social unit performing its specific role.

Bláha interested his students in sociology by involving them in research undertaken by his department into the lifestyle of workers, unemployment and political leadership, as well as complex research into the lives of communities, etc. In the course of the 1930s, a group later called the "Brno Sociology School" formed around Bláha.<sup>6</sup> Bláha also gave lectures in "practical philosophy", contributing thus to the education of young philosophy students (students of the Faculty of Law as well were obliged to take this course). He focused his course on basic problems of ethics to which he attended as well in some of his works, mostly in *Filosofie mravnosti* (The Philosophy of Morality, 1922). He professed a lay morality, considering religion a "purely human business." In these works, Bláha reveals his philosophical focus most immediately: he overcame positivism in order to replace it with critical realism (as a metaphysical-noetic position).

*Emanuel Chalupný* (1879-1958) gave irregular lectures at the Department of Sociology in the period between the Wars: in 1923 he became docent and in 1936 an associate professor of sociology. His lectures and research were focused on general sociology, the sociology of law and morality, the sociology of journalism, and the sociology of Czech history.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> *The Sociological Review* was edited by A. I. Blaha, E. Chalupny and J.L/ Fischer. The review was published in 1930-1940, and then in 1945-1949. The other Czech sociological journal was *Socialni problem* (Social Issues), published in Prague and edited by Josef Kral.

<sup>5</sup> See Jan Macku, "Poznamky ke strukturalnimu determinismu v dile A.I. Blahy" (Notes on Structural Determinism in the Work of A.I. Blaha), *Sbornik praci filosoficke faculty Brno* (B 13, 1966), 66

<sup>6</sup> Among its representatives was Bruno Zwicker, a leftist sociologist dealing primarily with unemployment. He died prematurely in the concentration camp in Auschwitz.

<sup>7</sup> Of E. Chalupny's extensive work, the most significant appears to be his five volume *Sociologie: na zaklade klasifikacni metody* (Sociology: Based upon the Method of Classification). He dealt with the history of Czech philosophical thought in such texts as *Ukol ceskeho naroda* (The Task for the Czech Nation, 1910); *Predni tvurcove narodniho programu Jungmann, Havlicek, Tyrs a Masaryk* (Jungmann, Havlicek, Tyrs, and Masaryk: The Leading Creators of the National Programme, 1925); *Narodni filosofie ceskoslovenska I. Narodni povaha* (National Czechoslovak Philosophy I. The National Character, 1933).



*Josef Tvrđý*, after graduating from Charles University, became a grammar school teacher, first in Vyskov (1901-1918), then in Brno. In 1922 he became an associate professor at the Faculty of Arts in Brno and in 1928 a full professor at Comenius University in Bratislava, where he stayed until 1938. Among his Brno students was Blahoslav Zboril (1901-1982), who graduated from the Charles University where he attended mostly Krejčí's and Rádl's courses. Zboril became a grammar school teacher. In 1946 he became an associate professor at the Faculty of Arts in Brno; but could teach there only until 1949 (and then again in 1966-1969). He followed Tvrđý's ideas with his "undogmatic positivism" and his interest in the philosophy of values in his *Problém hodnot I. Poznání, hodnocení a tvorení norem* (The Problem of Values I, Knowing, Evaluating, and Creating Norms, 1947), as well as in the philosophy of fine arts and in reflections upon the "new religion" (as Zboril called human efforts to come close to perfection asymptotically, i.e., to get close to the qualities Christianity ascribed to God).

When Zich left for Prague he was succeeded by *Mihajlo Rostohar* (1879-1966) who became head of the Department of Philosophy. Rostohar, of Slovenian origin, came to Brno from Prague where he had become an associate professor at the Faculty of Arts of Charles University in 1911, having defended his work on logic, *Teorie hypotetického soudu* (Theory of Hypothetical Judgment) in 1910. He was appointed professor of philosophy in Brno in 1924, though his field was psychology. In 1926 he succeeded in establishing the Institute of Psychology at the Faculty. When an independent Department of Psychology was approved in 1931, Rostohar became full professor of psychology. Soon after he ceased giving philosophy lectures and gave up his position at the Department of Philosophy.<sup>8</sup>

Rostohar pioneered experimental psychology in Czechoslovakia, adhering to a holistic and structuralist approach to psychology. At a time when the notion of structure was fast making its way into philosophy and science, Rostohar used it in psychology as a "dynamic term" in order to explain the existence of psychological wholes as opposed to static terms (form, formation, complex), which describe their varieties. In his book, *Psychologie jako veda* (Psychology as Science), 1951, which summarizes his opinions, he defines psychological structure as "only such wholes in whose essence there is a creative principle, i.e., a potential formative power directed holistically." From the point of view of his approach to psychology, he critiqued Frantisek Krejčí's system of psychology. He considered Krejčí's theory of psychological parallelism to reflect the biological focus of that psychology and saw the concept of sensation as a psychological element as a "classical example of static atomizing Czech psychology."<sup>9</sup>

The most distinguished personalities at the Department of Philosophy in the period between the Wars were *Vladimír Hoppe* and *J.L. Fischer*. They have both been mentioned above in a different context; here it need only to be added that Hoppe was the head of the Department of Philosophy in 1927-1931. After his premature death the post was taken by J.L. Fischer, who occupied the post until 1939 and for a short time after the War.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Psychology, as well as sociology, could be studied only as parts of philosophy.

<sup>9</sup> In the '30s, psychology was taught at the Faculty by Ferdinand Kratina (1885-1944). He explained his conception of philosophy in *Studie z tvarove psychologie* (Studies in the Psychology of Forms, 1932), and in *uvod do celostni a tvarove psychologie* (Introduction to the Holistic Psychology and the Psychology of Forms). In 1926 he published a Czech translation of Durkheim's *Rules of Sociological method*.

<sup>10</sup> J.L. Fischer was one of the Czech philosophers who actively took part in public and political life. He was a member of the editorial board of the *Sociological Review and Index*, an *avant-garde* journal which he edited in Brno with Vaclavek and Mahen, and a leading member of *Jednota filosoficka* (The Philosophical Fraternity), the Brno section of the *Spolecnost pratel demokratickho Spanelska* (The Association of the Friends of Democratic Spain), etc. He was one of the professors of the Faculty of Arts who were forbidden to continue teaching.

Philosophy at the Faculty of Arts in Brno was not treated only by expert philosophers. Among the professors teaching at other departments, Frantisek Novotný and Karel Svoboda, both classical philologists, devoted some of their attention thereto. Novotný (1881-1960) became famous as a connoisseur and translator of Plato, *O Platónovi I-III* (Plato's works, I-III), 1948-1970. Svoboda (1886-1960) dealt with the history of classical aesthetic thought and gave courses in the history of Greek and Roman philosophy. Otakar Chlup (1875-1965), a professor of pedagogy also paid continuing attention to philosophy, as did Jan Uher (1891-1942), the second professor of pedagogy, who continued the current tradition of Czech pedagogy. The Russian intuitivist, N.O. Losskij, spent the summer term of 1936-1937 giving lectures in Russian philosophy, after which he left for Prague where he became a lecturer in Russian studies. Josef Kratochvíl, an associate professor at the Theological Faculty of Charles University and a member of St. Thomas Academy in Rome, asked in vain to be transferred to the Faculty of Arts in Brno, but he lived in Brno and was employed in the State Scholarly Library.

### **Normative Legal Theory**

A very important centre of philosophical work at the University of Brno in the period between the Wars was the Faculty of Law whose professors developed the so-called *normative theory of law* (the Brno school of pure juristic theory): Frantisek Weyr, Jaroslav Kallab, Jaromir Sedláček, Jan Loevenstein, Josef Krejčí, Václav Chytil, Hynek Bulín, Vladimír Kubes, and others.

The objectives and aims of the Brno school were characterized by Vladimír Kubes. The movement was headed by Frantisek Weyr (1879-1951) who, before Hans Kelsen, in his first works, *Prispevky k teorii nucených svazku* (Some Contributions to the Theory of Forced Bonds), 1908, and *Zum Probleme eines einheitlichen Rechtssystems* (1908) laid the foundations of a juristic philosophical theory which met with a wide reception throughout the world, both in the positive and negative sense. What Weyr, Kelsen and their followers were after was, above all, making jurisprudence more scientific and creating a noetic and methodological approach to law, while focusing on a concrete juristic logic.

All these philosophers of law professed Kant's critical method, the idea of a dualism between cognition and volition. The philosophy of law should examine the *a priori* principles of juristic cognition, with an aim to applying this knowledge to any possible juridical experience: therefore, it should be a theory only of formal elements. Their thesis of the dualism between being and ought departs from Kant's dualism of nature and morality, and is based in Kant's statement from the *Critique of Pure Reason* that "Ought expresses a kind of necessity and connection which otherwise does not occur in nature." They showed that notions such as obligation, norm, etc., cannot be conceived in causal terms, but only in the normative ones. The classification of sciences follows from this. Adherents of this school of thought intended to complete Kant's philosophy by attempting to examine the noetic and logical foundations of normative sciences, assuming that Kant had carried out only a classification of natural sciences.

Having rigorously distinguished between the cognitive and the volitional spheres, they came to the conclusion that science should be limited only to cognition. They wanted to create a theory of positive law and put aside the question of how to create the law properly, considering this issue unscientific. In this, they were uncompromising juridical positivists, their characteristic feature being a resolutely anti-theoretical stance. Thus, they opposed all forms of the doctrine of natural law. It follows from their relativism that no absolute juridic form is conceivable. They pointed out

the need for jurisprudence to be absolutely self-contained and hence rid of all that does not belong to the subject labelled as law.

It was only natural that among individual representatives of the school, all excellent lawyers, there were certain differences in opinions. Jaromír Sedláček (1885-1945), an outstanding expert in civil law and in Kant's transcendental philosophy, to a certain degree ceased to distinguish strictly between the cognitive and volitional spheres. Jaroslav Kallab (1879-1942), professor of criminal and international law and of the philosophy of law, denied consistently the absolute cleavage between these spheres and attempted to master the volitional spheres. (Kallab was inspired by Windelband, Münsterberg, and Rickert, and to a certain degree even by Bergson.)

Among the younger professors at the Faculty of Law in Brno who abandoned the normative school was Vladimír Kubes (1908-1988), professor of civil law and the philosophy of law. At first Kubes also professed Kant's transcendental philosophy and wrote a large work on it during World War II (as yet unpublished). As he changed his focus toward systematic philosophy (most of all due to Nicolai Hartmann's critical ontology, whose lectures he had attended in Berlin in 1932), he gradually crossed the "narrow confines of normative theory." As Kubes himself put it, the deepest foundation of his philosophy was (in contrast with Hartman) an optimistic attitude to the world. It assumed the general tendency to attain perfection (i.e., normative ideas of truth and rightness, morality, law, and beauty) to be not only individual, but historical, that there is a similar tendency in humankind as a whole. He considered an optimistic position to be the most fundamental condition for philosophy, every science, all that man undertakes, the whole of human life: pessimism, in historical terms, amounts to a statement that all that man does lacks any sense. Kubes thought that the dualism between the real world and the ideal one--the sphere of normative ideas--was based on this optimistic attitude toward the world. In turn, he thought that the unique human awareness of the ideal world conditioned the Ought (*das Sollen*) or obligation. In his view, the possibility of a positive answer to the "grand question of the freedom of will lay in the relation between dependence and autonomy or independence".

In his studies and works, Kubes dealt with the ontology of law and its relation to the structure of law, with jurisprudence and ethics, with modern natural law and the attempt to master the sphere of law and volition rationally, and with the freedom of will. He wrote also as an historian and interpreter of modern European philosophy of law in *Právní filosofie XX. století* (The Juristic Philosophy of the 20th Century, 1947). After the coup d'etat in 1948 he had to leave the Faculty of Law; he taught there again in 1968-1970. After 1974 he taught as a visiting professor of philosophy of law at the University of Vienna, at which time his new works could be published only abroad.

Another member of the Faculty of Law in the period between the Wars was *Karel Englis* (1880-1961), a leading Czech economist and methodologist. He also took as a point of departure Weyr's and Kelsen's normative theory and Kant's transcendental philosophy in its Schopenhauerian interpretation. However, later he developed his own approach, namely his theory of orders of thought. Englis did not recognize any *a priori* notions or opinions: all our mental creations are historically conditioned (variable), purpose-oriented means which help us to explain and understand reality. The various categories and notions create systems or orders of thought with inner connections.

Until that time, the adherents to the Brno Normative School had distinguished between the "sphere of causal rationality" and the "sphere of normative rationality". Englis introduced the "sphere of teleological rationality", which enabled him to consider, along with the ontological-causal sciences and the normative sciences, also the teleological sciences. Their main feature was

the fact that they arrange their notions or ideational contents according to their finality, that is, as purposes and means. All that can be said about reality is the result of sensations and ideas processed by the corresponding order of thought. Norms and postulates differ from judgments (which result from causal cognition) in that they express the human will in a certain manner.

Englis applied his teleological mode of observation to the functioning of the national economy and economic politics, dealing with both theoretically in his work, *Soustava národního hospodárství* (The System of the National Economy, 1937), and practically as Minister of Finance in several Czechoslovak governments and as Governor of the National Bank. After the war, Englis taught at Charles University, where he was appointed Rector. Upon the *coup d'état* in February 1948, he was forced to leave the university and, later, even Prague. Englis's thousand-page work *Velká logika* (Major Logic) also remains unpublished.

As the "hard" sciences made progress in the period between the Wars, and a new interdisciplinary field emerged, scientists attempted certain methodological generalizations and a kind of philosophical synthesis. As before World War I, it was especially the biologists who were most prone to philosophical speculations, notably at the Faculty of Sciences in Brno, Vladimír Ulehla and Josef Krízenecký.

*Vladimír Ulehla* (1888-1947) ranked among the leading Czechoslovak physiologists of plants. His philosophy abounds especially in works written for the general public: *Zamyslení nad životem* (Reflections on Life, 1939, revised in 1941, 1947); and *Za oponou života* (Behind the Curtain of Life), 1940; *Život vesmírný* (Cosmic Life, 1944); and *Záhada smrti* (The Enigma of Death, 1945), Ulehla proved to be a noetic optimist in these works: he even assumes that the ever increasing amount of knowledge in hard sciences will be the backbone of a new philosophy. "If matter tends to create life, the greatest art appears to be finding the conditions under which this tendency occurs." This statement suggests that Ulehla advocated conditionalism (he often quoted Max Verworn). He invented a principle to explain the essence of life: "the continuum, the unceasing stream of protoplasma going from one cell to another," explains all the conditions for its existence including its motion, assimilation, regeneration and procreation. He considered every natural event to be a set of conditions under which such an event can occur; the so-called cause is but one of the many conditions which until now had been absent in the set of factors conditioning the particular phenomenon.

*Jaroslav Krízenecký* (1896-1964) was one of the leading exponents of Czech genetics and eugenics. He emphasized the fact that in order to improve the state in which mankind finds itself it is necessary to create corresponding social and political conditions, to arrange social affairs in accordance with the "natural law of mutual aid". In his view, humanity and social ethics had their roots in Nature itself (*Boj o život a dohoda k životu* (The Struggle for Survival and the Agreement to Life, 1940).

## Chapter XVI

# Czechs and the Czech Republic: The National vs the Civic

*Jaroslav Stritecky*

The specter of nationalism is stalking post-Communist Europe. People experience a massive and multifaceted identity crisis, not unlike the one which followed the French Revolution and the Napoleonic era. Hearts beat strongly, while minds remain lazy and crowds cling anxiously to newly recalled collective subjects. Their revival promises to provide final salvation so that they would not, laboriously, uncertainly and through their own efforts, have to free themselves from the ties with the recent past. Although almost everyone feels greatly relieved at escaping the crushing embrace of the unloved totalitarian power, it is as though they had become orphaned. A vacuum is left by the demise of the authority to which many had become accustomed, however unwillingly.

Consequently, representatives of the new power face a surprising dilemma. Either they will find the courage to overcome the intuitive expectations of their fellow citizens that the new authority will care for them in a better way than the old one, or the lure of success will make them forget what they revolted against only yesterday and lead them to rule flamboyantly from the abandoned throne. Certainly, it is not necessary to stress that only the first option can lay the foundation for a truly free civic society.

Without the yoke of superior authority, too many people feel beside themselves. Instead of experiencing the dizziness of freedom, they remain beset by a feeling of being threatened. This is multiplied, but not necessarily caused, by unfavorable economic conditions. They cling to everything that still remains their own, e.g., their anxieties and inferiority complexes. They enclose themselves within their intolerant egos, the alpha and omega of their being. They are, indeed, under threat, but what is threatening are not the forces of the past but an invasion of all the substantial problems tabled until recently. In turn, these imply the challenge to apply to their solution the measures of a civic society, that is to say, approaches different from those of the clan, custom-bound community, or similar traditional bodies.

### **Nation**

Among the reclaimed fundamentalisms that have emerged in this situation, the most dangerous appears to be national fundamentalism. Independently of reality, it tends to unite symbolically what is heterogeneous in order to constitute vast horizontal groupings which overlap particular egoisms. The fictitious "we" is always being set against "them", something foreign that becomes all too easily an embodiment of the enemy. This explains how conflicts erupt easily between nations who have had essentially identical experiences with the old power regime and whose revolts against that system were carried out in similar ways.

The patterns on the basis of which large groups of people identify themselves as nations are comprised of heterogeneous components that can be integrated only through a unifying interpretation. Such interpretation is mostly historical or history-related; it selects only some from among the possible identities, arranging them into grand narratives (*grand recit*). These come to facilitate collective identification through the suggestion that national identification is something

given almost naturally, something that realizes itself in a long historical process with which one can either concur or wantonly betray.

Modern grand narratives have two roots: 1) the emotional energy of the homeland, or the longing for it, is transformed into a fiction of the homeland common to everybody; or 2) the idea of a civic society descends from a universal human horizon into the seemingly natural boundaries of particular ethnic groups. Both methods replace real interests and values with the fiction of a unified notional collective.

It has not always been as self-evident as it may seem that we have been Czechs--or what has identified us as such. But even the Germans, in our own and adjacent realms, have not had less difficulties with their national identity. That may be the reason why they find the slogan *Deutschland einig Vaterland* (Germany is one Fatherland) so emotionally appealing, although they come from the same tribe as Goethe or Beethoven. Only a truly mysterious act can integrate Prussians, Saxons, Bavarians, Rhinelanders and Swabians into a union of blood and soil. Why were the German-speaking Swiss and most of Austrians excluded? And who were our Germans-- those living in Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia and Slovakia? Why did they sometimes feel as patriots of the Land (for instance, *Böhmen deutscher Zunge*, that is to say, German Czechs), sometimes as Austrians, and then again sometimes as Germans? Over the last two centuries, we could have recorded several such transformations; since 1848 this has occurred even several times in one generation.

Then there is the wavering between German and Czech identities among the educated strata and later also among the social groups thrown into the melting pot of modern nationalization. It was a matter of decision, as the Czech philosophers of the interwar period constantly kept reminding us. As family names, as well as other circumstances show, many of today's Czech families used to be German, and the other way around, and many contemporary Slovaks used to be Hungarian, and vice versa. These variations and combinations can be justifiably extended to include Czechs and Slovaks, Poles, Ukrainians, Slovenians, Croatians, Lusatians, Serbs, in part also Italians and Romanians. This applies, of course, also to Jews, most of whom were exterminated regardless of whether they had become Czechs, Germans, Hungarians or Israelites (both in the sense of religious faith and of nationalist Zionism).

Seen from this perspective, Central Europe begins to look more idiosyncratic than it does in its geographical or political definitions. In the heart of Europe, modernist homogenization, associated with the transformation of small regional societies into large, general social structures, has not been realized to the extent achieved elsewhere. Our grandfathers and great grandfathers-- Czech, German, Austrian, Jewish, Hungarian, Northern Italian or Polish--despaired of this. On the basis of catastrophic prophecies, they did not even hesitate to call that period of their lives the laboratory of the world's end. If we do not succumb to nationalist suggestions, however, we can find an outstanding advantage in this. The monotony of the modern has sharpened our appreciation of small, but real, differences. Life in multiplicity has become the chance that cannot be created artificially. Thanks to a happy circumstance, we have inherited multiplicity; we can enrich ourselves through it, and we can pass it on as a gift to others.

Central European diversity does not consist so much of national differentiations as of instability of national identifications. Various compensations of this uncertainty have, as is well-known, hypertrophied into particularly monstrous forms of chauvinist, anti-Semitic and other forms of socially destructive aggression. This leads some interpreters to an easy demonization of Central European peculiarities. When we look closer, we can recognize that it is not the work of the mysterious Mephisto, but rather a clumsy circus. Unfortunately, this makes the resulting

illusion no less powerful. Today, anyone can orate to enthusiastic crowds about nations and their eternal characteristics, as if such things have existed since times immemorial. Speakers talk like this about nations which nobody knew about until relatively recently. The grand nationalist narrative assembles the illusion of the macrosubject from heterogeneous elements.

## **Identifiers**

### *State*

The state is undoubtedly a very strong identifier, particularly as an idea. Czechs had had an historic state with a long and continuous past. It is no wonder that this perspective played an important role during their search for national identity in the nineteenth century. Advocacy for the continuity of Czech statehood constituted an integral part of Czech politics at that time.

These attempts to forge Czech statehood were in conflict not only with the conservative, but also with the modernizing tendencies within the Austrian-Hungarian Empire. There was a further complication as the defense of Czech statehood was permeated also by both trends as well. It was conservative in the sense that it was a defense of the Czech kingdom against Viennese centralism and was carried on mainly by traditional representative structures. It was also modernizing in the sense that this was pursued by nontraditional representatives and initiatives. More and more, each was differentiated along national lines.

The second basic problem was that the possibility for a truly national state as a means of transfer from medieval to modern statehood was denied to Czechs. National statehood could not exist in the Central European region. As a matter of fact, the idea of national states has stood in the way of civic state.

The idea of a national state proved to be fruitful only under circumstances which negated its realization; it could retain its distinctively emancipatory features only through its encouragement of economic and cultural initiatives. The notion that national and social emancipation could be realized solely through a national state oriented productive energies too unilaterally in a political direction, which as a result was emptied of its meaning. This notion harkened back to the pre-civic context and its ideal of good lord or king. The paternalist state was believed to be, or presented as being, good for the nation only if it was a national state and if nobody could deprive us of its benefits. This is why the rhetorical formulas associated with this secularized form of pre-civic state metaphysics used to be so sacred to our grandfathers; they had absorbed the longing to move from below to above, from subordination to control.

Despite its being a powerful identifier, the state is also a very problematic identifier. Poor foundations for the idea of statehood and arbitrary substitutions of the national state for the civic state have led to a "weakening of respect for statehood, as well as for law and order. Like similar nationalist movements, the Czech political tradition from the second half of the nineteenth century showed a tendency toward a utilitarian understanding of state forms and a superimposition of nationalist views and interests over legal principles.

### *Ethnicity*

The *Ethnos* has been used frequently and extensively as an identifier. Only recently has the notion developed that two ethnic principles--the Slavic and the Germanic---have competed against each other in the Central European region for centuries, if not millennia, and that their struggle

there has formed history and its purposes. The idea has not been derived from real history, but merely taken over as a finished product of French and English romantic historians and writers. Its original version, known to historians from Thierry's work on the Norman invasion of England and to lay readers from the historical novels of Walter Scott, explained the origins of feudalism as the conquest and subjugation of one ethnos by another.

Ideologically, the embellishment of this scheme with "national character" has been most important for according to this an emancipatory civic program was encoded into the character of the subjugated people. Where conquest of one ethnos by another could not be proven historically, the act of suppression was styled as a battle of nationally characterized principles. Thus, for instance, Georg Gottfried Gervinus, a liberal German historian, saw the purpose of German history in the struggle of freedom-loving Germanism against expansively universalist Romanism. The Reformation then appeared to be a key victory of the genuinely German spirit that anticipated the liberal ideals of Gervinus' generation. Czech national historian Frantisek Palacky transferred this scheme to Czech history, arguing, of course, that love of freedom is the Czech national characteristic while the German influence brought to Bohemia only feudal imperiousness. The Hussite Reformation was the climax of Czech history to Palacky for the same reason that German reformation was important to Gervinus.

We do not want to deny that, on the territory of the Czech state there lived the Czech and the German peoples, besides Jews, Poles, Italians, Spaniards, Frenchmen and others, depending upon the historical period, government, and international circumstances. Consistently, the largest groups were Czechs and Germans. To distinguish between them, however, is not as easy as it might seem from national opinions and ideas. Learned ethnographers have concluded that nymphs and sprites and similar water-bound creatures are of Slavic origin while other monsters are German. Archeology, into which much money and hope has been invested, can reliably distinguish Slavs from Germans at the time of the movement of the peoples (third-fourth century). Later, particularly in the most recent centuries, differences in appearance, behavior and culture ceased to exist, and regional and social contrasts became more notable than national differences. This is why complete sets of images associated with the development of the national spirit could be freely imported from one context into another.

### *Language*

The only aspect to provide a clear difference is language. However, even language identification has not been reliable for a long time. The Josephine reforms in the second half of eighteenth century had brought, aside from modernizing impulses, also haziness regarding the language situation. All education, not only at the highest levels but also at the lower level was provided in German only. This Germanization was complete and peaceful; it did not have nationalist overtones and forced no one to lose his or her national identity. In itself, it was a process of delatinization of education and state administration, and it has remained unfinished even today. In this situation, language-based differences had as little meaning as at the time of medieval Latin universalism, whose pervasive integrity the Josephine Germanization did not reach.

It is often believed that his Germanization gave advantage to Germans at the cost of everyone else. Direct evidence has to be taken carefully, however, for nationalist feelings frequently hide social frustrations painfully felt by boys of peasant and even lower origins who found themselves in new urban environments. Young Czech men, from Jungmann to Masaryk, gave this frustration a nationalist meaning. Jewish and German students called it differently though the content of their



experience is the same. Everyone had to learn the standard literal form of the German language--even the Germans--like the Czech students who later had to learn standardized literary Czech.

In the nineteenth century, Czechhood and Germanhood in our lands had become a matter of choice. This selectivity cannot be derived from historical determinants. The dilemma had to be faced at first by small circles of intellectual and social elites (mainly the landed nobility, a part of which, logically, supported the Czech orientation). With the progress of modernization and the development of both national movements, ever-widening population groups were confronted by the need to choose. In the end, the lack of national identity or national uprootedness took the form of a character flaw and was often ascribed to Jews. Bilingualism without reliable national preference, however, existed elsewhere, although always as a more or less hidden exception. These islands of universalism could be found in religious circles (for instance, in the tolerant atmosphere of the Augustinian monastery in Brno, students would sign up for courses in genetics, as well as in the Communist Manifesto), among the high bureaucracy, in the officer corps, among artists and, of course, in extremist anarchist and revolutionary circles. The working classes, textbook Marxism notwithstanding, mostly did not resist nationalist polarization.

### **The National vs the Civic: Jungmann vs Bolzano**

While learned interest in Slavic studies during the Enlightenment period could have taken place outside the German context, the decision of Jungmann and his followers in favor of Czech nationalism cannot be imagined without it. This is due to the asynchronic development of German and Czech modernization trends. The foundations of national culture in Germany were fully constructed before other elements of social life could be modernized. A Czech, educated in the German language anyway, personally could provide a unique example of how to create a truly new culture instead of deriving it from the continuity of the past.

Herderian nationalist visions directly encouraged attempts to usurp the universalist and civic aspects of social life. Language is not merely an expressive system facilitating communication, but, as Vladimír Macura showed in his book *Znamení zrodu* (Sign of Birth), 1983, language in the nationalists' conception creates and establishes reality.

Jungmann's argument of 1806 looks very "democratic". It requires that the Czech intelligentsia not stray from the Czech peasantry. The elites should be capable of communicating with the people. Although it sounds wonderful, it can have nonrepressive meaning only within the Herderian vision that the national spirit lives most fully in the language, and the language in its people. This vision has saved many beautiful folksongs and children's stories as its supporters tried to divine the future from the bequest of past witnesses. When Jungmann says that it will be easier to raise one hundred Czech writers than to Germanize the Czech countryside, he gives hold to the Czech language. Far from underestimating Czech literature, he demands that it prepare itself for competition with German literature. Such demand was not dictated by enthusiasm for the Czech cause, but by sheer necessity, for most of those capable of reading then were educated and well-read only in German. Was Jungmann's national dream realistical, was it practical?

Jungmann's seemingly democratic argument established the Czech tradition demanding that the elites communicate with the people first with regard to language, though its many realizations proved the argument to be undemocratic. Characteristically, Jungmann sought reasons for his romantic national dream, not in political utopias but in realistic appraisals of concrete interests. Instead of definitions of human and citizens' rights, he talked realistically of the Czech countryside.

This idea bothered Jan Patočka a great deal. His essay, "Dilema v našem národním programu: Jungmann a Bolzano" (Dilemma in Our National Program: Jungmann and Bolzano), 1969, is still well-remembered today. Nevertheless, its impact was small and the response negative, as were the responses to Rádl's antinationalist polemics from the interwar period. Patočka considered Bolzano's vision of civic emancipation in bilingual (or multilingual) political nations consisting of free individuals to be a valuable, though neglected, alternative to language-based traditionalism.

This neglect was not absolute, however. There was the delayed attempt at realizing Bolzano's conception in the form of the Czechoslovakist First Republic (1918-1938). Undoubtedly, it would have had much greater chance to succeed if it had clearly addressed itself to all citizens, that is to say, not only to Czechs and Slovaks but, in equal measure, also to Germans, Hungarians and all others.

Czechoslovakism has not failed because it was based on the idea of a civic (political) nation, but because it made concessions to nationalist feelings. It remained faithful to Bolzano only in terms of the practical arrangement regarding language parity between Czechs and Slovaks, and in its theoretical formulation and practical application of gradual social equalization, for which it had created in Slovakia at least the educational prerequisite. Those who like to speak about the quasi-colonial supremacy of the Czech bourgeoisie in Slovakia (and who are perhaps right regarding some important details), cannot deny the Czechoslovakists' unquestionable language tolerance, support for education in the Slovak language, and social empathy.

The application of Czechoslovakism as a theory of a majoritarian and state-making nation was contrary to Bolzano. This justified Czech expansion into the power vacuum left in Upper Hungary after the dissolution of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire with its ideology of self-determination. Lessons can be drawn from both approaches. It is possible to gain from the demythologization of differences in language and customs--and to take heed of the price exacted by the demon of nationalism from those who joined to his game with the vain expectation that it would be only a temporary educational compromise over which they would retain full control.

## Afterword

It was stated in the foreword that to give a comprehensive account of Czech philosophical thought in the twentieth century was an ambitious task which could be carried through only in the future. However, we are inclined to think that we may already outline the contours of our mosaic in order to elucidate some directions of thought and modes of questioning. As parts of the Czech cultural tradition, these may influence the philosophical enterprise in the Czech Republic, as well as the present efforts to revive modern democracy.

From this point of view, we would like to emphasize especially the following tendencies in Czech thought:

1. Continuous attention has been paid to the philosophy of man and society, with an emphasis on its moral, humanist, and democratic aspects. This includes a search for how to realize the ideal of a society based on social justice, ideally through establishing the "power of the powerless". The subject has been discussed from a variety of philosophical standpoints, such as Masarykian "ethical religion", the idea of "lay morality", the religious-philosophical point of view (especially the varieties based on the Reformation Protestant tradition and or the stream of thought inspired by Roman Catholicism), Marxism conceived as the theory of emancipation, the structuralist philosophy of J.L. Fischer, and the phenomenology of J. Patocka. Aphoristically put: all the main streams of Czech philosophy want to have a "human face".

2. This is closely connected to efforts to give the Czech nation a spiritual and cultural character, to situate the problems of a small nation in Central Europe in the international context, both historically and philosophically. Therefore, there is a clear tendency to view history from the point of view of philosophy. Both the general philosophy of history and the philosophy of Czech history seem to be of crucial importance. This includes many varieties reaching from visions of Herderian Europe to the Marxist philosophical construction of history. This tendency of Czech thought sometimes results in neglecting purely philosophical subjects which are independent of the social events and struggles of a particular period, and allowing more room for discussing, e.g., the relationship of Czech society (the Czech state and nation) to Europe and the World. This subject inevitably appears as structuralism and phenomenology as well as in positivist philosophy, which underline the function of philosophy in conditioning the *Weltanschauung*, as well as its educational function.

3. The first two paragraphs of this conclusion suggest the answer to the question why Czech philosophy has paid so much attention to religion and its place in constituting the "Weltanschauung of the modern Czech person". The geographical location of this socio-cultural region with the problems related to its existence contribute to the fact that Czech philosophy appears to be a conjunction of various cultural and political currents and tendencies. Influences coming from German-speaking, Slavonic (especially Russian), French, and Anglo-American regions have met with a largely sensitive, consistent, and independent reception, no matter how different these influences may have been.

4. The frequency with which the issues of "practical philosophy" are discussed are sometimes interpreted as a sign of the Czech mind being "sober", "matter-of-fact", "anti-speculative", incapable of profound religious experience, etc. In the period between the wars (the 1920s and 1930s) there were, however, efforts to develop the fundamental philosophical subjects, ontology and noetics, in order to constitute a Czech vision of philosophy in the proper sense of the word.

This is connected to the third phase of Czech positivism, neo-Kantianism, and to the structuralist and phenomenological endeavors. After World War II, some authors influenced by Marxism viewed this as their principal task.

5. A brief survey of the achievements of Czech philosophy that transcended the limits of cultivating a given socio-cultural region would include, apart from significant authors writing earlier in history--Huss, Chelcický, Comenius, Bolzano, and certainly Masaryk--the original philosophy of Ladislav Klíma; Protestant theological philosophy; the philosophical foundations of modern Catholic literature; the philosophical, aesthetic and critical works written by F.X. Salda; structuralism (broadly speaking, i.e., in philosophy, sociology, criticism, linguistics, and psychology); phenomenology (J. Patocka's legacy); and, last but not least, attempts to carry out an anti-Stalinist Marxist theory of emancipation.

In spite of difficult times unfavorable to free philosophical thought--five years of German occupation, forty years of the ideological monopoly by the Communist Party--there has always been a large variety of opinions and tendencies on the Czech philosophical scene. Of course, often the samizdat and exile philosophical production made the most significant contributions, especially in the last decades. In that respect, Czech, as well as Slovak, philosophy has not been completely "out of touch with Europe". This is why it can take part in creating the intellectual sensibility necessary to reflect the topical values and problems of Europe and the world. For having had concrete experience with authoritative, totalitarian systems, in reflecting upon specific intellectual challenges Czech philosophy tends to develop an ability to blend unbending criticism with responsible tolerance.

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