



Editorial

The nineteenth century was a period when modern ethnic and cultural identities were being formed in Central Europe, with naturally differing dynamics, initial requirements, goals, and their gradual fulfillment in individual contexts. The differing nature of these processes is also reflected in the periodical press, whose growing importance during the “long” nineteenth century became a significant factor that could influence and help create public opinion. The position of newspapers and magazines and their significance in a specific national context poses thought-provoking questions that the humanities have already addressed in an interdisciplinary approach, considering the context of Central and Central Eastern Europe. The current issue of the magazine *Z Badań nad Książką i Księgozbiorami Historycznymi* deals primarily with the Czech situation, which can be characterized, inter alia, in the context of increased cultivation of journalism as a gradually coalescing profession.

The individual papers in this issue are related not only through their interest in consideration of the development of national literature and culture but also attention focused on questions of a referential nature related in a period approach to emphasized aspects of Slavic reciprocity and constructed cultural community. The perception of Slavic countries as an area that should be given the appropriate attention, including in the sense of a busy tourism industry, appears in various genres, including that of “high” literature. Similar analogies with an appellative effect also appear in the periodical press of the day and help form the structures of its sections and journalistic forms. In their thematic spectrum, however, the offered texts do not limit themselves to the “nation-building” nineteenth century before 1848, but in apparent retrospectives, return to it in later phases as well.

In the atmosphere of the late 1850s, it is possible to ask questions regarding the importance, concept, and direction of Czech literature, which was, to a significant degree, commenced with the publication of the *Máj almanac* in 1858. Subsequent discussions published in the pages of newspapers and magazines, which also experienced a substantial revival in the Czech lands after the end of “Bach’s absolutism,” contributed to elevating Czech literature to a European level. The end of the 1850s and the beginning of the 1860s can be called a critical turning point in the evolution of Czech culture. This was not merely an indication of an effort to find an adequate creative and adaptive relationship to the contemporary development of European literature and thus to also answer the question of what Czech literature is and where it should be heading. Key questions aiming “inside” national life were also being formulated. One of the emblems of the new decade was the numerous associations

whose creation naturally personified the tension in Czech society during this phase of the nationalist movement. Mainly, associations such as *Hlahol* (1861) or *Umělecká beseda* (1862) and Sokol, founded a year earlier, testify to the new cultural situation clearly Slavo-centrism characterized. During this same period, emblematic periodicals were started, especially *Národní listy* (since 1861), *Lumír*, which was published at the beginning of the 1850s, and from 1865 onward, *Květy* was also an essential element that was an example of a society magazine. Last but not least, the first steps were taken toward constructing the National Theatre during this time. At the same time, significant differences arose in questions of how to promote nationalist demands. At the beginning of the 1860s, two key ideological directions began forming within the originally unified National Party, whose differing stances resulted ten years later in an open dispute regarding passive resistance espoused by the “Old Czechs.” The arrival of seven Czech deputies at the *Reichsrat* [Imperial Council] in Vienna in 1875 declared a clear divergence from current political practice and demonstrated the will to oppose the established “Old Czech” passive resistance. The creation of the *Národní strana svobodomyšlná* [National Liberal Party] in that same year marked a clear milestone in the final phases of the national movement. In the second half of the nineteenth century, many discussions and polemics developed in political life and other areas. From the end of the 1850s and the start of the 1860s, the newly established periodicals primarily provided significant opportunities for an exchange of opinions in questions of the aesthetic principles of Czech literature.

When considering what Czech literature is and how its natural development can be understood, one can rely on newspaper and magazine texts, which became one of the transparent platforms of ideological and aesthetic polemics of intergenerational confrontation. Individual genres and sections offer material that simultaneously becomes a typology describing agitative methods, not only in the sense of a call for patriotic education (persisting in various forms throughout virtually the entire second half of the nineteenth century) but also in terms of efforts to create an integrated aesthetic program personifying the peculiarities and qualities of Czech literature concerning surrounding works of literature. In this sense, this naturally involves a relational tension to the dominant German environment. Still, in its way, the question of developmental relationships with a generally European cultural context was also key.

The spectrum of topics begins with a study by **Ivo Říha**, a literary historian and Bohemist focusing on the history of Czech literature of the nineteenth to twenty-first centuries, who, in the context of the intergenerational conflicts of the mid-nineteenth century, presents the evolution of polemics on the originality of Czech literature, basing himself on his earlier work on this topic (especially the relevant chapter in the monograph *Možnosti četby. Karolina*

Světlá v diskurzu literární kritiky druhé poloviny 19. století [Possible readings. Karolina Světlá in critical literary discourse of the second half of the nineteenth century] (Červený Kostelec: Pavel Mervart, 2012). Ivo Říha thus covers the main spectrum of opinions that, in connection with the passionate polemics regarding the relationship of national literature with the broader European context, resounded at that time in the pages of the periodical press, and which in Czech literary history temporally overlaps with the arrival of the generation of the *Májovci* [the “May School”] more precisely precedes it slightly. In specific contexts, it follows the overall anatomy of the polemic as a phenomenon that, in the 1850s, affected the appearance of Czech literary culture in a significant way and did not forget to emphasize multiple contradictions, ambiguities, and vagueness in attempts to formulate the key questions of that time, often affected by the personal enmity of the participants.

A case study by **Aleš Kozár**, a leading Czech Slovenist and translator of Slovenian fiction, aims at reflection as it represents Czech exploration of a specific cultural landscape that could at first glance seem marginal, but in the context of Czech society undergoing revival, played an important role. It deals with Slovenian regions, which during the relevant period were still administratively split between the royal lands of Carniola, Styria, and Carinthia. Visits by Czech revivalists and travelers were not only an expression of exploration of not overly known Slavic parts of the Habsburg monarchy but also a prominent emblem of a contemporary worldview based on awareness of Slavic reciprocity. However, Aleš Kozár does not consider only the nineteenth century and mutual contacts between Czech and Slovenian personalities of revivalist cultural life. His consideration of how Czech mapped out the Slovenian lands as a friendly, interesting, and close cultural landscape also extends to the first half of the twentieth century, when these relations were, to a great extent, predetermined by the political conditions related to the Little Entente and solidifying relationships between Czechoslovakia and the Kingdom of SCS (Yugoslavia), which Slovenia was a part of. In doing so, Aleš Kozár states that the intensity of mutual relationships culminated at the beginning of the twentieth century because, in particular, political changes after 1948 brought about mutual isolation accompanied by an erosion of awareness of Slovenian culture in Czechoslovakia. In this case, the periodical press becomes a transparent platform through which the circumstances of continuously formed reflections of Slovenian cultural emblems in the Czech context are shown.

Similar statements in the indicated topography of Slavic reciprocity and its reflection in the Czech periodical press are presented in the article by **Miroslav Kouba**, focusing his attention on the end of the 1870s, i.e., until the time when *Národní listy* was already a fully established daily newspaper, which determined and co-created social opinion at the time of intensified polemics between the

“Old Czechs” and “Young Czechs.” Using the example of the culminating moments of the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–1878, which concluded with the signing of the preliminary Treaty of San Stefano and the subsequent Berlin Congress, Miroslav Kouba attempts to outline the thematic structure of the contemporary discourse. He shows ways of perceiving a war in a geographically relatively distant part of Europe, to which a collectively shared sense of solidarity applies. At the same time, it describes the progressive professionalization of Czech journalism. It shows the functioning of a leading Czech periodic in terms of its sections, methods of reporting from the field, telegraphic reports, and commentaries as an essential element of the contemporary structure of newspapers through which the picture of war is transmitted and shaped.

The text by **Kateřina Korábková** focuses on the forms of celebrations of the day of the creation of the Czechoslovak Republic on 28 October 1918. Commemoration of that day has become an essential part of the narrative in pan-societal discourse describing the creation of the new state. The methods used to present October 28 have been examined, capturing the place of this important day in the historical memory of the entire twentieth century. Kateřina Korábková, however, follows how October 28 was commemorated in children’s sections and supplements of newspapers of interwar Czechoslovakia. Based on analysis of various types of texts intended for children, the author presents the circumstances under which the nation-forming myth in the collective memory of parents is transformed into historical memory, its expression reinforcing national identity. In interesting contexts, she presents pledges and credos handed down from generation to generation, identifying the main character traits of a proper citizen with the ideological values and aesthetic principles of the new state and its leading symbols, especially the legacy of Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk or the Legionnaires.

The last study in this set also confirms the interdependence of historical memory of the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century. The reflective environment of the periodical press showed the form through which Czech society attempted to distinguish itself from the Habsburg monarchy, be it within the scope of national revival or later periods when new emblems of the Czech art history narrative were being formed.

In closing, as the author of this editorial, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the editorial board of *Z Badań nad Książką i Księgozbiorami Historycznymi*, which made the publication of these papers possible and supported the creation of this monothematic issue.

Miroslav Kouba