



Faculty
of Arts



Genius loci ...

Invitation to the International Academic Conference

**The shaping of the Czech "national story" in the 19th century
- a view from outside**

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Utváření českého „národního příběhu“ v 19. století – pohled zvenčí

Date of event:	24 – 25.4.2023
Venue:	Faculty of Arts, Palacký University Olomouc (Křížkovského 10)
Conference languages:	Czech/Slovak and English
Length of presentation:	15–20 minutes
Admission fee:	50€ (designated exclusively for publication)
Application form:	no later than 28 February 2023 (jiri.hrabal@upol.cz)

Not only the identity of each individual, but also the identity of a nation is formed by means of narratives. The constitution of the “national story” is always an internalised view of itself that each nation holds.

The process of self-identification of a nation by means of a narrative (or a number of competing variants of a narrative) is frequently at variance with the actual historical events, and very often also with the narratives of other nations, in particular those neighbouring or in close proximity, which over the course of history have found themselves within a network of mutually transforming interrelationships and historical complexities, and have been influenced by the same events and macropolitical interests, as well as by the interests and actions of specific individuals.

It is a well-known fact that František Palacký interpreted Czech history primarily as an agelong struggle between Czechs and Germans: “Czech history in general is founded mainly upon a dispute with the German nation, thus on a perception and rejection of the manners of the Germans on the part of the Czechs”. However, during the course of history Czech interests have clashed also with those of other neighbours, for example the Poles or Hungarians. Palacký’s interpretation of Czech history was undoubtedly highly influential but it was not the sole historical narrative concerning this issue, and up to the present day the Czech national story has undergone a series of further retellings, which have emerged either due to the influence of new historical discoveries or as a consequence of changes in social values and norms or ideological motivations.

The experience of the “long” 19th century was of decisive importance for the formation of the Czech “national story”, which is both a cause and a consequence of the process of Czech national self-determination. At this time the formation of a national literature (and the attention devoted to the national language), which also had a national constitutive function (whether this was the primary intention from the author’s perspective, or in the case of other works a secondary effect), made a marked contribution to the fixation of the national story. Countless studies have already been written on the role of the Czech national literature in the formation of the Czech nation. The aim of our conference is above all to attempt to identify the external (non-Czech) stances of the time regarding the endeavours of the Czech literati and scholars during the course of the 19th century. We are interested not only in how Czech national aspirations were reflected by the scholars of other nations in their general literary-historical, historical, philosophical or political conceptions and historical interpretations, but also by the image of the Czech aspirations that was presented in the foreign press and literary or cultural periodicals of the time, and no less in correspondences, diary or travelogue writings recorded on the basis of direct contact between Czech and foreign literati and scholars.

We believe that certain “views from outside” (even if only of fragmentary events, specific works of literature or interpretations thereof) may play a productively subversive (or revising or alternatively also affirmative) role in Czech research into the nation’s own history and literature, as well as concerning the forms of the “national story”, the impulses for its establishment or the consequences that the “story told by the Czechs about themselves” has had within the history of the Czech nation or other nations.

Organising partner universities:

- ❖ Univerzita Palackého, Filozofická fakulta, Katedra bohemistiky (Jiří Hrabal)
- ❖ Univerzita Karlova, Filozofická fakulta, Ústav české literatury a komparatistiky (Petr A. Bílek)
- ❖ Sveučilište u Zagrebu, Filozofski fakultet, Odsjek za zapadnoslavenske jezike i književnosti (Matija Ivačić)
- ❖ Università degli studi di Udine, Dipartimento di Lingue e Letterature Straniere Department (Anna Maria Perissutti)
- ❖ Uniwersytet Jagielloński w Krakowie, Instytut Filologii Słowiańskiej (Natalia Palich)
- ❖ Uniwersytet Śląski w Katowicach, Wydział Humanistyczny, Filologia słowiańska (Joanna Derdowska)

The conference is organised within the framework of the research-education week **Czech-in to Literary Culture** (as part of the programme Cooperation within Blended Intensive Programme within Erasmus, 2021-1-CZ01-KA131-H ED-000008282)

Please send the completed application forms for the conference by **28 February 2023** to the e-mail address: jiri.hrabal@upol.cz