

Editorial

This issue of *Word and Sense* is devoted to the work of colleagues from abroad, who have supported us for many years and pursue Czech Studies not merely as a minor interest, a rare and fragile endangered orchid, but rather as a significant discipline essential for understanding European culture. In spite of the scepticism overcoming not only them but also us here in Prague, these colleagues translate Czech literature and promote Czech culture in all its forms. Czech Studies have become for them a resource for studying Central European culture within a broader framework, as well as a starting point for theoretical considerations transcending the limits of one fairly small region. This is one more reason why we print their texts in their various languages.

The texts included here provide an idea of the current shape of Czech studies, of the polymorph nature of its topics and its potential import for us here „in the center“. The issue opens with a phenomenological and narrative analysis of Weiner's *Crazy Silence* (*Ztřeštěné ticho*), written by Petr Málek (University of Hamburg) whose links to this periodical as well as our Department are particularly close. Loosely associated in topic is the essay by Jose Vergara (University of Wisconsin-Madison) on corporeal imagery, language, and identity in Ivan Blatný's *Pomocná škola Bixley*. The section of literary historical studies bring two essays: Žoržeta Čolaková's analysis of K. J. Erben's ballads as a reflection of the hylozoist essence of Romantic mythopoetism, and Kirsten Lodge's (University of Texas) text on vampires in Czech Decadence.

The highly topical issue of representation of Holocaust in art is addressed by Jiří Holý and Šárka Sladovnicková, associated with the Prague Center of Jewish Studies.

Reinhard Ibler draws our attention to Josef Bor's novel *An Abandoned Doll* (*Opuštěná panenka*). Holt Meyer in his extensive analysis of the presence of Julius Fučík in Milan Kundera's oeuvre highlights the importance of changing perspective in reading a text and demonstrates the fruitfulness of the provocative desorientation often brought about by Czech studies pursued abroad. The role of ideology in literature, although from a different methodological starting point, is treated by David Danaher (University of Chicago) in his essay on *Ideology as Metaphor, Narrative, and Performance in the Writings of Václav Havel*. Another look on ideology in literature is provided by Hana Šmahelová in her article *On Science, Ideology and Structuralism*. Ursula Stohler (University of Zurich) employs ideological background for an inquiry into the metamorphoses of textbook interpretations of Remarque's *All Quiet on the*



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Western Front before and after 1989. Contributions by Raul Eshelman, Tamás Berkes and Catherine Servant describe the role of Czech studies in a comparative context and in other national cultures.

The achievements of Czech studies from abroad are highlighted also by the reviews, devoted to books by Anja Tippner, Robert Kiss Széman, Xavier Galmiche and Dariusz Pajak, as well as two glosses on new method on historiography.

Number 23 of *Word and Sense* with its exclusive focus on Czech studies abroad wants to demonstrate the deep links of these “solitary runners” to Czech culture and thank them for their help, support, criticism and their sustained interest in a very specific area. This lifetime interest — thanks to which Czech culture did not remain “a star observable only by a telescope”, as wrote Žofie Podlipská at the end of the 19th century — is also recalled by the translation of an excerpt from Angelo Maria Ripellino’s so far inaccessible essay on his long-time friend Jiří Kolář, selected for us by Annalisa Cosentino.

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