

Evaluation of the Research and Professional Activity of the Institutes of the Czech Academy of Sciences (CAS) for the period 2010–2014

Final Report on the Evaluation of the Institute

Name of the Institute: Institute of Slavonic Studies of the CAS, v. v. i.

Fields, in which the Institute registered its teams:

Languages and literature

Observer representing the Academy Council of the CAS: Taťána Petrasová

Observer representing the Institute: Václav Čermák, substitute observer Eva Šlaufová

Commission No. 12: Languages and literature

Chair: Univ. Prof. Mag. Dr. Stefan Michael Newerkla

Date(s) of the visit of the Institute: October 19 – October 21, 2015

Programme of the visit of the Institute: see attached Minutes from the visit

Evaluated research teams:

No. 1 - Paleoslavistics and Byzantology; No. 2 - Slavic Linguistics and Lexicography; No. 3 - History of Slavic Studies and Slavic Literatures

A. Evaluation of the Institute as a whole

1. Introduction

The Institute of Slavonic Studies comprises three different teams which deal with quite different topics such as Paleoslavistics and Byzantinology, Slavic Linguistics and Lexicography, and History of Slavic Studies and Slavic Literatures.

The institute is one of the most prestigious institutes of the Czech Academy of Sciences in the field of the humanities, but has had to adapt itself to the new political and social situation of the country after the end of the Communist regime. The commission did not have access to the results of the evaluation of the previous period (2004–2009), and so it is very difficult to comment on shift or stagnation in the research, editorial and popularising activities during the period under evaluation.

Notwithstanding evident difficulties the institute has carried out a rich and successful programme of scientific, editorial and cultural activities.

2. Strengths and Opportunities

The institute has a long scholarly tradition and is well known in the Czech Republic as well as abroad. It publishes three peer-reviewed journals of the greatest importance in their respective fields («Slavia», «Byzantinoslavica», and «Germanoslavica»).

Of particular importance is the work carried out by the researchers of Team no. 1 on the vocabulary of the Old Church Slavonic language. The previous achievements in this field and the work which is being done today makes the whole institute almost a symbol for the indispensable investigation of Old Church Slavonic, the first literary language of the Slavs. This language has also a particular importance for Czech culture as it was used also in the Bohemian and Moravian lands in different periods of its history.

Another important strength of the institute as a whole is the evident comparative stamp which characterises it, and which is (or should be) an essential feature of Slavic studies.

3. Weaknesses and Threats

What is a very important strength of the institute, the evident comparative stamp, is at the same time a weakness. Potentially the institute could cover a broad range of scientific subjects and problems; practically, due in part to its reduced dimension in number of researchers and to the difficulty of attracting funds, it can deal only with a limited number of interesting subjects and problems. Moreover, these problems and subjects may be not as attractive for contemporary Czech society as other problems and subjects investigated by researchers working in other institutes.

The individual researchers of the institute are working in quite varied fields, and have to face different problems. The current grant policy works against the focus on long-term projects of the sort the Institute has been known for.

4. Recommendations

Under the current conditions the different teams could on the one hand develop forms of closer collaboration with other teams working in other institutes, but on the other hand this kind of collaboration would not help to strengthen the inner cohesion of the institute.

At this point we would like to add a consideration made independently by the evaluators who had to report on the History of Slavic Studies and Slavic Literatures team: “The Institute of Slavonic Studies has a long tradition, and its existence acquired a specific meaning in the academic Czech (and Czechoslovak) world, and generally speaking in the (political and cultural) values of the Czech lands, as built from the 19th century and symbolised by Masaryk’s philosophical realism. It promoted from the twenties of the 20th century, with other similar institutes, the civilisation ideal of mediation between Slavic and Germanic cultures, based on an agenda of knowledge and “humanity”, which has been assigned as a part of “the meaning of Czech history”. That is why nobody should try to reform the institute of Slavonic Studies without answering the concerns of the scientific community.

The commission was struck by the relative isolation but also by the resilience of the Institute of Slavonic Studies. Indeed, during the last decades, this institute has not been favoured by the geopolitical and epistemological evolution. We could speak of stoicism to characterise the mixture of fatalism and resistance with which the members of the institute face the situation.”

We completely agree with this view, and would like to add a further consideration. A longlasting tradition is of course an advantage, but it can also become a burden, if it is not cultivated with an intense concern for the future. In the case of the Institute of Slavonic Studies, this future is best sought in our view in the preservation and enlargement of its comparative orientation. This comparative orientation can be interpreted in two different (and complementary) ways. First of all in a Slavic one, in the sense of intra-Slavic comparisons; and then at the same time in extra-Slavic comparisons (beginning with German culture), which comprise the whole European context. In each of our European countries all institutions who can help to encourage the study of this European context should be endowed with particular means in order to function better, even if their visibility, to use a fashionable word, is not as great as the visibility of other institutions.

It is quite natural that the reputation of an institute like the Institute of Slavonic Studies is so high abroad. The intense collaboration with several other institutes in the Slavic world and outside is proof of the international prestige the institute has even today, notwithstanding its difficulties. And the fact that three internationally prominent journals like «Slavia», «Byzantinoslavica», and «Germanoslavica» do appear thanks to the efforts of its researchers could prompt the Academy to make an extraordinary effort to support and, if possible, to implement the activities of its three teams. It is a risk, but it is a risk that could be taken also in consideration of the

enthusiasm (albeit not without a certain amount of stoicism, as was mentioned earlier) we deeply felt when we met the different teams working at the institute.

Moreover, an urgent task is to improve even further the cooperation with universities and thereby to succeed in obtaining various financial sources (internal and external grants) for a new generation of Slavists and members of the scientific community who will be able to carry forward not only the historical heritage of Slavic studies, but also their future perspectives and directions. In other words, the further vitality and sustainability of the institute is dependent on a significant modernisation and restructuring. There is legitimate reason and justified hope that younger researchers will be able to sustain the further development of the institute in future. However, this will only be possible with a financial boost and long-term adequate support from the Academy of Sciences. Salaries will simply have to be above the average wage in Prague in order to recruit a promising future generation and keep staff vital as well as guarantee the sustainability and quality of their scientific output.

5. Detailed evaluations

Declaration on the quality of the results and share in their acquisition

The institute's results are of high quality (out of 32 evaluated publications 5 were rated as world leading, 12 as internationally excellent and 13 as internationally recognised).

The output is not so impressive at a quantitative level, but it comprises extremely important publications such as the Addenda and Corrigenda to the Dictionary of Old Church Slavonic, an outstanding encyclopedia on Byzantium, and the above-mentioned journals.

Declaration on the involvement of students in research

Because of the special topics dealt with in the institute, the involvement of students in research is not as easy as in other institutes, but considerable and successful efforts have been and are made in order to attract young researchers. Members of the department also supervised BA, MA and Ph.D. theses and were involved in doctoral study programs, resp. contributed to them with lectures.

Declaration on societal relevance

The institute may not be in the centre of attention of Czech society, because its main interests are not focused on specifically Czech topics, at least in the strict sense of the word, but it has a very important role in investigating several fundamental areas in a broader Slavic and European perspective. Its societal relevance is therefore considerable.

Declaration on the position in the international and national context

It is harder for the commission to judge the position the institute holds in the national context, where maybe it is not as well-known as other institutes. But we can certainly say that the institute has had in the past decades and has even now significance and

a high degree of international prominence. It is for example one of the most famous institutions working in the field of medieval studies in the Slavic world and beyond.

Declaration on the vitality and sustainability

The institute has a well-balanced age structure for the time being, but has some difficulties attracting younger researchers. Moreover, important contributions are being made by researchers of retirement age or close to retirement age. These problems should be considered to ensure the existing high standards and will need to be addressed if the institute is to be sustained by the Academy of Sciences.

Declaration on the strategy and plans for the future

Among the different plans proposed for the next five years, a very interesting one concerns a collective project focused on the figure of Václav Hanka, a pivotal figure in 19th-century Czech culture. The teams' members should as far as possible look for forms of collaboration inside the institute, and at the same time outside, with other institutes.

Of course, the new electronic resources (i. e. an informative portal that gives access to digital platforms dedicated to relevant research results) shall be exploited in future years, but the most important thing will probably be the preservation and, if possible, the enlargement of the comparative perspective that has characterised the institute since its foundation.

B. Evaluation of the individual teams

Evaluation of the Team No. 1: Paleoslavistics and Byzantology

1. Introduction

Within the framework of the Institute of Slavonic Studies of the Czech Academy of Sciences the team no. 1 Paleoslavistics and Byzantology is engaged in three main fields of research and activity. The first is lexicographical, the second concerns editorial and textual-critical activity in the field of Church Slavonic literature and the third focuses on Byzantine studies.

The team is not a very large one, but has a high reputation in the field internationally based on its long tradition.

2. Strengths and Opportunities

The projects carried out by the researchers of the team are of high importance, especially in the field of Old Church Slavonic lexicography. The different projects connected with the *Old Church Slavonic Dictionary* are and will be of great importance for scholars all around the world, because they will enable (and already are enabling) a deeper study of the Old Church Slavonic language.

The already published fascicles of *Addenda and Corrigenda* to the *Old Church Slavonic Dictionary* as well as the first issues of the *Greek-Old Church Slavonic Index* are an indispensable tool for researchers working on the Old Church Slavonic language, and not only on this language, but on ancient Slavic languages in general.

Another strength that has to be mentioned is the close collaboration with the researchers of the Department of Etymology of the Institute of the Czech Language of the Czech Academy of Sciences who are publishing the *Etymological Dictionary of the Old Church Slavonic Language*, which is an essential and standard lexicographical work indispensable for all scholars working in the field of Slavic etymology due to its rich bibliographical data.

Also very important is the Byzantine section of the team. The close ties between Byzantium and a large part of the Slavic world during the middle ages and afterwards form the historical background which explains the great cultural importance of the studies carried out by this part of the Team.

Also the books as well as the articles published by all the Team members deserve a particular praise for their high scientific standard.

The team members have made efforts to popularise their work in the contemporary Czech society, but of course the interest and above all the demand for such activity is not as high as it is for other academic institutions and for institutes more concerned with Czech themes and subjects. But especially in the case of this team its international prominence should be taken into account.

In this regard, the participation of the team members in conferences, especially abroad, forms a critically important part of their dissemination activities.

3. Weaknesses and Threats

We do not see particular weaknesses with regard to the work which has been done in the period under examination, nor with the projects which are planned for the next five years. But of course, there is a more general problem in our modern world in connection with medieval studies, which seem sometimes out of fashion and encounter great difficulties in attracting funding.

If we may be permitted a brief excursus, this fact is particularly strange and paradoxical now, in the context of an extended European Union, because the Europe we live in is for a great part a product of the middle ages when people speaking Romance, Germanic and Slavonic languages, as well as several others, gave birth to the territorial entities which were to develop into our modern states. And as there are still several open questions precisely surrounding the formative stages of the Slavic medieval world, a support to a team like this from part of the Czech Academy of Sciences would be of great value, even beyond the borders of the Czech Republic.

4. Recommendations

The team Palaeoslavistics and Byzantology should on the one hand continue its main activities, and on the other undertake supplementary efforts to implement collaboration with universities and also with other institutes from the Czech Academy (for example with the Teams working at the Institute for Czech Literature on Medieval Czech literature and on Editorial questions).

It should perhaps also consider how to make the rich material collected during the last decades available to a larger scholarly community and begin to work out new projects intended to deepen our knowledge of the Church Slavonic linguistic patrimony.

5. Detailed evaluations

Declaration on the quality of the results and share in their acquisition

The team has a leading position in the field of Church Slavonic lexicography. The other outputs are also important, but are of other nature (for example investigations into particular texts).

This section of the institute also publishes the very important journal «Byzantinoslavica» and takes part in publishing the likewise renowned journal «Slavia» (team members are part of its editorial board and cover diachronic linguistics).

Declaration on the involvement of students in research

Involving students in the scientific work done by the team members is more difficult than in other fields of research because of the complex knowledge everyone who participates in this kind of research has to show: knowledge of the Old Church Slavonic language and, as far as possible, of Greek and Latin, alongside other modern Slavic and non-Slavic languages.

Nevertheless, successful efforts have been and are made in order to involve also students in the research. Moreover, members of the department also supervised a considerable number of theses on all levels.

Declaration on societal relevance

The linguistic material on the Old Church Slavonic languages archived in the department represents a unique resource from a global perspective.

Declaration on the position in the international and national context

The team Paleoslavistics and Byzantinology has been in the past decades and continues to be internationally prominent in the field. It is one of the most famous institutions working in the field of medieval studies in the Slavic world and beyond.

Declaration on the vitality and sustainability

The team has to face several difficulties (fundings, attractiveness towards younger scholars), but the young average age is a positive aspect worthy of comment. At the same time the active presence of some older team members helps to guarantee the transmission of their lifelong experience coupled with a commendable scientific enthusiasm.

Declaration on the strategy and plans for the future

The team is encouraged to work out all the projects presented in the documents. As far as possible the possibilities offered by the Internet should be exploited in order to give access to rich lexicographic material collected in the past.

Evaluation of the Team No. 2: Slavic Linguistics and Lexicography

1. Introduction

The team no. 2 Slavic Linguistics and Lexicography of the Czech Academy of Sciences consists of seven researchers aged between 25 and 55. This team is one of the few in the Czech Republic that focuses on long-term, systematic study of the vocabulary and grammar of selected Slavic languages. Team projects form the core of its scientific activities. Lexicographical and lexicological outputs are intended for both researchers (Czech as well as foreign) and the public at large, and can be used as the foundation for further research.

During the evaluated period, the team's main attention was primarily devoted to vocabulary dynamics in Russian, Ukrainian, Bulgarian, Slovenian, and Croatian, and to comparative study of the grammars of certain West Slavic languages and Russian. It is important to mention also the projects monitoring minority languages – Sorbian and Rusyn.

2. Strengths and Opportunities

Here we would list two outstanding fields of research of the institute:

Lexicographical projects

- One of the principal projects is represented by the *Russian-Czech Electronic Dictionary Database* (it began as a part of the grant project named “A Comprehensive Comparative Description of Russian and Czech Vocabulary with Respect to its Dynamics”). Besides basic vocabulary, this database includes numerous new words and collocations, primarily from the realms of economics, IT, and political and social life, but also from music, sports, film, and everyday life. It includes both formal vocabulary and colloquial and non-standard expressions. The database is currently accessible to users at <http://slovník.slu.cas.cz>.
- In connection with this project we have to mention the lexicographical project – the electronic processing of *Velký česko-ruský slovník* (The Large Czech-Russian Dictionary). This five-volume dictionary was created in the 1970s and 80s and was intended as a counterpart to *Velký rusko-český slovník* (The Large Russian-Czech Dictionary) under the editorship of L. Kopecký. Part of it was submitted for printing at Academia publishers in early 1990, but it was never published.
- Another lexicographic project was brought forward to its final stage: it is the “Ukrainian-Czech Dictionary of Neologisms” (with nearly 4500 entries).

Dialectological and Minority-Research

First of all there is the long-term task of the highest importance: research into Rusyn dialects. This research is exceptionally valuable both for Slavonic studies and for Europe in general. The dialectological collections of the Institute of Slavonic Studies include invaluable materials gathered since the 1920s by Prof. Ivan Pankevych for his planned dictionary of the South Carpathian dialects. At present this material is being converted into an electronic database which currently contains about 57,000 entries.

We have also to mention important dialectological research in Eastern Slovakia and Transcarpathian Ukraine, which should lead to both a description of the current state of the dialects and, after comparison with older materials, to a mapping of these dialects’ development.

Last not least, there is a comparative project focusing on “The Distribution and Functions of Past Verb(al) Forms in Older Sorbian, Old Czech and Old Polish”. It analyzed the functions of past-tense verb forms in Older Sorbian in comparison with the functions of corresponding forms in German, against the backdrop of Old Czech and Old Polish.

3. Weaknesses and Threats

The most severe problem is financing of research and especially of young researchers. If Ph.D. students cannot gain a foothold in scientific work, they soon try to earn their living elsewhere and very seldom return to research. Enthusiasm is an important base for academic work but it cannot overcome the bleak reality of poor remuneration.

A major problem is the fact, that important (lexicographical) projects are financed mainly within short-term agreements. This does not allow sustainable staff planning.

International cooperation and mobility programs depend to a great extent on external financing (e. g. EU-financed projects).

4. Recommendations

Strive after more international connections, grants, projects and cooperations. Under the given circumstances it is not easy to sustain the achieved high standards. Under better working conditions (richer fundings, larger number of researchers), other projects – involving also non-Slavic languages – could be thought of, but at the moment this perspective unfortunately doesn't seem very realistic.

5. Detailed evaluations

Declaration on the quality of the results and share in their acquisition

The instruments and methods of research are up to date with international standards of comparable projects. Published lexicographical databases are very useful and of high quality. The same can be said about the minority and dialectological projects.

The Slavic Linguistics and Lexicography team takes part in publishing the important journal «Slavia» (team members are part of its editorial board and cover synchronic linguistics).

Declaration on the involvement of students in research

The Slavic Linguistics and Lexicography team is very concerned about the involvement of students in research in order to recruit a rising generation for research work to keep staff vital and to guarantee the sustainability of their scientific output

Declaration on societal relevance

The linguistic material archived in the department represents something unique from a global perspective.

Declaration on the position in the international and national context

In spite of the limited number of team members, the research work and the publications have met with a very positive response in the scientific community (from a national as well as an international point of view).

In the Czech Republic the team as well as the institute as a whole are regarded as prominent representatives of Czech Slavic studies.

Declaration on the vitality and sustainability

The vitality and sustainability of the small team is to a certain extent dependent on cooperation with other, mostly foreign Slavists who can participate in their projects, e. g. as co-authors of publications.

Declaration on the strategy and plans for the future

The team will continue the work already begun on collective and individual tasks: research into the grammatical structure of Slavic languages, including semantics and

pragmatics and research into the vocabularies of those languages from a comparative standpoint, as well as trends in lexical development.

- Work on three other lexicographical projects will continue: preparing the Russian-Czech Electronic Dictionary Database, digitising the Large Czech-Russian Dictionary, processing the Slovenian-Czech Lexical Database.
- During the given period work on all the sections of the Russian-Czech Electronic Dictionary Database shall be finished and made publicly accessible in its entirety.
- In as much as technical, staffing, and financial possibilities will allow it, electronic processing of the Large Czech-Russian Dictionary will continue.

For the work of the team's Bulgarian studies section, significant cooperation with the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences is planned. It began in 2013 and was confirmed in 2014 via an inter-academic agreement with the Lyubomir Andreychin Institute for Bulgarian Language at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. In 2016 this inter-academic cooperation will see the preparation of a collective monograph the working title of which is *Slavic lexicography at the beginning of the 21st century*.

Evaluation of the Team No. 3: History of Slavic Studies and Slavic Literatures

1. Introduction

After the renewal of its activities in 1990, the rejuvenated team continued the best historical traditions of the Institute of Slavonic Studies, mostly in the field of the comparative study of Slavic literatures. At the same time its members focused on their ongoing involvement in the European intercultural Slavic context, especially in literary history and literary criticism. Some team projects are characterised by active participation of foreign partners who often become co-authors of the team's publications.

Many of the projects are concentrated not only on Slavic languages and literatures. The research also incorporates Slavic topics against the background of other fields, especially in the area of Germano-Slavic contacts. The team plays a very important role in undertaking unique research into the life and scientific activity of Russian emigres in interwar Czechoslovakia.

From 2012 to 2016 the team members have been taking part in a project called "Literatur und Wissen" (reflections of philosophy of human knowledge in the texts of literature) headed by an international team based in Prague and Göteborg.

Nevertheless, the present situation of the team is, like the institute itself, quite critical in terms of vitality and visibility: It requires a deep reflection on its revitalisation and a process of re-legitimisation among the academic community.

2. Strengths and Opportunities

The scientific position of the Institute of Slavonic Studies is unique, and this is especially the case for the team of History of Slavic Studies and of Slavic Literatures.

The team consists of a balanced combination of experienced and young members. Two of them are Assistant Professors, five are Ph.D. graduates or have equivalent

qualifications. In the years 2010–2014 they produced 16 scientific books and numerous articles and chapters in monographs.

The team's completed projects, its works on Czech comparative studies in the field of pre-war and present-day literary criticism and Slavic literary history and the rich material offered especially by the Prague-based libraries (mainly Slovanská knihovna) including unpublished manuscripts, documents, correspondence and memoirs could prove to be an attractive resource for foreign students and researchers. This presents a challenge for the team and a reason for its further existence in future.

The team has the specialist skills (the knowledge of the Russian and Czech languages, cultures and literatures) and the archive material to do research on the intellectual history of Russian exile in interwar Czechoslovakia. This forms a subject which this department is uniquely well-situated to investigate.

Another field of research the department is well-suited to are Germano-Slavic, and especially Czech-German cultural interrelations.

The institute could recruit two young scholars thanks to the prestigious J. E. Purkyně Fellowship granted by the Czech Academy of Sciences to perspective foreign researchers and is able to involve them in current research programs (but cannot afford to keep them beyond the few years of their financed studies, see "Weaknesses and Threats" below).

We should notice the fact that the skills of some members are in demand to supplement the offerings available in high schools across the country (part time positions of certain members in the Institute of East European Studies and the Department of South Slavonic and Balkan Studies of the Charles University, numerous external cooperations with Masaryk University and the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ostrava).

The Institute of Slavonic Studies indeed plays an important role of support in the educational activities of those institutions, which often gave up this domain of speciality in their recruitment policy.

3. Weaknesses and Threats

The main problem of the History of Slavic Studies and Slavic Literatures team seems to reside in its quantitative limitations, especially in the number of the team's members: 8 researchers (the departure of Ljubov Běloševská, a strong scholar, caused a notable decrease in the scientific production and the dynamism of the team); 3 further workers (with an uncertain institutional position) and two J. E. Purkyně Fellowship holders from Poland and Austria.

The staff of the department is very small now, therefore the choice of the themes of research and of the areas of Slavic studies have to be limited to such an extent that it is hard to find convincing criteria for the particular choice of subject material.

4. Recommendations

In comparison with the quantity and well-appreciated quality of the outputs the staff seems to be relatively small. The situation has been improved thanks to two J. E.

Purkyně Fellowships (2013–2017 and 2014–2019) granted by the Czech Academy of Sciences to perspective and outstanding foreign scholars.

Nevertheless, it remains an urgent task to improve the cooperation with universities (by means of lectures and seminars, supervisions of BA, MA and Ph.D. theses) and thereby to succeed in obtaining for various financial sources (internal and external grants) for a new generation of Slavists and members of the scientific community who will be able to carry forward not only the historical heritage of Slavic studies but also their future perspectives and directions.

The department should continue in its research in the field of Russian exile in interwar Czechoslovakia and in Czech-German and Slavic-German cultural relationships as both are subjects to which the institute can contribute its unique expertise.

However, in future the department should be augmented by at least two young university graduates.

5. Detailed evaluations

Declaration on the quality of the results and share in their acquisition

The members of the team publish their works in Czech, Slovak, German and Russian. They published 16 monographs (some of them in collaboration with foreign authors), 66 articles in scientific journals, 37 chapters in monographs and 7 in collective volumes. Out of 13 evaluated publications 6 were rated as internationally excellent and 5 as internationally recognised.

Several publications (original works and commented editions) and bibliographies of the team are outstanding in quality. A good example of the application of oral history is a volume that has received positive responses at home as well as abroad containing annotated talks with outstanding Russian emigrants (e. g. Nikodim Kondakov, Grigory Musatov, Nikolay Chkheidze, etc.) in pre-war Czechoslovakia called *Vospominanija, dnevniki, besedy* (ed. by L. Běloševskaja, 2011).

The Czech and German Sorabists M. Černý and P. Kaleta in the book *Pražské stopy Jakuba Barta-Čišinského* (Prague traces of Jakub Bart-Čišinski) follow the relations of this Sorbian poet from the end of the 19th century to his Czech contemporaries and give a survey of the translations of his poetry and correspondence to Czech.

M. Černý edited the works of the outstanding Czech Polonist and literary theoretician Karel Krejčí in the volume *Literatury a žánry v evropské dimenzi* (700 pp.) The volume is accompanied by the editor's introductory chapter and detailed commentaries.

Several times reviewed and highly appreciated at home and in Germany is Siegfried Ulbrecht's book *Schloss Johannesburg. Jauernig und Umgebung. Begegnungen von Personen in einer europäischen Region* (Görlitz 2012).

In the volume *Věci na dně duše* (2012), Anna Zelenková edited hitherto unknown essays of the Slovak literary criticist Štefan Krčméry.

In the volume *Slavica v české řeči* J. Bečka et al. published a complete bibliography of the translations from eastern Slavic languages to Czech published in the years 1890–1918.

Declaration on the involvement of students in research

Two holders of the Jan Evangelista Purkyně Fellowship granted by the Czech Academy of Sciences to outstanding and perspective researchers are successfully involved in the working programs of the team. The topics of the fellowship holders are the “West Slavic Novel of the Second Half of the 20th Century” and “Polish Literature on Holocaust”. Their personal bibliographies show their significant contributions to the team’s work.

But due to the financial conditions of the employees, employment at the institute is not attractive enough to keep its young researchers, except in the few cases of involvement in an international research programme.

Declaration on societal relevance

The original works, bibliographies and editions (based on large-scale, exclusively collected data) are important for the community of specialists in Slavic studies.

The members of the team are engaged in editing the renowned journal *Germanoslavica: Zeitschrift für Germano-slawische Studien* and participate in publishing the important journal «Slavia» (team members are part of its editorial board and take care of its literary section).

Declaration on the position in the international and national context

In spite of the very limited number of team members their publications have met with a positive response in European Slavistics (the list of reviews in foreign journals contains more than 20 items).

In the Czech Republic the team as well as the institute as a whole are regarded as prominent representatives of Czech Slavic studies. Nevertheless, the Institute of Slavonic Studies is engaged in a long-lasting crisis, due to numerous, national and international reasons.

National context:

- a) the structural stagnation of the contribution from the state budget, but especially the low level of individual salaries that the institute can afford to pay (below the average wage in Prague)
- b) in the present situation, the Institute of Slavonic Studies cannot, contrary to other institutes, count on the resources of national project grants (GAČR) and even less on the support of international programs. This lack of resources results in ongoing losses of young researchers, who naturally choose academic opportunities in other structures or even a professional reorientation.

International context:

In some of its fields, the Institute of Slavonic Studies is isolated. The most striking gap here is in Russian institutions, and it resulted in the termination of numerous projects.

The institute has not yet managed to recreate a replacement of an international network (as the European and American academic institutions that could be potential partners are often in precarious situations as well). These difficulties in the

internationalisation are obvious, while the institute remains one of the last in the world to insure the scientific survival of certain specialties.

Declaration on the vitality and sustainability

The vitality and sustainability of the small team is to a certain extent dependent on the cooperation with other, mostly foreign Slavists who can participate in their projects, e. g. as co-authors of publications.

However, with adequate financial support from the Academy, there is hope that the younger team members and students will be able to sustain the further development of the team in future.

Declaration on the strategy and plans for the future

The team plans to prepare and publish further critical editions of hitherto unexplored materials from the heritage of Czech Slavistics, and to publish profiles of Czech and foreign outstanding Slavists. An important task consists in strengthening the role of Czech Slavistics in the European context by means of intensive participation in international publications and projects.

Date: February 5, 2016

Commission Chair: Univ. Prof. Mag. Dr. Stefan Michael Newerkla