

**“Central European Literary Theory (Structuralism, Marxism,  
Phenomenology) and its Reception in the World”**

**Prague, July 10th – 12th 2018**

**ABSTRACTS**

**Institute of Czech Literature**

**(Czech Academy of Sciences)**

### **The Theoretical Formations and their Significances of Eastern European Marxist Aesthetics**

Marxist aesthetics, which came from the Eastern European countries such as Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and former Yugoslavia and Eastern Germany, were fruitful and creative. A lot of important aestheticians stood out and a number of original writings on Marxist aesthetics with a series of innovative notions, categories and methods were published, but there were also some problems with institutionalization, theoretical corruption and crisis of legitimacy of Marxist aesthetics. In the comparison with Western Marxist aesthetics, Soviet and Russian Marxist aesthetics and Chinese Marxist aesthetics there are both similarities and differences. Eastern European Marxist aesthetics is characteristic of its own historicity and originality, which grew up on the background of the different national traditions, modern capitalist societies and the existing socialist realities. Generally speaking, it consists of such fundamental theoretical formations as aesthetics of praxis, theory of realism, critique of modernity, and semiotics. A reflection on achievements and lessons of Eastern European Marxist aesthetics is very important for grasping the contemporary literary and artistic theory and aesthetics.

**Bio** Fu Qilin (1973) is a professor of Literary theory at the College of Literature and Journalism of Sichuan University (Chengdu). He is the chief expert of the key project of China Social Science Fund “Bibliography and Research of Eastern European Marxist Aesthetics”. He has published numerous books on the subject of Marxist aesthetics, for example, *A Study of Agnes Heller’s Thoughts on Aesthetic Modernity* (2006), *The Critique of Grand Narrative and the Construction of Pluralist Aesthetics: A Study of Reconstructing Aesthetics of Budapest School* (2011), *Eastern European Neo-Marxist Aesthetics* (2016) and *A Study of basic issues of Eastern European Neo-Marxist Literary and Artistic Theory* (2017). He can be reached at fuqilin11@163.com.

### **Jan Mukařovský and Marxism**

Jan Mukařovský as an important representative of the Prague school has made great contribution to literary theory and aesthetics, especially with his structural poetics. Generally speaking, many works about Prague school or Mukařovský often paid more attention to the relationship between Mukařovský and Ferdinand de Saussure, Russian Formalism or Structuralism. However, some scholars also mentioned the intellectual influence of Marxism on Mukařovský’s work, for example René Wellek in his *History of Modern Criticism*, Jan M. Broekman in the *Structuralism: Moscow–Prague–Paris*, or Ondřej Sládek in *The Metamorphoses of Prague School Structural Poetics*. Last but not least, the Soviet Marxist aesthetician M. S. Kagan in his *Lectures on the History of Aesthetics* discussed the characteristic of Marxism in two books of Mukařovský published in 1930s. I agree that from the early stage to the last one in Mukařovský’s academic career, his theory has a close relation to Marxism. This paper tries to elaborate this issue. In my view, Mukařovský not only probes the core proposition of Marxism, that is to say, interconnection between literature, aesthetics

and society through its concepts of structure, sign and function, but also used the Marxist methodology, namely, dialectics and historical materialism.

**Bio** Gao Shubo (1983) is a doctor of literary theory and teaches western literature at the College of Literature and Journalism of Sichuan University (Chengdu). He is the leader of the China Project of Philosophy and Social Science “Research on Contemporary Western Marxism and World Literature”. His interests in scholarship include western literary theory, Marxist aesthetics and semiotics. He published book *Genre, Space and Literary History in the Perspective of Distant Reading: On Franco Moretti’s Literary Theory* (2016) and several essays, such as “The Reception of Jan Mukařovský’s Thought in China” (2015) and “The Introduction to the Aesthetics Thought of Stefan Morawski” (2016). He can be reached at shixian220@163.com.

Tomáš GLANC

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### **Political Dimension of the Central European Literary Theory in Works and Activities of Some Members of the Prague Linguistic Circle (1948–2018)**

The Prague Linguistic Circle presented itself since it was established in 1926 as a research community, operating exclusively by objective, provable methods and findings. Nevertheless, links of at least some of the members to political issues are inevitable. The political dimension was symptomatic for the discussion on the “language culture”, by several participants of the Prague Linguistic Circle also their relationship to Masaryk, Lenin, Bucharin or to the bolshevik revolution did play a role. The new intensity became the political level in the reception of structuralism after WWII. Not only was an important matter the official ideology, criticizing the decadent bourgeois scholarship of the past. Maybe even more relevant was the new generation of scholars, who reconsidered the heritage of inter-war research on the field of function, structure and the sign, emphasizing by new means and in their contemporary context the political orientation of humanities. During 1960s, intellectuals like Robert Kalivoda, Vratislav Effenberger or Jiří Levý delivered new readings of Mukařovský's work and some writings by other members of the Prague Linguistic Circle, that has arisen during 1920s and 1930s and became pivotal in context of French Structuralism and Neo-Marxism. Also our today's discussion on the methodology in humanities includes the area of a political reading as an possible inspiration and a challenge. What has in this regard the Central European Literary Theory of the past to propose?

**Bio** Tomáš Glanc (1969) works at the Slavic Department of the University of Zurich. He authored monographs *Videnije ruskich avangardov* (1999) and *Autoren im Ausnahmezustand: Die tschechische und russische Parallelkultur* (2017), co-authored the dictionary of Russian avant-garde *Lexikon ruských avantgard 20. století* (2005) and edited Roman Jakobson's lectures on Russian formalism *Formalistická škola a dnešní literární věda ruská* (2005). Now, he is working on the project “Performance Art in Eastern Europe (1950–1990).” He can be reached at tomas.glanc@uzh.ch.

**The Wiener Kreis and the Cercle linguistique de Prague: (K)eine Wahlverwandtschaft?**

Among the intellectual currents that emerged in Central Europe at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, i.e. in the 20's and in the 30's of the *novecento* (we start counting the 20<sup>th</sup> century from the Great-War 1914–1918 on only, and stop counting it with the fall of the bi-polar world in 1989–1991; even if curtailed in that way, the 20<sup>th</sup> century is horrible enough), so among the intellectual currents that emerged in Central Europe at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, some are recognized as topical by literary scholars (like Marxism, structuralism, phenomenology), some are not (like logical empiricism), some are even not recognized as such (like existentialism). The present contribution does not aim at changing what is, and what is not taken into account by nowadays literary scholarship (which is, anyway, the reign of *la mode*); it aims at setting an example of how to grasp in their entirety great chapters from the past of scholarly research, and of how to make historical experience pertinent to both present and future research in philology and philosophy. Proceeding in the purest structuralist way, two historical phenomena are evaluated by mutual differentiating within three particular definition sets: (i) as corpora of scholarly texts, (ii) as fora of scholarly discussion, (iii) as instances of intellectual currents.

**Bio** Tomáš Hoskovec (1960) graduated first in mathematics (set theory, algebra, topology), then in linguistics (Indo-European comparative-historical linguistics, functional-structural description of language); opened a new way in Baltic studies, while making them a philologically well-grounded case study of cultural-historical complexity of Europe, and founded encompassing philology, which conceives language as the potentiality to produce and interpret both spoken and written texts, conceived in their turn as cultural-historical events, subject to social norms. After twenty years of eventually fruitless efforts to cultivate the academical *milieu* in his country, he left university and has been subsequently living as a freelance scholar. Committed to the Prague Linguistic Circle since it resumed its activities in 1990, he assumes actually its presidency. He can be reached at [thoskovec@seznam.cz](mailto:thoskovec@seznam.cz).

CHEN Tao

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**Chronotope: *Bildung* of Bakhtin's Phenomenology**

Time-space as the immediate experiential grasp establishes the relationship between time-space and the existence. Life itself is the existence. Time-space as the descriptive concept of the existence is integral to life. Based upon Einstein's relativity, Bakhtin borrows the metaphor of chronotope to explain the inseparability of time and space. Circling around the *Bildung*, the spiritual production of chronotope becomes the solid evidence of emancipatory *Bildung*. *Bildung* in Bakhtin's understanding is the unity of subject and object, of essence and phenomenon in the new seeing to rediscover and redefine the existing world, thus chronotope becomes the inseparable unity of human's life development, penetrates into the human's soul and forms the image of human's idea, which is the core of *Bildung* of Bakhtin's phenomenology.

**Bio** Chen Tao is an associate professor at the China Women's University (Beijing). She is interested in modern Slavic literary criticism, narratology and Bakhtin. Recently, she undertakes the nation-funded project of Bakhtin's literary criticism research. She can be reached at 210560171@qq.com.

LI Zhixiong

Thu 12:00

### **Chinese Environmental Problems Today and Marxist Eco-criticism**

Chinese environmental problems today—the second decade of 21<sup>st</sup> century and the period after 30 years Reform and Open, are seriously existing and lastingly vexing. As matter of fact, these problems have been mainly caused by economic impetus as well as by administrative corruption. For solutions of these problems, this article argues for employing Marxist strategies and campaigning against administrative corruption. Marx and Engels advocate the unity of man with nature necessarily existing in industry of every epoch. In political economics term, Marx expounds his views on the mutual relations of production and consumption. In view of dialectics of nature, Engels confirms the possibility that we can control remote natural consequences of our most ordinary productive activities. Since 1980s, in the Eco-Marxist camp, orthodox Eco-Marxists propose that resource should be conserved and utilized wisely, while humanist Eco-Marxists seek to harmonize relations between the human and nonhuman realms. All these Marxist traditions suggest that Marxist strategies could be relevant to environmental problems in China today. However less work has been done than it should be. In essence, the Marxist strategies are the solutions to curb economic avarice and to eliminate administrative corruption in China today. And these strategies are appropriate for today's China where the political system can be a buttress for the implementation of these strategies if reform nowadays undertakes deeper than the previous 30 years.

**Bio** Li Zhixiong (1966) is a professor of literature at the Xiangtan University (Hunan Province). He obtained his PhD from Zhejiang University in 2007. He is a council member of China Marxist-Leninist Literary Theory Association, China Religion Association, Hunan Association of Comparative & World Literature. He is the author of *Aristotle's Classical Narrative Theory* (Xiangtan University Press, 2009), *A Literary Study Concerning Marx and His Culture* (Henan University Press, 2017) and of numerous articles concerning literature, Marxism, Christian Culture and narratology. Currently he is an academic visiting scholar at University of Bonn, and was previously at University of Oxford (2012–2013), Seattle Pacific University (2007), and University of Athens (2006). He can be reached at lzxxtu@163.com.

Petr PLECHÁČ

Wed 14:30

### **Versification and Authorship Recognition**

Contemporary stylometry has developed extremely accurate and sophisticated methods of authorship recognition. The logic behind them is to tell the author by measuring the degree of stylistic similarity between the text in question and particular texts written by candidate

authors. Various style markers are being taken into account for this purpose: frequencies of words, frequencies of parts-of-speech, frequencies of character n-grams, frequencies of collocations... One important aspect of style (of one important form of literature) however seems to be completely disregarded – versification. The talk will present the ongoing project focusing on whether characteristics such as frequencies of stress patterns, frequencies of rhyme types etc. may be useful in the process of authorship recognition. Some pilot experiments comparing various classification methods (Delta family, SVM, Random forest) and their evaluation with Czech, German, Spanish, and English poetry will be presented.

**Bio** Petr Plecháč (1985) works at the department of Theory of literature and in the Versification research group at the Institute of Czech Literature (Czech Academy of Sciences). He is involved in the quantitative and corpus verse studies, especially in possibilities of automatic verse analysis and frequency characteristics of poetic texts. He co-authored the introduction to the theory of verse *Úvod do teorie verše* (2013), the monograph on corpus verse studies *Kapitoly z korpusové versologie* (2017) and published numerous articles on the subject. He is a member of the Prague linguistic circle and can be reached at plechac@ucl.cas.cz.

František A. PODHAJSKÝ

Tue 15:30

### **When the Supply Meets the Demand: Fučík's and Mukařovský's Histories from 1930s**

Historical depictions of the relationship between Czech structuralism and Marxist criticism predominantly take the form of a battle between two unequal adversaries. Maybe the reason is that the primary sources of this renditions are mainly published polemics or introduced administrative measures. The presented paper shall attempt to escape this established scheme by comparing some results of their parallel intellectual endeavour. Jan Mukařovský's exercise in the structural history of literature, the book-length study on the Milota Zdirad Polák's poem *The Sublimity of Nature*, and Julius Fučík's Marxian essay on the history of the Czech National Theater will serve as the point of departure for this comparison.

**Bio** František A. Podhajský (1980) received his MA in aesthetics from Charles University in Prague and his Ph.D. in Czech literature from Masaryk University in Brno. He taught at the Faculty of Arts of the Masaryk University and at the Faculty of Humanities of the Charles University. He works at the Czech Literary Bibliography Infrastructure at the Institute of Czech Literature (Czech Academy of Sciences). He edited two collective monographs: *Julek Fučík—věčně živý!* [Julius Fučík forever!] (2010) and *Fikce Jaroslava Haška* [Jaroslav Hašek's fictions] (2016). Now, he prepares the collection of Julius Fučík's critical work and is working on the monograph on Czech Marxist literary criticism. He is a member of the Brno narratological circle and can be reached at podhajsky@ucl.cas.cz.

### **Possibilities: On Lukács' Theory of Genres**

Possibility shows the precondition and prerequisite of the existence of an object. The study on the possibility is actually the considerations of historical-philosophical background, cultural context and subjective issue. Lukács attached "possibility" to his studies of aesthetics and genres of art especially in his early works, such as the *History of the Development of Modern Drama*, *Soul and Form* and *Theory of Novel*, concerning on the relationship between people, society, art works and the lost totality. This study has started from "possibility" in the works of Lukács, concentrating on the environment of the development of different genres, and primarily taking drama as an example to interpret and explain the role genres were playing in the solution to the break-up of the totality and the close relationship.

**Bio** Qin Jiayang (1993) is a PhD student at the College of Literature and Journalism of Sichuan University (Chengdu). Her dissertation project concentrates on Lukács' early work on drama. She published several essays on marxist interpretation of semiotics and can be reached at francesca@163.com.

### ***Metri causa*: The Nature of Meter and Editing of Poetic Texts**

The editorial interventions in poetic texts based on metrical criteria (*metri causa*) always had its champions (e.g. Richard Bentley, R. D. Fulk, Leonard Neidorf) as its adversaries (e.g. George Kane, K. S. Kiernan, J. D. Niles). The proposed paper neither wants to take sides nor to repeat their arguments (which can be summed up by two opposing quotations: "meter is actually the most reliable means of presenting a convincing case for textual corruption, since it is the area in which probabilities are most readily quantifiable" /R. D. Fulk/ × "Emendations that are made *metri causa* eliminate poetic license by fiat. They can take no account of departures from the norm for special reasons or effect" /J. D. Niles/). The aim of the proposed paper is to outline the nature of metrical norm and its relevance for textual studies and editorial work (reading MSS, establishing a history of text, detecting and emending corruptions). The approach to meter, embodied in the paper, proceeds from the theory of the Prague school (Jan Mukařovský, Miroslav Červenka). The argumentation will be based on the recent experience with the transformation of the full-text database of Czech poetry of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Czech Electronic Library) into the Corpus of Czech Verse (i. e. a lemmatized, phonetically, morphologically, and metrically annotated corpus of 2,7 million verses).

**Bio** Jakub Říha (1982) works at the Department of scholarly editing and in the Versification research group at the Institute of Czech Literature (Czech Academy of Sciences). His spheres of interest are history of verse, rhyme, and strophe theories. The core of his research lies in the post-1850s Czech poetry. Methodologically, he builds on the tradition of Czech structuralism, drawing inspiration from the French metric studies as well (B. de Cornulier). He co-authored the introduction to the theory of verse *Úvod do teorie verše*

(2013) and is preparing the monograph on the verse of Czech poet Jan Neruda. He is a member of the Prague linguistic circle and can be reached at riha@ucl.cas.cz.

Peter STEINER

Tue 15:00

### **Authoring the Proletariat: Lukács, Bakhtin, Luther**

The presentation will scrutinize Lukács' concept of “imputed consciousness” from the perspective of the “author/hero” relationship as formulated by Bakhtin. It will also entertain the question of its parallelism with the Lutheran principle of “imputed righteousness.”

**Bio** Peter Steiner (1946) is Yunshan Chair Professor at the Quangdong University of Foreign Studies. He authored books *Russian Formalism: A Metapoetics* (1984) and *The Deserts of Bohemia: Czech Fiction and Its Social Context* (2000), as well as numerous articles on the history of Czech Structuralism, semiotics, Czech and Russian literature. He can be reached at psteiner@sas.upenn.edu.

TANG Ke

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### **Doležel's Theoretical Progress Revisited**

Lubomír Doležel is yet not a very familiar name to Chinese academia. The fictional worlds theory contributed by Doležel has been discussed recently in literary criticism (Zhang X-j 2011; Zhang Y 2017) and has been referred to in rhetoric studies (Huo 2014), whilst Doležel's inventive treatise *Occidental Poetics: Tradition and Progress* is seldom touched upon. This essay aims to examine the methodologies of these two theoretical projects of Doležel in a whole picture and explore the inspiration they can offer to the study of comparative poetics.

**Bio** Tang Ke is an assistant professor at the School of English Studies of Shanghai International Studies University. She obtained her doctoral degree in comparative literature in 2015 at Fudan University (Shanghai). She was a visiting student research collaborator 2013–2014 in the department of comparative literature at the Princeton University. She published several essays on topics of poetics and narratology in CSSCI journals in China. She can be reached at ivankajin@hotmail.com.

WANG Hongzhang

Thu 10:30

### **The Reception of Phenomenological Hermeneutics in Contemporary Chinese Literary Scholarship**

Contemporary Chinese literary scholarship has continued to be heavily influenced by the introduction and translation of Western literary theory and criticism, including structuralism,



Marxism, and phenomenology, whose methodology and critical vocabulary never fail to provide a mixed inspiration for generations of Chinese scholars in their study of traditional Chinese critical literature as well as their contemporary critical practice. The current paper by no means attempts to be exhaustive in its treatment of the reception of all Western critical schools in modern China, as, in fact, no paper of this kind can be sweeping enough to effectively comprehend so wide-ranging cross-cultural phenomenon. Having read much and published some papers in related fields, the author only intends to identify some significant moments of Chinese reception of phenomenological hermeneutics since the early 1980s, and tries to offer some of his personal reflections upon the reception and consequent influence found to have been exercised especially by Martin Heidegger, Roman Ingarden, and Hans-Georg Gadamer. The author's approach is highly selective and particular attention will be given to perennial critical problems regarding the nature, interpretation and reception of texts, problems that figure equally important in the history of Chinese and Western literary theory and criticism.

**Bio** Wang Hongzhang (1960) is a professor of English, Chair of the Department of Translation and Interpreting at the College of Foreign Languages and Literatures, Fudan University (Shanghai). He specializes in comparative literary studies and is the author of numerous books, essays and articles, including *Western Literary Theory and Comparative Poetics: A Collection of Critical Essays* (2012), "*The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons*" and *20th Century Western Literary Theory* (2005), and *Comparative Literature and Euro-American Literature Studies* (2004). He has also published many Chinese translations of works in literature, history and philosophy by such authors as J. M. Coetzee, John Dewey, Eighth Earl of Elgin, Ted Honderich, and Joyce Carol Oats. He can be reached at hzwang8@fudan.edu.cn and whz\_fd@outlook.com.

YUAN Zhe

Tue 13:30

### **The Marxist Interpretation of the Prague School Sinology**

Based on structuralism, semiotics and Marxism, the sinology of the Prague school has formed a unique sinology research and interpretation paradigm. This article tries to explore the paradigm of the Prague school research on Chinese literature from the perspective of Marxist theory. The paper concentrates predominantly on three questions. First of all, how did sinologists of the Prague School view the relationship between society, reality and literature? What is the theoretical source of this relationship? Secondly, how does the sinology of the Prague school interpret Chinese literature in the context of world literature? And finally, how did the sinology of the Prague school discuss the relationship between proletarian and revolutionary literature in the context of Chinese modern literature?

**Bio** Yuan Zhe (1991) is a PhD student at the College of Literature and Journalism of Sichuan University (Chengdu). Her main areas of interest include sinology, inter-cultural studies and translation studies. She published a study on the sinology of the Prague school recently and can be reached at 605875768@qq.com.

### **Theoretical Journey of Modern Slavic Literary Theories to Contemporary China**

In the 1980s, introduction and studies of works of Ingarden, Mukařovský, Bakhtin, Propp, Jakobson, Shklovsky and Lotman began to appear into the view of the academic circles of contemporary China. However, there does exist disequilibrium in certain fields, such major schools as Russian Formalism and Prague Structuralism and the introduction and interpretation of such classic works as Bakhtin's and Mukařovský's. There is a new phenomenon in contemporary Chinese literary criticism that it is not only the awareness of modern Slavic literary criticism as a unity standing right across from the modern Anglo-American and European continental peers but also the task for us to fully explore its grandeur, originality, richness and influence since the 21st century. The book *Introduction of Modern Slavic Literary Criticism* (2011), the sessions of international symposiums on modern Slavic literary criticism held in China (2012 in Beijing, 2016 in Guangzhou), and the launch of top Nation-funded research project of "modern Slavic literary criticism classics and their Chinese translation and interpretation" (2018–2022) signify that the introduction and studies of modern Slavic literary criticism are promising in contemporary China.

**Bio** Zhou Qichao is the first PhD of Russian language and literature study of the People's Republic of China. He served as a research fellow at the Institute of Foreign Literature in Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. He is now a professor at the Institute of World Literature and Comparative Literature at the School of Humanities of Zhejiang University (Hangzhou). His main research interests include Russian literature, literary theories of Russia and Soviet Union, modern Slavic literary theory, and the study of comparative poetics. He published books on Russian symbolism and Slavic literary theory. He was chief editor of the first Chinese translation of collected works of Nicolai Gogol (9 volumes), this work earned him a prize for "the prominent contribution to the popularization of Russian literary classics and refreshing the image of Russian Literature." He is the deputy chairman of the Society of Chinese and Foreign Literary Theories, chairman of the Chinese Society for Bakhtin Studies, and chairman of the Chinese Society of Foreign Literary Theory and Comparative Poetics. He can be reached at zhou010@mail.ru.