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MARXISM, COMMUNISM AND CZECHOSLOVAK ARCHAEOLOGY

ABSTRACT: The 1948 political situation radically changed the former Czechoslovakia. For decades the Communist regime has been influencing political, social and ideological progress. The new ideology was supposed to be strongly reflected in social sciences including archaeology. This is why we are dealing with the influence of Marxist ideology in the subject of archaeology in Czechoslovakia between the years 1948 and 1989. We can state that this influence was slightly different in intensity before and after 1968. The application of Marxism has in most cases been strictly ideological and often tendentiously applied. However, its assertion was never applied in broader aspect. Although we notice few genuine efforts for scientific conception of Marxist archaeology in the sense of historical materialism, it is clear that in our environment, it was never destined to be able to cross the dogmatic barriers. Marxism in Czechoslovakia was not evolving and it never reached the high level of Marxist methodology in Western Europe.

KEY WORDS: Marxism – Czechoslovakia – Ideology – Historical materialism – Communism

Ideological influence and direct political pressure on scientific research are common features of totalitarian regimes. The most distinct examples are Nazi Germany and the communist Soviet Union. But a similar situation could be observed in most if not all countries of the former Eastern Bloc, where the only allowed political party was communist with official state ideology known as Marxism-Leninism.

The impact of Marxism on archaeological research was therefore discussed with varying intensity in almost all post-communist countries. In 1991, right after the fall of communist regimes in the former Eastern Bloc, Ian

Hodder published his well-known book, *Archaeological theory in Europe* (Hodder 1991). Papers regarding the situation in archaeological theory in Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia were also presented. All of them briefly commented on the impact of Marxism and communism on archaeology in their countries (Kobyliński 1991, Laszlovsky, Siklódi 1991, Neustupný 1991: 260–262). The studies regarding the subject were published by Polish (Barford 1995, Lech 1998, Tabaczyński 1995) and Romanian (Anghelinu 2007) archaeologists. However, except for the valuable but short contribution by E. Neustupný (1991) we have not

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as yet observed any deeper analysis in Czech and Slovak archaeology. There may be various reasons why it did not happen. Firstly the archaeological community from former Czechoslovakia has little experience with constructive criticism against their own colleagues and the old and most respected generation in the archaeological community was raised on communist ideas and may still be ashamed of them. On the other hand, the younger generation may have a problem in really understanding communism and Marxism and so it may be too challenging for them to correctly evaluate its real impact on scientific life. However, we believe that critical self-reflection of any science can be beneficial from the point of view of methodological standards. It may even be necessary if we want to continue productive theoretical research. By pointing out the totalitarian practices our discipline could experience so much needed catharsis, even if we already know that this process could only be achieved by a wider consensus of the archaeological community. It may be symptomatic, but we still notice only a small effort to face and challenge our own past. Therefore we aim this paper to be one of the first attempts to highlight the discussion regarding the subject of Marxism in Czech and Slovak archaeology and the influence of communist doctrine.

MARXISM – THEORY AND IDEOLOGY

Probably the most fundamental question if one wants to deal with Marxism is the one simply framed as: *What is Marxism and how to define it?* However simple it sounds, it is a difficult question to answer. Generally speaking, the term Marxism involves philosophical, economical and socio-political theories. They mostly share the similar premises that are usually more or less related to the original (philosophical, economical or socio-political) ideas of Karl H. Marx, respectively (and with this one some can argue) of F. Engels. This may sound as a vague definition, but to fairly describe Marxism and all its subcategories is far greater task than one we are dealing with. Maybe it is more correct to evaluate Marxism "as a tradition of thought, a philosophy, a mode of theoretical production that has and will produce many theories" (McGuire 2008: 73).

All of this and more hints at the problems of scholars who want to deal with Marxism in any subject. The concept of Marxism sometimes fundamentally differs through various groups that identify themselves as Marxists even in western archaeology (cf. Dark 1995: 181, Johnson 1999: 92–95, McGuire 2008, Spriggs

1984). The later Marxist perspective on archaeology emerged almost beyond recognition since the original formulation and development of Karl Marx in the nineteenth century (Johnson 1999: 92). The classical approaches mostly dealt with the basic concept of historical materialism which is a fundamental part of Marxist conception of history (cf. Marx 1953). In 1979 A. Giddens identified at least seven views on materialist interpretation of history (Giddens 1979). One of the last archaeological views on historical materialism is that "material engagement theory considers the processes by which human individuals and communities engage with the material world through actions which have simultaneously a material reality and a cognitive or intelligent component" (Friedman, Rowlands 2005: 122). Another important fact suggested by classical Marxists is that the historical changes are dialectical and driven by class struggle (cf. Dark 1995: 180–182, Johnson 1999: 92–94, Marx 1953).

The later Marxist perspective on archaeology stressed the role of ideology and approached to criticism (Johnson 1999: 94–95, for one of the last attempts see Matthews 2005).

Such a wide spectrum of Marxist approaches to archaeology is a typical outcome of western research in aspect of social sciences, which was different from communist Czechoslovakia. As Spriggs stated, there should not be an attempt to develop a Marxist "school" of archaeology, an attempt which he viewed as impossible (Spriggs 1984: 3). The free research, dispersed in various countries, where it was not forcedly influenced by official dogma, led to a development of dozens of Marxist perspectives that sometimes slightly differed. Sometimes so much, that the *term* "Marxist" gives in itself a little clue as to the nature of an explanation being offered" (Dark 1995: 182).

The key difference between the Marxist perspectives on archaeology in Czechoslovakia and those in western archaeological research is in the basic concept of Marxism(-Leninism) which was viewed in Czechoslovakia as a constant, set by official political doctrine.

Therefore, before we start to evaluate the impact of Marxism on archaeology in Czechoslovakia we should point out that there were two different (even if closely tied) levels of state influence. The first one was political, the second one was ideological. The first one should be understood in a broader political (totalitarian) context. In February 1948 the communist regime assumed power by various political machinations and the communist party became the only one allowed. Democracy ceased to exist and the political system became in all aspects

totalitarian. This had a tremendous (and in recent times much underestimated) impact on all aspects of everyday life, including scientific research. People were not allowed to travel freely and communication with foreigners was strictly controlled and even suppressed by state and police departments (communication with western – "capitalist" countries in particular). Inconvenient citizens and citizens with unsuitable political and social backgrounds had limited options to study and limited opportunities for professional growth. For western and contemporary society unaffected by communism it may be hard to truly understand the relativity of freedom (and in this case the freedom in scientific research as well) when comparing the totalitarian and democratic systems. The only exceptions were during the little more relaxed atmosphere of late sixties and it is well known how the reform movement known as Prague Spring ended in 1968.

The presented political situation must be for that reason taken into account if one wants to understand the environment for scientific research and the (non-) development of true theoretical research. The totalitarian system was supported by official, state ideology, in this case – Marxism-Leninism. The state ideology therefore had to be applied if one wanted to deal with scientific theory. The result was that there were very limited options for theoretical progress. For scientists it was difficult to challenge the rooted dogmatic barriers. The second level of influence was therefore in violently pressed, ideological impact.

The flame discussion that was held by Barford and Lech in Polish archaeological journals (Barford 1995, 2002, Lech 1998, 2002), demonstrate the delicacy of the subject of Marxism, when approached by archaeologists with different cultural and academic backgrounds. We certainly want to avoid such types of discussion based a lot on misunderstandings and personal stances. The aim of this paper is again, to evaluate the impact of Marxism and communism on archaeological research in Czechoslovakia. When official state ideology is supposed to be a part of research, it is sometimes impossible to determine which Marxist perspectives were authentic and which were not. The same goes for dogmatic propositions, mostly when they do not negatively affect the "healthy core" of interpretation. The selected examples which will be pointed out in next chapters were the ones, which approached the subject of Marxism the best, even if the best does not always have to be seen as sufficient.

Still, there is a danger of how to identify Marxism (not only in Czechoslovak archaeology) as well as

people dealing with Marxist theories. Is a person that cites Marxists, and incorporate its theories in its own research Marxist? And what about the person that has to produce research under pressure of a regime that identifies itself as Marxist? What if the person under this influence is producing studies that have to incorporate Marxist theories, even if in the most vulgar ideological sense – are these studies Marxist? And one of the most paradoxical is Marxism-Leninism still Marxism? These are the important questions, demanding answers, which sometimes cannot be entirely delivered without sufficient discussion.

Before we start to evaluate these examples of studies that could be considered as influenced by Marxism (even those influenced by vulgar Marxism(-Leninism)), we should spend a few sentences on the state of theoretical research in Czechoslovakia. The reader could get a false impression that except for the Marxist approaches there was no theory present in Czechoslovakian archaeology. Even if the progressive theory was seriously affected and pressed by political situation, the cases of Neustupný, Soudský, Podborský and Malina and Vašíček are proof that it was possible to produce progressive theoretical research, even if some of them were prosecuted by the regime. However, the theoretical achievements of most Czechoslovak archaeologists described by E. Neustupný in 1991 were mostly at best "half theoretical" with mediocre methodological standards (Neustupný 1991). The majority of archaeologists in Czechoslovakia were (and most of them still are) more or less tied with culture-historical (as well as typological) paradigm.

DEKAN, BÖHM AND THE SITUATION FROM 1948 TO 1968

When communists took control of the country, the so called purges appeared in almost all aspects of everyday life. The dogmatic, vulgar, Stalinist principles of Marxism-Leninism were advanced into the science by force, with the threat of terminating the professional career of inconvenient individuals. The political situation of the early fifties in Czechoslovakia was hence heavily impacted by Russian Stalinism including Stalin's cult of personality which was sometimes also reflected in scientific research. The period of the fifties and sixties is also known for massive investment into field excavations (Podborský 1991), and the special emphasis placed into research of the Great Moravian period, which was supposed to strengthen the idea of common state for Czech and Slovaks (cf. Macháček 2012: 776). Slovakia

still lacked a large enough number of professional archaeologists at the beginning of this period.

Centralization of archaeology was therefore one of the main goals of high ranked archaeologists tied with communist party. Various smaller institutions and journals ceased to exist (Podborský 1991) so the regime could more easily control archaeological research. On the methodological level, the new theories were supposed to originate from historical materialism.

One of the first that responded to circumstances of a changed political situation was the young archaeologist J. Dekan, who presented a paper called *For Stalinist solution of some questions of ethnography* [*Za stalinské riešenie otázok etnogenézy*] in Bratislava and Prague in 1951. In the same year the paper was published (Dekan 1951). The author acclaimed the criticism of linguist N. J. Marr by J. V. Stalin, when he literally stated "the comrade Stalin with brilliant confidence revealed the crucial mistakes of Marr's teaching" (cf. 17). Dekan criticized "bourgeois" scientists such as L. Niederle because of his scepticism against the possibilities of archaeology to show the cultural continuity in the supposed homeland of Slavs (cf. 8). He also blamed another prominent Czechoslovakian archaeologist J. Filip, because in his synthesis *Prehistoric Czechoslovakia* [*Pravěké Československo*] from 1948, we did not learn anything about the protection of material culture in the sense of historical materialism (cf. 55). Although J. Dekan is in his paper sometimes trying to use a more serious, academic approach when dealing with the linguistic problems, his ideological background was limiting his theoretical achievements. Nevertheless, maybe because he did not want to leave anything to chance, at the end he admitted that the discussion is still not closed and in the future it could benefit from "comrade criticism that could point out some mistakes in his paper" (cf. 88).

Even though in 1953 J. Dekan in his 34 years became a dean at the Comenius University in Bratislava, he still should be considered as a young and yet not very influential archaeologist at this time. The first heavy ideological support for Marxism was brought by the prominent Czech archaeologist J. Böhm. His *Study about the periodization of primeval history* [*Studie k periodisaci pravěkých dějin*] published in journal *Památky archeologické* in 1953 became the most important theoretical publication of Marxist archaeology in Czechoslovakia of the fifties and early sixties. He clearly inclined himself to the soviet archaeological science and the historical materialism considered as the only solid ground for scientific progress. The study is framed as an

outline for periodization of prehistory by stressing the conception in the sense of Marxist ideas. As well as J. Dekan at the beginning of the paper he dissociated himself from the "dirty influence" of Marr's School. The basis of his study was the analysis of theoretical models based on the ethnographic observations of L. H. Morgan (1877, 1951) mainly by their interpretations of F. Engels (1948), S. P. Tolstov (1952) and K. V. Nikolskij (1951). Böhm however still maintained his own opinion on the subject. He partly criticized presented models, although he did not believe in unified, uncritical understanding of prehistory only on the basis of archaeological sources. He sought the only possibilities in their mutual interaction. From the current point of view we could complain of unnecessary quotations of quasi theoretical studies of V. I. Lenin and J. V. Stalin (Böhm 1953: 5, 7, 12). But on the other hand we should not forget about the political situation and already mentioned Stalinist cult of personality, which so highly placed archaeologists such as J. Böhm had to respect. Even if the presented study was stylistically unclear with rather mediocre methodological standards, it must be understood in the context of that time, years before the beginning of the theoretical revolution of (new) processual archaeology, when it could stand out as a relatively inspiring reading.

The mentioned study is not Böhm's first, where he seriously treated the Marxist ideas by the understanding of (pre)historical development in the sense of historical materialism. We should also mention his *Study about the beginning of feudalism in Czech countries* [*Studie k otázce o vzniku feudalismu v českých zemích*], published in the journal *Český lid* (1951), which soon after its publication caused rather lively discussion in the Czechoslovakian archaeological community. The summarisation of his Marxist ideas was published in the book *Overview of Czechoslovak history* [*Přehled československých dějin*] (1958a). The Böhm Marxist legacy was also the source of inspiration for some contributors (mainly J. Neustupný, J. Filip and J. Poulik) in the two volumes of journal *Památky Archeologické*, dedicated to his sixtieth birthday in 1961.

When dealing with Marxism in Czechoslovak archaeology, we should not forget the impact of the famous Australian archaeologist G. V. Childe. His affiliation to Marxism and his ideological (someone may even say political) background of left-leaning (cf. Gathercole 2009, Harris 1992) were one of the reasons that lead to his relatively high popularity amongst the archaeologists in communist countries (cf. Lasszlovsky, Siklódi 1991: 281, 282, Lech 1998: 87–88). Childe allegedly spoke Russian (Böhm 1958b: 590) and he

made several visits to countries of the Eastern Bloc, including Moscow in the Soviet Union and Prague in Czechoslovakia. He personally knew many Czech archaeologists as well as the already mentioned J. Böhm, who was inspired by him and positively regarded him as a "progressive British scientist" (Böhm 1953: 17). It was not by chance that two of his books were also published in Czech translation (Childe 1949, 1966). It may be paradoxical but even with his Marxist ideological background and popularity among archaeologists from communist countries whom he even inspired, he was still considered in a pejorative way as a "bourgeois" archaeologist by some of them (Böhm 1958b: 590).

NEUSTUPNÝ AND HIS APPROACH

The only author of this period that was approaching Marxism in a progressive way was E. Neustupný. Together with his father Jiří Neustupný, they shocked the small archaeological world in Czechoslovakia and disturbed the congenial status-quo when they wrote *Nástin pravěkých dějin* (1960), next year printed in USA as *Czechoslovakia before the Slavs* (1961). Probably for the first time, the authors almost completely abandoned the basic principles of the then culture-historical paradigm and placed most emphasis on continuity of cultures and describing the economic and social life of prehistoric people. One can argue if this was the first glimpse of processual paradigm, but the way in which the book was written was definitely a breath of fresh air of progressive theory in Czechoslovak archaeology. One of the proofs of its striking theoretical impact was that the book received a rather chilly reception by that time archaeological elite (cf. Kuna 2013: 409). But what is important, it is that particularly the economical parts of the book were indicators of the different approach to Marxism by young Neustupný, who in 1967 published his famous and probably the only "truly Marxist" book *The beginning of patriarchy in Central Europe* [*K počátkům patriarchátu ve střední Evropě*]. Although both Dekan and Böhm were citing Marx studies in their articles, they placed much greater emphasis on later Marxist works such as those by Engels, Lenin and Stalin and it is at least questionable how much they were influenced by former studies of Marx. On the other hand, Neustupný was clearly pursuing the original (economical) ideas of Marx, which heavily influenced his scientific approach. It is most evident in the chapter about ownership where he abandoned later Stalinist ideas and once and again described private property in the original

Marxian sense as a "social relation between those who have and those who have not" (Neustupný 1967: 44).

By clever citing of writings by Marx and Engels, Neustupný also reworked some of their theses. It was mainly the issue of social division of labor and the beginning of patriarchy. According to Neustupný, the first social division of labor was not the separation of animal husbandry from the growing of crops (as Engels suggested), but the specialization of some communities on the exploitation of raw stone for stone tools. The rise of man in social hierarchy and the beginning of patriarchy should be sought at the time of discovering the scratch plough pulled by cattle (Neustupný 1967: 37, 62). We are not evaluating the eligibility of using these terms from the current point of view, but in any case it was very conductive work of its time which by its content (by stressing the impact of economy) came very close to the western approach to Marxism. It was the first and probably the only paper where the Marxist methodology was creatively used and not ideologically abused. It was not incidental that it was published in the more relaxed atmosphere of the late sixties.

One has to wonder, why was Neustupný able to proceed to so high theoretical level with such success and others not? J. Böhm was too much tied to communist regime and his high placement (vice president of Academy of Science and director of Archaeological department) required ideological (Stalinist) status-quo. He also entered the new political era as a highly profiled archaeologist and as a representative of old-school culture-historical approach which was in its older version already exploited. Mostly the same could be applied to other, unnamed high ranked archaeologists of that time. Beside his archaeological role Böhm is also known for his successful attempts in centralization of archaeology by structurally rebuilding it according to the soviet model. The other archaeologists, the young generation, educated in the fifties either did not want to approach this delicate subject because of various reasons, were under too strong an influence of cultural-historical paradigm which due to their educational background they were not able to overcome or simply lacked sufficient intellectual ability.

Neustupný was according to his own words (Kuna 2013: 407) strongly influenced by his father J. Neustupný. It almost sounds obvious due to their cooperation on the already mentioned book *Czechoslovakia before the Slavs*. From his later works it is therefore evident that his educational background was much more "progressive-friendly" than that of his colleagues. This little advantage however could never solely help him to

get such achievements and one again has to reckon his personal and intellectual abilities. But yet again, why is his Marxist approach so different? Maybe because his approach was not particularly Marxist *per se* (at least not in Czechoslovak sense). By stripping the Marxism of ideological paddling and issue of class-struggle to core Marx economic ideas which were in the current state of economic research still of relatively high standards, he completely redefined the answer to question "What does it mean to do Marxist archaeology?". It is evident that Neustupný understood Marx and freely, we can almost say that with some sort of enjoyment, comprehended his theory to his own.

Then another question arises. Why he later abandoned his "Marxist" ideas? As we will describe later, the political situation changed once again after the liberal atmosphere of the Prague Spring. This clearly influenced Neustupný, but by studying his vast theoretical writings, which he published over more than 50 years it is also evident that as soon as he had gone through (or even exploited?) the particular theoretical subject he already begun to work on another one. This constant need for improvement and researching new ideas probably led him to "the development" of his own semi-processual approach which arose simultaneously with the one of L. Binford and D. Clarke. Neustupný was later at the end of the sixties and at the beginning of the seventies even more influenced by other ideas of North American and British archaeologists, which he later admitted (Kuna 2013: 413, Neustupný 1994: xi). Neustupný probably independently and rather quickly realized that there is more to study than the application of Marxist economic theories to archaeology and the processual revolution of New Archaeology even more opened the possibilities of research for him. The needs of future archaeology were clearly defined in his award-winning essay published in journal *Antiquity* (1971). Still, his constant search of future paradigm was noticeably made unpleasant by the communist era of normalization, when (still in sense of processualism) according to his own words he rather specialized on collaboration with natural sciences, math and computer programming (Kuna 2013: 410).

Neustupný's case was proof that although on very limited scale, it was still possible to maneuver to progressive theory. The already mentioned massive investments in archaeological excavations, which were supposed to be as monumental as everything in the fifties and sixties, further enhancing the idea of giant communist progress, produced a huge amount of archaeological material. Although the majority of archaeologists felt safe in the steady waters of cultural-

historical and typological paradigm, some of them understood the necessity of a new approach, if they wanted to correctly evaluate the amassed collections of artefacts and new data. Bohumil Soudský could be considered as one of the very few that adopted (one can say that he also created his own) new, (semi-)processual approach. Soudský was definitely a man of new innovative ideas, even if he failed to address them more properly (and frequently) in his studies. By leading the huge excavation on Bylany site, he encountered the hypothesis of settlement-rotation (Soudský 1962, 1966), which he tried to confirm by later excavations (Soudský, Pavlů 1972) and even if he failed (Květina, Končelová 2011: 198), by adopting the high standards of excavation methods and introducing the new statistical and database methodological systems (cf. Demoule 2002: 5–6) together with Neustupný (although separately and in case of Soudský on smaller scale) introduced the processual ideas of New Archaeology to Czechoslovak archaeology.

THE SITUATION FROM 1969 TO 1989

After the more liberal sixties and the occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1968, and because of the changed socio-political situation archaeology began to change as well. We can agree with E. Neustupný and his statement that even if somebody believed in Marxism before 1968, very few believed in it during this so called "normalization period" (Neustupný 1991: 261). The neo-Stalinist regime desperately tried to maintain a status-quo and any personal opinion that was not following official standards became suspicious. This rather "dangerous" atmosphere can be considered as "theory unfriendly" and therefore it further supported the so called *Materialschlacht* approach, already typical of central European archaeology (Gramsch 2012).

Some archaeologists such as B. Soudský and Z. Vašíček became persona non grata. B. Soudský was always closely tied to French archaeology, so after the occupation of Czechoslovakia by soviet armed forces he decided to "extend" his visit to France, which caused animosity among communists in Czechoslovakia. His name was supposed to be erased from archaeological science in his homeland, and the publication of the results of his many-years leded excavation was stopped. He died of cardio-vascular problems in 1976 in Paris (Demoule 2002). Persecuted in his own country was an excellent processual theorist – Z. Vašíček. Because of alleged state-treason he was imprisoned and later expelled from professional archaeology while he involuntarily worked as manual laborer. However it did

not forced him to stay silent and together with his colleague J. Malina (and under his name) published some of the most important theoretical books (Malina 1977, 1980, 1981). Vašíček later in 1981 emigrated to Italy.

During the "normalization", the ideological centre of Czechoslovakia became the Archaeological Institute of Slovak Academy of Science in Nitra with the new director B. Chropovský. With his high political profile in the communist party he eventually became the coordinator of archaeological research for the whole of Czechoslovakia. He eagerly organized the so called "philosophical-methodological" seminars and conferences, in which Marxist ideas were supposed to be implemented into archaeology. The most important outcome of these activities was the conference held in Nové Vozokany in 1974. The papers were later published in the book *Basic methodological problems and marxist categories in archaeology* [Základné metodologické problémy a marxistické kategórie v archeológii] in 1978.

Particularly dogmatic were two papers in this book, where only vague phrases and quotations of Marx, Engels and Lenin were used. In his opening essay Chropovský (1978) warned against the infiltration of bourgeois philosophy and ideology into scientific theory and emphasized the basic ideological features of Marxist methodology. According to him, Marxism revealed the patterns of the evolution of society and promoted the teaching about the origin of man on the level of real science. The scientific basis of Marxist-Leninist methodology was supposed to be the unity of dialectic and materialism, theory and practice, justness and party-spirit in its widest sense. This proposition of party-spirit introduced the roughest anti-scientific ideology. If scientific research is subordinated to the principles of a political (in this case communist) party, we cannot talk about real science. Chropovský's ideas were also criticized by J. Malina (and Z. Vašíček), who mentioned some contradictions in his paper. Among the other things he pointed out the misuse of some terms such as method, methodology, theory, etc. as well as the fact that Chropovský reduced the theory to adjustment of archaeological material to common propositions (Malina 1981: 336). This criticism was not without consequences. The book in which Malina's work was published was banned.

Little more specific than Chropovský was M. Kliský in his paper that explained the origin of class (Kliský 1978). By citing the classics of Marxism he tried to explain terms such as first and second division of labour. Beside the improper examples he used in support of his arguments, he did not help to clarify the origin of social

classes and social differentiation. The other authors in the book more or less successfully presented the themes they received according to Marxist methodology (for example – matriarchy, the social division of labour, slavery-like formation, etc.).

In 1978 the archaeological institute in Nitra also published the translation of the soviet publication *The Leninist ideas of studying the history of primitive communal, slave and feudal society* [Leninské myšlienky v skúmaní dejín prvotnopospolnej, otrokárskej a feudálnej spoločnosti]. Fortunately, despite the initial idea, the book had no effect on Czechoslovakian archaeology.

Although it was only a latent form of usage of specific Marxist idea, some kind of exception was a popular theme of "military democracy". Because of the extensive field excavations, many particularly rich warrior graves of the Bronze and Iron Age were discovered and archaeologists tried to explain their occurrence in Marxist terminology (cf. Paulík 1974). One of the most serious was the attempt by D. Koutecký in his study dealing with the Bylany culture (1968). By analyzing the individual economic aspects, he reached the conclusion that the strong ruling class with military features appeared during the Early Iron Age (Koutecký 1968: 479–484).

It may be surprising, but the author that tried to express Marxist theory with probably the most compelling approach was a German archaeologist, living for a brief time in Slovakia – Sigrig Dušek. The study *The question of military democracy in Slovak prehistory* [K otázke vojenskej demokracie v pravekom vývoji Slovenska] published in journal *Slovenská Archeológia* (Dušek 1973), was also dwelling on the idea of military democracy, but tried to advance the subject with an as yet unprecedented method. Although we can still observe the same ideological barriers that author did not want or was not able to overcome, there is at least an attempt towards the synchronization of individual Marxist ideas with the prehistoric development in Slovakia and an attempt to achieve at least some theoretical progress in Marxist archaeology.

One of the most serious works of this period is the book by R. Pleiner *Otázka štátu ve staré Galii*. The author cited some original works by Marx and Engels, and even tried to carefully expand a few of their conclusions. Unfortunately he also comprehended some infirm ideological formulations mostly the ones regarding the class society and the exploitation of Celts after 100 BC (Pleiner 1979: 89).

The presented papers and books are from amongst the very few that used Marxist theory for more than

simple ideological statements. During the normalization, it was almost obligatory to quote the classics of Marxism or some official statements of communist party meetings in the prefaces of a doctoral thesis. In the main Czechoslovak archaeological journals, theoretical Marxism was almost absent and it could be said that it was sufficient to at least ideologically comprehend it in editorials where were reflected important state anniversaries such as jubilee communist party meetings, celebrations of Slovak national uprising, etc. To illustrate their dogmatic nature we could point out especially one contribution by B. Chropovský: *The communist party of Czechoslovakia – the guarantee of scientific research* [*Komunistická strana Československa – záruka rozvoja vedy*] published as an editorial in the journal *Slovenská Archeológia* in 1971, in which the origin and leading role of the communist party of Czechoslovakia (KSČ) were strongly emphasized (Chropovský 1971: 287–290). Very strong was the ideological nature of many papers published in historical-archaeological journal *Historica Carpathica*.

The case of Chropovský is a typical outcome of communist Europe. There are striking similarities between him and another archaeologist, Joachim Herrmann from GDR. Both of them were academic leaders in their countries and both of them were highly placed in communist political structures. Maybe it is no coincidence that they were both engaged with archaeology of Slavs, the popular propaganda tool of Soviet Union. Both of them were considered as devoted and reliable communists and maybe that is why they were supposed to control and ideologically manage archaeology in their countries.

CONCLUSIONS

We could ask ourselves a question. How to evaluate the influence of Marxism on Czechoslovakian archaeology? Was it a change of paradigm in the sense of T. Kuhn theory? By the way, his influential book *The structure of scientific revolutions* was by some miracle published in a Slovak translation in 1982. We have to state, that the change of paradigm after 1948 did not happen in the classic "Kuhn" sense. There was not a normal evolution and revolutionary change that brought the accumulative development of scientific cognition, but it was a violent interruption that forced new methodology and ideology. Fortunately this abused Marxist ideology was not, in a broader sense, applied to Czechoslovakian archaeology very often. The majority

of archaeologists working in the fifties had attended pre-war "non-Marxists" schools. Czechoslovakian archaeology was strongly tied to German archaeological research, which after World War II ceased to produce theoretical studies and instead focused even more on publishing the already mentioned *Materialschlacht* studies. The situation was similar in the whole of Central Europe – especially in the former Eastern Bloc, as it was recently well described by A. Gramsch (2012). Even in Czechoslovakian universities archaeological theory did not receive sufficient attention. The emphasis on archaeological research in Czechoslovakia was placed mainly on excavations, its documentations and consecutive publications of acquired (mostly raw) data.

Therefore one of the main reasons why Marxism was not widely implemented into theory was in the general approach to any theory. The culture-historical tradition was deeply rooted into Czechoslovakian archaeology and the forced Marxist change in paradigm with mostly weak methodological standards only covered the stable traditional core with a coat made of rather simple dogmatic ideology. Except for some methodological approaches by E. Neustupný there was no real Marxist archaeology in the sense of high methodological standards that achieved some form of western Marxism (cf. Kristiansen, Rowlands 1998, Spriggs 1984). As was mentioned before, western Marxism was mostly not limited by strict dogma (except some excesses within post-processualism). On the other hand we cannot imagine a way in which rigid state institutions in Czechoslovakia would accept the western Marxism that developed almost beyond recognition since its original formulation by K. Marx in the nineteenth century (and we are not taking into account the abuse of the original formulation by Lenin and Stalin which were so fundamental for official state ideology). Marxism in Czechoslovakian archaeology probably never had a chance to escape its vulgar, dogmatic form, which was later mostly abandoned in western scientific theory.

It may be ironic but it is the neo-Marxist approach to ideology that can be used to denounce the practice of Marxism in Czechoslovak archaeology. Some Marxist thoughts and achievements were quite influential for western social sciences (Johnson 1999: 92–97) and it is hard to imagine current archaeology without them. But the same stands for some of Kossina's achievements, and we all know how even more poisoned ideology was attached to them. There is simply no place for any rigid (especially the dangerous ones) ideologies in science.

To summarize, Marxism in Czechoslovak archaeology never achieved a significant status. The applied Marxist

perspectives were so limited, so static, unprogressive and mostly dogmatic that Marxism never had a chance to even equally coexist with the culture-historical approach never mind to replace it. When the regime changed, the most important archaeologists simply accepted Marxism-Leninism as an official state ideology and it is not important if they believed in it (and because of the terror of Stalinism it is hard to denounce them if they did not) but that they did not see a reason to completely change their paradigm. It is similar to the situation in Romania (cf. Anghelinu 2007: 30). The culture-historical paradigm with its *Materialschlacht* studies therefore widely dominated. On a progressive theoretical level, even some semi-processual approaches were much more understood (cf. Neustupný 1991) and accepted than Marxism. The archaeology in Czechoslovakia was developing little differently than the archaeologies in other communist countries, such as Poland (cf. Lech 2002) or the Soviet Union (cf. Klejn 2012), even if they shared few common characteristics mostly related to the official communist party.

Every year in November in the Czech and Slovak republics we are bringing back the memory of the Velvet revolution of 1989. The former Czechoslovakia was supposed to open itself to the western world. We have to ask ourselves what has really changed. There are (almost) no political obstacles, but archaeology in our countries (particularly in Slovakia) is still mostly reserved and uncommunicative to theory even sometimes with a denouncing attitude. Normalization had the desired effect and archaeologists still do not like to talk about theory. But even Marxism cannot be simply denounced because of bad past experiences. It is up to us to freely explore the possibilities of any approach to archaeological theory.

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