

# **CZECH-IRISH CULTURAL RELATIONS**

## **1900-1950**

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An abbreviated early version of the Czech text appeared as an article in *Souvislosti* 19.3 (2008). Cover image: Czechoslovak Honorary Consul Karel Košťál with his wife Ludmila in front of the Dublin Consulate building during World War II (Archive of the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs).

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## CZECH-IRISH CULTURAL RELATIONS, 1900-1950

The nineteenth century meant primarily the introduction of Ireland as a topic in the Czech cultural milieu, combined with the interpretation of the Irish political agenda for the purpose of Czech national activists and the first visits to Ireland (Václav Petrů, Jiří Guth Jarkovský).<sup>1</sup> The twentieth century then brought a greater balance in mutual relations, particularly as regards personal contacts. A number of intellectuals and public figures started to appear on both sides whose thoughts became the source of reciprocated inspiration. While the primary impulse had still been inherited from the nineteenth century, i.e., to look at oneself in the mirror of the political struggle taking place in the other country, it seemed that the edge had been taken off of radical nationalism, since many national aims had already been accomplished. The fact in turn enabled a rather more self-assured perception of both the domestic and the international situation. In contrast to the previous century, Czech admiration for Irish politics was gradually superseded by Irish interest in the Czech national revival, and especially in the Czech struggle for the legal equality of the Czech and the German languages.<sup>2</sup>

### Flourishing Relations and Mutual Admiration

Czech-Irish relations were spurred in the new century most importantly by the visit of journalists working for foremost British papers to Austria-Hungary

<sup>1</sup> See Daniel Řehák [Samek], "Irsko jako téma a obraz v české literatuře 19. století" [Ireland as a Theme and Image in Czech Literature of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century], *Cizí, jiné, exotické v české kultuře 19. století* (Prague: Academia / KLP, 2008) 156-67.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Rev. Thomas A. Finlay, "The Saving of a Nation's Language," *New Ireland Review* 18.2 (October 1902): 65-72, or Charles Munro, "The Prospects of the Irish Language Revival," *New Ireland Review* 18.3 (November 1902): 160-65.

in June 1905. The trip was exceedingly well organised: the group was headed by the English “friend of the Czechs,” now almost forgotten historian and novelist James Baker (1847-1920) who had paid particular attention to the Czech Lands in his studies and novels. The 1905 Jubilee Exhibition was naturally among the chief destinations of the visitors. The arrival of the train with the British journalists in Prague triggered the weaving together of the lives of several Czechs and Irishmen, since the party included two influential figures, Count Horace Plunkett (1854-1932), who was President of the Dublin Press Fund, and barrister and journalist Richard John Kelly (1860-1931), editor and co-owner of *The Tuam Herald*. The role of guides was assumed by a daughter of the British Honorary Consul Wentworth Forbes, director of the Prague National Theatre and translator Karel Mušek (1867-1924) and his English wife Alice Hillstead (1870-1957).<sup>3</sup>

Mušek and Kelly quickly found common ground while visiting important cultural institutions and memorials in Prague and other Czech cities. Similarly to many others, Kelly was fascinated by the beauty of Prague and was moreover surprised that the Czech national spirit had completely taken over the ancient “German” city.<sup>4</sup> Despite the fact that Kelly already knew a significant amount about Bohemia, he still found an inspiration for the Irish national revival, delayed by the Famine as it was, in the reality of Czech-language signs in Prague streets. He considered their existence a clear proof that even the impossible may be accomplished wherever there is a determination of national leaders and a sufficient awareness on the part of the people.<sup>5</sup>

The visit of the journalists was followed by an unexpected postscript: Kelly sent forthwith the text of *In the Shadow of a Glen*, a play by John Millington Synge (1871-1909), to Mušek. Mušek translated it swiftly into Czech and staged it at Švandovo divadlo, thus becoming the first of Synge’s translators in the Continent to have his translation produced. Moreover, Mušek proceeded to visit the West of Ireland in the following year in order to

<sup>3</sup> Karel Mušek, “Z návštěvy Angličanů” [From the Visit of the English], *Národní listy*, 22 June 1905: 1.

<sup>4</sup> It is indicative that it was precisely in 1905 that the Prague-born scholar of Jewish origin Julius Pokorný, who was to become an Indo-European linguist, Celtic philologist and medieval Irish specialist of world renown, left the city together with his parents, as they felt the city was becoming increasingly more provincial due to the Czechs. See Pól Ó Dochartaigh, *Julius Pokorný 1887-1970* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2004) 19-24.

<sup>5</sup> The first of Kelly’s articles about Bohemia was published prior to his arrival in the country. Cf. Richard John Kelly, “Bohemia and Ireland,” *The Freeman’s Journal*, Special Edition, 1 July 1905: 7.

study the traits and dress of the people, so as his forthcoming production of the play at the National Theatre had as authentic a stage design as possible.<sup>6</sup> He met Synge and other authors associated with the Irish national theatre on the occasion. His visit to Lady Gregory at Coole Park resulted, however, also in sceptical thoughts concerning the current Czech political claims, since a discussion with poet W.B. Yeats (1865-1939) and playwright Edward Martyn (1859-1923) revealed that the Czechs were not all that oppressed any more, having their representatives in the parliament and receiving a subsidy for their national theatre from the monarchy. This terminated any analogies with the sorrowful fate of the Irish on the part of Mušek, who had to admit to himself that his grumbling over the situation in Bohemia was rather a matter of habit than anything else.<sup>7</sup> With Synge, Mušek hiked in County Wicklow where the playwright explained to him the origin of some of the themes and motifs in his dramas.<sup>8</sup>

Most of the group of British journalists returned to the Czech Lands in 1908, again on the occasion of a Jubilee Exhibition, complemented by the preparations for a Slavonic Congress. Richard John Kelly was the only Irishman in the party this time; after his departure, he wrote a letter of thanks to the editor-in-chief of *Národní listy* (The National Press), complimenting the Czech nation in an ornate manner.<sup>9</sup> Kelly's praise for the Czechs was nonetheless not a matter of mere politeness, as Kelly published his eulogies also in Irish periodicals and gave a number of lectures on the subject.<sup>10</sup> This period culminated in 1910 with the writing of a series of articles for *The Leader*, in which Kelly compared the national revival in Ireland and in

<sup>6</sup> For Synge's letters to Mušek, see *The Collected Letters of John Millington Synge*, ed. Ann Saddlemyer (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983, 1984), Vol. 1 (1871-1907) 109, 158-59, 168-69, 174, 254, Vol. 2 (1907-1909) 73, 88, 184-85.

<sup>7</sup> Karel Mušek, "V zapadlém kraji – Črty z Erina, ostrova hoře" [In a Remote Country – Sketches from Erin, the Isle of Sorrow], *Zvon* 7.23 (1907): 362-65; 7.24 (1907): 378-81; 7.25 (1907): 388-92. Mušek notes that Edward Martyn mentioned having visited Prague eighteen years before, i.e., some time in the late 1880s.

<sup>8</sup> See, e.g., Mušek's photograph of J.M. Synge in Dargle Glen, published in Maurice Bourgeois, *John Millington Synge and the Irish Theatre* (London: Constable and Company, 1913) 15.

<sup>9</sup> Richard John Kelly, "Velectěný pane redaktore!" [To the Most Esteemed Editor], *Národní listy*, 21 July 1908: 7. Translator unknown.

<sup>10</sup> Richard John Kelly, "Ireland and Bohemia," *Irish Ecclesiastical Record* 21 (April 1907): 355-60. Cf. also anon., "Mr. R. J. Kelly, B L at the Matthew Hall," *The Tuam Herald*, 19 January 1907: 2.

Bohemia: he discussed both the athletic movement Sokol (Falcon) and the return of the Czech language into Czech culture.<sup>11</sup>

It is likely that the orchestration of both visits of the British journalists involved Count František Lützow (1849-1916), an avid promoter of Czech history and culture in the English-speaking world and author of the popular books *Bohemia – A Historical Sketch* (1896) and *History of Bohemina Literature* (1899). Since he spent every half year in England, it does not come as a surprise that he appeared also in Dublin in 1909, where he met foremost local intellectuals. These included the famous writer George Moore (1852-1933); their debate concerning the possibility of the revival of the Irish language – recorded by Moore's brother Maurice (1854-1939) – represents another moving tribute to the Czech national endeavour, which was viewed as a potential paradigm for the struggle to restore Irish to the public sphere.<sup>12</sup> The reaction of Irish cultural worthies must have filled Lützow with immense satisfaction concerning his life work, as he amply documented in his commentary of the event by indirect glorification of himself.<sup>13</sup>

In 1911, a collection of adaptations of medieval Irish lore entitled *Keltické báje* (Celtic Myths) by Louey Chisholm appeared from the Hynek publishing house. The volume was translated by Božena Šimková (1881-1958), a Czech Protestant who had spent an extended period in Ireland as a student. Šimková is an important representative of Evangelical students who attended Protestant universities in Britain and Ireland before World War I.<sup>14</sup> The publication of a somewhat peculiar volume *Pohádky ze Zeleného ostrova* (Fairy Tales from the Green Isle) meant a similar event in the area of the translation of Irish legends; the book was published in 1913 by Ivan Krahulík

<sup>11</sup> Richard John Kelly, "Bohemia and Ireland," *The Leader* 21.9 (1910): 210-11; R.J. Kelly, "The Sokols of Bohemia," *The Leader* 21.12 (1910): 282-84; R.J. Kelly, "The Revival of the Bohemian Language," *The Leader* 21.20 (1910): 500-502, 21.21 (1911): 523-24.

<sup>12</sup> Maurice Moore, "Bohemian and Irish – The Fight for a Language," *The Irish Independent*, 2 May 1910: 7.

<sup>13</sup> František Lützow, "Z irských dojmů" [From the Irish Impressions], *Samostatnost* 14.62 (1909/1910): 331-32.

<sup>14</sup> Czech Evangelicals who studied in Belfast included, in particular, Jan Drobny (1863-1952), Josef Souček (1864-1938), Jarolím Nešpor (1865-1939), Rudolf Medek (1884-1958), and Ladislav Funda (\*1889). Jaroslav Ovečka (1882-1953) was a student in Tullamore. Cf. Jan Toul, *Jubilejní kniha českobratrské evangelické rodiny* [The Jubilee Book of the Evangelical Family of the Czech Brethren] (České Budějovice: self-published, 1931).

(1881-1966) under the pen-name Zachar. The title seems to demarcate the content in a rather unambiguous fashion; despite that, however, the only recognizably Irish tale is the story of “Jablko touhy” (The Apple of Desire). The same year saw the publication by A. Svěcený of a selection from the famed collection by the Brothers Grimm, *Irish Fairy Tales*, translated by Antonín Macek as *Irské pohádky o skřítcích* (Irish Tales of Hobgoblins).<sup>15</sup> Irish topics have thus arrived in a completely different fashion.

Czech-Irish personal links, few as they were at the time, featured at least one that certainly merits a mention: the marriage of Eileen Joyce, sister of James Joyce, to Czech clerk of the Živnostenská Bank branch in Trieste, František Schaurek. A reported story of the 1914 wedding has Joyce stay faithful to his reputation of a punster, as he predicted a fruitful union based on the conjunction of “jajce” (eggs in, e.g., Croatian, and the pronunciation frequently given to Joyce’s name by speakers of South Slavonic languages) and “šourek” (scrotum in Czech).<sup>16</sup> It was due to Schaurek, originally Joyce’s student in a language course, that several Czech expressions and toponyms found their way into the author’s magnum opus, *Finnegans Wake*.<sup>17</sup>

Because of the letters he sent to his sister Eileen and František Schaurek, who were living in Prague during World War I, the Irish writer was put on the list of Czech arch-traitors by the Austrian secret police at the beginning of the war. This however happened only due to a curious blunder resulting from the fact that the secret policemen were unable to determine Joyce’s origin, and most likely his actual occupation either.<sup>18</sup> Joyce’s contact with František Schaurek provided, on the other hand, a firm basis for his later communication with Adolf Hoffmeister, one of the translators of his *Anna Livia Plurabelle*.<sup>19</sup> Like the Schaureks, Joyce returned to Trieste, where he

<sup>15</sup> The collection itself, titled *Irische Elfenmärchen* in the original, was the Grimms’ translation of Thomas Crofton Croker’s book *Fairy Legends and Traditions of the South of Ireland* (1825) which they furnished with a long and insightful introductory essay.

<sup>16</sup> Richard Ellmann, *James Joyce* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965) 395-96.

<sup>17</sup> Petr Škrabánek, *Night Joyce of a Thousand Tiers. Studies in Finnegans Wake*, eds. Louis Armand and Ondřej Pilný (Prague: Litteraria Pragensia, 2002).

<sup>18</sup> See the entry James Joyce in *Album velezrádců (Velezrádné rejdy Čechů za hranicemi)* [An Album of Arch-Traitors: The Treacherous Intrigues of Czechs Abroad], introduced by Florian Zapletal (Praha: Alois Hynek, 1919) 100.

<sup>19</sup> Adolf Hoffmeister, “Osobnost James Joyce” [James Joyce the Personage], *Rozpravy Aventina* 6.2 (1930/1931): 13-14, 6.3 (1930/1931): 30-31. Translated into English as

frequently met members of the Jewish community and found there inspiration for Leopold Bloom, protagonist of *Ulysses*. Mr Bloom was modelled on two gentlemen, a Hungarian Jew by the name of Luis Blum and a Czech Jew called Leopold Popper.<sup>20</sup>

Irish texts of the medieval period were extensively studied in Bohemia before World War I by young Indoeuropean scholar and Celtologist Josef Baudiš (1883-1933). Baudiš customarily undertook lengthy preparations for the writing of any of his studies; nevertheless, several times he was provoked to an immediate reaction. For instance, he made a decisive and fundamental contribution to the termination of a protracted polemic between literary historian Václav Schüller and Romance scholar Maxmilián Křepinský over the sources that the important prose writer and poet Julius Zeyer used in his work dealing with ancient Ireland.<sup>21</sup> Baudiš had already made several trips to Corna Mana near Galway in order to study the spoken Irish language, based on a recommendation given to him by a leading Irish language scholar of his time, Rudolf Thurneysen. His 1914 holiday outing to Britain, however, placed him in emigration. His forced stay in the U.K. allowed him nonetheless to deepen his knowledge of Celtic languages, particularly Irish and Welsh. Baudiš met with genuine luck: after he had been detained together with his wife in an internment camp on the outbreak of war, he was released on the grounds of a request filed by the Royal Irish Academy. Should this not have happened, he may have ended up in the notorious concentration camp on the Isle of Man (needless to say, without being given a chance to study the Manx Gaelic). It was due to his Irish friends that Baudiš was able to develop his philological interests throughout the war, which made his involuntary exile in Britain probably the most fruitful period of his life. Already during his first year in the U.K., he published a study of the relationship of the Irish hero Cúchulainn and his rival Cúroí in the Irish journal *Ériu*.<sup>22</sup> Subsequently, he contributed an essay on the cultic tradition related to the seat of the high kings of Ireland, at the Hill of Tara to the same journal in 1916.<sup>23</sup> Celtic philology apart, Baudiš cooperated with the future first president of Czechoslovakia, Tomáš Garrigue

Adolf Hoffmeister, "The Game of Evenings," trans. Michelle Woods, *Granta* 89 (Spring 2005): 240-54.

<sup>20</sup> John McCourt, *The Years of Bloom. James Joyce in Trieste 1904-1920* (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 2000) 226.

<sup>21</sup> Josef Baudiš, "K otázce pramenů Zeyerových" [On the Issue of Zeyer's Sources], *Časopis pro moderní filologii* 2.2 (1912): 114-17, 2.3 (1912): 203-207.

<sup>22</sup> Josef Baudiš, "Cúroí and Cúchulinn," *Ériu* 7 (1914): 200-209.

<sup>23</sup> Josef Baudiš, "On the Antiquity of the Kingship of Tara," *Ériu* 8 (1916): 102-107.



Masaryk, making thus his own modest contribution to the independence of his homeland. His input was nonetheless quickly forgotten after the foundation of Czechoslovakia, as he had not been among the first to return and seize an office or other. Baudiš, apparently disgusted by the manners that in his view came to prevail, accepted a professorship in Bratislava, where he died prematurely in the early 1930s.<sup>24</sup>

## Independence and Autonomy

The year in which World War I ended naturally represented a great turning point in the history of both nations. The Czech dream of autonomy was transformed into the reality of independence, while and the Irish dream of independence was soon to transform into the reality of autonomy. Sinn Féin election posters announced in 1918 Czech and Slovak independence as a model in what were a number of respects: “The Czecho-Slovaks are to-day as free as the English... Be Men and vote for Freedom!” or “The Czecho-Slovaks are demanding Independence. Nobody is quite sure who the Czechoslovaks are. But the whole World knows who the Irish are and would wonder if that ancient Race did not demand Independence. Cannot you be as true to Ireland as the Czecho-Slovaks are to Czecho-Slovakia?”<sup>25</sup>

The customary comparison between the oppression of the Irish and the Czechs was, however, being made in Bohemia as well. The choice of topic was by no means accidental, as demonstrated by two sets of reflections on Irish politics published in the latter half of 1918 by the respected political analyst Karel Hoch (1884-1962). When Hoch discussed the rights of each nationality to preserve its unique characteristics in the concluding passage of his article in *Národ* (The Nation), he wound up by a telling appeal: “Dear reader, please apprehend!” The other article, published in *Česká revue* (The Czech Revue), is remarkable by the date of its appearance: despite the fact that it had clearly been written prior to the declaration of an independent Czechoslovak state, its publication happened to coincide with the days in which history was being shaped.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Václav Machek, *Josef Baudiš* (Praha: Česká akademie věd a umění, 1948). See also Josef Baudiš's file in the Archive of the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

<sup>25</sup> The cited posters are deposited in the National Library of Ireland, Dublin.

<sup>26</sup> Karel Hoch, “Irsko” [Ireland], *Národ* 2.25 (1918): 313-15. See also Karel Hoch, “Irsko I. and II.,” *Česká revue* 12.1 (1918/1919): 25-36, 12.3 (1918/1919): s. 147-55.

A curious commentary on the political enthusiasm of 1918 was provided also by the perspective of the Czech Germans on the events: drawing on the European habit of all the oppressed to compare themselves to the Irish, they cheered free Ireland with the obvious intent to provoke the Czechs who were currently taking over the rule over their country, an event that was both unimaginable and unpalatable for Czech Germans. The situation in the Czech Lands had simply turned around and it was the Czechs who were henceforth to play the role of oppressors. Moreover, the symbolic inversion that had taken place at the end of World War I was to stand at the birth of World War II.<sup>27</sup> The Irish were well aware of these Czechoslovak-German problems due to their own differences with communities settled in the North of the country, which included the ex-rulers of Ireland.<sup>28</sup>

Journalist and owner of *The Tuam Herald*, Richard John Kelly started to write extensively about Czechoslovakia again from 1918 on. The number of his articles concerning Czechoslovakia was so vast that he occasionally lacked words for the headlines, which ended up consisting in various combinations of a few expressions. Kelly continued his massive promotion up till 1922, and then intermittently until 1929, shortly before his death.

In the autumn of 1919, literary critic and translator Artuš Černík (1900-1953) published a series of articles about Irish culture dedicated to mythology, folklore, the visual arts, literature and theatre respectively. The essays were based on the Irish issue of *The Times* of 4 November of the same year. While Černík's effort in compiling the texts was painstaking, the printer corrupted Gaelic terms and Irish names beyond recognition, which meant that the impact of Černík's work was considerably dulled.<sup>29</sup>

Notwithstanding the continuous deepening of mutual knowledge in the respective countries, individual visits were still rather an exception. Irish author Lord Dunsany (1878-1957), a relative of Horace Plunkett, arrived in Czechoslovakia at the end of June 1920. He came to watch the opening night of his play *The Laughter of the Gods* at the National Theatre and to see the

<sup>27</sup> Karel Haltmar [signed: -ar.], "Naši Němci a Irsko" [Our Germans and Ireland], *Národní listy*, 22 July 1921: 3.

<sup>28</sup> Rev. Patrick Gannon, "Bohemia and its Ulster Question," *Studies* 7.28 (1918): 644-58.

<sup>29</sup> Artuš Černík [unsigned]: "Irsko. I. Bájėsloví," [Ireland. I. Mythology], *Tribuna* 1.256 (1919): 7, Artuš Černík [signed: Čk.], "Irsko II. Folklor" [Ireland. II. Folklore], *Tribuna* 1.257 (1919): 1, Artuš Černík [signed: Čk.], "Irsko. III. Výtvarné umění v Irsku" [Ireland. III. The Visual Arts in Ireland], *Tribuna* 1.268 (1919): 4, Artuš Černík [signed: A.Čk.], "Irsko. IV. Literatura. V. Divadlo" [Ireland. IV. Literature. V. Theatre], *Tribuna* 1.278 (1919): 4.

Pan-Sokol Rally of the year. Reflections on his visit in the Czech press imply that Dunsany had taken an active part in promoting the new republic in England and America.<sup>30</sup> One of the earliest Czech visitors to Ireland, on the other hand, was translator and lover of literary curiosities Edgar Theodor Havránek (1896-1964) who travelled to Ireland in the latter half of 1920. Although he left a printed record of his impressions of the country, the motivation for his journey is impossible to establish. It seems that Havránek's stay on the island was only brief, since his article provides a rather condensed, speedy (and not over-emotional) account of impressions from Dublin and its environs.<sup>31</sup> At the same time, Havránek's interest in the dying languages of Europe remains noteworthy, since it included Irish, a language that Havránek however did not speak.<sup>32</sup>

The Irish language was also a matter of interest for linguist and Orientalist Jindřich Entlicher (1876-1926). He owned important editions of Old Irish texts, which eventually came to be lodged in the National Library in Prague. Entlicher's concern was nonetheless purely of linguistic and comparative nature; due to his fleeting habits, he probably never wrote anything about the language and did not translate from it either. Contact between the Czech and the Irish languages took place, moreover, also in a much mediated way. For instance, leading French philologist Marie-Louise Sjoestedt (1900-1941), author of *Phonétique d'un parler irlandais de Kerry* (The Phonetics of the Irish Language of County Kerry, 1931) took a somewhat curious interest in both languages: she studied Czech and Russian at a French school of Oriental languages. Sjoestedt's concern was not merely comparative, as she spent the latter half of 1921 in Czechoslovakia in order to enhance her knowledge of spoken Czech.<sup>33</sup>

Irish Slavonicist John Joseph Regis O'Beirne (\*1887) made for an interesting figure in the Czech-Irish relations of his time. Although his research focused mainly on South-Slavonic languages, he dedicated two articles to Czech writing, published at the beginning of the 1920s in the *Irish*

<sup>30</sup> Anon. [signed +], "O autoru hry Smích bohů..." [On the Author of the drama *The Laughter of the Gods*], *Národní listy*, 4 July 1920: 4. On the patriotic gymnastics organisation Sokol see below, p. 47ff.

<sup>31</sup> Edgar Theodor Havránek, "Napříč Irskem" [Across Ireland], *Tribuna* 2.300 (1920): 4.

<sup>32</sup> Edgar Theodor Havránek "Jazyky, které vymírají. Skizka linguistická a – novinářská" [Languages That Are Dying. A Linguistic – and Journalistic – Sketch], *Zlatá Praha* 44.7 (1926/1927): 142-44 (recte 146-48).

<sup>33</sup> Seán Ó Lúing, *Celtic Studies in Europe and Other Essays* (Dublin: Geography Publications, 2000) 111-12.

*Monthly*. The first of these discusses the importance of the long poem by Jan Kollár *Slávy dcera* (The Daughter of Sláva) for Czech national revival; the other concerns *Legenda z Erinu* (A Legend of Erin) by Julius Zeyer, an adaptation of the medieval Irish tale of Diarmaid and Gráinne, together with its setting to music by Otakar Ostrčil.<sup>34</sup>

A rather important event in the mutual relations was a lecture on the creation and codification of the Czech language delivered by Celtologist Josef Baudiš at a Celtic Congress on the Isle of Man in 1921. It was the only contribution at the congress that did not concern Celtic languages. However, it solicited a wide response in the Irish press, since its content inspired, among others, Douglas Hyde (1860-1949), founder of the Gaelic League and future Irish president.<sup>35</sup>

Young author Karel Čapek (1890-1938) would have made a notable visitor to Ireland. Nevertheless, Čapek never managed to arrive in the country, despite his desire to do so. During his 1924 trip to the U.K., he wrote a series of sketches for the *Lidové noviny* daily, focusing also on the Celtic areas of Britain and on the adjacent islands. Čapek had an avid interest in Ireland but had to face significant difficulties when trying to obtain printed sources about the island, and could not have been unaware of the English barrier of silence and discomfiture at any mention of Ireland. The reverberations of the Irish Civil War with its bombings ultimately persuaded him not to travel to the island. Despite his absence from Ireland, Čapek included a chapter devoted to Ireland in his *English Letters* (Anglické listy); it however treats rather of the attitude of the English to Ireland than about the country itself.<sup>36</sup> A visit to Ireland was paid in the same year by a Prague student of history, Welsh-born John Emlyn Williams (\*1896) who subsequently wrote a report on the shape of the country two years after the end of the Civil War. The report includes a special note concerning a change in the Irish mentality: Williams claims that

<sup>34</sup> John J.R. O'Beirne, "Slávy dcera (The Daughter of Sláva), a Czech Classic," *Irish Monthly* 48 (May 1920): 244-53. John J.R. O'Beirne, "Diarmuid and Grainne in Czechoslovakia," *Irish Monthly* 50 (February 1922): 59-62.

<sup>35</sup> Josef Baudiš, "Re-establishment of the Czech Literary Language," *Transactions of the Celtic Congress 1921*, ed. Rhys Phillips (Beili Glas: Swansea 1923) 154-60. Cf. also anon., "The Lesson of Bohemia," *Réalta a' deiscirt (The Southern Star)*, 16 July 1921: 7.

<sup>36</sup> Karel Čapek, "Listy o Irsku" [Letters Concerning Ireland], *Lidové noviny* – Ráno 32, 9 August 1924: 1-2. Published in book form in Karel Čapek, *Anglické listy* [English Letters] (Praha: Ot. Štorch-Marien, 1924) 82-84. For details of the context, see also Otakar Vočadlo, *Anglické listy Karla Čapka* [Karel Čapek's English Letters] (Praha: JAN, 1995) 73.

cheerfulness had been replaced by self-preservatory cynicism.<sup>37</sup> The consequences of the Civil War were also described by translator and future promoter of Irish literature Aloys Skoumal (1904-1988),<sup>38</sup> who acquired his interest in Ireland for the most part from Josef Florian (1872-1941), an influential publisher from Stará Říše who printed Mušek's translations of Synge's plays.

## Promotion and Propaganda

From the early 1920s, Czech journalists set about to comment on the most recent political developments in Europe with new vigour, and without Austrian censorship. News items concerning Ireland became more frequent and more reliable: Ireland was covered chiefly by foreign correspondents and political commentators of leading national papers as part of their journalistic mission in Britain. Their ranks included the extraordinarily inquisitive Alois Šašek (pen-name Sirius) at *Venkov* (The Country),<sup>39</sup> the indefatigable correspondent František Janča (acronym –a.) at *Lidové noviny* (People's Press), famous graphologist Robert Saudek (as RS) at *Prager Presse*, the perceptive Karel Haltmar (acronym –ar.) at *Národní listy* (National Press), routinist Stanislav Nikolau at *Národní politika* (National Politics) or later, Orientalist and international politics expert Alois Musil at the *Venkov* of the 1930s.<sup>40</sup>

The extensive focus on the Irish political scene was obviously determined mainly by the contemporary Irish struggle for independence and the Civil War at the beginning of the 1920s. Once the situation in Ireland had become stabilised, Irish topics almost vanished from the pages of Czech papers. The desire to learn something about the other country transferred in this period

<sup>37</sup> John Emlyn Williams, "Irská otázka" [The Irish Question], *Československá republika* 245.156 (1924): 1.

<sup>38</sup> Aloys Skoumal, "Cesta do Irska" [Journey to Ireland], *Akord* 1.4 (1928): 100-105.

<sup>39</sup> See also his pre-war article on Irish politics, Alois Šašek, "Boj Keltů v Anglii o samosprávu (Problém národa a socialismu)" [The Struggle of Celts in England for Home Rule (An Issue Concerning the Nation and Socialism)], *Akademie (Socialistická revue)* 16.3 (1912): 103-107.

<sup>40</sup> Information about these articles comes from the Collection of Newspaper Clippings of the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Výstřižkový archiv MZV) deposited in the National Archives of the Czech Republic (Národní archiv ČR). The articles are listed in an electronic database available at <http://ualk.ff.cuni.cz/ibibliography/index.htm>.

fully to Ireland, since the Czechs had by then achieved all political aims for which they had used Irish historical parallels, while a new perspective on Ireland took a long time to develop.

In Ireland, on the other hand, the image of the Czech language revival was absolutely essential as a model for the defenders of Irish Gaelic in this period. The exceptional nature of the Czech model in the context of the languages of small nations may be documented, for example, by a series of articles published in 1925 by the Irish language activist Liam Pádraig Ó Riain (1867-1942) under the title “Lessons from Modern Language Movements.” Of the total number of eight articles, the part entitled “Czech Struggle” takes up four sequels, apparently representing to the author the most vital instance of a successful struggle for the emancipation of a language among small European nations.<sup>41</sup>

A representative of the Czechoslovak Consulate in London who had been in charge of the Irish agenda since 1924, František Pavlásek, was dispatched to Dublin in the middle of April 1926.<sup>42</sup> His delegated task was to seek for a candidate for the office of the Honorary Consul. Pavlásek produced an extensive report about the two weeks that he spent roaming through the Dublin business circles. He listed at least twenty individual candidates, which he had however rejected all for a variety of reasons.<sup>43</sup> Towards the end of 1926, a friend of Czechoslovakia of a long standing, journalist Richard John Kelly was selected to become Honorary Consul, apparently on a recommendation by Jan Masaryk, son of the President and current Ambassador to the United Kingdom. Kelly accepted the offer as an honour; nevertheless, miscommunication between the two parties probably ensued. The idea of the Czech authorities was that Kelly rent representative rooms in Dublin city centre, as his own house, magnificent as it was, did not seem quite suitable for the purpose of consular service due to its remoteness from the city. The “friend of the Czechs” was however not inclined to undertake such a major investment and as a result, gave up the title of Honorary Consul in early 1927. His announcement induced profoundly negative feelings on the Czech

<sup>41</sup> Liam P. Ó Riain, “Lessons from Modern Language Movements,” *Réalta a’ deiscirt (The Southern Star)*, 28 November 1925: 7, 5 December 1925: 3, 12 December 1925: 3, 19 December 1925: 2. On the same issue, cf. also a later article, S. Nic Siothaig, “A Language Miracle. Compulsory Czech,” *Irish Independent*, 1 October 1929: 6.

<sup>42</sup> National Archives of Ireland, file “Department of Foreign Affairs,” no. 318/33 1A.

<sup>43</sup> Archiv MZV (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archive), file “První sekce – konzuláty,” box 35 (Drážďany-Dublin). See also Archiv MZV (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archive), file “Generální konzulát Londýn 1924-1950,” box 5.

side, who labelled the originator of the difficulty rather undeservedly a “miser.”<sup>44</sup> The failed attempt postponed the effort to establish an inexpensive mission in Ireland, while Kelly in time became the Honorary Consul of Estonia.

In the spring of 1927, Milena Illová (1888-1944), women’s rights activist, translator and wife of author of social verse Rudolf Illový, visited Dublin as a delegate of a women’s congress. She went to see, together with other delegates and an unnamed Irish revolutionary for a guide, the royal hill of Tara and the passage tomb at Newgrange in the Valley of the Boyne.<sup>45</sup>

The issue of the Czechoslovak mission in Dublin reappeared on the agenda towards the end of 1929. The Czechoslovak business circles, whose extensive export to Britain had been significantly curbed, were looking for new markets and began to plea for the establishment of suitable representation in neighbouring Ireland. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs eventually decided to set up a full diplomatic mission of Czechoslovakia to Ireland, fulfilling in this manner also the wishes on the Irish side where there was little interest in a mere honorary representation. Major Pavel Růžička (1887-1961), who fought in the Czech Legion during World War I, was finally appointed as the Czechoslovak Consul in Dublin. Růžička started to explore the situation in Irish politics and culture immediately after his arrival. According to a situational report that he delivered, the tendencies in Irish politics were not only anti-British, but also anti-French, while the Irish political and intellectual scene harboured a penchant for Germany.<sup>46</sup> Růžička was a keen observer and hence understood the historical roots of the negative orientation against Britain; nonetheless, this represented blatant discord with the foreign policy of the Czechoslovak Republic, which had been in contrast traditionally anti-German.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>44</sup> On the entire affair, see Archiv MZV (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archive), file “První sekce – prezidium, konzuláty,” box 35.

<sup>45</sup> Milena Illová, “Irsko” [Ireland], *Právo lidu*, 8 March 1927: 1-2, “Zelený ostrov Eirean” [The Green Isle of Eirean], *Právo lidu*, 9 March 1927: 1-2, “Turas na Boinne,” *Právo lidu*, 10 March 1927: 1-2.

<sup>46</sup> Pavel Růžička, “Zpráva o situaci v informační a propagační činnosti” [Report on the Situation in Informational and Promotion Activities], Archiv MZV (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archive), file “Zastupitelský úřad Dublin 1929-1950,” box 8, folder “Propagace čsl. literatury v Anglii” [Promotion of Czechoslovak Literature in England].

<sup>47</sup> Pavel Růžička, “K dějinám a vzniku irského svobodného státu” [On the History and Creation of the Irish Free State], *Zahraniční politika* 10 (11).1 (January 1931): 34-46.

Růžička's initial attempts to promote Czechoslovak culture and industry in Ireland were not easy, as the appellation of the state that he represented met with ubiquitous confusion.<sup>48</sup> He first had to fathom the country he arrived in. Reading volumes clearly did not suffice, what was required was a full comprehension of the entire context. This transpired well during the Consul's futile effort to impose on the Irish press obituaries of Alois Jirásek, prominent Czech national author who remarkably praised the Hussite movement which, however, was a synonym of heresy and the rejection of a united church to all Western Catholics. Růžička, himself a member of a Protestant congregation, encountered here the limits of his promotion skills, since texts of this nature found little response from Irish journalists at the time.<sup>49</sup>

Much more successful were his broadcasts about Czech music on the Irish radio and lectures on Czech history and contemporary Czechoslovak politics that he delivered to various associations, including the Dublin Writers' Club and the Dublin Rotary Club. Still in 1930, Růžička contacted the Royal Dublin Society, donated several books on Czechoslovakia for its reading room and took care to have them placed in a prominent position. Moreover, he began to arrange concerts by Czech musicians with the Society.

A World Eucharistic Congress took place in Dublin in June 1932, which featured the participation of prominent Catholic dignitaries from Bohemia and Moravia. The reports by correspondents from the Czech group clearly suggest that the Czechoslovak delegates were overwhelmed by the piety of the Irish people and the general reverence with which the clergy were treated, a situation hardly comparable with the religious tepidity obtaining at home. Czechoslovak participants at the Congress included, among others, the Abbot of the Strahov Monastery in Prague, Method Jan Zavoral (1862-1942) and politician Jan Jiří Růckl (1900-1938). It is worthy of note that the presence of the national section at the Dublin Congress had been arranged in Dublin two years earlier by Monsignore Alois Kolísek (1868-1931) who however did not live to see the Congress. His brother Karel Kolísek (1872-1947) managed to participate nonetheless, and wrote an extensive article on the activities of the Czech group in Dublin, which he published both in instalments in his journal *Růže lurdská* (The Rose of Lourdes) between 1932

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Aodh De Blácam [signed Roddy The Rover], "A Nation of Detectives? My Problem Puzzled No One," *The Irish Press*, 11 July 1933: 6.

<sup>49</sup> Archiv MZV (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archive), file "Zastupitelský úřad Dublin 1929-1950," box 8.



and 1934, and as a brochure entitled *Venite, adoremus! / Pojd'te, klanějme se!* in 1932. Other referents of the congress included its participants František Cinek (1888-1966), an Olomouc professor of theology, in the journal *Nášinec* (Fellow Contryman) and Alexandr Titl in *Pražský večerník* (Prague Evening Press), and, in a mediated fashion, journalist Josef Krlín (1895-1973) in *Lidové listy* (People's Press).

*The Irish Times* editor Robert Maire Smyllie (1894-1954) was invited through the Czechoslovak Consulate to the Pan-Sokol Rally, the general assembly of the patriotic gymnastics association, in the same year. He was enthralled by the gathering, and wrote a whole series of articles for his paper from his excursion to Czechoslovakia during August and September. These he published under the pen-name Nichevo (from the Russian *nitchevo*, "never mind") and titled "Visit to Central Europe." Apart from Prague, he covered also Slovakia, Bratislava, Hungary and, prominently, Sub-Carpathian Ukraine (then part of Czechoslovakia) which mesmerized him by its mixture of nationalities and the Babel of spoken languages.<sup>50</sup> Smyllie became an avid supporter of Czechoslovakia as a result of his visit, who would prove his worth yet in the difficult times that were to follow.

Gaelic activist Seán Ó Loingsigh (John J. Lynch) joined the ranks of scholars interested in Czech matters in the same year, lecturing in the Irish language in Dundalk about the Czech language revival. The sources he used for his lecture, and later also for an article, were provided by Consul Pavel Růžička, rather than by independent research. Ó Loingsigh's presentation featured a recital of an Irish-language translation of Svatopluk Čech's poem "Náš jazyk" (Our Language), which had been based on an English translation by Paul Selver.<sup>51</sup>

Feminist and widow of the prominent pacifist, Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington (1877-1946) visited Prague in 1932 and was received by President Masaryk, who was a world-renowned defender of women's rights. She was interested, in particular, in the elaborate Czechoslovak system of social benefits.<sup>52</sup> Still in the same year, she delivered a lecture at an arts school in Cork focused on the information and impressions she had gathered. Her lecture and subsequent

<sup>50</sup> Robert Maire Smyllie [signed Nichevo], "A Visit to Central Europe," *The Irish Times*, 11 August - 6 September 1932 (a series of reports).

<sup>51</sup> Seán Uí Loingsigh, "An t-aiséirghe seiceach – Adhbhar dóchais do Gaedhealibh," *The Examiner*, 23 April 1932, "An Scrúduightheoir" supplement: 5, 7 May 1932, "An Scrúduightheoir" supplement: 5.

<sup>52</sup> Felix M. Larkin, ed., *Librarians, Poets and Scholars: A Festschrift for Donall O Luanaigh* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2007) 80.

articles in the press however contained frequent misunderstandings and errors. Consul Růžička was trying to see the disseminated nonsense corrected by sending promotion brochures and books on selected issues to Sheehy-Skeffington. Nonetheless, his effort had little impact as she continued reiterating her mistakes, and Růžička finally gave up.<sup>53</sup>

In January 1932, the Prague String Quartet performed at the Royal Dublin Society concert hall.<sup>54</sup> The reception of their rendering of Czech music was magnificent; despite that, accounts exist that many years after the event, members of the quartet continued to recount their astonishment at seeing Irish ladies knit sweaters in the front rows during the performance.

Czechoslovakia was of some interest, moreover, to Irish literary critic and author Stephen Gwynn (1864-1950), who wrote an article about President Masaryk for *The Fortnightly Review* in July 1933. Gwynn continued to report about Czechoslovakia in his “Ebb and Flow” section in the same journal throughout the second half of the 1930s, while the country has very likely not disappeared from his focus later, since he published a poem entitled “Salute the Czechs” in the early 1940s dedicated to the Czech struggle against the German Nazis.<sup>55</sup>

## Physical Education and Music

In May 1934, German history scholar Mary M. Macken visited an exhibition on Wallenstein in Prague, acting on the suggestion of the Consul’s office. While in Prague, she began to research sources on the Irish participants in the assassination of Duke Wallenstein, particularly Colonel Walter Butler.<sup>56</sup> Macken was also interested in the German minority, and in the critical period of the late 1930s issued an objective assessment of the history and current state of the issue of the German minority in Bohemia.<sup>57</sup>

The year 1934 featured what was probably the most important cultural exchange between the two nations. A reform, or rather the creation of the

<sup>53</sup> Archiv MZV (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archive), file “Zastupitelský úřad Dublin 1929-1950,” box 9, no. 124.

<sup>54</sup> Harold R. White [signed H.R.W.], “Prague String Quartet R.D.S. Recital,” *Irish Independent*, 31 January 1933: 6.

<sup>55</sup> Stephen Gwynn, “Salute the Czechs,” *The Central European Observer* 18.6 (1941): 65; cited from Stephen Gwynn, *Salute the Valour* (London: Constable, 1941).

<sup>56</sup> Mary M. Macken, “Wallenstein and Butler, 1634-1934,” *Studies* 23.4 (1934): 593-610.

<sup>57</sup> Mary M. Macken, “Bohemia – Czechs and Germans,” *Studies* 27.4 (1938): 605-14.

legal structure of the Irish army had been taking place from the early 1920s, consisting primarily in the rejection of archaic British institutions and the establishment of a national character of the Irish military. One of the aspects that was truly due for reform was the insufficient structure of physical education. It is quite natural that Major Růžička, a participant in the famous Siberian anabasis in World War I, was acquainted not only with Irish business and cultural representatives but also members of the military circles. He is likely to have provided a simple explication for the prowess and endurance of Czechoslovak World War I legionnaires by referring to their pre-war membership of Sokol, the largest gymnastics movement of its time. The interest he had generated on the part of the Irish officials resulted in the Czechoslovak Ministry of Defence sending First Lieutenant Josef Tichý of the artillery to Ireland in July. For the following two years, Tichý ran courses of Sokol gymnastics and fencing for Irish army officers. Graduates of the courses subsequently taught at civilian schools, where Sokol exercises were enjoyed, for instance, by the writer-to-be Eoghan Ó Tuairisc (1919-1982), author of the prominent Irish-language novel *L'Attaque*.<sup>58</sup>

Collective exercise subordinated to an aesthetic ideal and underscored by music found avid adherents in Ireland. The musical accompaniment for Irish Sokols was first provided by Czech rally compositions, while the creation of Irish music for the purpose was eventually suggested. The task was performed by a music teacher from an army school, John Francis Larchet (1884-1967), who regularly met with Consul Růžička. As much as the adoption of the Sokol scheme had a generally positive reception, there were still voices asking – and rather justifiably so – why Ireland was accepting a foreign system instead of creating one of its own, based, for instance, on Gaelic games. Another point of criticism consisted in the Irish adopting a scheme developed by a non-Catholic organisation with a significant free-thinking fundament which, moreover, indulged in the pagan attributes of Ancient Greek championship.<sup>59</sup>

Despite these critical reflections, the “Czech way” remained a powerful model for revivalists and others alike, and the interest in Czechoslovakia was rapidly growing. Besides, inspiration came also from the industry, where Czech influences assisted in the renewal of traditional Irish manufacturing. In

<sup>58</sup> Máirín Nic Eoin, *Eoghan Ó Tuairisc – Beatha agus Saothar* (Dublin: An Clóchomhar, 1988) 63. The novel was recently published in Czech translation: Eoghan Ó Tuairisc, *L'Attaque*, trans. Radvan Markus (Praha: Baronet, 2007).

<sup>59</sup> J.J. Murphy, “Physical Culture Plans – A Plea for National Principle,” *The Catholic Bulletin* 24.7 (July 1934): 577-84.

December 1934, an exhibition of Czech glass and porcelain took place at the National Museum of Ireland. It was determined by negotiations with pro-Nazi director of Austrian origin Adolf Mahr (1887-1951) who stipulated, in line with his belief in all-German unity, that Sudeten German companies that were otherwise unlikely to have been selected participate in the exhibition. The Irish press wrote with enthusiasm about the return of the art of glassmaking to Ireland after what had been more than a thousand years.<sup>60</sup> Piano virtuoso Rudolf Firkušný (1912-1994) was invited to Ireland by the Royal Dublin Society in the same year, following a recommendation by the Czechoslovak Consulate, and gave two concerts in November.<sup>61</sup>

The outcome of the Sokol courses was presented at public performances with grand success to large Irish audiences in 1935. The first of these took place in the military camp at Curragh in April, another in the Dublin Porto Bello Barracks in September.<sup>62</sup> The reaction was rapturous.<sup>63</sup> In December, the instructor Josef Tichý came to speak about the organisation of the Czechoslovak Sokol on the Irish radio.

The following year marked the coming to an end of Consul Pavel Růžička's posting. The Consul appeared in an Irish radio broadcast in February 1936 in the atmosphere of militarising Europe, reminiscing about his participation in the Siberian anabasis. His mission to Ireland was concluded by a lavish dinner organised in his honour at the Shelbourne Hotel, with numerous prominent representatives of the Dublin cultural, political and diplomatic spheres present and presided over once again by editor R.M. Smyllie. The dinner really displayed the personal contacts that Růžička had developed due to his personal charm and musical talent, the hospitality of his home and the culinary art of his wife Svatava, daughter of the Chairman of

<sup>60</sup> Archiv MZV (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archive), file "Zastupitelský úřad Dublin 1929-1950," box 9, no. 137.

<sup>61</sup> Archiv MZV (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archive), file "Zastupitelský úřad Dublin 1929-1950," box 8, no. 113.

<sup>62</sup> J.A.P., "Display of New Drill at Curragh Camp. Success of Sokol System," *Irish Independent*, 16 July 1935: 11. Cf. anon., "Sokol System of Training. Army's Display in Dublin," *The Irish Times*, 5 September 1935: 5. See also a Czech reflection by Rudolf Procházka [signed in the table of contents as R.P.], "Sokolská tělovýchova v Irsku" [The Sokol Physical Education in Ireland], *Sokolský věstník* 37.38 (1935): 304-305.

<sup>63</sup> See the poem of praise, anon. [signed P.O.P.], "Sokol," *The Evening Mail*, 5 September 1935: 4.

the Czechoslovak Senate Václav Donát. The couple set out on a return scenic journey through Europe to Czechoslovakia within a few days.<sup>64</sup>

Diplomat Karel Košťál (\*1893) was selected as Růžička's successor. Košťál had previously been First Secretary at the Czechoslovak Consulate in Copenhagen; he made a favourable impression on Dublin journalists immediately after his arrival and was labelled a connoisseur of Anglo-Irish literature. Soon he mastered also the chief issues of Irish history.<sup>65</sup> His mission in Ireland was a successful one as well, particularly as he had been able to take over Růžička's contacts, including the friendship of R.M. Smyllie (Košťál addressed Smyllie "Dear Bertiček [Bertie]"), and to replicate some of his ways, for instance in the music sphere. Similarly to his predecessor, Košťál was an enthusiastic musician, being a very good cellist.

The new Consul founded already in his first year in Dublin (1937) the Karel Kostal Quartet in Chamber Music. Its members included Maud Aiken, wife of the Irish Minister for Defence Frank Aiken (1898-1983).<sup>66</sup> The quartet frequently performed on the radio, where Košťál productively maintained Růžička's liaisons that helped him place not only concerts, but also lectures on Czechoslovakia in broadcasts from Dublin. For example, a frequent participant in the events organised by the Czechoslovak Consulate, Secretary of the Senate of Ireland and prominent musicologist Donall O'Sullivan (1893-1973) lectured on Radio Éireann on 13 March 1937 about the minority issue in Czechoslovakia, unambiguously taking the side of the Czechoslovaks in his discussion.<sup>67</sup>

A year before the catastrophic Munich Agreement, a count of Irish origin Edward Taaffe (1898-1967) sold the Bohemian estate of Nalžovy (Elischau in German) due to financial difficulties. His ancestors had acquired the estate a long time back thanks to their participation in the assassination of Wallenstein. After the sale, Count Taaffe made a permanent move to Ireland. The books owned by his father, former Prime Minister of Austria-Hungary, ended up in a Zink's auction, which necessitated the making of their complete

<sup>64</sup> Svatava Růžičková-Donátová, "Jižní Anglií" [Through the South of England], *Salon* 16.1 (January 1937): 14-15, 33.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. Karel Košťál, "Irsko a Velká Británie" [Ireland and Great Britain], *Zahraniční politika* 17.6/7 (1938): 217-30.

<sup>66</sup> Archiv MZV (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archive), file "Zastupitelský úřad Dublin 1929-1950," box 8, no. 114. The papers of Frank and Maud Aiken are lodged in the archive of University College Dublin.

<sup>67</sup> For the content of the lecture, see Archiv MZV (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archive), file "Zastupitelský úřad Dublin 1929-1950," box 9, no. 128.

list.<sup>68</sup> Fortunately, the family archive was extracted from the auction; still, it remains unsorted until this day. After his return to Ireland, Taaffe was considered as a nominee for the office of the President.

The greatest champion of Czechoslovak issues in Ireland, editor M.R. Smyllie stayed in Czechoslovakia again in November and December 1937. Despite the fact that his reports begin by an account of the grief of Czechs over the death of President Masaryk, Smyllie's destination this time was not the developed west of the country, but exclusively the easternmost area, Sub-Carpathian Ukraine. From there he wrote, under the pen-name Nichevo, a series of articles for *The Irish Times* entitled "Carpathian Contrasts." He focused, in particular, on impoverished Slovaks and Ruthenians, and also on the situation of the Jews and Gypsies. Smyllie crossed the border to Rumania and Poland several times, asking himself interesting questions as regards the future of the region.<sup>69</sup> The entire series was then published in February of the following year as one of the first offprints of the paper, with a dedication to Pavel and Svatava Růžička in Czech.<sup>70</sup>

The second year of Košťál's posting was the year of the onset of the Munich crisis. The eventual Agreement concerning the forceful ceding of the Sudetenland by Czechoslovakia to the German Reich was perceived in Ireland, unlike in the rest of Western Europe, in quite a specific manner. Not only did Czechoslovak agenda have a large number of supporters in the press, but many Irish intellectuals had also been cured of their flirtations with German fascism by the purge within the Nazi party known as the Night of the Long Knives. Some may have still maintained a pro-German stance; however, this was merely due to the traditional negation of British policies. At a moment when British and German 'interests' seemed to converge, the Irish press was given space to freely ponder issues of Central Europe. Naturally, Irish journalists came to side with the small nation. Moreover, the British support of minority interests must have sounded fairly false to the Irish ear in particular, given the historical experience. The British effort to oversee

<sup>68</sup> Bohumír Lifka and Karel Zink, *LI. knižní aukce z knihovny hraběte Edvarda Taaffa a dvou jiných významných sbírek, 14., 15. a 16. března 1938, Hotel Beránek, Král. Vinohrady* [51<sup>st</sup> Book Auction from the Library of Count Edvard Taaffe and Two Other Prominent Collections, 14, 15 and 16 March 1938, Hotel Beránek, Král. Vinohrady] (Praha: Karel Zink, 1938).

<sup>69</sup> Robert Maire Smyllie [signed Nichevo], "Carpathian Contrasts," *The Irish Times*, 15 November - 22 December 1937.

<sup>70</sup> Robert Maire Smyllie [signed Nichevo], *Carpathian Contrasts* (Dublin: The Irish Times, 1938).

policies concerning minorities was in fact ironized also in many of the letters to the editor of the *Manchester Guardian*, suggesting that the Czechs should send a delegate to Ulster to supervise British minority policies there.

A remarkable finale of the year 1938 in which Czech history turned was provided by the performance by the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Rafael Kubelík at the Dublin Theatre Royal, as part of the International Celebrity Concert on 12 November.<sup>71</sup> After the concert, Kubelík met the Irish musician John Francis Larchet. In addition to that, young writer Jiří Mucha (1915-1991), son of painter Alfons Mucha, appeared in Dublin as a correspondent of *Lidové noviny*. His coverage of the concert was however overwhelmed by depression resulting from the treachery of the allies and the breaking apart of the Czechoslovak territory.<sup>72</sup> Irish reviewers were enthralled by the orchestra, yet Mucha bitterly remarked that as much as the world may seem to be impressed by Czech music, the same may hardly be claimed of Czechoslovak democracy.

## Protectorate and Neutrality

After the annexation of the second Czechoslovak Republic to the German Reich on 15 March 1939, Karel Košťál was one of the very few Czechoslovak diplomats not to surrender their office to envoys of the Reich. Košťál had initially informed the Irish Department of External Affairs that he was terminating his activities; however, he reconsidered his decision and came to announce to the Irish authorities that he was going to continue his service. Since Ireland had adopted a strictly neutral stance as regards the forthcoming European armed struggle, maintaining also excellent relations with Germany, the continued existence of the Czechoslovak Consulate was not particularly welcome by Irish politicians. It is true that Ireland still recognized the Consulate; nonetheless, the Consul's name was not allowed to appear in print, while Irish government officials attempted from time to time to restrict Košťál's diplomatic rights. Yet whenever the Consul objected, any problems were always resolved. The atmosphere was hardly conducive to a continued promotion of Czechoslovak culture and politics though. Similarly to all

<sup>71</sup> Harold R. White, "Kubelik Showed Mature Artistry. Fine Performance by Czech Orchestra," *Irish Independent*, 14 November 1938: 9.

<sup>72</sup> Jiří Mucha, "Z Nového světa v Irsku" ["From the New World" in Ireland], *Lidové noviny*, 16 November 1938 (morning edition): 6.

Czechoslovaks in exile, Košťál had to wait until the European conflict had developed fully and Europeans were forced to adopt a firmer stance against Germany. In the meantime, he at least maintained contact with prominent journalists<sup>73</sup> and inquired of quartet member Maud Aiken, wife of the Minister of Defence, as to the position of the Irish Government on being pressurized by the U.K. and the United States to abolish neutrality, and then he passed the information on to the exiled President Edvard Beneš in London.<sup>74</sup>

Cultural and political events of significance in terms of Czech-Irish relations at the time of neutral Ireland prominently included the staging by director Walter Macken (1915-1967) of the anti-Nazi allegorical play *The White Disease* (Bílá nemoc, 1937) by Karel Čapek. The play was staged in the Galway theatre An Taibhdhearc in an Irish-language translation by Buadhac Toibin. In 1942, minister of the Czechoslovak exile government Jan Masaryk (1886-1948) visited a Belfast exhibition on the Czechoslovak Army in Britain, and delivered a lecture at Queen's University concerning the Czechoslovak contribution to European civilization. He was awarded a doctorate of honour after the lecture, an act that had been strongly supported by the Belfast Masaryk Society. Masaryk reminisced on the occasion of his first meeting with Irish workers in the United States thirty-five years earlier. Lectures were delivered in Belfast, besides Masaryk, also by Ladislav Feierabend who spoke about the Czech Lands under the Nazi regime, and by Jaroslav Císař, who discussed the European attitudes of T.G. Masaryk.<sup>75</sup> Still in 1942, Father Antonín Veselý (\*1912) gave a lecture on the subject of the relation between the state and the church in Czechoslovakia at the Irish Institute of International Affairs in Dublin. The occasion was to have involved another speaker as well, minister of the exile government Monsignore František Hála (1893-1952), who however fractured his leg on the stairs of the Consulate; his contribution was consequently read out by Veselý.

From January 1942, the Consulate mediated negotiations concerning the staging of *The Insect Play* (*Ze života hmyzu*) by brothers Čapek at the Gate

<sup>73</sup> Kees Van Hoek, "The Czechoslovak Consul," *Diplomats in Dublin* (Dublin: Talbot Press, 1943) 103-106.

<sup>74</sup> Archiv MZV (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archive), file "Londýnský archiv 1939-1945," box 117.

<sup>75</sup> Archiv MZV (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archive), file "Londýnský archiv 1939-1945," box 364.



Theatre in Dublin, naturally in Paul Selver's translation.<sup>76</sup> The director of the Abbey Theatre orchestra, composer Frederick May (1911-1985) set to music a poem by Jaroslav Kvapil "Conversation" (Rozhovor) in the same year; he used the English translation included in Selver's 1912 *Anthology of Modern Bohemian Poetry* for the purpose. The wartime correspondence of the Czechoslovak Consulate in Dublin reveals that more poems were to follow, as May was planning to visit Selver in England in order to obtain permission to use some of his other translations from the anthology. Nevertheless, it rests unclear whether the meeting ever happened, since Kvapil's poem remains the only Czech work set to music and presented by May.<sup>77</sup>

March 1943 saw the production of *Rhapsody in Stephen's Green* by Flann O'Brien at the Dublin Gaiety Theatre. The play was an idiosyncratic adaptation of the Čapeks' *The Insect Play* mentioned above.<sup>78</sup> The suggestion that O'Brien adapt the play came from director Hilton Edwards who furnished him with Paul Selver's English translation, and together with his Gate Theatre partner Micheál Mac Liammóir then produced the play at the Gaiety.<sup>79</sup> It remains a paradox of fate that approximately at the same time, one of the authors of the play Josef Čapek (1887-1945) was secretly translating in the concentration camp at Sachsenhausen a poem by Irish author James Stephens about St Stephen's Green, together with Joyce's verse from *Chamber Music*.<sup>80</sup>

Jan Masaryk visited Dublin in November 1944 in order to deliver a lecture at Trinity College. Two lectures had originally been planned; however, the latter of these, which was to be given at the Irish Institute of International Affairs, was cancelled by Irish government censors. This initiated a protracted debate in the daily press, as well as in the Dáil, concerning how strict censorship in Ireland should really be, and the issue eventually became part of

<sup>76</sup> Archiv MZV (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archive), file "Zastupitelský úřad Dublin 1929-1950," box 8, no. 107.

<sup>77</sup> Archiv MZV (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archive), file "Zastupitelský úřad Dublin 1929-1950," box 8, no. 116.

<sup>78</sup> Flann O'Brien (Myles na gCopaleen), *Rhapsody in Stephen's Green. The Insect Play*, ed. Robert Tracy (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 1994).

<sup>79</sup> Anthony Cronin, *No Laughing Matter: The Life and Times of Flann O'Brien* (London: Grafton Books, 1989) 149.

<sup>80</sup> James Stephens, "Stephenova zelenost," James Joyce, "Komorní hudba," James Joyce, "Přistálých vojsk," Josef Čapek, *Oheň a touha (Básně a překlady z koncentračního tábora)* [Fire and Desire: Poems and Translations from the Concentration Camp] (Praha: Odeon, 1980) 259-61.

the domestic political struggle.<sup>81</sup> A legend had spread among Czechoslovak emigrants to Ireland about the event, which had it that Masaryk must have made an objectionable remark as regards Irish neutrality in his first lecture. It is very likely that nothing of that nature had occurred however, since Consul Košťál documented in quite a persuasive manner that Taoiseach de Valera was seen having a friendly discussion with Masaryk after his lecture and was extraordinarily cordial and cheerful. The confusing affair that had remained without explanation for an extended period of time is rather characteristic of Irish politics of the first half of the 1940s. The British envoy to Ireland John Maffey (1877-1969), who had been posted in Dublin until 1939, explained to Košťál in a conversation (the course of which is reconstructed in Košťál's *Book of Visitors*) that the banning of the second lecture was not directed against Masaryk. Much more likely, the lecture became the subject of settling accounts between de Valera and his enemies at the Irish Institute of International Affairs, which was then taking place both in the press and in the Dáil.<sup>82</sup>

Poet Viktor Fischl (1912-2006) visited Belfast in the same year, accompanying Ladislav Feierabend, the Czechoslovak exile Minister of Finance. An official reception was hosted in the honour of Fischl, who was at the time Secretary of the Czechoslovak PEN Club. The local branch of PEN paid him a lavish tribute, while the chairperson of the branch proceeded to offer a ceremonial toast in Czech, which he had learnt some time earlier from Jan Masaryk. The wording of this toast, however, was reported by Fischl to have been shocking and quite unpublishable.<sup>83</sup>

In the Protectorate Bohemia and Moravia, Ireland received wide coverage throughout the war, as the subject was not affected by censorship. Some of the early articles concerning the Irish strife against Britain were motivated by spite that originated from contempt for the cowardly allies of Czechoslovakia;<sup>84</sup> nonetheless, as the situation continued to steadily aggravate for

<sup>81</sup> Archiv MZV (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archive), file "Zastupitelský úřad Dublin 1929-1950," box 10, no. 165.

<sup>82</sup> Archiv MZV (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archive), file "Návštěvní kniha Zastupitelského úřadu Dublin 1937-1947."

<sup>83</sup> Viktor Fischl, *Hovory s Janem Masarykem* [Conversations with Jan Masaryk] (Praha: Česká expedice / Riopress, 1996) 99-100.

<sup>84</sup> Cf. the change of stress in the following two articles about Ireland by the same author: František Bauer, "Tvrký irský oříšek" [The Hard Irish Nut], *Národní politika*, 30 July 1937: 3, František Bauer, "Irsko – tvrdý oříšek" [Ireland – A Hard Nut], *Národní politika*, 16 November 1940: 1.

Germany, the topic of Ireland became eventually one of the few international concerns that were permitted in print. As the millennial empire kept on shrinking, geographical topics in particular were being curbed or disappeared entirely, until there were very few 'neutral' countries that journalists could write about at all. News about Ireland successfully defending its neutrality was so frequent in the Protectorate press that, when juxtaposed with the modified items from the battlefield, the conclusion may have been drawn that the fate of the Reich was dependent particularly on the neutral island. Regardless of that, a certain bond between Ireland and Germany cannot be regarded merely as a German projection, given that Taoiseach de Valera and Secretary of the Department of External Affairs Joe Walshe consoled the German Ambassador in Dublin on the death of Adolf Hitler, and that Consul Košťál reported in May 1945 from Dublin to London that a peculiar defeatist atmosphere had dominated in the city and the few flags of the Allies that had been hoisted had provided an impetus for disturbance.<sup>85</sup>

## West and East

In March of the final year of the war, Consul Košťál presented himself at the Irish Department of External Affairs where he asserted in a discussion with Secretary Walshe that the Czechoslovak Government intended to elevate the Dublin Consulate to an Embassy.<sup>86</sup> The internal commentary on the event, as much as it may be positively inclined as regards the proposal, was devastating, and suggestive of its time: Walshe wrote to another Department official that the intention was bound to create an interesting situation indeed, as Czechoslovakia would be the first "communist country" that Ireland would have diplomatic relations with on such a high level.<sup>87</sup> Walshe was eventually proved correct in his 'prophetic' and seemingly unjustified partiality, since Czechoslovakia was headed straight for another disaster ever since the adoption of the Košice Government Programme on 5 April 1945. While many gave way to euphoria over the post-war territorial arrangement of Europe, staunch anti-communists had the advantage of being ready for what was to

<sup>85</sup> Archiv MZV (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archive), file "Londýnský archiv 1939-1945," box 117.

<sup>86</sup> Compare Košťál's report of 9 April 1945. Archiv MZV (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archive), file "Zastupitelský úřad Dublin 1929-1950," box 1.

<sup>87</sup> Letter of 9 March 1945. National Archives of Ireland, file "Department of Foreign Affairs," no. 318/33 1A.

come well in advance. The incessantly mouthed idea of Czechoslovakia as a bridge between the East and the West was to come to no fruition.

Post-war Europe had to deal with other issues than the development of cultural relations across borders, which was reflected also in the significant attenuation of the cultural exchange between Czechoslovakia and Ireland. Despite that, several interesting events still occurred. The first of these was the publication of an extended article by Ulster revivalist Cathal O'Byrne concerning the Irish Franciscans in Prague, published in May 1945 in Northern Ireland. Apart from numerous familiar facts, the author mentions that the manuscript of an Irish text about a mass by Geoffrey Keating (1570-1649) preserved in the Maynooth College library was written in 1663 "in Prague in Bohemia" ("a bPraga 'san mBohemia") by Franciscan Henry MacArdle.<sup>88</sup> Another article of note was written by Michael J. Murphy (1913-1996) about Czech amateur theatre and published in June 1946; Murphy pointed out new possibilities in educating the Irish people and raising their cultural awareness.<sup>89</sup> Czech professional theatre was covered, on the other hand, by film director Liam O'Laoghaire (1910-1997) in July 1947; O'Laoghaire visited Czechoslovakia shortly before the war and exchanged letters with the acclaimed Czech theatre director Emil František Burian (1904-1959).<sup>90</sup> Commentaries of *The Irish Times* military analyst, Irish Army captain B. Petersen published early in 1946 are remarkable in terms of politics, as Petersen discussed the adverse Soviet influence on Czechoslovakia.<sup>91</sup>

At the end of May 1947, the Czechoslovak Consulate was transformed into an Embassy. Soon after that, Karel Košťál resigned from his post and returned to Czechoslovakia. Pavel Růžička was appointed once again, and after some initial difficulties represented by the veto of Minister František Hála, became Košťál's successor.<sup>92</sup> Růžička subsequently arrived in Ireland

<sup>88</sup> Cathal O'Byrne, "Prague and Ireland," *The Irish News*, 23 May 1945: 2.

<sup>89</sup> Michael J. Murphy, "The Czech Amateur Theatre," *The Irish Press*, 25 June 1946: 4.

<sup>90</sup> Liam O'Laoghaire, "The Theatre of Czechoslovakia," *The Irish Press*, 29 July 1947: 4. See also "Irský žurnalista obdivuje české umění" [Irish Journalist Admires Czech Art], *Národní listy*, 27 April 1938: 2, and Liam O'Laoghaire, "Drama v Irsku" [The Drama in Ireland], trans. Zdenka Münzerová, *Program D 39*, 1938/1939, Vol. 2: 77-80 (article in the annual programme brochure of E.F. Burian's theatre).

<sup>91</sup> B. Petersen [signed B.P.], "Soviet Influence Retards Czechoslovak Revival," *The Irish Times*, 1 February 1946: 2, B. Petersen [signed B.P.], "Czechoslovakia's Quick Recovery Will Benefit Europe," *The Irish Times*, 9 April 1946: 2.

<sup>92</sup> See an explanatory letter of support by Jan Masaryk to František Hála, dated 25 April 1947. Národní archiv – Chodovec (National Archive at Chodovec), file "Londýnský archiv 1939-1945," inv. no. 142.

accompanied by his wife and niece. Another legend circulating among Czechoslovak emigrants concerns the spectacular reception given to Růžička on the occasion of the handing over of his accreditation papers at Dublin Castle. There is no doubt about Růžička's popularity in Ireland; however, the nature of the ceremony was influenced rather by the fact that Ireland had already been well on its way to complete independence (i.e., the proclamation of a republic) and its representatives relished every opportunity to demonstrate the fact. The magnificence and ostentation were hence aimed internally, as de Valera's celebration of the approaching total independence. All dailies stressed that this was the first instance that had the inaugural and welcome speeches delivered in two languages incomprehensible to most Irish people, i.e., Czech and Irish.<sup>93</sup>

A group of Czechoslovak physicians arrived in Dublin at the time of Růžička's appointment to participate in an international congress of gynaecologists and obstetricians. The doctors met Mr Justice T.C. Kingsmill Moore (1893-1979), who possessed extensive knowledge of Czechoslovakia, and also famous Irish paediatrician Robert Collis (1900-1975), who had been in close contact with Czech physicians and who adopted two Czechoslovak orphans of Hungarian Jewish origin after the war.<sup>94</sup> Collis brought the children to Ireland from the concentration camp in Bergen-Belsen where he assisted in the actions of the International Red Cross. Edit (\*1937) and Zoltán (\*1939) Zinn eventually stayed living in Ireland, notwithstanding that Collis looked up their relatives in Slovakia.<sup>95</sup> Numerous Irish doctors in fact participated in helping destitute children in Central Europe, including, prominently, a friend of Robert Collis, journalist, nationalist historian and fiction writer Dorothy Macardle (1899-1958). Macardle came to Czechoslovakia immediately after the war as part of her mission to supervise the distribution of Irish governmental aid in Europe, and subsequently dedicated

<sup>93</sup> For the protocol of Růžička's journey through Dublin and his reception at Dublin Castle, see National Archives of Ireland, file "Department of Foreign Affairs," no. 318/50.

<sup>94</sup> Josef Lukáš, "Mezinárodní kongres gynaekologů v Dublinu" [International Congress of Gynaecologists in Dublin], *Československá gynaekologie* 12/16.10 (1947): 367-72.

<sup>95</sup> Robert Collis, *To Be a Pilgrim* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1975) 101-227. Cf. also Robert Collis, "Work in Progress, no. 3," *The Bell* 11.5 (February 1946): 947-59. On the subsequent history of the orphans, see the memoir Zoltán Zinn-Collis (and Alicia McAuley), *Final Witness* (Dunshaughlin, Co. Meath: Maverick House, 2006). There is also a mention of them in Christy Brown's autobiography *My Left Foot* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1954), to which Collis wrote a foreword.

almost an entire chapter of her influential study *Children of Europe* to the extermination of Lidice by the Nazis that happened as a reprisal for the assassination of Deputy Protector of Bohemia and Moravia Reinhard Heydrich in 1941.<sup>96</sup>

Also in May 1947, esperantist Father Jan Filip (1911-1971) visited Dublin. No relation to his namesake, the famous Czech archaeologist, Filip was a professor of Catholic theology and was invited to lecture in Esperanto about Czechoslovakia by the Dublin league of Catholic esperantists. However, Filip was delayed on his arrival and his lectures had to be cancelled as a result; he was soon to continue on his travels to England and Holland according to plan. Notwithstanding the brevity of his stay, he entered into contact with numerous local esperantists and induced or deepened their interest in Czechoslovakia respectively. On his part, he came to mention an important personage of the Irish Esperanto movement, Lorcán Ó hUiginn (1910-1985), a stenographer in the Dáil who had a programme in Esperanto on Radio Éireann in 1937-1939 that was broadcast for the whole of Europe.<sup>97</sup>

Opera tenor Walter Janowitz visited Dublin in January 1948, the year that meant tragedy for Czechoslovak democracy. Janowitz, a distinguished veteran of the allied campaign in Northern Africa, arrived in the city together with his wife Ada Morrans, a native of Athy in Co. Kildare, in order to get to know the country of his wife's origin. In mid-February, Irish writer Elizabeth Bowen (1899-1973) went on a visit to Czechoslovakia and received great publicity regardless of the politically stifling atmosphere. Apart from Prague, Bowen stayed also in Moravia, particularly in Brno where she met members of the Circle of Moravian Writers.<sup>98</sup>

When the communist takeover happened in Czechoslovakia in February 1948, Ambassador Pavel Růžička soon got his bearings, being an ex-legionnaire who possessed personal memories of Soviet Russia. He convened a

<sup>96</sup> Dorothy Macardle, *Children of Europe. A Study of the Children of Liberated Countries: Their War-time Experiences, Their Reactions, and Their Needs, with a Note on Germany* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1949). See Luke Gibbons, "Prefiguring the Past: Re-imagining the Archive in Irish Studies," Christina Hunt Mahony et al., eds., *The Future of Irish Studies: Report of the Irish Forum* (Prague: Centre for Irish Studies, Charles University / Irish Forum, 2006) 68-72.

<sup>97</sup> Jan Filip, "Poznámky z Irska" [Notes from Ireland], *Štít* 3.32 (1947): 1.

<sup>98</sup> A press conference is described in anon. [signed č.], "Miss Bowen mezi novináři" [Miss Bowen among Journalists], *Obrana lidu* 2.36 (1948): 5. An interview was printed as anon. [signed K.], "Zájem irské spisovatelky o moravský venkov" [The Interest of an Irish Writer in the Moravian Countryside], *Zdar* 4.39 (1948): 4.

press conference where he outlined what was happening in Prague without any ambiguity and proclaimed that he would not serve the communists. He assembled the archive of the Czechoslovak mission and dispatched it to the Embassy in London. The communists tried to woo Růžička back home, promising him a pension; when the effort failed, they proceeded to confiscate all his property. Růžička subsequently occupied the Embassy building and confiscated its furniture in reaction to his dispossession. The communists demanded redress of the Irish Government; however, the Irish representatives sabotaged the matter due to the expulsion of the Apostolic Nuncio from Czechoslovakia, and even went as far as refusing to issue visas to the 'liquidators' of the Embassy.<sup>99</sup> The affair with the confiscated furniture trailed on until 1949, at which point the agenda of Ireland was handed over to translator and Irish literature enthusiast Aloys Skoumal who was then the Czechoslovak Cultural Attaché in London.<sup>100</sup> The communists abolished their effort to regain control over the Embassy in 1950 and closed down the mission to Dublin entirely.

## Aftertaste

What may be regarded as a sad epilogue to the Czech-Irish relations in the first half of the twentieth century is the list of Czechoslovak citizens living in Ireland forwarded by Pavel Růžička to the Executive Board of the Council of Free Czechoslovakia in London.<sup>101</sup> The auspicious foundations of Czech-Irish cultural and economic relations were to be paralysed for almost fifty years to come. The Růžičkas, who became an epitome of all things Czech in Dublin for several decades, maintained their livelihood due to the culinary skills of Mrs Růžička by producing continental delicatessen for Magill's (Oriental and Continental Foods), a shop located between Grafton Street and Clarendon Street. The couple became exiles, while what had taken fifty years of successful development left no more than the peculiar aftertaste of ruin by history. The relations between the two countries had to wait for complete renewal till the early 1990s.

<sup>99</sup> National Archives of Ireland, file "Department of Foreign Affairs," no. 318/33 1A.

<sup>100</sup> Dagmar Blümllová, "Tolik záští a tak málo prostoru! Irsko Aloyse Skoumala" [So Many Enmities and So Little Room! Aloys Skoumal's Ireland], *Dějiny a současnost* 28.2 (2006): 24-27.

<sup>101</sup> Letter dated 26 July 1950. Fragment of Růžička's papers, private possession.