# The intertextual aspect of the Faustian theme in 19th-century Slovak and Czech literature: Jonáš Záborský, Šebestián Hněvkovský, and the categories of "national" vs. "world"

ANNA ZELENKOVÁ

In contemporary approaches to literary interpretation, area and comparative studies not limited to a particular language, literary tradition, and culture, but accentuating diversity, interrelation, and mutual influence through analytical contact with the "other" and the "foreign" have gained an ever stronger footing. This transformation of "traditional" interpretations delimited by national borders is connected with the search for intertextual transformations of a concrete character: motif, topos, situation, etc. It establishes an intertextual communication where a literary text (or its part) serves as a basis, or a kind of inspiration for another work. This concerns the post-textual existence of a common thematic element or a repeatedly recurrent subject in subsequent presentations (i.e. not only in literature, but also in film, TV, radio, and theater adaptations) which extend even beyond the boundaries of national literature. The meaning of a literary text is thus analyzed from the perspective of a receptive impression conveyed by reading a particular work and, in the same way, resulting from intertextual literary continuation consisting, for example, of quotations, parodies, allusions, etc.

However, it is important to consider diverse concepts of "nationhood" and "worldhood". In this dualism, national literature is most frequently presented as a category defined by the language, the surroundings, and the receptive function capable of addressing domestic readership. Thus world literature, despite being linguistically identified with full-fledged "great" literatures (such as English, French, German, Russian, Spanish, formerly Hebrew, Greek, Latin, etc.), has been reduced to an aesthetical and axiological anthology of texts virtually comprising a common cultural heritage that has "lost" its national character. Modern comparative research aims at defining the category of national literature as related to world literature, yet this endeavor favors literary theory at the expense of literary history (many times restrained by the national context). It means that for example "domestic", national texts will be searched for their potential "world" quality (with regard to their aesthetic value) and the analysis of "world masterpieces" will be related to a particular literary period and area. Interliterariness is then based on receptive aesthetics, on the assumption that a text exists only when it is set in time and space against another text – which in the intertextual comparative approach becomes an important prerequisite for the interpretative exploration of concordances

and discordances, the relations and cultural "distances" between texts and culture (Zelenka 2002, 43–44).

For centuries in the Central European context, the complementarity of individual literary discourses and numerous languages, poetics, and confessions, along with the coexistence of ethnic minorities, has created a specific "interliterary network", which, though rooted in individual national literatures, is surpassed by its communicative-receptive impact. Its "texture" has also embraced "unclassifiable" authors, such as those who appeared at the turn of two literary movements, or across two national cultures, demoting the imaginary span between the "nation" and the "world". The enquiry into authors who set up a special "intertextual network" oscillating between "national" or "domestic" and "foreign" or "world" influences can be enhanced by imagological research into interculturally close "otherness". This mainly involves the quest for analogical themes, genres, and topoi within neighboring and linguistically related national literatures. A fairly important factor seems to be the fact that a systematic analysis of the interliterary network of intertextual reminiscences (in the 19th-century classics) is not an immediate reflection of reality, rather it assumes the character of myths and stereotypes as concrete designs (Zelenková 2016). Imagologically, our interpretational approach thus does not explore the aesthetic or linguistic qualities of a text, since our pursuit follows the significance and topicality of a theme, with the aim of ascertaining its receptive effect (Gáfrik and Zelenka 2016, 87–88). In the past, the time-honored concept of the history of national literature, with its didactically pragmatic implications, typical of small nations in Central and Eastern Europe, was interpreted as an integral component of domestic cultures and their ideologies. They produced their own selection of original works and translations (with regard to aesthetic values) determined to a large extent by "national" needs. Nevertheless, it often happened that a work outside this ideal of "nationhood" was deliberately propelled towards the edge of literary historians' concern as a "problematic" text, for it inclined to the opposite pole of the then espoused concept of "worldliness".

The aim of our study is to specify the "interliterary network" of Central European cultural tradition from the perspective of "minor national literatures" by interpreting two works: the Slovak "heroic poem" (in prose) *Faustiáda* (The Faustiad, 1864) by Jonáš Záborský (1812–1876) and the Czech poem *Doktor Faust* (Doctor Faust, 1844), by Šebestián Hněvkovský (1770–1847). The two authors employ ironizing hyperbole to portray the social and political inadequacies of life in their countries while creating a multilayered network of intertextual reminiscences, referring to both domestic and world literature. They rank among the acknowledged authors, some texts of whose were already at the time of their origin received as "antique relicts", in ideological disagreement with "contemporary needs". In this way, both Záborský in Slovakia and Hněvkovský in Czechia are in contemporary literary discourse considered "unclassifiable" because of their genre and style discrepancies. Perceived through the national code, their type of "hybridization" ensues from different concepts of national literature in the mid-19th century and in the early 21st century. The authors' subjective perception of their "specificity" did not affect their awareness of deviating from the contemporary context. They both stood proudly at the turn of Classicism and Romanticism, that

is to say, between Enlightened realism and pre-Romanticism, with their poetics being reflected in the negative reception of their texts. Both *Faustiáda* and *Doktor Faust*, each in their own way, deal with the great "Faustian" theme, so frequent in Central European literatures. Despite their dissimilar attitude to Romanticism (Hněvkovský proceeds to Romanticism from Classicism, while Záborský, within the "Romantic movement" fundamentally disagrees with him) their typological parallel results from an analogical response. By demythicizing and desacralizing it, they both influence the "reinterpretation" of historical moments where social history intermingles with personal stories. Strictly, it could be said that authors deal with history in what Daniela Hodrová (2006) has called the "patchwork style", genuinely weaving historic signals into the wide thematic warp of texts which makes them, together with other motifs, complementarily effective. It is a subversive way to reconcile with the past (as well as the contemporary reality) by rewriting it and breaking apart the described reality into special interpretational "codes". For instance, the history of Central European (national) literatures is a problematic "story" (reflection) examining the coexistence of a host of ethnic (Slavonic/non-Slavonic) communities, with multiple "blank spaces", parallels; and breakpoints. It confirms that Záborský's *Faustiáda* and Hněvkovský's *Doktor Faust* employed the popularity of "Faustiads", having adopted Goethe's proto-text as an inimitable model, even though here the character of Faust obviously refers to popular reading, rather than to Goethe's *Faust* (Horváth 2009, 317).

In Czech literature, Faustiads endured until the turning point of 1848, while in Slovak literature, they survived till the 1860s–1870s, representing poetic and prose types based on the principle of Classicist aestheticism, although through their form (an epic or prose work termed as "*a poem*") they aimed to express the nation's philosophy and its major problems (Štěpánek 1960, 344). The popularity of the Faustian theme with Czech audiences was effectively helped also by its puppet adaptation, written by the founder of Czech Revivalist puppet theatre, Matěj Kopecký (1775–1847). He retranslated and textually fixed the widely accepted vernacular version of this time-honored international theme, enhanced by the poetics of street songs, or magical and chivalric farces. The subject model of Faustian themes in general consisted in winning man's soul conditioned by his contract with God or the devil. As a literary character, Faust is not satisfied with the traditional "vow" of Christian love as voluntarily adopted faith of predetermined value, but, an eternal seeker of truth, he waives God's protection and signs the tragic pact with the devil. The transfer of the historical substance of this originally German legend connected with the Lutheran revolution transposed Faust to the 18th-century popular presentation through the alteration of chronological and topographical codes in the established story as a character temporarily defeated by evil. Faust's attempt to cancel the pact with the devil relativizes his effort to vanquish his original forsaking of God. At the beginning of the 19th century, the character of Faust assumes an almost pre-Romantic touch of revolt against the feudal order. This developmental line proceeds to Goethe, whose Faust as a symbol of human creativity, diligence and application synthesizes the knowledge of his time. Moreover, within the Central European context of small "oppressed" literatures, developing in contact with the dominant "majority" of West European cultures,

the poetic, prosaic and dramatic approaches to the Faustian theme were adapted to the specific conditions of the country. Through historical updating, the new adaptation parodied the popular myth, or modified it didactically, making it in unconventional genre variations accessible for readers as "patriotically embraced".

Our interpretation of Záborský's *Faustiáda* is methodologically grounded mainly in Tibor Žilka's study of the intertextual reminiscences of the Faustian topos *Faustovský mýtus a jeho podoby* (The Faustian myth and its representations, 2015a), and further in the texts of Peter Zajac (Zajac 2005, 2011; Zajac and Schmarcová et al. 2019) and Tomáš Horváth (2009). Surveying the mutual relation between the thematic-compositional structure and the genre classification of *Faustiáda*, subtitled *A fantastic heroic epic*, we find out that the author took advantage of the purposeful, almost mystifying inadequacy of this genre category. On the other hand, this mystification need not be taken literally, since Záborský rather suggests following an ironical code. The complete text, which was not fully published until 1912 in the journal *Slovenské pohľady*, is actually prose fiction at the length of a short novel and places it at the opposite pole of the heroic epic. Paradoxically, more important for this text than its reception history and occurrence in the literary circulation is the time of its origin, encoded in the form of a spatially mythical structure based on the "ideas of the predecessors, to wit, Záborský's peculiar compilations. On behalf of it, the work becomes a multicoded text, a genre palimpsest, in a sense" (Kobylińska 2008, 58). Its comical and satirical orientation points to the heroic-comical genre inclining to parody, rooted in the rationalism of the 18th-century Enlightenment prose (Krejčí 1964, 391). As Peter Darovec points out in his afterword to the most recent edition: "The use of prosaic instead of poetic language is in this case one of the author's instruments for 'debasing' the high epic genre. This relates to another change in Záborský's writing: elevated seriousness is replaced by the comic, also parodically debasing everything higher" (2012, 181).

In *Faustiáda*, the deformation of the described reality almost reaches an absurd hyperbole where everything is questionable with the meaning shifted towards a monstrous caricature and unveiling pamphlet. The recipient perceives these disjointed "flying arabesques" (Záborský 1984, 13), as critical responses to the contemporary society, as politics, as well as culture. Already in the preface, which functions in classical literature as a receptive signal for the reader, as an interpretational "key" to explain the thematic fields, the author queries the true value of his work, which he disregards as "a futile effort" (8), lacking response from readers. In his own words, Záborský places the preface "at the front so that at the end there would be space for slander" (9); moreover, there appears an allusion to the illusive nature of Slavonic literary mutuality, based, among other things, upon voluntarily exchanging and reading books. In real life, according to the author, no one in Slovakia cares about books, and Slovak books are not read at home, because, as he remarks ironically, "they exit the printing works as an antiquarian rarity" (8). As suggested above, in *Faustiáda*, it is possible to distinguish two spheres of metatextual relatedness – to domestic and world topics (Žilka 2015b, 29). As in the case of the first recognized proto-text, Ján Chalupka's comic drama *Kocourkovo anebo Jen abychom v hanbě nezůstali* (Gotham or If only we

did not remain in shame, 1830), the topos of the "world" is associated, in particular, with the anti-illusive allusion to Goethe's *Faust* and with interest in ancient literary culture as impacted by Classicist aesthetics.

The work's twenty chapters are conceived as hypertrophic "preposterous episodes" amended by a satiric introduction that "no one will read" (Záborský 1984, 7). In the company of his Polish guide, the philosopher and mystic Andrzej Towiańsky, Faust travels to Kocúrkovo, the Slovak Gotham ("a foolish spot in Slovakia"), situated "anywhere between the Tisa and the Danube rivers" (18), after making a stop – following the intentions of Dante's *Divine Comedy* – in heaven and hell, and even in the actual Istanbul, where his Polish companion abandons him. *Faustiáda* pursues the rules of rationalistic Enlightenment prose typified by short annotations at the head of each chapter. Záborský employs the form of the travelogue allowing for the free alteration of crazy farcical scenes and situations, interconnected by Faust as the protagonist who is in each successive "arabesque" confronted with as many contemporary figures as possible. The top paradox appears in the seventh chapter during Faust's visit to Gotham, where he fights the giant Puchor on the mountain of Rvačár and gets acquainted with a wide variety of typical figures with funny names that stand for the contemporary social ills in Slovak-Hungarian reality. Whether an Evangelical Lutheran or a Catholic priest, a poet, a burgher, or a national apostate, these schematized characters are captives of their false ideas. Their activities are characterized by a polarity between words and deeds evolving into the contrast of beauty and values, between the fictional and the real, between myth and truth. The characters speak about promoting journalism, education, and enlightenment (e.g. the scene depicting the foundation of a reading club), yet actually they behave like romantic daydreamers divorced from reality. "They are 'right' but not in practice: they are incompetent in fact..." (Janů 1961, 23). Towering high above the selection of typical characters is a small group of Pan-Slavs and "Magyarones" (Hungarophiles) who represent the reverse side of "politicking", ineffectual government, and obtuse bureaucracy. Their conflicts figure only in caricatured portrayals of feasts, carousing, merrymaking, and carnivals, for example, in scenes whose aesthetic nihilism resembles Petronius's *Satyricon*. In the end, Faust leaves Gotham in frustration, for he has not managed to improve the local conditions stinking of "musty decaying nations" (Záborský 1984, 123). In the last chapter, the hyperbolization that consists in disclosing contradictions and opposites is completed as the authorial subject is incorporated in the text, resulting in a "mock" epitaph where Záborský characterizes himself through a paradox about domestic ingratitude and foreign praise: "Elsewhere he might have been a great man, here, he was just a great fool" (125).

When analyzing this unclassifiable "fantastic" novel, Oskár Čepan speaks about three semantic, complementarily interconnected layers (Čepan et al. 1964, 202; Čepan 1984). They constitute a context of abstract, rational norms, of historical reality, and of the subjective experience of the author who fiercely attacked the ideological and aesthetical orientation of Štúr and his contemporaries. Despite its expressively parodic-fictional nature, *Faustiáda* presents numerous references to the contemporary life and encyclopedic facts, namely the extensive interliterary network of "non-textual"

references to a number of officials, politicians, and statesmen connected with European politics and the Habsburg Empire (including the Austrian minister of the interior Alexander von Bach, the Hungarian politician Ferenc Deák, the Italian King Victor Emmanuel, the Austrian Prime Minister Felix Schwarzenberg, the Croatian Ban Jelačić, the Russian Czar Nicholas, the Prussian Chancellor Otto von Bismarck, and Emperor Franz Josef I), all of whom talk with Faust and extol the non-existent importance of their feats. The third chapter, set in paradise and describing "heavenly pleasures", features Ján Kollár's critical monologue on Štúr's standard Slovak language, which clearly cannot take root without Slovak schools and which has severed "the sacred bond that connected the Slovaks with the Czechs and with each other" (Záborský 1984, 28). Kollár's criticism is supported by Šafárik's reply and further supplemented by Bernolák's bearing the blame for the unfulfilled national unity between Slovak Evangelical Lutherans and Catholics. The criticism of the Štúrian movement reflected, as mentioned above, Záborský's lifelong polemic with Romantic ideology, whose visionary mysticism did not acknowledge Slovak social backwardness. The final chapters, in addition, feature a strong anti-Hungarian mold, associated with the critical reproof of Germanization pursued in alliance with German-speaking Bohemian civil servants or "deutsch-Czechs" ("Dojč-Česi") who were sent by Bach to Upper Hungary, where "the denial of one's nation was an unavoidable prerequisite to promotion" (124). The satirical perspective points to the exacerbated national issue as Záborský's premonition of further oppression of the Slovak people (after the Austrian-Hungarian compromise of 1867) emerged in a comical parody hyperbolizing the typical features of social reality. Portrayed in the "Gotham scenes", loosely inspired by world models, and still in the form of prose, it "creates a kind of prevailingly prosodic variety of heroic-comic poetry" (Krejčí 1964, 391).

Erika Brtáňová has shown that Záborský's quarrel with Romanticism was, in his concept of literary aesthetics, linked with the revival of Classicist epic and pointed to his search for an ideal pattern of national literature, its receptive function and genre system (2014, 44). In relation to Záborský's autobiography, *Vlastný životopis* (1989), Brtáňová highlights his affinity for clergy or gentry as well as his aesthetical orientation towards artificial poetics and stimuli from antiquity, which were in contradiction with the Štúrian principle of cultivating the nation through literature and its folkloric elements. However, according to Cyril Kraus, at the time when *Faustiáda* was conceived (which was also the period of landmark events such as the Memorandum of the Slovak Nation and the establishment of the cultural institution Matica slovenská), Záborský's "return" to Classicist epic was hardly a restoration of Classicism but exposed "the reverse side" of Slovak Romanticism, its inner, philosophical-aesthetical heterogeneity (1999, 186). The harmonious ideal of perfection in *Faustiáda* thus does not result from the communion or intimacy of an immensely suffering creature with Nature, because the temporality of earthly life is predominated by the spiritual sphere, inseparably bound with antique civilization and Christian morals. The allegorical perspective on the past of the protagonist's own nation mingles with frequent, emotionally charged, moralizing and reflexive "insertions" descrying a lyrical subject that "does not disavow being a Romantic poet" (229). In doing so, Záborský ideologically approaches the epic poetics

of Ľudovít Žello's *Pád Miliducha* (The fall of Miliduch, 1862) on the one hand, and the reflexive-meditative poetry of Karol Kuzmány and Andrej Sládkovič on the other.

Záborský's "spanning" of Classicism, Romanticism and early Realism, his kind of idiosyncratic dualism, leads to literary-historical classifications labelling him a late Classicist and Enlightened realist, or a pioneer of realism, and an "atypical" Romantic. Valér Mikula argues against Záborský being labelled as a direct precursor of realistic aesthetics, rather accentuating his propensity for the Enlightenment and Voltairean writing (Mikula 2013, 12). Peter Zajac, by contrast, integrates the concept of Romantic irony into the Slovak context, analyzing the nature of Záborský's poetics within the Slovak Romantic movement in the 1860s (cf. *Prepisovania,* 2011; Zajac and Schmarcová et al. 2019), as he specifies the narrative forms of the author's self-ironical insertions into *Faustiáda* (Zajac 2011). Záborský produced a grotesque vision of the authentic reflection of Slovak-Hungarian conditions in the mid-19th century, specifically, in the political situation after the fall of Bach absolutism. He placed the relevant historical events in the "interliterary network" of intertextual reminiscences within interliterary establishment, with not only a particular work but a complete anthology of texts being potentially identified as the proto-textual starting point (Žilka 2015b, 29–30). The genre and content of Goethe's *Faust* is desacralized (the epic form being replaced with prose) and presented as a parodied symbol of tragically Romantic severance from reality, together with further allusions to Homer, Dante, François Rabelais, Jonathan Swift, Laurence Sterne, John Milton, Ján Kollár, etc. Apart from "classic" literature, Záborský also utilizes the motifs and methods of "trivial" literature (chivalric romances and ballads), or folk tales (the giant Puchor, the Wizard) which transform *Faustiáda* into a parody of the Classicist or Romantic epic where the protagonist was, to a large extent, a tragic hero.

*Faustiáda* has been examined by many literary historians and theoreticians who have perceived its essential feature, referred to by Ján Števček as "incompleteness" (Števček 1989, 99), or intentional non-literariness ranging from stylistic idiosyncrasies to intensified antinomy between its genre variety and historical-social content (Šmatlák 1988, 379–380). All things considered, from the comparative perspective of intertextual establishment, *Faustiáda*'s unaesthetizing parody, according to Žilka, "in many respects resembles the creative approaches of postmodernists" (2015b, 29). Therefore, it has become "a cult artistic text because of its intertextual status, and as an impetus for new works" (2015b, 30). In reference to Chalupka's *Kocourkovo* and Karol Horák's play *Nebo, peklo, Kocúrkovo* (Heaven, hell, Gotham, 1995), Žilka praises Záborský for establishing Gotham/Kocúrkovo as "a small Slovakia", an absurd symbol of chaotic space and social abuses which can be apprehended only by a fellow "who smiles with one eye and cries with the other", as is stated in the epilogue to *Faustiáda* (Záborský 1984, 125). Nothing but Romantic irony, no matter how evinced, accentuates the inner differentiation of Slovak Romanticism featuring nationalist-pragmatic, messianist-mystical, and poetological-mythological lines, in addition to ironic Romanticism represented by Záborský himself: "The heterogeneity of his texts is not a flaw but a conscious aesthetical act" (Zajac 2011, 294), modelling the antimyth of modern Slovak culture.

Like Záborský, his Czech counterpart Šebestián Hněvkovský remained "between" Enlightened realism and Romanticism. For contemporary readers, Hněvkovský remains an antiquarian, forgotten Revivalist, whose works "nowadays remain unnoticed, but for casual references, even by literary scholarship" (Peřina 2019–2020, 253). Only in exceptional cases are his creations remembered for pioneering the "further development of Czech literature in the mid-19th century" (253). As a member of Antonín Puchmajer's literary grouping, he enlarged the Classicist anacreontic poetry with the burlesque ballad and the heroic-comic epic. His contribution to Czech Revivalist literature received a similarly ambiguous and contradictory appraisal as both authors alike failed to abandon their poetics after the radical change of stylistic paradigms. Hněvkovský's literary evolution over more than 50 years embodied the transition from Classicist aesthetics to ironizing accommodation with Romanticism, which found reflection in his article "Rozmlouvání na českém Parnasu" (Interlocution at the Czech Parnassus, 1840), where he attempted to accommodate Romantic aesthetics. His verse technique, however, was rooted in late 18th-century Classicism with the corresponding diversity of styles and genres.

Hněvkovský managed to surmount "the discrepancies between the subject and his unpolished language and versification" (Krejčí 1964) especially in his best-known composition *Děvín* (1805), subtitled "a mock-heroic poem" and originally in twelve cantos. Presenting the "Czech" theme of the Maidens' War, as employed, for example, in Prokop Šedivý's chivalric romance *České amazonky aneb Dívčí boj v Čechách* (Czech Amazons or Women warriors in Bohemia, 1792) and in the dramatic farce *Vlasta a Šárka aneb Dívčí boj u Prahy* (Vlasta and Šárka, or Women warriors at Prague, 1788), Hněvkovský introduced a new "patriotic" approach inspired by the ideology of the Enlightenment. In his satirical denouncement of the old feudal regime, he combined ironical glosses, topical illusions, and witty commentaries with a didactic celebration of the nation's homeland and human freedom. He effectively exploited folkloric methods and common readers' inclination to appreciate comical episodes so as to install *Děvín* as a foundational text of modern humorist reading, whose tone was complemented through three more categories of aesthetic expression: heroically serious, comic, and romantic. Thus he instituted a burlesque travesty of the Maiden's War legend, interspersed with scenes showing the interliterary application of proto-textual literary models produced in world literature in antiquity, the Renaissance, and Classicism (Homer, Virgil, Voltaire, Torquato Tasso, Lodovico Ariosto, Christoph M. Wieland, Ignacy Krasicki, etc.). Serious expression is restrained, manifesting itself only in war themes and enlightened opinions on the importance of female education for the bourgeois society. At the same time the theme of the Maidens' War serves to ironize the Czech nobility, which in the early 19th century was losing its historical privilege. The comic element prevails in the local-temporal presentation as ancient stories appear in contemporary criticism disclosing negative human features (careerism, the Germanization of Czech "pseudo-patriots", disapproval of superstitions, ridicule of feminine stupidity, the theme of deceived husbands and quarrelsome wives, etc.), whereas the Romantic element appears in the portrayal of the amorous adventures of "two heroic characters", Kasal and Beta. Moreover, *Děvín* offers vulgar jokes

alternating with sentimental recitations, and "gallant" Rococo poetry with the themes of broadside ballads, along with traces of romance. The resulting idiosyncratic type of heroic-comic poem conformed to the needs of the Revivalist readership and, within the context of advanced Western countries in the early 19th century, it represented a recurrent type anticipating the Byronic style.

The anachronous communication of Hněvkovský's poem is reflected in its form, simple anacreontic poetics. The aging poet wrote solely in syllabo-tonic trochees in monotonous eight-syllable stanzas. Versologically, he did not leave the early 19th century when Josef Dobrovský's obligatory reform of prosody was published in *Böhmische Prosodie* as a supplement to František Martin Pelcl's monograph *Grundsätze der böhmischen Grammatik* from 1795. Hněvkovský, an adherent of Enlightened Classicism, felt inclination towards syllabo-tonic verse with fixed meter, which is in contrast to natural speech. He took this stand even in his polemics on the character of Czech verse against František Palacký and Pavol Jozef Šafárik, published in his tract *Zlomky o českém básnictví, zvláště pak o prozódii* (Fragments on Czech poetry, especially prosody, 1820), paraphrasing the title of their treatise *Počátkové českého básnictví, obzvláště prozodie* (The beginnings of Czech poetry, especially prosody, 1818). He criticized their endeavor to introduce the aesthetically demanding metrical prosody, which would infringe on the established usage of metrification in domestic poetry.

In 1829, after a long pause, Hněvkovský rewrote his "mock-heroic" *Děvín*, converting it into a "romantic-heroic" poem extended by six cantos (eighteen in total). His attempt at a compositional and ideological combination of Puchmajer's anacreontics (based on Classicist poetics) and a pre-Romantic celebration of his own nation was not successful and Hněvkovský abandoned writing for a long time. Only in 1844, in his declining years, he published his last poem *Doktor Faust*, subtitled *Starožitná pověst v devíti zpěvích* (An ancient legend in nine cantos). In his historical story *Pomněnky z hrobu nejstaršího Čecha* (Forget-me-nots from the grave of the oldest Czech, 1847), Josef Kajetán Tyl says that Hněvkovský's plan for the portrayal of Faust matured after his return to Prague in 1836 (when he retired from the position of burgomaster in Polička). In his fictionalized "profile", Tyl gives a realistic portrait of "the oldest Czech", while surveying the development of Czech literature from the early National Revival until the 1840s. Hněvkovský "did not toil in vain in the desolate vineyard of our mother tongue" (Tyl 1964, 164) and is esteemed here as a representative of Puchmajer's generation, who remained faithful to the poetics of their almanacs compiled in the early 19th century even decades later (when *Doktor Faust* was composed). Tyl held Hněvkovský in high regard for his merits in the Czech language, quoting Puchmajer's statement that "whatever I have become in the temple of patriotic endeavor has only been to the credit of my dear Hněvkovský" (163), although he characterized his later prose as an antiquarian "monument" which renders Czech subjects through obsolete anacreontic versing.

*Doktor Faust* is Hněvkovský's attempt at a humorous approach to the Faustian myth in the form of a "Czech legend", i.e. a subject simply "appropriated" by the neighboring Germans. He was guided by the notion maintained in the 17th

century among Prague's populace, which ensued from the Humanist and Baroque opinion about the Czech origins of Gutenberg, the inventor of printing (allegedly a native of Kutná Hora). In the 17th-century Prague legends, he was etymologically identified with Faust, deemed to be a co-inventor of printing. Hněvkovský also responded to the story "Jan Šťastný" by the Czech literary historian and editor Antonín Jaroslav Vrťátko as a fictionalized incipit in an article on Gutenberg. It features the character of Jan of Kutná Hora, who invents printing in partnership with Faust. The seventy-year-old author specified his choice of the theme in his epigraph: "Do you ask why I have chosen Doctor Faust as my subject? One can play with this material, Prague honors him as its own" (Hněvkovský 1844, ii). In the preface, he mentions his sources: as early as his studies in Prague in the 1780s, he grew acquainted with the oral tradition rendering the legendary moralizing story about Faust and his house in Prague, just as he was familiarized with German sources (notably the historical tract by Kristian Ludwig Stieglitz). His literary companions from the Puchmajer group then encouraged him, in his own words, "to depict in comic ballads" the Faustian myth connected with Prague (vi). As mentioned above, this myth was then very popular in European literature, namely in the English, French, Swedish, and particularly German surroundings. Hněvkovský, a most erudite and well-read man, conjectured (namely when reading Goethe and Lenau) that the "serious style" was not suitable for the Slavic world and decided to "elaborate a romantic theme with a humoristic effect" (x). The work as a whole is not a parodical imitation of foreign models, as he states that "my intention was not to offend [...] morals" (xi).

In *Doktor Faust*, as in his early 19th-century creations, Hněvkovský intentionally addressed the popular reader, emphasizing the epic narrative paraphrased in legends and historical narratives "based on patriotic lines", which circulated among common people in Prague even in the late 18th century: "At that time, on every occasion, hundreds of tales about the magician Doctor Faust [...] could be heard" (iii). Its humorous aspect consists, above all, in the lightly ironical presentation of Faust's biography and his wanderings, or his links with Prague. The composition offers a selection of the most significant moments of the Faustian myth, with Faust not being a seducer like Don Juan, but a scholar, desiring honor and morals, who, with regard to the contemporary patriotic feeling "can be deemed a nationalized compatriot" (vii). As in Záborský's *Faustiáda,* Hněvkovský's *Doktor Faust* did not originate from one particular proto-text – Goethe's version represented here rather an abstract, inspirational model, which was generated from a compilation of texts delimited by the genre-thematic circle of invented and popular (mythological) presentations (Žilka 2015, 29). Whereas Záborský's intertextual continuation is unambiguously parodical and polemical towards Romantic inclinations, Hněvkovský's parody is tempered and supplemented by the didactic aspect of Czech "appropriation". Vladimír Macura, in this respect, mentions adaptational strategies and their subsequent pragmatical-ideological application: "[F]oreign disguise was not so much considered as expansion of a foreign influence into Czech culture [...] rather an act of Czech cultural expansion" (Macura 1983, 46).

The period's domain of Czech Faustiads would be incomplete without mentioning *Labyrint slávy* (The labyrinth of fame, 1846), an extensive verse epic by Jan Erazim Vocel, whose title alludes to Kollár's *Slávy dcera* (The daughter of Sláva, 1824), and which similarly blends a subjective pre-Romantic experience with the didactic element in elegiac scenes from Slavonic mythology. Vocel (1802–1871), jointly with František Palacký (the founding father of Czech archeology), belongs among the conservative patriots combining scholarly pursuits with the arts, where the declining Classicism comes to terms with Romantic aesthetics and Kollár's Slavic reciprocity, on the one hand, and with the arrival of Realism demanding, in contrast with "impractical" Romanticism, closer interconnection between literature and current issues. *Labyrint slávy* originated before the revolutionary year of 1848 and also supported two prototextual lines – the formula of Czech Faustiads responding to Goethe's *Faust*, in particular, and Kollár's pre-Romantic tradition of reflexive and "scholarly" verse projecting the ideas of Slavic ethnogenesis into artificial adaptation. As a professional archeologist, Vocel inserted contemporary theories about the origin of the Slavs, based on archeological research, into his verse composition. His endeavor to render the unrecorded Slavic history through its expedient location on the historical sites of European civilization (Italy) later resounded in Kollár's posthumous work *Staroitalia slavjanská* (The Slavic ancient Italy, 1853).

Vocel links the Faustian theme with the end of the Hussite period, as the plot of the epic is situated in the immediate aftermath of the battle at Lipany in 1434, following the defeat of the movement, when the bachelor Jan Kutenský pledges his soul to the evil spirit Duchomor (the Czech variant of Faust) in exchange for ten years of his life, when he wants to celebrate the oppressed Czech nation. The verse epic preserves the classical subject structure of the Faustiads and the Faustian myth in general, such as the act of selling his soul to the devil in exchange for a good service to an individual or a community-nation. It also includes such motifs as recognizing values through travelling and the subsequent transformation of the hero, the character of a friend who warns him against Faust, the invention of printing, the parting from Faust, and the final redemption. The rhetorical-religious pathos and didactic actuation suppress the subjective lyrical inspiration and sporadic suggestions of Romantic sensibility, which is eliminated even in Hněvkovský's *Doktor Faust,* whose "Czechization" of Faust penetrates all levels of his life story, supplemented with new "Czech episodes". For example, Faust's mother is presented in the Czech poetical composition as a Czech woman, a daughter of the legendary Žito, magician at the court of King Václav (Wenceslas) IV. According to the composition, Faust's father may have been a native of the Czech town of Bohdaneč, and Faust himself resides with his friend Hrbek in the romantic Valley of Šárka outside Prague, a favorite excursion spot of Czech patriots (where he also dies).

This composition has not attracted great interpretative interest in the past nor at present, but it would be unfair not to mention Karel Svoboda's study on *Doktor Faust*, whose author highlights adopting the chief idea of Goethe's work: he who attempts salvation will be saved. Hněvkovský, however, left the issue of Faust's salvation unsolved, leaving it to the reader's discretion. Svoboda analyzed the analogies between

Hněvkovský's and Goethe's motifs and compositions in *Faust* (Svoboda 1918): for example, the scene of Walpurgis Night is analogous to witches dancing on the waves of the Vltava river, etc. Hněvkovský's Faust is convinced that he stabs his Czech friend Hrbek, yet in Goethe, he is Gretchen's friend and Faust catches sight of the beautiful girl in the mirror. Although Hněvkovský borrowed his main idea as well as particular scenes from Goethe, he adds a multitude of characters and inserts irrelevant "Czech" elements, supplemented by the "Czechization" of minor episodes. Within the Czech context, Hněvkovský's *Doktor Faust* becomes a post-textual adaptation, where the affirmative fabular continuity (Žilka 2011, 167) of Goethe's proto-text alternates with controversial, parodical forms and modes of re-writing the original Faustian myth. What Vocel and Hněvkovský have in common is their topographical naturalization (the transference of the action to the "patriotic" Czech surroundings), where the schematized subject is enlivened by the exploitation of multiple sources and ideological actuation.

Parody remains dominant in *Doktor Faust* as an expressional aesthetic category related to the past, notwithstanding the prominence of the real, didactic, and mythological-romantic line of the adapted legend with patriotic motifs. Hněvkovský enriched poetic vocabulary along with the compositional structure of the work consisting of episodic scenes without logical sequence. The poetic language of this composition is almost overflowing with archaisms, or incomprehensible neologisms. Here Nature functions only as a scenic topos featuring an idealized landscape with sheep, a murmuring stream, a shepherdess, and a boy playing the flute, etc. A certain "scholarly saturation" of the text, like local and personal names, is not typical of Romantic poetry where Nature mingles with human fate. Faust remains a Rationalistic scholar and Enlightened patriot who, following the Romantic ideals before 1848, patriotically proclaims the idea of human equality and democratic liberties. "For years, mankind has been thinking of repair / So far it has been unable to break free from it", because "only thus a new morning will unfold" (Hněvkovský 1844, 45).

It has been proven that interpretation of a literary text can cross the "closed" ethno-linguistic border and join the "interliterary" network of European cultural tradition. This can help to explain also the "problematic" literary works (like *Faustiáda* and *Doktor Faust*) which in their national literatures have received an ambiguous reception or have been disregarded as Classicist-Enlightened texts produced in the "post-Romantic" period, where the traditional literary history does not expect to find any substantial developmental impulses. Both of these works represent the heroic-epic genre of a poem written in prose and verse, a genre whose ideological concept as well as prose structure evolves from Rationalist-Enlightened philosophy in the late 18th century. In addition, they point to the hybridization and simultaneity of the literary development of "minor" literatures and also to alternative options of the thematic-generic co-existence of contrasting poetics functioning in one text. By presenting Faustian themes, both *Faustiáda* and *Doktor Faust* create a collective national identity in the "sign of birth" (Macura 1983). Besides being simultaneously heroical-comical and lyrical, both works share the ambiguous position of their authors within contemporary poetics, genre discrepancy, and implicitly or explicitly ironic modality, which

anticipates a specific mode of reading based on a polemical perception of disputable reality. Both didactically topical (Hněvkovský) and humoristically parodizing (Záborský) approaches to Faustian theme, here adapted to the respective Czech and Slovak conditions, cannot be interpreted only as "anachronistic relicts" transposed from the 18th century, but also as parallel and alternative evidence of the diverse traditions in Central European Romanticism.

Translated from Czech by Jiřina Johanisová

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## The intertextual aspect of the Faustian theme in 19th-century Slovak and Czech literature: Jonáš Záborský, Šebestián Hněvkovský, and the categories of "national" vs. "world"

Interliterariness. Imagology. Literary history. National and world literature. Czech and Slovak Romantic literature. Jonáš Záborský. Šebestián Hněvkovský.

The study attempts to identify the "interliterary network" of the post-Romantic period from the perspective of "small national literatures" through an analysis of two Central European texts: *Faustiáda* (1864) by the Slovak writer Jonáš Záborský and *Doktor Faust* (1844) by the Czech writer Šebestián Hněvkovský. Although in the history of their respective literatures, both texts rank among the classics, they have been seen as "antiquary relicts" because of their genre hybridization, literary-orientational interference, and parallel coexistence of two different poetics within individual texts. The works belong to the genre of "Faustiads" whose purpose is to demythicize and desacralize the Faustian theme. The parodical-humorous form or didactically patriotic presentation enables them to cope with the historical philosophy of their nations. The interliterary interpretation of these works results in the transformation of fixed negative reflections in the literary discourse and in the confirmation of the diversity of the Central European post-Romantic tradition.

Doc. PhDr. Anna Zelenková, Ph.D.
Institute of Slavonic Studies
Czech Academy of Sciences
Valentinská 1
110 00 Prague
Czech Republic
zelenkova.anna@centrum.cz