

Czech historic movies between great epics and art or spiritual cinema II: František Vlácil: *Marketa Lazarová* (1967).

Screenplay: František Pavlíček, František Vlácil, based on the novel by Vladislav Vančura. Director of photography: Bedřich Bařka. Editor: Miroslav Hájek. Music: Zdeněk Liřka. Set designer: Oldřich Okáč. Cast: Magda Vášáryová (Marketa Lazarová), Josef Kemr (Kozlík), František Velecký (Mikoláš), Ivan Palúch (Adam), Pavla Polášková (Alexandra), Michal Kořuch (Lazar), Vladimír Menřík (Bernard), Zdeněk Kryzáneř (Pivo), Vlastimil Harapes (Kristián), Harry Studt (Kristián's father), Zdeněk Řehoř (Sovička), Nad'a Hejná (Kateřina), Jaroslav Moučka (Jan), and others. 160 min.

The film rhapsody *Marketa Lazarová* is a masterpiece of all Czech cinema; it won the first place on a top ten list of the best Czech and Slovak features ever made (the public inquiry was organized among Czech and Slovak critics in occasion to 100th anniversary of Czech cinema in 1998). The film is a variation of the leitmotifs of the novels by Vladislav Vančura (1891-1942) *Marketa Lazarová* (1931) and *Pictures from the History of the Czech Nation* (1939, 1940), which take place in the 13th century. Marketa is a daughter of a highwayman Lazar. She is promised to God, but she is abducted and raped by Mikoláš, a son of Kozlík, another of the robbing knights. She falls in love with Mikoláš... The excellent directing, outstanding music and the beauty of image on widescreen in black and white created some kind of "cult movie" for the Czech art public, but the film is not so well known abroad. There is only one film to compare with *Marketa Lazarová* in the world cinema: *Andrei Rublev* made by Andrei Tarkovsky, the famous Russian director, at the same time.

Assigned reading:

Hames, Peter. *The Czechoslovak New Wave*: "František Vlácil"