still a young student of theology. After learning Tamil he was despatched on a mission to Palamcottah whence he made several journeys. He spent the remainder of his life at Tinnevelly and Tanjore.

Travels by missionaries and their writings close – although not from a strictly chronological viewpoint – the long period of early direct reports about India, of echoes of a distant culture and sporadic contacts between the Czech and Slovak countries and India. It was a period during which objective cognition and rational thinking in general still met with many obstacles: ignorance, the narrow bounds of the religious outlook and, at a later stage, the disastrous consequences of colonial exploitation. All these handicaps have left deep traces on East-West relations. Possibilities of a gradual, though inevitable, improvement only began to take shape during the European Age of Reason and, where the Czechs and Slovaks are concerned, during the period of their struggle for national revival.

5 A CENTURY OF DISCOVERIES OF ANCIENT AND MODERN INDIA

"In this age men desire education. This is a felicitous sign everywhere and, in particular, in the Czech nation. Education is to the mind that which food is to the body, preserving it, infusing it with vigour, enabling it to grow and attain greater dignity. The main province of education is knowledge of our terrestrial abode. What nations inhabit it? What is their state of advancement, what their mode of living, manners and customs, and how are their communities constituted? How is our Earth formed? What are her countries like, her climates, creatures and plants, rivers and cities? What nations live on it, how are countries shaped, in a word, what picture does our world offer?"

HOW WELL has J. S. Tomíček (1806–1866), an ardent propagator of historical and travel literature, grasped the pressing urgency of questions, answers to which had been sought not only by his contemporaries but by his compatriots of both the preceding and the following generations. From the end of the 18th century on, the Czechs, and later the Slovaks, too, had lived through a hectic period of re-emerging national consciousness and of awakening modern political and cultural life. While new capitalist enterprise asserted itself on the economic scene, the European Age of Reason, with its streams of new thinking, provided the background against which gradually the modern nations of the Czechs and the Slovaks formed themselves, and ideas of a new nationalism budded forth. Alongside the progress achieved by scientific study, the founding of learned societies and the overall relaxation and regeneration of public life, interest in world developments grew apace in the country during the first decades of the 19th century. This revivalist activity and the revolutionary aspirations of the year 1848 were, it is true, temporarily damped by the absolutism of the Austrian

Government, but the Czechoslovak people's will to renew their independent national life could no more be permanently bridled.

Ideas of enlightenment and rationalism influenced the cultural life of Central Europe during the 18th century. Czech and Slovak scholars had even then access to writings of the leading spirits of the period. Geographical, ethnographic and historical literature, as well as new works on natural history, also set forth a wealth of information on India and her natural riches, works notable for a high level of exactitude and objectivity. Through various channels this information penetrated into Czech and Slovak scientific and specialised writing and, thanks to the spread of knowledge, soon grew to such proportions that we can mention only a few of the most influential works popularising India among Czech and Slovak readers.*

Czech literature on the geographical, historical and social conditions of India was greatly enriched by *Geograffia aneb vypsáni okršleku zemského* (Geography, or the Description of the Entire Earth), published in 1798 at Banská Bystrica (Slovakia). It was a work by Ladislav Bartolomeides (1754

* It may be worth while to mention that the attempts of the Habsburg court to seize a share in profitable trade with India through the founding of the Ostend Company at the beginning of the 18th century also had a bearing on Bohemia, especially her textile and glass industries. In several Czechoslovak archives (e. g. at Liberec, Klášterec-on-Ohře and Kroměříž) interesting documents and correspondencies have been preserved, testifying to the activities of representatives of Austria's mercantile policy. These documents have recently ben studied by J. V. Polišenský.

Czechoslovak archives also shed light on unsuccessful attempts at establishing a trading company at Cheb (West Bohemia), which was to engage in trade with overseas countries by linking its activities with those of Dutch companies.

to 1825), a Slovak Protestant and ardent pioneer of patriotic and specialised literature, who maintained contacts with Czech patriots in Prague, especially with V. M. Kramérius. Bartolomeides carried on the tradition initiated by the earliest Slovak textbooks of geography. For instance, as early as 1639 David Frölich's *Medulla geographiae practicae* (Essentials of Practical Geography), containing information on the geography of Asia, was published at Bardejov, an east Slovak town unaffected by the counter-reformation drive, while in 1755 knowledge about Asia was further enhanced by the publication in Trnava of *Geographica globi terraquei Synopsis* (A Geographical Synopsis of the Globe and Continents) by J. Münich. Bartolomeides surpassed his contemporaries by the conception and lucidity of his work. Maps of India, engraved by the author himself, show the position of this country in the world and within the Asian continent (with certain inaccuracies) and a separate chapter is devoted to India in the text. The book records the situation before the territorial expansion of the East India Company, stresses the "terrible" magnitude of the country and its innumerable population, states that the Indians are genial and kindly people, very keen on personal hygiene and clean garments, and that even four thousand years before they had been so perfect as to be sought out by others desiring wisdom. Bartolomeides further discusses the country's riches, gems and precious metals, describes conditions in North India and Deccan, records the country's political division, the different kingdoms, and princedoms, as well as the key positions of European powers on her territory, and mentions the various nations, religions and castes making up the population of India.

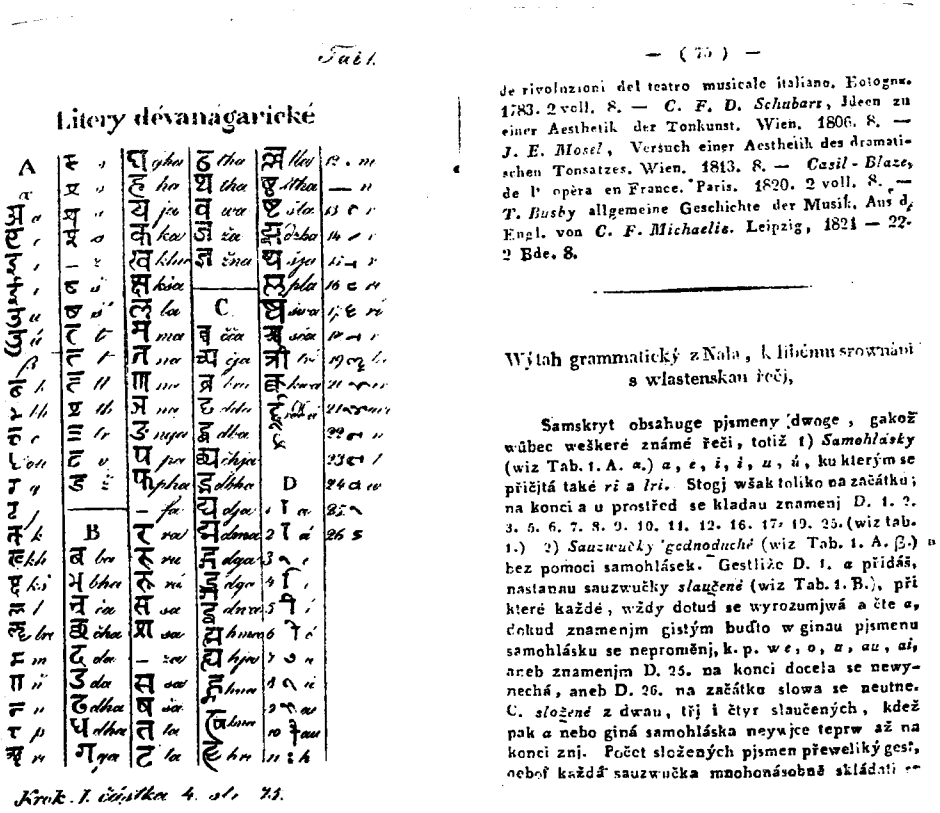
At about the same time Prague was witnessing the activities of Václav Matěj Kramérius (1759–1808), publisher

of popular educational literature, and of his son, Václav Radomil. The Kramériuses may be credited with having introduced Indian themes to wide circles of Czech readers. Let us mention at least V. M. Kramérius's *Historické vypsáni Mogolského císařství* (An Historical Description of the Mughal Empire) from 1803, providing detailed information on India in the form of a conversation between a knowledgeable Messenger and Lipan, a farmer desiring information on India and the Indians, whose manners and customs he admires. Lipan assures the Messenger that his narrative "will awaken many of us to such virtues and laudable deeds".

Deep interest in India, and above all, in her ancient language, the Sanskrit, was aroused by the Father of Czech philological studies, Josef Dobrovský, who, as we know, had turned to the study of Indian languages under the stimulating influence of Přikryl's Grammar of Konkani.

Thus Přikryl's fragmentary work bridged the gap between the existing knowledge of India and the concrete, scientific interest in Indian culture of entire generations of Czech and Slovak scholars during the period of the National Revival. Stimulated by Dobrovský's discovery of affinities between the Indian and the Slavonic languages as well as by contemporary discoveries of Indian cultural heritage in Western Europe, many applied themselves to the study of Sanskrit and Ancient Indian literature and translated examples into Czech. From 1821 on, the review *Krok* published a series of serious informative articles on Indian philology. Josef Jungmann (1773–1847), a Czech philologist and historian of literature, contributed to the review some studies in Indian poetry (*Krátký přehled prosodie a metriky Indické* – A Short Survey of Indian Prosody and Metric) and other articles, and referred to Sanskrit as the "real mother of the Slavonic Tongue" and a language "the most perfect

The first Czech example of the Devanagari script in A. Jungmann's article on Sanskrit Grammar, *Krok*, 1823



Tab. I.

Litery dévanágarické

Krok. I. čásťka 4. str. 71.

— (75) —

de rivoluzioni del teatro musicale italiano. Bologna. 1783. 2 voll. 8. — *C. F. D. Schubart*, Ideen zu einer Aesthetik der Tonkunst. Wien. 1806. 8. — *J. E. Mosel*, Versuch einer Aesthetik des dramatischen Tonsatzes. Wien. 1813. 8. — *Casil-Blaze*, de l' opéra en France. Paris. 1820. 2 voll. 8. — *T. Busby* allgemeine Geschichte der Musik. Aus d. Engl. von *C. F. Michaelis*. Leipzig, 1821 — 22. 2 Bde. 8.

Výtah grammatický z Nala, k libému srownání s wlastenskau řečj,

Samskryt obsahuge pjsmeny dwoge, gakož wůbec weškeré známé řeči, totiž 1) *Samohlásky* (wiz Tab. I. A. α.) a, e, i, i, u, ú, ku kterým se přičjtá také *ri* a *lri*. Stogj wšak toliko na začátku; na konci a u prostřed se kladau znamenj D. 1. 2. 3. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 16. 17. 19. 25. (wiz tab. I.) 2) *Sauzwučky gednoduché* (wiz Tab. I. A. β.) bez pomoci samohlásek. Gestliže D. 1. α přidáš, nastanau sauzwučky *slaučené* (wiz Tab. I. B.), při které každé, wždy dotud se wyrozumjwá a čte a, dokud znamenjm gistým budto w ginau pjsmenu samohlásku se nepromění, k. p. we, o, u, au, ai, aneb znamenjm D. 25. na konci docela se newynechá, aneb D. 26. na začátku slowa se neutne. C. *složené* z dwau, tří i čtyr slaučených, kdež pak a nebo giná samohláska neywjce teprw až na konci znj. Počet složených pjsmen přewelikj gest, nebo? každá sauzwučka mnohonásobně skládati se

under the Sun". In a letter to a friend he wrote with admiration: "These Indian chaps are as clever and adroit at versifying as at rope-climbing. Who can emulate them?"

His brother Antonín Jungmann (1775–1854) wrote a study *O sanskritu* (On Sanskrit), in which he substantiated his theory of linguistic affinity between Indian and Slavonic languages by quoting a certain F. Březovský, a lathe operator in Zagreb (Yugoslavia), who understood the languages he had met with in the course of his travels in India and Cochin China and had been equally well understood by the local

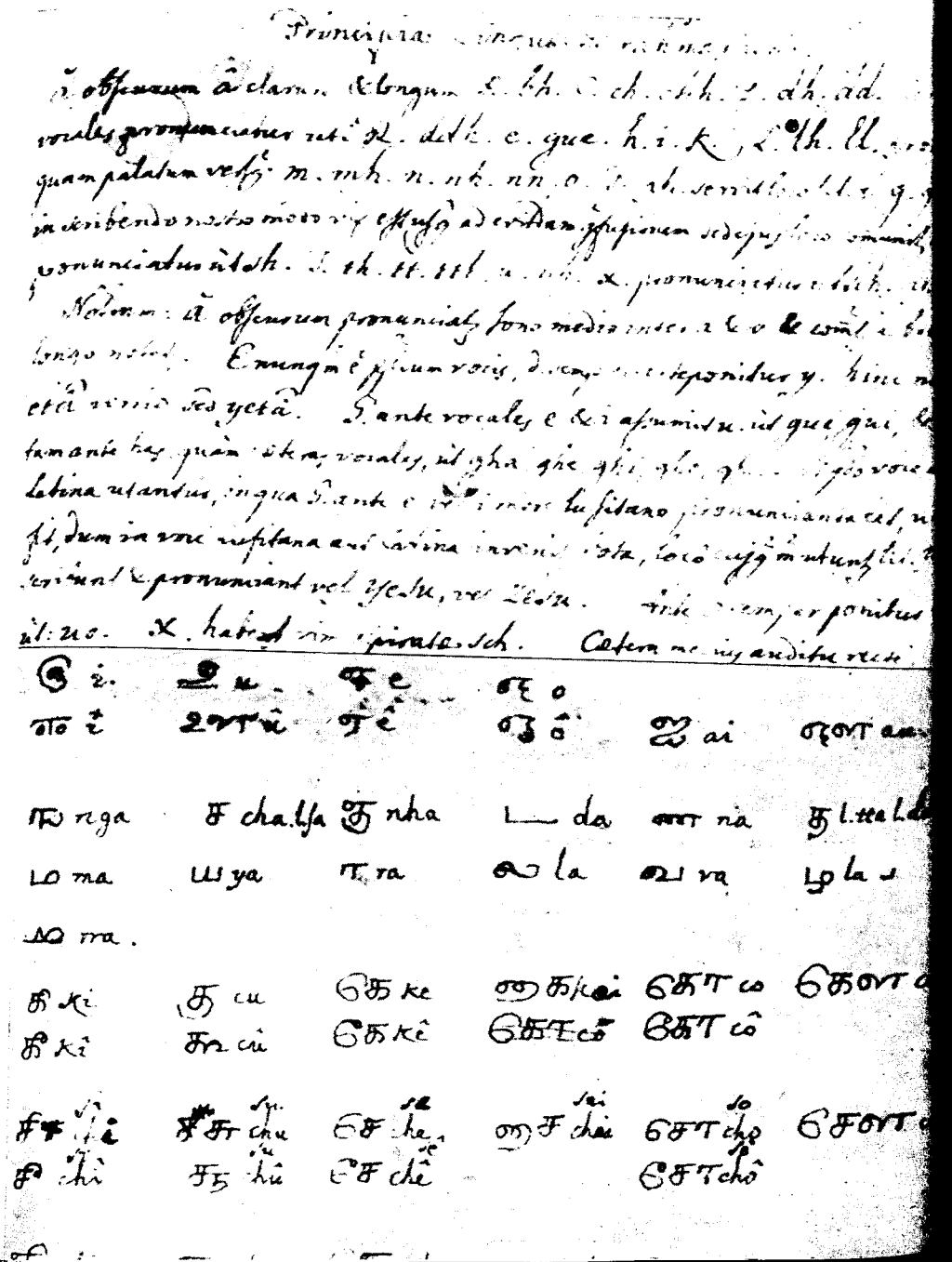
speakers. In his article *O Hindích* (On Indians) he left us a general outline of India and her inhabitants and described this country as the foundation of British power. He also published *Výtah gramatický z Nala k libému srovnání s vlasteneckou řečí* (A Grammatical Extract from Nala, to Be Kindly Compared with the Native Speech), an article supplemented by a grammar of Sanskrit in tabulated form and a reproduction of the Devanagari script. Another of his articles draws a comparison between Hindu and Slavonic deities.

The writer and publisher of Old Czech texts, Václav Hanka (1791–1861), was the first to introduce (in 1824) into Czech writing a passage from the *Ramayana* in a prose translation. Hanka's version was not based on the Sanskrit original but was introduced by an essay on that language and by a synopsis of the epic. The translation appeared under the title *Nářek rodičů nad smrtí jedináčka a válka Lakšmanova, bratra Ramova, s velikým Attikajou, synem Ravanovým* (The Parents' Lament over the Death of Their Only Son and the War Waged by Lakshmana, Rama's Brother, against the Great Attikaya, the Son of Ravana). Several Czech poets, inspired by Jungmann's articles, composed poems on Indian metrical patterns.

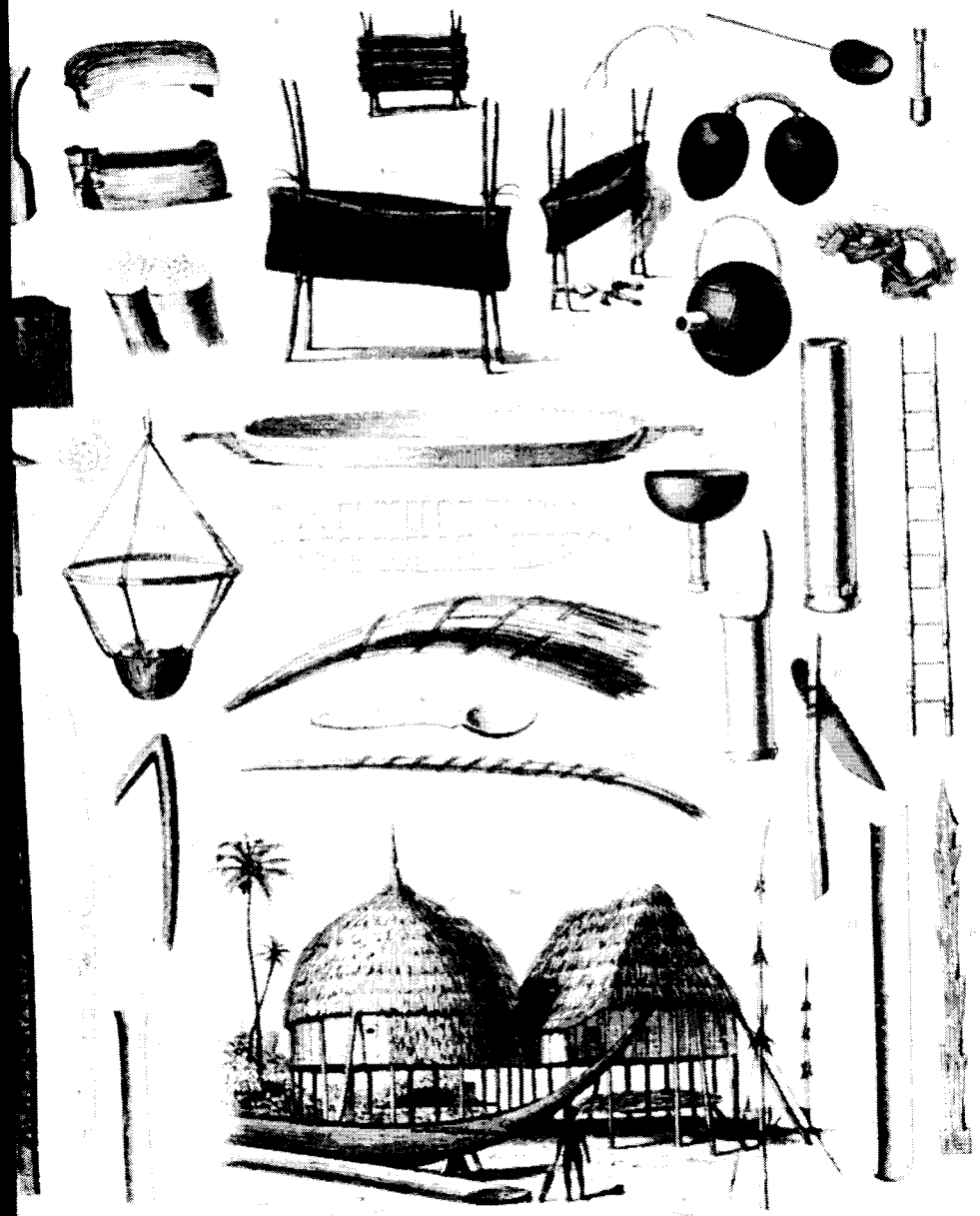
Karel Hynek Mácha (1810–1836), author of the poem *May,* took a lively interest in India, as can be inferred from his personal notes found after his death.

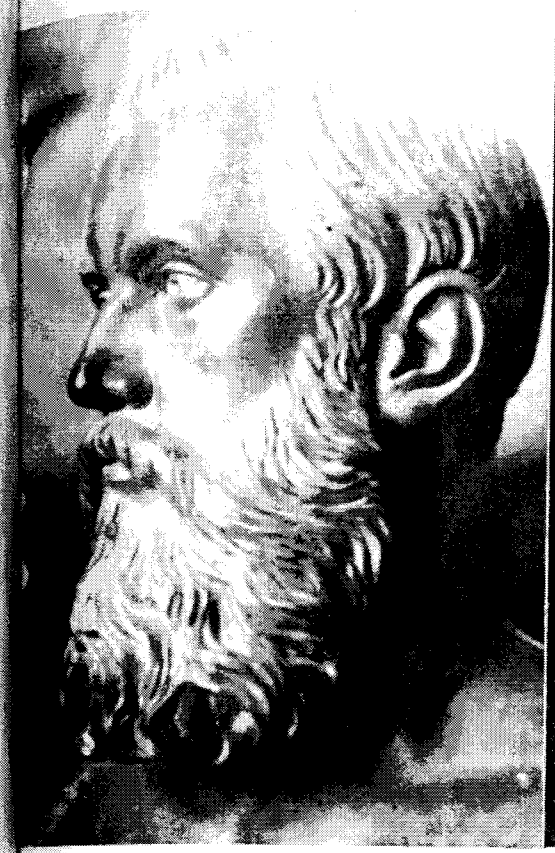
Karel Havlíček Borovský (1821–1856), a militant journalist and satirical poet, was another Czech writer attracted by India and her culture. When, at seventeen years of age, while still a grammar school pupil, he began to prepare himself systematically for a career as a public figure, he and some of his closest friends elaborated a romantic set of aims to be achieved in life. India and the study of Sanskrit were given

Karel Přikryl's manuscripts (middle of the 18th century)
a) Opening lines of Konkani Grammar
b) Fragment of Tamil Grammar



Drawings of dwellings and various articles of everyday use from the stay of Václav Svoboda in the Nicobar Islands in 1888.





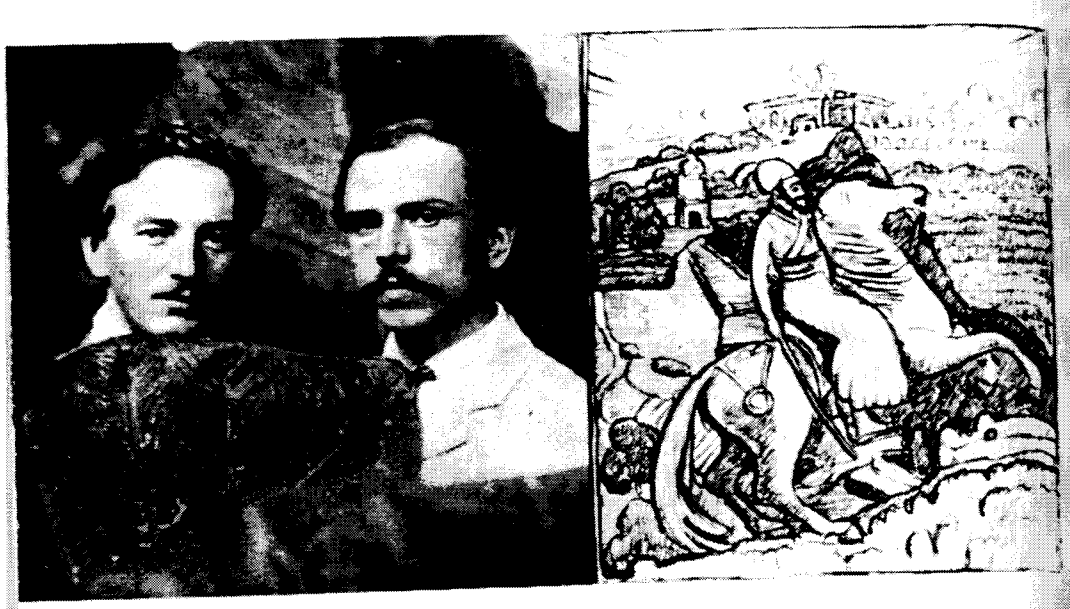
Bust of Ferdinand Stolička
in the Calcutta National Museum

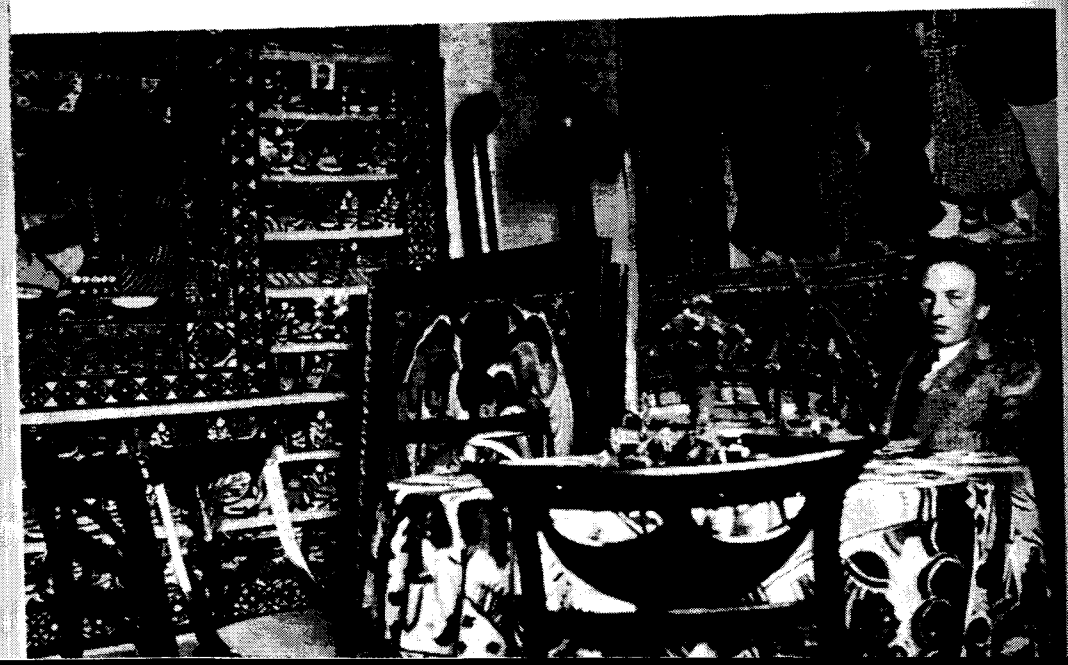
Otakar Feistmantel

Painters J. Hněvkovský and O. Nejedlý in Kerala, 1911.

O. Nejedlý in his studio after his return from India.

Hněvkovský's sketch for a large-scale painting of Shivaji.





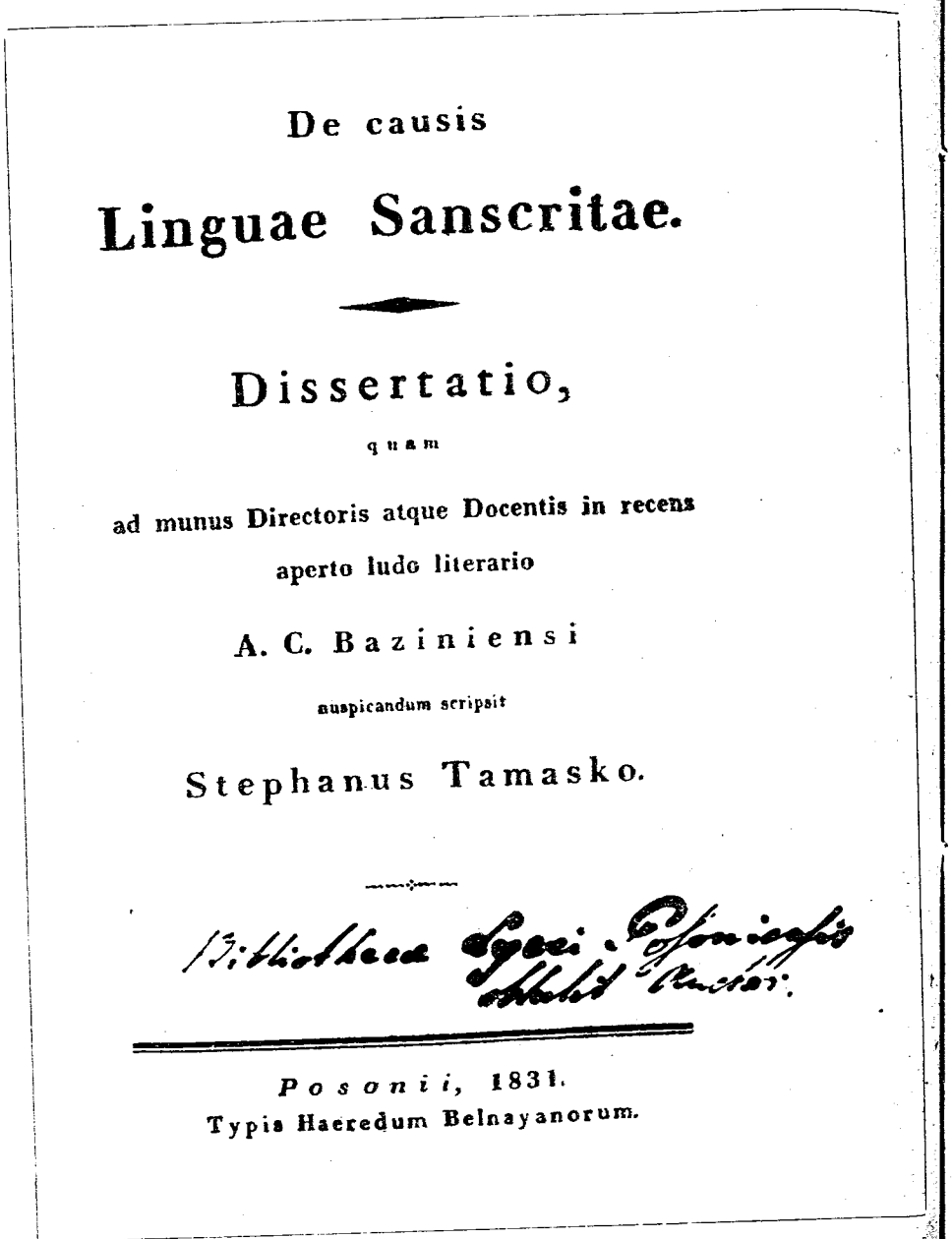
prominence on the list. As a mature man, Havlíček hailed the publication of Klácel's Czech rendering of tales from the *Panchatantra* and warmly recommended them to teachers and educators of youth. In appraising the tales, Havlíček was also guided by political motives. He obviously had in mind the foreign oppressors of the Czechs when he wrote in a review that, in a country ruled by tyrants intolerant of opposition, wise men had to put political and religious truths into the mouths of animals, so that they could be swallowed by the rulers as sugar-coated pills.

The first Slovak scholar to take a serious interest in Sanskrit was Jozef Štefan Tamaško (1801–1881), a teacher at a Protestant grammar school in Bratislava. Tamaško studied Sanskrit for two years under Georg Ewald, a Göttingen Orientalist, and gladly reverted to this field of study later, while teaching in Bratislava. He is the author of the first publication on Sanskrit to have originated on Czechoslovak territory *De causis Linguae Sanscritae* (On the Origins of the Sanskrit Language, 1831). His other works include a translation of nine hymns from the *Rig-Veda* (1860) and an ode composed by himself in Sanskrit.

Pavel Josef Šafařík (1795–1861), another Slovak scholar, mastered Sanskrit through diligent study. He was a man of encyclopaedic learning, a historian, a philologist and a writer. His knowledge of Sanskrit underlay all fields of his research work. He appreciated the inclusion of Sanskrit in the "Indoeuropean family of languages" as a new step in linguistic study. In tracing the development of religious notions he pointed to parallels between the Indians and the Slavs, and on the whole shared the views upheld by Polish historians of the romantic school, namely, that the Slavs had originated in India.

A similarly romantic spirit, lacking, however, Šafařík's

The title page of the first book on Sanskrit published on Czechoslovak territory, a work by Štefan Tamaško, 1831



De causis

Linguae Sanscritae.

Dissertatio,

quam

ad munus Directoris atque Docentis in recens

aperto ludo literario

A. C. Baziniensi

auspicandum scripsit

Stephanus Tamasko.

Posonii, 1831.

Typis Haeredum Belnayanorum.

critical acumen, permeates the work of Ján Kollár (1793 to 1852), a Slovak poet and writer who spared no effort (including the study of Sanskrit) to prove the relationship between the Slavs and India. To his *Sláva bohyně* (Sláva – the Goddess) written in 1839, he appended three extensive comparisons: Identities and similarities occurring in Indian and Slavonic life (i); a list of words and expressions in Sanskrit, Romany and Slavonic, having the same roots and meanings (ii); a comparison of Indian and Slav mythology (iii), including "A Survey of Slavonic Mythological Characters Comparable to the Indian", comprising more than 200 names. Only a part of these "similarities", however, can stand the test of scientific examination, but Kollár's endeavours remain an interesting testimony both to the period of their origin and to the sense of affinity then existing between the Slavonic and the Indian world.

Sanskrit and Ancient Indian literature attracted the interest of the greatest Czech scholars of the period. The awareness of a relationship between Czech and Indian culture strengthened their patriotic feelings and stimulated their strivings to win national freedom for their fellow countrymen and their country. J. E. Purkyně (1787–1869), a Czech physiologist, whose discovery, epitomised in the words *Omne vivum ex ovo* (All living beings come from egg), earned him world-wide renown, was another ardent admirer of Indian literature. It is little known that this man of genius had an extraordinary talent for linguistic study and that he was probably the author of the first (unpublished) Czech translation of the story of *Nal and Damayanti,* from the *Mahabharata.* In his old age his interest was aroused by Bhartrihari's Sayings in Peter Bohlen's edition, on which he based his translation of *Prvních sto průpovědí* (The First One Hundred Sayings). The translation appeared in *Květy* (Blossoms), a

popular Prague journal. In 1868 this journal published Purkyně's poetic version of *God and the Bayadere, an Indian Legend,* based on a poem by Goethe.

One of the co-founders of the Sokol physical training organisation, Jindřich Fügner (1822–1865), had the following text printed on his visiting-cards: *Buddhau caranam anviccha kripanas phalahetavas.* This seems to be something more than an interesting biographical detail, as the idea expressed by the verse (Seek refinement in knowledge while to be pitied are those whose action is prompted by a reward) shows a striking similarity with the slogan devised by Fügner for the Sokol movement: Neither Gain, nor Glory.

There were not a few leading representatives of Czech literature who used Indian themes and drew inspiration from Indian sources. They presented their subjects with a view to pleasing Czech readers and, for the most part, with a remarkably Romantic tinge. Among these authors the most notable were Jan Neruda (1834–1891), Julius Zeyer (1841–1901), Svatopluk Čech (1846–1908) and Jaroslav Vrchlický (1853–1912), among those of a later generation Karel Matěj Čapek-Chod (1860–1927), Josef Svatopluk Machar (1864 to 1942), Anna Marie Tilschová (1873–1957) and, in particular, Otakar Březina (1868–1929).

The year 1893 saw the première at the National Theatre of Shudraka's *Mrichchhakatikam* (The Clay Cart), in J. Vrchlický's translation of the European adaptation of the play by E. Pohl (known as *Vasantasena*), and in 1908 the same theatre put on *Kunala's Eyes,* an opera by the Czech composer Otakar Ostrčil, with a libretto by K. Mašek, based on a story by Julius Zeyer.

In the circumstances of the times, scholarly interest in India crystallised in close connection with the progress of Indoeuropean comparative philology and it is only true to

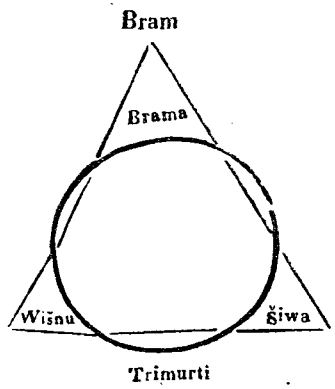
From J. Kollár's *Sláva bohyně* (Sláva – the Goddess) from 1839; chapter on Indian religion

šidla, k. p. Bobo, Buka; brzo gako hry, k. p. Slepá Bába, Skomra atd. Co *Chr. G. Arndt, Urspr. d. eur. Sprachen* S. 8. o srownáwánj řečj pjše, to platj i o srownáwánj mythologie slawské s indickau: „Auf diesem Wege wird man die Geschichte der Mythologie, und dadurch gewissermassen, selbst die Geschichte des Menschengeschlechtes, bis über die Grenzen aller geschriebenen Geschichte und aufbewahrten Traditionen verfolgen; so wie man durch die nähere Untersuchung und Vergleichung der Beschaffenheit mehrerer, weit von einander entfernten Gebirge, eine Naturgeschichte des Erdballs vorbereitet hat, die den ersten Anfang unserer bekannten Weltgeschichte, um viele tausend Jahre hinter sich lässt." W indické Mythologii má geden bůh často mnoho přjgmenj čili rozličných názwůw a wlastnostj, každé přjgmenj gest gakoby zwláštnj bůh a wšak zase wšudy a we wšem totožnost, nebo každé přjgmeno gest rowné samému bohu. Přjgmena, přetwory a manželky gsau gen úkazy a wywinowanj gednoho a téhož boha w rozličných časjch a způsobách.

Přehled indického náboženstwj.

I. Božstwa.

1. Prwnj třjdy:



2. Druhé třjdy, Gandharva, Div Devetas:

a) *Sur* čili Bjlj, Bělbohowé:

aa) Wišnu, Bešu čili ochráncowé swěta:

1 *Indri*, bůh oblohy čili Wedra; manželka: *Indrani* (Wedrina)
Agni bůh Ohně; manželka *Agnaji* čili *Swaha* (Ohňowa, Sláwa)

say that it had not disengaged itself from this partnership until the war of 1914–18. The founder of Indian studies in Prague University was August Schleicher (1821–1868), who became the University's first Ordinary in 1850. Among other writings he is responsible for the translation into and publishing in Czech of the first episodes from the Sanskrit original of the Mahabharata – *The Deluge*. In collaboration with F. Šohaj (1816–1878), he translated *Nal and Damayanti*. Schleicher's successor at the University, Alfred Ludwig (1837–1912), interested himself particularly in Vedic literature and produced, among other translations, an annotated German version of the 1,028 hymns of the *Rig-Veda* (the first German translation of the work), translations of verses from the *Sama-Veda* and selected hymns from the *Atharva-Veda*. One of his later writings touches upon Dravidian philology: *On the Phonetic Peculiarities of Telugu and the Term Dravida*. After the reorganisation of Prague University in 1882*, a course of lectures on the beginnings of Sanskrit was started by Alois Vaníček (1825–1883) who, however, died shortly afterwards. Another Czech Indologist to die prematurely, was Emanuel Kovář (1861–98), who specialised in Indian dramatic literature besides translating hymns from the *Rig-Veda* and a collection of fables, *Hitopadesha*, into Czech. Among the numbers of Czech Sanskritists and comparative philologists, special mention is due

* On its foundation in 1348 by Charles IV, Prague University was the first institution of this type in Central Europe. After the Battle of the White Mountain (1620), when it came under Jesuit administration, all lectures were given in Latin. In the eighties of the 18th century the University was Germanised and about a century later (in 1882) was divided into a Czech and a German University. In 1920 a law was passed declaring the Czech University to be the legitimate heir of the original Charles (Caroline) University.

to Professor Čeněk Šercl (1843–1906). This prodigious linguist – nicknamed the Czech Mezzofanti, who even in his youth startled his contemporaries by his knowledge of 30 western and eastern languages (including Sanskrit, Hindustani and Romany) – spent most of his mature life teaching and doing research work at universities abroad, e. g. in Kharkov and Odessa. His life work includes *A Grammar of Sanskrit* (written in Russian), a book on *The Life of the Ancient Indians*, and others writings. His bulky volume of *Lingustic Studies* examines Dravidian linguistic material, especially Kanarese, Tamil and Telugu.

But not even at this stage of scholarly interest in India was research confined to the domains of linguistics and literature alone. For instance, a four-volume book on Indian philosophical systems and their relationship to Christianity was written by František Čupr (1821–82). Josef Virgil Grohman (1831–1919), a grammar-school teacher, studied the popular therapeutic methods of Ancient India, besides interesting himself in Indian mythology and Vedic texts from a medical viewpoint. Specialists in Indian ethnography, geology and palaeontology will be mentioned at the end of the chapter.

The constitution of Indology as a separate branch of study at the turn of the 19th century was completed by the comprehensive research work of Professor Josef Zubatý (1885 to 1931), centering on analysis of the grammatical structure of the Vedic language. Zubatý also made a noteworthy contribution to the study of Ancient Indian literature (e. g. *On Vedic Literature*), comparative research and translations from Sanskrit, especially by his rendering of works by Kalidasa. Thus the foundations of an independent department of study – Classical Indology – had already been laid in effect before the renewal of Czechoslovak independence in 1918.

Deeper scientific interest in Indian culture found expression in many specialised works, in original books of travels, and, last but not least, in research done by Czech scholars in India. As early as 1787 a voluminous work was published (in German) in the Moravian metropolis of Brno, J. W. Archenholz's *Die Engländer in Indien* (The English in India), based on Orme's history. From the beginning of the 19th century on, Asian and Indian topics and problems found their place with increasing frequency in general works on history, geography, ethnography and in encyclopaedic works. Although the majority of these were compilations made abroad or based on second-hand information, now and then attempts at original interpretations can be noted. As regards the geography of India, a comparatively detailed work was T. F. Ehrmann's *Neueste Kunde von Asien* (Newest Knowledge of Asia) published as vol. 11 of a series covering the whole world (Prague, 1812). Gradually more and more chapters were devoted to India in original works, such as Karel Šádek's *General Geography* (published at Hradec Králové in eastern Bohemia between 1822 and 1824), or in K. V. Zap's *General Geography* (the part relating to India was published in Prague in 1850). The natural conditions of India were described by J. Palacký (1830–1908) in *Asie*, Prague, 1872. In his *Ethnography* (Prague, 1881–83), as well as in later writings, such as *Národopis všech dílů světa* (The Ethnography of All Parts of the World) and *Žena ve zvycích a mravech národů* (The Woman in the Customs and Morals of Nations), published shortly before the 1914–1918 war, J. Vlach (1852–1919) also in part relied on Indian material. J. Basl's *Asie* (1908) devotes more that 60 pages to India. Another informative work from the prewar period is F. Machát's *Ilustrovaný zeměpis všech dílů světa* (An Illustrated Geography of All the Continents, 1911). Exceptionally these and other publications on geography contain interesting historical, political and economic digressions.

Problems of Indian history were discussed by the founder of modern Czech historical science, František Palacký (1798 to 1876), in his survey *O nejstarších dějinách a dějepiscích národů asiatských* (On the Most Ancient History and Historians of the Asian Nations, 1831), an adaptation of a book by J. Klaproth. In most works by Czech and Slovak authors on world history, published during the 19th century and the first decade of the 20th, discussion of modern Indian history is directly or indirectly based on British models. This is true, for instance, of *Krátký všeobecný dějepis* (A Concise General History) by V. V. Tomek (1842) with an Introduction by P. J. Šafařík. T. B. Macaulay's *History of England* was translated into Czech in the sixties of the 19th century. Nevertheless, more than one work by a Czech or Slovak author from the latter half of the last century show attempts at an independent critical approach to the evaluation of historical personalities and periods in modern Indian history. Outstanding in this respect are the chapters devoted to India in *Děje anglické země* (A History of England) by the abovementioned J. S. Tomíček, published in Prague, 1849. Czech authors also pointed to the social and economic consequences of colonialisation and their historical repercussions. For instance J. Basl noted that 250 million Indians were living in dire poverty and added that they would not be starving "had they not been forced to deliver the fruits of their exertions to their overlords, none of whom are dying of hunger, but are thriving and growing rich".

From the beginning of the 19th century on, dozens of specialised treatises and textbooks of geography and history had been published, and hundreds of articles on India appeared in the periodical press. India and her life were also

brought nearer to the Czech and Slovak reading public by the first encyclopaedic works, above all by the *Slovník naučný* (Encyclopaedia) edited by F. L. Rieger (1818–1903), which was published in Prague from 1860–1873. Another such work was *Ottův slovník naučný* (Otto's Encyclopaedia) from 1888–1909. In Rieger's Encyclopaedia the articles pertaining to India were, for the most part, the work of members of the editorial board, only certain articles (e. g. on natural conditions, history and culture) being contributed by outsiders, two Professors of Prague University, J. Palacký and J. Gebauer (the latter contributing the article on Sanskrit). The eleven-volume Rieger's Encyclopaedia was the first venture of this kind on Czechoslovak territory and found subscribers even in Russia, Poland, Croatia and France. Otto's Encyclopaedia, in 27 volumes, contained far more, and more competent, information on India. Among the members of Otto's board of editors were some Indologists and Orientalists. Apart from J. Palacký, information on India was provided by O. Feistmantel, J. Zubatý and R. Dvořák, whose article on the Bengali language and literature was the first essay on this theme by a Czech.

From the seventies on, Czech scholars and travellers who visited the country were able to produce eye-witness reports. In the course of the 19th century, not a few Czechs came to India on various occasions and for different purposes, and their numbers grew during the period shortly preceding the Great War. As early as 1803, František Krása, a Czech oboe virtuoso, lived in Bengal and during the late thirties Jan Vilém Helfer (1810–1840), a naturalist, spent some time in India (and Burma) before meeting a tragic death on the Andaman Islands. He was probably the first Czech to learn Hindustani and his collections (mainly of insects) greatly enriched the natural history department of the

National Museum in Prague. Helfer's diaries were published by his widow in 1873.

Among the 350 men on board the *Novara*, an Austrian frigate, which, in the course of her round-the-world voyage, stopped for 12 days in Madras and for more than a month at the Nicobar Islands during the Great Indian Mutiny (January and February 1858), we can find many Czech names. In 1859, Čeněk Paclt (1813–1887), a genial Czech globe-trotter, soap-maker, gold-digger and diamond grinder, spent about a fortnight in Calcutta, having been attracted there, without doubt, by tales of gold deposits in Bengal. His letters, published later in book form, contain brief references to his stay in India. On the other hand, his letters from the seventies, when he was living in South Africa, abound with interesting observations on the life and customs of Indian immigrants. Jindřich Vávra (1831–1887), who circled the world many times while working as a ship's surgeon, visited India during the early eighteen-seventies and made a journey to the Himalayas. Part of his botanical collections are in the care of the Moravian Museum at Brno, the Moravian metropolis and Vávra's birthplace. Another Czech employed as a ship's surgeon, Václav Svoboda (1850–1924), used his ship's (the Austrian *Aurora*) call at the Nicobar Islands to make a fairly detailed study of the life and customs of the local population. On his return home, his observations appeared in geographical and ethnographical journals. His countryman Václav Stejskal, intendant on the same ship, brought home a valuable ethnographical collection which he bequeathed to the National Museum in Prague.

An important contribution to the development of the geology and palaeontology of India was made by two other Czechs. Ferdinand Stolička (1838–1874), born near the Moravian town of Kroměříž, is recalled to visitors to the

National Museum in Calcutta by a bust in the Department of Palaeontology. From 1863 on he worked on the staff of the Geological Survey of India and later became scientific secretary to the Asiatic Society of Bengal. (The Society's Hall displays a portrait and another bust of Stoličk a). He participated in several scientific expeditions, mainly into the Himalayas, the Cutch Peninsula and the Andaman Islands, and published many works. At his own request he took part in Forsyth's mission to Yarkand and Kashgar in Central Asia. Barely 36 years old, he died during a strenuous march over the Karakoran Pass on the return journey and lies buried at Leh. After 1875 his work was followed up, during eight years of travels through Deccan, the Hindustan Lowland, Indian Himalaya and Sikkim, by Otakar Feistmantel (1848–1891), who won fame mainly by his work on fossilised plants in the coal-bearing strata of Gondwana. Feistmantel, too, became a member of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, learned Hindi and Urdu, besides cultivating a variety of interests. On his travels he readily exercised his outstanding faculty of observation. But on the whole he was prevented from closer contacts with the Indian population by his status as a gazetted officer, and his views did not differ much from the superior attitudes of many other European residents.

From his Indian travels Feistmantel brought back a wealth of natural, historical, ethnographic and documentary material, as well as many examples of Indian craftsmanship. A great "Indian Exhibition" based on Feistmantel's collections (which filled seven exhibition rooms) was held in Prague in 1884. It met with a keen interest on the part of the city's public, as, without doubt, it was the first Czech exhibition on India. A large part of the exhibits are preserved to this day among the collections of the Náprstek Museum of Asian, African and American Cultures. Feistmantel is the author of some popular publications and articles, describing his travels in India, the country's cultural landmarks, history, political system and agricultural conditions.

Ten years after Feistmantel left, India was visited by another Czech naturalist, Josef Kořenský (1847–1938), a professional author of travelogues, who recorded his impressions in a book describing his round-the-world journey. In 1901 Jindřich Uzel (1868–1946), a phytopathologist, made his first journey to Bombay and thence to Ceylon, revisiting India on his second trip to Ceylon in 1909–10. He, too, recorded his recollections in the form of an article serialised by *Osvěta,* a Prague journal. In 1904 the southern and south-western inland of India was traversed by a well known pair of Czech travellers and big game hunters, Bedřich Machulka (1875–1954) and Richard Štorch (1877–1927), on their voyage from Ceylon to Iran.

The first Czechoslovak Indologist to visit India was Otakar Pertold (1884–1965). He used his first stay from 1909 to 1910 for assembling a wealth of documentary material for further scientific work in the fields of ethnography, study of religions and philology. His travel sketches, which appeared in the daily press, found a responsive public and were published in book form in 1911 under the title *Cesty po Hindustánu* (Hindustan Travels).

At about the same time India was discovered by a pair of young Czech painters, Jaroslav Hněvkovský (1884–1955) and Otakar Nejedlý (1883–1957). Both also spent some time in Ceylon; the latter left India two years after but Hněvkovský did not return home until 1913, when a comprehensive exhibition of his paintings from India was held at the Art Club *Umělecká beseda* in Prague. Their adventurous wanderings, inspired by a romantic interest in the East and

by the lure of the exotic flora, are to this day fondly recalled by many Czechoslovak artists of the older generation. Practically without financial means and certainly free from prejudice, the two artists mixed with simple Indian villagers and fishermen, spending many months – and sometimes miraculously escaping grave dangers – in the towns, villages and jungles of South Asia. This was a period of unforgettable impressions and creative inspiration for them both. Both left their hearts in India, Hněvkovský returning to the country once more after the war. They described their experience in books, which have lost little of their freshness to this day, as witnessed by a recent re-edition of Nejedlý's *Memories*. With rare sincerity and frankness they spoke of their impressions, loves, hardships and art experimentation. Like the trips of some of their predecessors, Hněvkovský's and Nejedlý's tour greatly stimulated Czechoslovak interest in India before the first world war and after.

Yet it was not until after the Czechs and Slovaks had won their national independence that this interest in India was able to develop under more favourable conditions.

6 ECHOES OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT

AS WE HAVE SEEN, foundations had, on the whole, been laid for a scholarly appreciation of India's cultural legacy before the 1914 war, while many new aspects of the country's past and contemporary life had been revealed to the Czech and Slovak public by both specialised and travel literature. The situation was, however, far less favourable to direct contacts with new streams of ideas and political movements, in which the strivings of the peoples of India for a free life and demands posed by awakened Indian nationalism were finding expression. Like the Indians, the Czechs and the Slovaks lived under foreign political domination, and although national oppression under the Austro-Hungarian monarchy was not fully comparable with British colonial rule in India, the existing state of affairs was in many ways responsible, directly and indirectly, for the paucity of information on contemporary events in the political arena of far-away India.

The political development of India and Czechoslovakia nevertheless did show certain analogies. During its initial stage, the Czech and Slovak national revival movement had much in common with the cultural reforms advocated in Bengal by Ram Mohan Roy, "the father of Indian nationalism." The defeat of the Czech democratic revolution in the stormy year 1848 and the suppression of an anti-British rising in India ten years later revealed the strengths and weaknesses in both countries of popular resistance to rule by a foreign power. There were also striking similarities between the organised political struggles and movements for national liberation. Incidentally, the endeavour of the Czech bourgeoisie to assert themselves on the home market, epitomised in the slogan "svůj k svému" (Hold to Your Kind), is in respect of both etymology and content an analogy of the Indian call for *Swadeshi*. Moreover, the Czech and Slovak national movem-

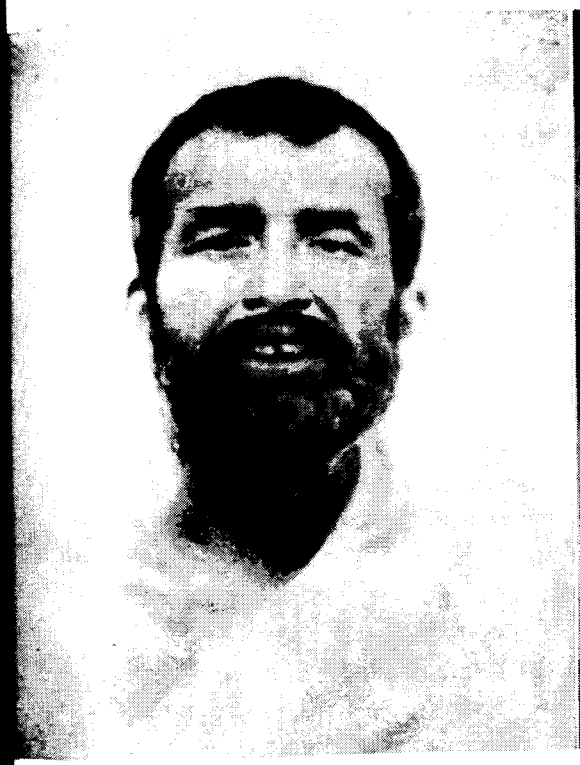
ent naturally reached out beyond the frontiers of the subjugated country, seeking encouragement and ideological support in the democratic strivings of other peoples.

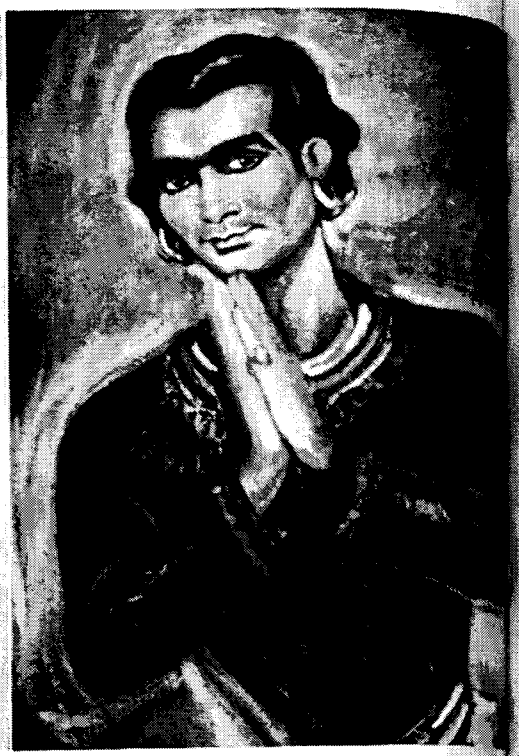
During the forties of the 19th century the Czechs found such inspiration in the freedom fight courageously waged by the Irish. A similar role was played by the example of the Indian national movement in its early stages, which were reported in the Czech press. As strict censorship under the Austrian monarchy made straightforward writing a sheer impossibility, all political articles had to be worded in ambiguous terms, ample use being made of allusions and allegories eagerly deciphered by a readership trained to read "between the lines".

An isolated, but all the more interesting, indication of response to the modern reform movement in India appeared in *Česká včela* (Czech Bee) in 1845. This was a long, serialised article, probably by Karel Boleslav Štorch (1812–1868), the journal's editor, acquainting the Czech public with Ram Mohan Roy's and Dvarkanath Tagore's campaign. The admirably informed journalist laid particular emphasis on the efforts of these, to use his own term, "revolutionaries of popular education" to achieve a general advancement throughout India, to introduce technical education, to gain a place for Indians in the national administration and the country's Government. The author especially admired the courage shown by the two revolutionaries in battling against the orthodox prejudices of Hinduism and the backward views then rife among their fellow-countrymen. The style and wording of the article betray a desire that the Indian example should be followed and that it should be emulated by similarly patriotic efforts at home: It is stressed that for Dvarkanath Tagore social progress was a path leading to the rebirth of India. The article ends with the following eloquent passage: "We

Rabindranath Tagore's first visit to Czechoslovakia in the spring of 1921. The visitor was accompanied by Vincenc Lesný.

M. Winternitz with his pupils O. Stein and V. Gampert along with Kamalabai Deshpande, the first Indian woman-graduate of Indology at Prague University, 1933.





The famous portrait
of Ramakrishna by F. Dvořák.

Portrait of Uday Shankar
painted by Zdenka Burghauserová
during his visit to Prague.

Indian women. Sketch by T. F. Simon.

Participants in the constituent meeting of the Indian Association in Prague, 1934, with Subhas Chandra Bose in the front row

Meeting of the Indian students from Europe in Prague addressed by the Mayor of Prague, 1936.

V. Lesný with Subhas Chandra Bose during one of the latter's visits to Czechoslovakia in the 1930s.

have recorded this example so that it can be restated that the happiness of a nation lies in the progress of education. Even if our own education may be on a high level, let us learn from these sons of their country their noble love of their neighbours and homeland, despised though it may be. Happy a nation which has its Dvarkanaths".

At the end of the eighteen-fifties the Czech and Slovak press was supplied with reports on India to a degree never witnessed before. This, however, occurred during a period of intensified political absolutism and stepped-up persecution of every form of resistance to the monarchy. Under these circumstances the public found information about the Sepoy Mutiny and the war waged to expel foreigners from Indian territory in innumerable newspaper articles, but the majority were brief translations of or excerpts from news supplied by British and other agencies, affording no possibility of individual interpretation and a personal attitude. How even these reports were interfered with by the Government censorship can be seen from a comparison of sympathies aroused by the Indian Mutiny in other Slavonic countries, for instance in Bulgaria and Russia, where biassed agency news did not prevent commentators from grasping the real causes of the dramatic events that shook colonial rule in several Indian regions.

So far no sources are available enabling us to draw a full picture of the contemporary reaction to and evaluation of these events among the Czechs and Slovaks. Nevertheless, it is safe to say that the Mutiny of 1857–9 was followed with the greatest interest and that India and Indian affairs were widely reported in the daily press, certainly a radical change in the situation existing until then.

Exactly a month after the Sepoy Mutiny flared up at Meerut, the first news from the "Indian battlefield" reached

Prague via London, where it arrived by sea-mail. Thereafter newspapers in Bohemia, Moravia and Slovakia, periodically registered the progress of military operations. While on earlier occasion, for instance the reporting of an unsuccessful British expedition in Afghanistan, press notices in the foreign news columns of Czech newspapers appeared under the date-line *England* or even *London,* the practice changed during the anti-British rising in India and reports thenceforth bore the date-line *East India.* Many Indian place-names found a permanent place in the local press of the period. For over two years Czech and Slovak readers followed the events of the first Indian freedom war, reports of battles, the storming of cities and fortresses, debates in the British Parliament and news of concentration of British troops on Indian territory, of acts of cruelty perpetrated by both sides, the guerilla-type of hostilities during the later stages of the conflict and reprisals taken by the colonial power. They became acquainted with the names of at least a few prominent leaders of the armed uprising, such as Nana Sahab and Tantya Topi, and with those of the representatives of the re-proclaimed Mughal Empire. The simple facts enabled the Czech public to discover for themselves the interconnections between the policies of the East India Company, the Mutiny, the necessity for an early abolition of the Company and Britain's attitude to digging through the Suez Isthmus as an expedient for shortening the passage to South and East Asia.

As has been stated above, news arrived mainly through London, but occasional reports were reprinted from the press of Paris and Petersburg. At the end of 1858, the Prague daily *Bohemia* printed the news that the proclamation by the British Queen about assuming colonial rule over India had not impressed the Indians as had been expected and quoted a statement by an Indian journalist who had written in a

"Hindustani" paper that "... all protestations and concessions made by this Proclamation had already been repeatedly enunciated by the East India Company but have remained on paper or been discarded under various pretexts."

The first Czech encyclopaedia, Rieger's, originated at the time of the Great Indian Mutiny, and so it is no wonder that due attention was devoted to the event in the article on India. The Mutiny was described as the most important event in the history of British colonial rule. On the other hand, opinions were published, for instance in *Cyrill a Method,* a Slovak Catholic paper, drawing upon a French source, alleging that the Indian Mutiny was a punishment meted out by God to England for deserting the unity of the Catholic Church.

The new stage in the Indian liberation movement, which now had its political platform in the annual sessions of the Indian National Congress, met with its widest response on Czechoslovak territory early in the 20th century, in the years of campaigns against the partition of Bengal and of Tilak's radical leadership. Even before these events, however, numerous reports and comments about Indian affairs had appeared in the Czech press. Apart from rare exceptions, such as Feistmantel's reflections, newspaper articles continued to be reprinted from foreign journals, mainly British, often, however, from unofficial periodicals, critical of Government policies. This new orientation and the shift of interest in the direction of topical problems can be exemplified by an article on an Indian famine, reprinted in 1897 from *The Social Democrat,* a London paper, by *Akademie,* the press organ of Czech socialist youth. This was a detailed and well-documented analysis setting forth concrete data on the draining away of the Indian national product to the colonial metropolis. The author's conclusion was that "above all the British Government is responsible for the utter decline of India".

During this period a young Indian lawyer, Mohandas Karamchad Gandhi, was already attracting some attention. It would certainly be an exaggeration to infer, from sporadic remarks in the contemporary European Press about his activity in South Africa, that his philosophical views and ideas on new forms of resistance by non-violent means had a direct impact on Central Europe. Nevertheless, it is an interesting fact that similar views were at that time in evidence among the young Czech generation. Undoubtedly this was due to the influence of Count L. N. Tolstoy's teaching and possibly also of Petr Chelčický (circa 1390–1460), a Czech medieval thinker. It is certainly noteworthy that these ideas professed by a small group of University students found a forum in the above mentioned journal, *Akademie,* in February, 1898. A young law student, Gusta Žalud (1872–1928), in his mature age a well known publicist and sociologist, analysed the philosophy of repudiating violence not only from a religious but from a positivist, rationalist standpoint. He saw a path to the eradication of evil in renouncing all violence, in self-restraint and self-sacrifice. Should violence be opposed by non-violence, it is necessary to proceed to the crux of the problem and to adopt an uncompromising stand: violence should also be rejected as a means of defence, as repulsion of an attack by violence does not lead to reconciliation but to an armed truce. Such an attitude has nothing in common with quietism and passivity, as this absolute humanism does not rule out the necessity of courageously resisting evil. Not, of course, through evil but through good action, not by violence but by non-violence, which is far more effective. To sustain a wrong requires more active energy than countering an attack by another attack. The author concludes his essay by discussing the possibility of gradually attaining this "Utopian" state: through education, reform of the legal system,

freeing men of their obsession with private property, abolishing elements of coercion in organs of state executive power etc. In postulating the absolute application of non-violent resistance to evil and demanding an unequivocally active attitude, the young Žalud came close to Gandhi's conception of *satyagraha.* In any case it was symptomatic that the feeling of factual helplessness vis-à-vis the armed power of a foreign rule was reflected in isolated, and purely theoretical, deliberations on how to mobilise the moral strength of the nation and to apply the principle of resistance by active non-violence in the Czech Lands, too.

The new age, the 20th century, was from its very beginning marked by the upsurge of the Indian national movement, which soon grew to such proportions and intensity that it could no longer remain confined to the Indian subcontinent. It was now to hold the attention of the world public, whatever their attitude to India. The Czechs and the Slovaks turned with renewed interest to political events in a country whose cultural values had long been firmly impressed on their subconscious mind and to which they had always looked with friendly sympathy.

Asian affairs were followed with keen interest during the Russo-Japanese War in the Far East. From the end of 1905 on, the foreign news columns of Czech and Slovak newspapers were again filled with despatches from India, now presented and commented upon more fully than barely a half-century before. These news items reflected the situation in India and the British reaction to it. The picture of events in this immense Asian country appeared in a sharper light, revealing many new details of the all-Indian resistance to colonial rule. The manner in which the Czech and Slovak press dealt with the new aspects of the Indian liberation movement, so close in spirit to the Czechoslovak people, is an indication

that events in distant India were felt to be topical in Central Europe precisely on account of their internal affinity and similarities with the local national movements.

For the first time the Czech and Slovak press introduced Indian students and intellectuals to their readers, reporting their demonstrations accompanied by the patriotic song *Bande Mataram*, and the persecutions of those who expressed by this song their love of their country and their resistance to foreign overlords. Boycotts of British goods also came into the news; *Národní listy*, the daily expressing the interests of the Czech bourgeoisie, printed on 25 November 1905 a quotation from the London *Express*, alleging that, in the Bengal Province, the boycott of British goods had grown into the first struggle against British rule.

The Czechoslovak public began to acquaint themselves with the organisation of the Indian national movement and its leading representatives. In 1906 the Indian National Congress session at Calcutta was extensively reported as the greatest political assembly ever held in India. At this session, which was noted for its radical mood, the Chairman called for a campaign for *Swaraj* for India. Reports gave the names of several national leaders, including Bipin Chandra Pal, Lala Lajpat Rai and Bal Gangadhar Tilak. Great attention was devoted to the tour of India by the British Labour Member of Parliament, Keir Hardie, and to the enthusiastic reception given him by the Indians. It can also be noted that this British militant against imperialism aroused similarly affectionate feelings among the Czechoslovak democratically-minded public. Not only socialist papers but also the sedate *Národní listy* (on 5 October 1907) reported Hardie's courageous stand and published his statement that conditions in East Bengal were even worse than those in Russia, bearing comparison with the mishandling of Armenians by the Turks.

Nor did the first political strike of the Indian working class pass unnoticed. *Akademie* (Vol. XII/519) wrote the following about the Bombay events of 1908: "The handful of telegrams containing laconic news of 'a few' workingmen shot dead by the British infantry give an idea of the brutality and violence of the British Government's conduct in India. About 14,000 diverse workers struck work in Bombay. They were later joined out of solidarity by men from some other factories, as a result of which the number of strikers rose to 20,000". Undoubtedly, great attention was also aroused by the terrorist movement, by attempts on the lives of representatives of colonial rule and by the courageous, patriotic attitude of those who, endeavouring in this individualistic manner to fight for their country's freedom, were condemned to death. Prague was aware of the existence of the journal *Indian Sociologist*, later banned, whose publication is bound up with the name of an outstanding figure in the Indian national resistance, Shyamaji Krishnavarma, described by Maxim Gorky as the "Mazzini of India". The Czech press took notice of another revolutionary, likewise active in his European exile, Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, and of his exciting escape and arrest while being deported from Britain to India.

The momentous events of these years, such as, for instance, the anti-British rising at Dacca, in the summer of 1910, found a prominent place in Czech journals of the period, in articles filling in the picture of contemporary India and giving the public a more objective view of life in that country. In connection with the growth of the Indian national movement during the first decades of the 20th century, Czech and Slovak dailies and other periodicals carried many articles modestly attempting to interpret and analyse the background of events currently taking place in India. Whether these were

reflections on the colonial army, or on the consequences of the introduction of Western-type education, of Indian liberalism and on the international aspects of British policy, they were an important contribution to the existing knowledge of India, arousing new interest among fairly wide sections of the educated public.

After the outbreak of war in 1914, Indian affairs and their coverage in the Czech and Slovak press understandably receded into the background. Yet now and then reports were printed about the valour of Indian troops on various battlefields of the Great War. An editorial article on commercial relations with India, which appeared on 11 April 1915 in the Social Democratic daily *Právo lidu* concludes with the following significant statement: "The industrial development of this greatest colony in the world will bring in its wake changes in all directions. The country will finally achieve its economic and, simultaneously, political independence. And the present war, which will mark a new stage in the history of India, will serve to accelerate the process, whereby all India will achieve independence".

7 GROWING CONTACTS AND TIES OF FRIENDSHIP

WHEN IN THE NINETEEN-FORTIES the Bengali scholar Benoy Kumar Sarkar was pondering the traditions of his country's relationships with Central Europe, he drew the following, probably correct, conclusion: "Hus and Comenius are the only two Czech masters with whom Indians had cultural contacts towards the beginning of the present century..." After the Great War, however, the situation changed rapidly, resulting in a speedy overcoming of the former one-sidedness in Indo-Czechoslovak relationships. The Czechs and Slovaks concluded their centuries-long struggle for a renewal of national independence. In 1918, a sovereign Czechoslovak Republic became a fact. Although at that time India still remained a colony, the fight of her peoples for independence had grown to such proportions as to become a primary moving force in the country's post-war development.

Czechoslovakia's first Consul in Bombay was Otakar Pertold, an outstanding Indologist, well-acquainted with Indian life from his prewar visits, and an enthusiastic interpreter of Indian culture in his country. In contacts between the two countries, commercial exchanges were increasingly coming to the fore. Czechoslovakia was mainly an importer of cotton, oleaginous seeds and jute, while India was predominantly interested in Czechoslovakia's traditional goods, such as glass, iron and steel products, as well as costume jewellery, which had found a limited market in India by the end of the 19th century. Naturally, Czechoslovak manufacturers were primarily interested in the great Indian market. During the world economic crisis they tried to compete with local firms (e. g. by deliveries of glass bangles), and, by these means, to keep their enterprises above water. Attempts were even made to establish factories on Indian territory, the aim being to exploit local manpower and raw material resources. Thus,