

úvod



Preface

The historical sciences have had their strong place in the Western scholarship since the ages when the Europe emerged from the timelessness of a barbaric anonymity. This is no coincidence – it is related to the fact that one of the primary roles of historiography consists in its didactic function. Historical sciences do not record history in order to serve us as a guide for avoiding the mistakes of the past – such demand would have been an expression of a pure idealistic naivety – but to present us appropriate paradigms that should be convenient for imitation and emulation. A man is a mimetic creature and therefore, his socialization and adaptation on the requirements and challenges of social and natural environment take place primarily through imitation. Through the mimetic respect towards tradition we show our readiness to accept and preserve our cultural models from the past. The historical revolution presents a revolt and discontinuation of this kind of imitation. This is the main reason why the societies tend to personify political activities because concrete human agents provide (sometimes subconsciously) an opportunity for imitation. The most stable and durable political systems are those, which use charisma of concrete personalities (for example monarchy, presidential or tribal systems with a strong role of the chieftain) as a kind of self-identification.

Those fields of historical sciences, which on behalf of rigorous methodology and conceptualization take over the gravity of scientific research on the complex anonymous social, economic or environmental forces and factors without respect to concrete human actions and free will, are imperiled that they would succumb to the historical fatalism and ideology of total predestination without any understanding and evaluation of

historical contingency and improvisation. They could also lose their above-mentioned educational role without which they would not be able to defend its autonomy and independence on other intellectual activities of the human mind.

The contributions, which are included in this special edition of *Acta Fakulty filozofické Západočeské univerzity v Plzni*, do not concentrate on the glorification and production of new facts concerning the life of "big historical personalities" as was Napoleon, Louis XIV, Christopher Columbus, Genghis Khan or Caesar. The contributors also have not attempted to seek "tolstoean" rejection of historical "titans" in the name of preference of the historical experience of "small", nameless, "suppressed" and "silenced" people and voices as some neomarxist, poststructural or microhistorical (especial the Italian) schools have endeavored. The issue contains scientific studies dealing with distinct and endowed personalities, which mostly had competence and opportunities to achieve an eminent place in the history, but due to various reasons and circumstances, which they often were not able to influence, were not able to fulfill it. The above-mentioned selectivity of historical apotheosis is a factor, which still to considerable degree escapes the attention of historians. This state of affairs could be caused by several reasons, most often probably because of the anxiety that the researchers of this problem could be accused of contrafactual speculations. Therefore, we provide this volume as a primary collection of various topics and themes from which the correct conclusions, interpretations and hypothesis should be deduced only after an appropriate time of further comprehensive research.

December 7, 2013

Prof. RNDr. Ivo Budil, Ph.D., DSc.

studie

Ivo Budil
Miroslav Šedivý
Jaroslav Valkoun
Roman Kodet
Drahomír Suchánek
Lukáš Novotný
Jan Záhořík
David Martinčík a Jiří Pešík
Martin Jeřábek
Monika Punová a Pavel Navrátil