Professor of European History, UC Berkeley

a lost brother?

proper metaphor: is Russia perhaps a distant cousin or – more likely –

That the Orthodox east is not alien let alone hostile territory, but part

Outstanding Czech thinkers have imagined their country

from extensive knowledge and a deep understanding of Russian history.

"Finally a book on the development of Russian spirituality arising

Rus–Ukraine–Russia presents to its invasion by "little green men" in 2014; explaining the cultural

state of Russia and Ukraine—the so-called heir to an "alternative

tory at different points – and what that means for the present and

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Award-winning Czech journalist and Cardiff-based philosopher of

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Why So Easily...

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THE DEFENCE OF CONSTITUTIONALISM
THE CZECH QUESTION IN POST-NATIONAL EUROPE
(Jiří Přibáň)

In these essays on contemporary Czech and European politics, legal philosopher Jiří Přibáň demonstrates that democracy is a process of permanent self-correction. While it possesses the capacity to respond to unexpected crises, it also contains inherent tension between ethics and administration. Defending constitutionalism, therefore, relies on civil rights and freedoms, limited government, and representative democracy – the validity and power of which are at stake not only in the Czech Republic but in the European Union and the world at large.

translated by:
Stuart Hoskins

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ISBN 978-80-246-3423-4
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FRAGMENTS OF LIVES
CHRONICLES OF THE GULAG
(Jacques Rossi)

Written in a sharp and dryly humorous tone, Rossi offers a vivid portrayal of everyday life inside the notorious Soviet prison camps. His vignettes of inmates across all walks of life – from peasants to party apparatchiks – give voice to the lives shattered by one of the most corrupt and repressive regimes of the twentieth century.

This clear translation will introduce a new generation of readers to the morally complicated world of the Soviet camp system, with its heroes and villains, survivors and collaborators.
— ANNE APPLEBAUM, Washington Post & London School of Economics, author of Gulag: A History

translated by:
Marie-Cecile Antonelli-Street

2019, paperback, 160 pp., 1. edition
ISBN 978-80-246-3700-6
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ebook ISBN 978-80-246-3721-1
$13
MAKING THE MOST OF TOMORROW
A LABORATORY OF SOCIALIST MODERNITY
IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA
(Matěj Spurný)

Most, a gorgeous historical city in northern Bohemia, was destroyed in the sixties and seventies for coal mining. As redevelopment began, hopes and expectations ran high; in the end, however, Most became a symbol for the brutal incompetence of Czechoslovak communism. But the book, like the city of Most itself, does not end in tragedy. Fusing architectural and political history with urban and environmental studies, Spurný’s tale shows the progress that can be made when crimes of the past are confronted and contemporary concepts of urban renewal are engaged.

translated by:
Derek and Marzia Paton

2019, paperback, 330 pp., 1. edition
ISBN 978-80-246-4017-4
$26 / £20
ebook ISBN 978-80-246-4018-1
$18

SPARTAKIADS
THE POLITICS OF PHYSICAL CULTURE IN COMMUNIST CZECHOSLOVAKIA
(Petr Roubal)

Every five years from 1955 to 1985, mass Czechoslovak gymnastic demonstrations, Spartakiads, were held to mark the Soviet liberation of Czechoslovakia. Hundreds of thousands of performers gathered in the world’s largest stadium – built expressly for this purpose – and their synchronized movements embodied, quite literally, the ideal Socialist citizenry: a powerful yet pliant force directed by the regime. Featuring an abundance of photographs, the book takes a novel approach to Communist history by opening a window onto the mentality and mundanity behind the Iron Curtain.

translated by:
Dan Morgan

2019, paperback, 315 pp., 1. edition
ISBN 978-80-246-4368-7
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ebook ISBN 978-80-246-4366-3
$17
PHILOSOPHY EN NOIR
(Miroslav Petříček)

Since thought necessarily reflects its time, Miroslav Petříček – the influential and erudite Czech philosopher – argues that after confronting the incomprehensible trauma of the Holocaust, Western philosophy has had to rewrite its tradition and its discourse. Should philosophy be capable of bearing witness to the contemporary world, Petříček contends, this metamorphosis in philosophy is necessary. Offering an original Central European perspective that reflects upon the historical underpinnings of pop culture phenomena and complex philosophies – including those of Adorno, Agamben, Benjamin, Derrida, Husserl, and Kracauer – Philosophy en noir is a record of this transformation.

translated by:
Phil Jones

2019, paperback, 330 pp., 1. edition
$20 / £15
ebook ISBN 978-80-246-3854-6
$15

SEVEN LETTERS TO MELIN
ESSAYS ON THE SOUL, SCIENCE, ART AND MORTALITY
(Josef Šafařík)

This book is an exploration of man’s alienation from nature – and from himself – in the modern technological age. Conceived as a series of letters to Melin, an engineer who believes in the value of science and technical progress, the book grows skeptical of such endeavors as it examines mankind’s search for meaning in life. Šafařík argues for the primacy of artistic creativity over scientific explanation, of truth over accuracy, of internal moral agency over an externally imposed social morality. He is neither anti-scientific nor anti-rational; he argues that science has limited power and that which cannot be measured or calculated does indeed have meaning and value.

translated by:
Ian Finlay Stone
epilogue by:
Ivan M. Havel

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$16
proper metaphor: is Russia perhaps a distant cousin or – more likely – and o/ft en aff  ectionate cultural and religious history can ponder the of us – of Europe and its heritage – and readers of Putna’s absorbing /Th  e Orthodox east is not alien let alone hostile territory, but part sensitivity and amazing erudition, shows their eff  orts to be misguided. as a bridge between East and West. Putna, a scholar of originality, “In an era where many speak and write about the politics of Russia, from extensive knowledge and a deep understanding of Russian history. “Finally a book on the development of Russian spirituality arising to its invasion by “little green men” in 2014; explaining the cultural Russia as a cultural and religious phenomenon: tracing its importance in Rus of the Vikings as well as Pussy Riot; exploring

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Stuart Hoskins
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RUS – UKRAINE – RUSSIA
SCENES FROM THE CULTURAL HISTORY
OF RUSSIAN RELIGIOSITY
(Martin Putna)
Essential reading to understand Russia and Ukraine – the heir to an “alternative Russia.” Using literary and artistic works, it offers a rich analysis of Russia as a cultural and religious phenomenon: tracing its development from the arrival of the ancient Greeks in Crimea to its invasion by “little green men” in 2014; explaining the cultural influence of the Poles, as well as Pussy Riot; exploring central figures from Vladimir the Great to Vladimir Putin. This book presents Russia as a complex mesh of national, religious, and cultural (especially countercultural) traditions.

translated by:
Michael Dean
2019, paperback, 350 pp., 1. edition
ISBN 978-80-246-3580-4
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ebook ISBN 978-80-246-3581-1
$16
WHY SO EASILY . . . SOME FAMILY REASONS FOR THE VELVET REVOLUTION
A SOCIOLICAL ESSAY
(Ivo Možný)

When communism was ushered into Czechoslovakia, it was supposed to last forever – yet over eleven days in November 1989, this supposedly eternal order collapsed. Why did it fall apart so easily? This respected sociological essay, written in the pivotal years of 1989 and 1990, is now available for the first time in English. Ivo Možný tells the story of a despotic state expropriating the Czechoslovak family and subjugating the personal sphere in exchange for promises of a bright collective future, only for the regime to be vanquished forty years later by the very institution it had dispossessed. The essay explains the reasons for communism’s downfall, examining the private aspirations of whole swaths of nameless social actors that left hardly anyone interested in keeping the regime afloat.

translated by:
Phil Jones

2023, paperback, 140 pp., 1. edition
ISBN 978-80-246-5315-0
$20
$15

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