

Alleged Plagiarism Case from the Ethics Commission of Charles University

The case of alleged plagiarism involves texts in Czech by Martin Kovář with source texts by historians writing in English (see below for a listing of these texts).

Evidence for plagiarism

1. A comparison of the source texts with Czech texts by Kovář in terms of both language and the apparatus of scholarly citations and notes; also considered is comparative data taken from book indices. This comparison is accompanied by a thorough analysis (plus an addendum to that analysis) that looks at the nuances of Kovář's clearly non-standard citation practice to determine whether it may be a case of a one-time failure to cite the source text or a more intentional and systematic style of work that attempts to give the impression that the author carried out original research on his own. The analysis concludes that the latter is likely the case.

2. An intertextual analysis of one case that involves an article by Kovář and a chapter in an English-language book by Barry Coward. The analytical method claims to uncover the overlapping relational structure of both texts (*vzájemné vztahy struktur*) in terms of the arrangement of themes in the works (*řazení témat*) and the overall conceptualization of them (*celková koncepce*). The method relies on automatic analysis of the texts with pre-specified parameters, and the methodology and results are clearly described in the analysis; researchers have made efforts to eliminate noise in the analysis and reduce the occurrence of false-positive results. The data is graphed, and the meaning of the graphs is verbally summarized. The results of intertextual analysis in this case strongly indicate that, while the Kovář text is not a full translation of the Coward text, the correspondences are considerably stronger than would be expected if the two texts were independent of one another. The researchers conclude that Kovář seems to have copied in the large part the overall conceptual structure of Coward's text.

Evaluation

While I have been asked to evaluate the data in my capacity as a supposed linguistic expert (ie, as a native speaker of English who also is proficient in Czech and as myself a scholar with considerable linguistic training), it does not seem that I can add anything more to the linguistic analysis of the case than what has already been presented. I can merely state that I either find the conclusion that Kovář has committed plagiarism—as it is both generally understood and as it is defined in the context of the ethical codex of Charles University, which is outlined in one of the documents provided to me—persuasive or reject that conclusion.

All of the documents that have been provided to me in this case lead me to confirm the findings of plagiarism.

Evaluation of the data was carried out by David S. Danaher, Professor, Slavic Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison (dsdanaher@wisc.edu).

Texts by Kovář

- *Anglie posledních Stuartovců 1658–1714*. Praha: Karolinum, 1998.
- *Stuartovská Anglie: Stát a společnost v letech 1603–1689*. Praha: Libri, 2001.
- *Velká Británie v éře Roberta Walpola: k vývoji britského státu a britské společnosti v první polovině 18. století*. Praha: ISV nakladatelství, 2004.
- Jakub I. Stuart (1566–1625). Anglie za vlády „krále Šalamouna“ anebo Příběh muže, jenž – současníkům a historikům navzdory – nezpůsobil „krvavou revoluci“, In: *Lidé a dějiny: k roli osobnosti v historii v multidisciplinární perspektivě* (ed. J. Bárta a M. Kovář), Praha: Academia, 2017, s. 257–290.

Source texts

- COWARD, Barry. *The Stuart Age: A History of England 1603–1714*. New York: Longman, 1994. Poprvé vyšlo v r. 1980.
- HARRIS, Michael. „Print and Politics in the Age of Walpole“, In: BLACK, Jeremy (ed). *Britain in the Age of Walpole*. Macmillan, 1984, s. 189–210 a 249–252.
- BLACK, Jeremy. „Introduction: an Age of Political Stability?“, In: BLACK, Jeremy (ed). *Britain in the Age of Walpole*. Macmillan, 1984, s. 1–22 a 224–226.