

The Best of Intentions: Reconsidered

ABSTRACT

The talk will recount some of the experiences during two visits to Czechoslovakia, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia. In the two-year gap between visits, the political climate changed radically, as did available resources. The author worked with conservators at the Narodni Knihova (the National Library at Prague), the Strahov Monastery, and the Slovak National Archives in Bratislava. In order to work effectively within other cultures it is necessary to understand how the values of those cultures differ from commonly accepted American ideals and assumptions and to understand the reasons for the departures. In the end, the author was able to accomplish many of her goals and even some things beyond, such as arranging for a Capek manuscript to be returned to the collection from which it had been removed. Working effectively required flexibility and a willingness to seize quickly upon opportunities.

KAREN L. PAVELKA

Senior Lecturer

Preservation & Conservation Studies

Graduate School of Library and Information Science

The University of Texas at Austin

Austin, Texas

pavelka@mail.utexas.edu

Presented at the Book & Paper Group Session, AIC 28th Annual Meeting, June 8–13, 2000, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Received for publication Winter 2001.

