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No. 2047 Free subscriptions at subscribe@fsfinalword.com Fri., Feb. 13, 2009

Czechs and Europe

The Czech and Russian foreign ministers got into a duel of words in Moscow this week over the lingering question of whether the CR and Poland are in "Central" or "Eastern" Europe. Most Czechs are on the side of their proud Middle European prince in this, but what might the economic crisis do to their West-centric world view? Tomáš Sedláček of ČSOB told the Czech CFA Society last night that the crisis is a crisis of debt-obsessed Western civilization. What happens, then, if the West loses the platform war? Will Czechs again start looking East, whence they came? Nikolai Danilevsky, a Russian philosopher who believed in the circularity of history, wrote in "Russia and Europe" in 1888 that for all Slavs, the idea of Slavism should be above everything except God and his Holy Church - above freedom, science, enlightenment and all earthly happiness - because none of these are possible without a spiritually and politically independent Slavic civilization. In his eyes, any attempts by Slavs to join the West were doomed to fail.



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