

The submitted diploma work "Power and Powerlessness" - Emanuel Rádl on the intellectual's responsibility for a life in polis addresses the fundamental questions articulated by the philosophy of one of the most interesting and controversial proponents of Czech philosophical thinking during the first half of the 20th century. The author presents Emanuel Rádl's life and work on the background of the era of laborious formation of a modern society in the independent Czechoslovak Republic, in opposition to the thoughts and approach of the principal political personality and source of inspiration for Czech philosophers of the mentioned era – T. G. Masaryk. The classical topics of social philosophy, ethics and the philosophy of religion, which have traditionally occupied a dominant place in Czech thinking, resonate in E. Rádl's interpretation with the dramatic events of modern European history, go beyond the scope of local philosophising to culminate in the tragic discourse on the intellectual's responsibility towards the polis when the values of European humanistic heritage are threatened, and in reflection on philosophy's power and powerlessness when faced with the menace of fascism.