LEGISLATION CONCERNING GERMAN NATIONALS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND IN OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, 1938-1948

Jiří Pešek / Oldřich Tůma

The present article reports on a Czech-German editorial project which aims at documenting and comparatively evaluating wartime and early postwar legislation concerning German minorities in the liberated countries which belonged to the anti-Hitler coalition. The work thus described began with a comparison of the provisional “anti-German” legislation in Czechoslovakia, which took the form of decrees by the President, with both preliminary and definitive legislation in Poland, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Italy, France, Belgium and Denmark. Occupational legislation in various regions having been under German occupation was also looked at. The authors of the article deal with arguments that arose when the project was under way, concerning mainly issues of assessing the passing and the application of relevant legislation, and of placing them in an appropriate context. They emphasize that radical plans for punishing, expropriating, and expelling German (but also Hungarian and Italian) minorities may be observed in all countries that had been occupied by Nazi Germany. Forced transfer of large groups of German nationals abroad and considerable territorial reallocations, however, took place only in Eastern Europe. The authors take issue with interpretations stressing the role of alleged continuities between prewar conditions in the countries concerned and the expulsion of German nationals, emphasizing instead the connection between forced migration and wartime plans of the allied nations (mainly Great Britain), plans which were negotiated and repeatedly confirmed at those nations’ conferences between 1941 and 1945. To what extent such schemes were put into practice after the war in the nations concerned, however, depends upon whether they were situated east or west of the “Iron Curtain.”

THE HUSSITE REVOLUTION. ABOUT THE ORIGINS OF A RESEARCH PARADIGM IN CZECH HISTORIOGRAPHY IN THE 1950s AND 1960s

Martin Nodl

The present study deals with literature on the Hussite movement from the 1950s and 1960s, the main focus being on threads having been picked up from the relatively sophisticated research scene of the interwar period. Nodl uses works by František Graus and Josef Macek in order to demonstrate to what extent Marxist historians benefited from works by Bedřich Mendl, Josef Pekař and Jan Slavík. To the former, everything revolved around the social question, in which they determined the reason for societal crisis and, eventually, the revolutionary movement. In the 1960s, scholars dispensed with schematic explanations under the influence of West European medievalist research, and a new generation of Hussitologists (Ivan Hlaváček, František Hoffmann, Jaroslav Mezník) was able to publish works devoid of any
ideology. But only Robert Kalivoda's "Husitská ideologie" (The Hussite Ideology), a completely new interpretation of Hussitism representing the first bourgeois revolution, fundamentally challenged the patterns of interpretation offered by Graus and Macek. Kalivoda's work, however, remained largely unknown and has not had much influence on developments since the 1980s, which led scholars such as Smahel back to the sources, and on the other hand into establishing a dialogue with West European medievalist research.

PRIVATIZATION IN THE 13TH CENTURY?
CZECH MEDIEVALIST RESEARCH AND THE INTERPRETATION OF THE PŘEMISLID ERA

Martin Wihoda

After the purges at the beginning of the so-called "normalization," Czech research into medieval history experienced an isolation from which it was able to emerge only after 1989. In the years immediately thereafter, and lacking a critical approach to its own role and purpose, it sought to emulate modern West European trends, in reality going on, under the cover of elevated proclamations, to pursue a factographically-structured historiography of persons and institutions, masking its professional deficiencies with purposefully modern catchwords such as the "privatization" having allegedly occurred in the 13th century. This concept was meant to explain how a "Central European-type" state, in which everything belonged to the ruling prince, could develop into the layered political community, structured along property lines, of which multitudinous sources from the high and late Middle Ages bear witness. Today, this attempt at an explanation is defended by Josef Žemlická, who basically only expands on the earlier interpretations of Dušan Třeštík, dating as far back as the 1960s. In contrast to this, the younger generation, which is represented in the present article by Jan Klápště and Libor Jan, refutes the thesis of an alleged "privatization" and above all of a "Central European-type state" and stresses "long duration," local conditions, according to them, being permeated by innovations from the west of Europe, and Přemislid rule gradually and incrementally altered towards what was current at the time in the Holy Roman Empire and, more generally, throughout Central Europe.