IMAGE CULTIVATION, DIVERSIFIED: CZECHOSLOVAK POLICY ON CULTURAL RELATIONS WITH AFRICAN, ASIAN, AND LATIN AMERICAN NATIONS DURING THE PERIOD OF NORMALISATION

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The present study examines Czechoslovak foreign cultural policy in Africa, Asia, and Latin America in the 1970s and 1980s. For one part, it offers an overview on the development of Czechoslovakia’s cultural relations with developing and newly industrialised nations following the turning point of 1968. On the other hand, the author looks for the “Slovak factor” in the framework of normalisation-period foreign cultural policy. Federalizing the Czechoslovak state had created scope for Slovak politicians, and they, in turn, used that scope in foreign politics. Thus, the (Slovak) ministries of education, culture, and health and the Academy of Sciences extended their cooperation with nations such as Algeria, Egypt, or Vietnam. On a Slovak level, institutions, competences, and resources emerged within this framework that the Slovak part of the federal state could use to act on its own. Slovakia did use this potential, among other things, to show itself off to the partner countries as a nation of its own and as a “success story” with regard to societal development, modernisation, and national emancipation.

LUDWIG CZECH AND THE GERMAN SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

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During the tenure of Czech’s predecessor Josef Seliger, the German Social Democratic Workers’ Party in the Czechoslovak Republic (DSAP) achieved a major victory in the elections of 1920. By a substantial margin it became the largest German party in the country. Under Czech, in office from 1921 until 1938, the DSAP lost its leading position. The text attempts to present the reasons why the DSAP failed under Czech’s leadership and why it also failed to become a serious, state-loyal challenger of the negativist Sudeten German Party (SdP). The latter benefitted from the effects of the world economic crisis and the support of neighboring Hitler-Germany. Although Ludwig Czech was one of the most important Sudeten German politicians during the first republic, he has thus far received little attention in historiography. The text also encourages continued research concerning Czech. As a Moravian, lawyer and socialist of Jewish origin, he saw himself not really as a Sudeten German, and for this reason he was most likely principally opposed to ethnic politics.