PARALLELS AND DIFFERENCES: 
POLITICAL ACTIVISM IN THE INTERWAR PERIOD 
AMONG ETHIC HUNGARIANS IN SLOVAKIA 
AND AMONG SUDETEN GERMANS 

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Political activism (i.e. seeking participation instead of refusing to get involved) in the First Czechoslovak Republic is a phenomenon that has hitherto received scant attention by researchers. This is especially true for activism among ethnic Hungarians. The present study aims at both sketching the basic features of Hungarian activist politics and at comparing it to the Sudeten German variant. In the first part, the author examines the conditions that gave rise to Hungarian activism and introduces its most important actors. A second part deals with József Szentivány’s failed attempt at inducing the Hungarian National Party to support the Prague government. Had it done so, the party would have approximated its line to that of the ethnic German activists, especially the Farmers’ Union. The final part discusses why Hungarian activism differed from the German one in both appearance and dynamics and why it had considerably less success.

THE POST-WAR EXPULSION OF GERMANS ACCORDING TO CZECH THEOLOGIANS OF THAT TIME 

Vojtěch Novotný

This contribution deals with moral theological observations by Bedřich Vašek (1882-1959), Alexander Heidler (1916-1980), and Josef Zvěřina (1913-1990) on the post-World-War-II expulsion of ethnic Germans from Czechoslovakia. While Vašek worked as a scholar, Heidler as a publicist and Zvěřina as a preacher, all three were Roman Catholic priests and theologians. Their analysis of early post-war expulsions was influenced by their own experience during the war. Whereas they did defend the principles of collective guilt and collective punishment, their arguments differed in several aspects. Moreover, all three of them differentiated between collective guilt as a principle and its practical application. They demanded that the basic human rights of those undergoing punishment be respected, and warned against possible consequences for the Czech nation in case the rights of “children of God” were violated. With time passing, the opinion of the three theologians gradually changed – they began to entertain doubts regarding the principle of collective guilt. Many years later, Zvěřina called the consequences of the injustice committed during the expulsion of the Germans “a pathology of hatred”. He did not, however, contest the expulsion in itself.