ABSTRACTS

REVOLUTION AS A BOHEMIAN DRAMA: THE QUEST FOR NATIONAL IDENTITY IN THE EUROPEAN CRISIS YEAR 1848

Jiří Štaif

The present contribution starts out from the thesis that the revolutionary years 1848 and 1849 brought about a fundamental breach in the thoughts and actions of broad strata of the population in the Bohemian lands. New and very different perspectives opened up for the people in areas such as national identity, political concepts, cultural affiliation, economical orientation, and nationality or citizenship. These changes are interpreted by the author as a drastic reaction to the crisis of the pre-revolutionary society. However, this reaction incurred a number of new crises caused by the quest for a consensus on what to expect from the revolution. The author pursues an interpretation in several steps, setting out with a description of the problem, moving on to examine historiographic approaches, and finally describing specific aspects – hopes, dilemmas and changing successes of the parties concerned. He comes to the conclusion that we may view the revolution of 1848/49 as a multi-dimensional and multi-faceted historical disruption, to which the model of an open interplay of forces is applicable. This, he argues, would make us better understand the power of the quest for revolutionary change. He also deals with the question to what extent this revolution became a constitutive or complementary element in the collective memory of Germans from the Bohemian lands. One thing is evident: its imprints on Czech historical memory have been far smaller than those on the German one.

“WE ARE FREE!” THE SUDE TEN GERMAN LIBERATION POSTMARKS OF 1938

Rudolf Jaworski

This brief sketch deals with a postal consequence of the “Anschluss” of October 1938, when those border regions of Czechoslovakia which had a predominantly German population were incorporated into the “Großdeutsches Reich”. The author presents a broad spectrum of so-called Sudeten German liberation postmarks from this period of political turnaround – publicity impressions in the proper sense, but also postcards conveying a political message. He thus examines a category of sources
that has hitherto been neglected by historians. However, the political slogans disseminated by means of these postmarks do represent an authentical reflection of the mood prevailing at that time.

“THE CZECH HABIT OF CLINGING TO THE LETTER OF THE LAW SIGNIFICANTLY CONTRIBUTES TO THE WIDESPREAD USE OF GERMAN”

Language Regulation During the Protectorate

Václav Velčovský

During the Protectorate, the neuralgic relations between Czechs and Germans sharing the same area and living in the same state became worse and worse. The Nazi administration sought to Germanize Central Europe, among other things, by employing a language policy composed of legal instruments (decrees and comparable legislative acts) and supporting this with a journalism fulfilling a largely propagandistic function. This paper analyzes the language policy of the Protectorate and its implementation throughout the administration, with the author looking at areas such as the translation of toponyms and anthroponyms and the ideologization of graphemics and orthography.

EMIL FRANZEL IN THE LIBRARY OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM

Marta Vaculínová

Emil Franzel (1901-1975) compiled the first history of the National Museum library in Prague, on whose staff he was for a brief period in 1940-41. The present contribution analyzes the circumstances under which Franzel worked in the museum library and the context for his writing a history of the library, with the author focusing on apparent contradictions in Franzel’s personality. Franzel started out as an important exponent of the German Social Democratic Party, but later gained membership of the Sudeten German Party. Although his history of the museum library was intended as a scholarly work and the concluding piece of his course for German scientific librarians, it offers clear insights into the circumstances of the time of writing and the ideology then prevalent.