The insurrection was organized and led by the hereditary mayors („Erbrichter“) of the 178 village communities. Unlike the big peasant uprisings of 1680 in Bohemia, this one remained bloodless, being conducted entirely along legal lines. The reason was that the young monarch Joseph I took the peasants under his special protection from the very beginning. The so-called „Hohenstadt Specifications“ reveal that in the years 1705 and 1706 he granted 37 audiences to the peasant spokesmen. The nobility tried to sabotage the Emperor's moves by retarding the implementation of his orders.

In view of the wartime destruction of the records of the other estates, the present study focusses on the peasant uprising in the Trübau—Türnau estate. But the existing sources amply illustrate events in the other estates as well. The result is thus a picture of the whole uprising, rounded off by the imperial decisions covering all the estates, which are presented in an appendix. The study not only describes the course of the uprising but attempts to identify its causes, the author reaching new conclusions also in this respect.

The fact that this insurrection was only partially successful can be explained by the early death of Joseph I — for it was thus left to his successor, Charles VI, to pass final judgement on the grievances submitted by the peasants.

THE SOCIAL SITUATION OF GLASSMAKERS IN THE WEST BOHEMIAN GLASSWORKS IN THE 18th AND 19th CENTURIES

Bedřich Stieß

Thus far not enough research has been done on the social conditions under which glassmakers worked in the West Bohemian glassworks during the 18th and 19th centuries, but it is nevertheless clear that — with only a few exceptions — they had more than ample grounds for complaint. Wages were too low (and, what is more, were paid out in „inferior“ money), excessively high prices were calculated for payments in kind, journeymen and apprentices were exploited and mistreated, and so on.

The journeyman glassmaker Johann Thomas Lenk addressed a complaint along these lines to Empress Maria Theresa in 1766. The result was the publication on 5 October 1767 of a set of regulations on glassmaking aimed at putting the situation on a more orderly basis. Continuing complaints, however, show that the stipulations of these regulations were not obeyed, nor were they even put up on display in the glassworks, as required. Again and again there were conflicts between glassmakers and glasswork masters over the latter’s refusal to adhere to the wage regulations or to pay out wages in full.

Health conditions in the glassworks were extremely bad; safety precautions during the arsenic crushing process, for example, were wholly inadequate. The blazing ovens were a constant hazard for the eyesight, and by the age of forty, many glassmakers were suffering from gray cataracts. Respiratory ailments at the same age were also common.
Despite the threats of the Bohemian gubernium to apply penal sanctions if the glassmaking regulations were not enforced, the situation at the beginning of the 19th century was by no means better. Some extremely interesting proposals — all too revolutionary for the time, to be sure — were advanced by the Kaltenbach glassworks owner Johann Mayer for improving the social conditions under which the glassmakers worked but were not realized.

Lack of work opportunities, mistreatment by the employers and inadequate wages prompted many glassmakers to emigrate. Bans on emigration (the oldest known one dating back to 1723) were designed to put a stop to this, but they were not observed, for the officials were not in a position to go to the root of the evil and improve the unsatisfactory social conditions.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE GERMAN POLITICAL PRESS IN THE FIRST CZECHOSLOVAK REPUBLIC (1918—1925)

Norbert Linz

The author examines the development of the German political press in the early years of the ČSR, with emphasis on the structure of the organs of the German parties. Used as sources were numerous newspaper catalogues and statistical publications, as well as official pronouncements by the German parties on their press. In addition, extensive newspaper files were read and statements by contemporaries on this subject appraised.

Departing from the differing structure of the German and Czech press, the specific situation of the German press is illuminated. Decentralization was visible in the high number of small, low-circulation newspapers, a factor which frequently resulted in weak standards.

In depicting the initial situation of the press of the individual parties, special attention is devoted to the 1918—1920 period; after the reorientation from Vienna to Prague, the German papers began in this period in which political parties were founded to develop a stronger party-political commitment. Following a description of individual party papers and their development in the Bohemian lands, the author presents an outline of the German party newspapers in Slovakia and a sketch of the largely independent papers as well as the semi-official newspapers. The study concludes with a structural comparison of the papers of the German parties. The author shows that the economic crisis that set in at the end of 1922 forced a sweeping restructuration of the party political press. The process of contraction induced by the critical financial situation of the papers and the ensuing movement toward concentration worked against the previously existing dispersion and strengthened the influence of the central organs. By the mid-1920’s the press of most of the parties had achieved so stable a structure that there were hardly any changes in the years which followed.