

THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA SEEN AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF THE GERMAN-CZECH NATIONALITY PROBLEM

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With the exception of Vienna, the educational system in Bohemia is regarded as the most highly developed and most modern of the whole Austro-Hungarian Empire, in both the sheer number of schools and the multiplicity of their organizational forms. The author examines continuity and change in the educational system in Bohemia in the context of the setting-up of the Czechoslovak state, and his attention centers on the consequences of the radically new concept of educational legislation after 1918. Had a nationally autonomous administration on the lower echelons supervised by multinational bodies been typical for the Habsburg monarchy, this was now substituted with a centralized educational system in which Germans were deprived of any influence on the top-level administration of educational institutions. The principal object of research were the consequences for the German schools of the educational policy of the

Czechoslovak state, particularly the law on providing schools for ethnic minorities and the law on the language of instruction at the so-called *Mittelschulen* and at institutions training teachers. The system of adult education and cultural institutions in general did not escape attention either. The author reaches the conclusion that the essence of the German-language educational system remained untouched. A comparison of available statistics with those on Czech- and Slovak-language schools and with the educational system in Germany proves that even under the new conditions the Sudenten Germans enjoyed more favourable conditions in terms of both quantity and quality. In those communities, however, where Germans were in a minority, the educational system was instrumental in advancing a policy of de-nationalization. The complaints that the educational system of the Germans was being discriminated against are, according to this study, due, among other things, to a discrepancy of the democratic structure of the state and internationally recognized standards of minority protection.