

CZECH-SLOVAK RELATIONS
FROM THE ANGLE OF SOCIAL HISTORY

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This contribution is devoted to relations between Czechs and Slovaks which developed when, in the late 19th and early 20th century, Slovak merchants, craftsmen, students and other people came to the Bohemian lands in considerable numbers. Out of the contacts thus established grew perceptions, impressions, and prejudices relating to one another, which in turn shaped Czech-Slovak relations until the interwar period. Growing opportunities for labour migration and becoming acquainted with each other were prerequisites for a better mutual understanding, which at that time was no longer conveyed solely through both nations' political elites. On both the Czech and the Slovak sides, political leadership tended to confine available information about the other side to the area of cultural politics, and did not help create a realistic picture of the respective Czech and Slovak societies. From that fact stemmed many problems of Czech-Slovak coexistence which became apparent after 1918.