

HISTORY AND HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Similarities and Dissimilarities in the History of the Jews in Germany and the Czech Lands 1918-1945

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This article draws a comparison between the Jews of Germany and the Jews of the Czech Lands in the period between 1918 and 1945: the parallel or analogical developments, the ties and reciprocal influences, the differences in their political and social status, and the ways with which they tried to cope with a changing historical situation. The framework for the comparison is chronological, following a parallel periodization of the history of the Jews in the two countries during these years. The axis around which the discussion will revolve is the period between 1918 and 1938 in Germany and between 1918 and 1939 in the Czech Lands. This will provide the basis for a later discussion of the parallel deportation policy in the two countries, the initiatives of Czech Jewry to establish the Theresienstadt Ghetto, and the continuation of autonomous Jewish activity in the struggle for survival under Nazi rule until the period of the so called "Final Solution."