

Religion in den böhmischen Ländern 1938-1948. Diktatur, Krieg und Gesellschaftswandel als Herausforderungen für religiöses Leben und kirchliche Organisation. Hrsg. von Martin Zückert und Laura Hözlzimmer. (Veröffentlichungen des Collegium Carolinum, Bd. 115.) R. Oldenbourg Verlag. München 2007. 432 S. (€ 39,80.)

The volume's editors remind us that studies of religion have been breaking ground in the most unlikely places. It is only proper, therefore, that attention finally falls on the Czech lands, one of the most anti-clerical regions in Europe. Some twenty contributions come together in this volume, which focuses on three periods in the twentieth century: the interwar years, the Nazi dictatorship, and the early postwar period. That final period is broken in two: with four essays on the immediate postwar years and the challenges of recovery from the war, and seven focusing on this period as one of "transition" to Communism.

Martin Schulze Wessel starts off with an intriguing consideration of what lay beneath the ultimate success of Czech Communists in controlling the Church: greater than in any other land of East Central Europe. He finds a primary explanation in enforced Sovietization, but argues that even before 1948 important "successes" had been scored against the church by what Schulze Wessel calls an "anticlerical public sphere." This in turn has deep roots in Czech culture which the author helpfully traces on the background of other national histories (for example France).

Part of the weakness of organized religion across the Czech lands lies in the country's national divisions, which is the subject of Jaroslav Šebek's essay. He notes for example that Czech and German Catholics in Bohemia had their "own" saints. Czech and German Catholics faced common challenges of secularization – intensified in both cases by the national movements' aversion to Catholicism – but that did nothing to unite them. One interesting difference in "tactics" was the support German Catholics gave to uniformed youth groups, an effort which does not seem to have an echo on the Czech side. Following such figures as Othmar Spann, these young people tended to be intensely anti-liberal. The division among Catholics intensified with time, so that by the late 1930s even religious orders in Bohemia were separated along national lines. Even the "Catholic action" did not cooperate across the territory. Perhaps in no other case are the limits of Catholic universalism as evident as in the Czech lands.

Christoph Kösters takes an upbeat view of the position of the Catholic Church in the Second World War, assuming an essential incompatibility between Nazism and Catholicism, even if the Holy See never made unequivocal its condemnation of Nazism. He further assumes a broad attitude of "resistance" among Catholics that is not demonstrated in sources. Over a decade ago Klemens von Klemperer alerted us that resistance properly speaking was always a matter of isolated individuals, who tended to lack support of the institution of the Church. This insight has not found a place in Kösters's essay.

Jan Stříbrný also discusses Church resistance in the Protectorate, with greater precision in use of the concept (it meant, for example, giving refuge to persons living in illegality), but not much greater evidence of its extent. The assumption that resistance was widespread is not demonstrated with sources. The undoubtedly more common positions of accommodation and collaboration are not investigated. We learn that Catholic bishops were "forced" [gezwungen] to make statements of loyalty. What force was used? One of these statements they were "forced" to make involved castigating the "godlessness from the East."

René Küpper discusses this act of obeisance from the opposite perspective: namely as evidence of the Nazi regime's instrumentalization of the Catholic Church. It was an outstanding success, because of the implicit support such a statement gave to the Nazis' racially inspired crusade to "save" Europe from Bolshevism. Küpper is careful to note how limited are the sources to study this phenomenon: in his essay the major collection is from the "Staatsministerium für Böhmen und Mähren." Küpper might have wondered more at

the limits in perspective of documents produced by officials from this ministry. He reasonably concludes that the overwhelming majority of Catholics, like Czechs in general, rejected Nazi dominion, but had little opportunity to leave records of this rejection that might be registered by historians two generations later.

In an essay featuring extraordinary erudition Emilia Hrabovec turns to the papacy, stressing the balance that Pius XI and Pius XII tried to achieve during Hitler's dictatorship: between striking alarm at the risks to peace posed by Nazism on the one hand, and avoiding all hints of political partisanship in order to try to maintain peace on the other. Perhaps this attempted balancing act helps best explain the Vatican's "silence" in the face of numerous acts of criminal violence: like the invasion of the Czech lands in March 1939, or of Poland later that year; or the mass killing of Jews and other "racial enemies." Ironically, the open hand in international politics was compensated for with rhetorical appeals to the victims to accept their suffering in religious terms: the Czechs for example were encouraged to see themselves as "victims for peace and humanity." The attempt to combine roles of statesman and pastor arguably eviscerated both functions.

Moving into the postwar period, Árpád von Klimó contributes a *tour d'horizon* of "religious change" in Europe in the twentieth century, treating expected themes like secularization and confrontation with totalitarianism, but also the less understood revivals of the two postwar periods. The literature cited and deft analysis make this piece highly valuable for those with general curiosity. I only wondered whether like Kösters von Klimó was not too optimistic about inbuilt "tensions" between religion and Nazism: as we know, some Christians were willing to go very far in their compromises with the Nazi regime.

Also rooted in the postwar years, Martin Zückert surveys the situation of Christians in Czech border regions. The case of Protestants was complicated, but Catholics generally tried to assure that "German" Catholic church property passed over into hands of Czech Catholics. The author has discovered that the Catholic church did not object to the expulsions of Germans from the Czech lands, but rather to excessive use of force. Indeed, the Czech Catholic hierarchy fully accepted arguments of rights of state when looking at the expulsions, very quickly passing over concerns for individuals rights. Archbishop Beran even said that violence perpetrated against German refugees was qualitatively different from what happened during the war, because it was a "reaction" to brutality. Zückert astutely notes the "evacuation" of any concern for theology that accompanied these unprecedented evacuations of human beings: "Es findet sich jedoch sowohl in diesem Gespräch [mit Beran] wie auch in anderen Äußerungen katholischer tschechischer Bischöfe keine theologische Auseinandersetzung." Representatives of the Protestant *Böhmische Brüder* worried about moral problems, but ultimately also agreed that in a "revolutionary time" expulsion was the only possible solution.

Thus the churches attempted to remain relevant in a time of massive upheaval by dressing in national colors. For example it seemed impossible for the Catholic church to argue for a religious role in the border areas without reference to "national motives." (p. 277) In general, the author notes a weakening of organized religion in those areas: church structures were never rebuilt, either in the immediate postwar years, or in the more hostile climate after 1948.

In a fascinating study of the treatment of expulsions in the church press, Jan Lata describes the anti-nationalist engagement taken by (mostly Catholic) Christians in the immediate postwar years. Especially strong were the voices of former concentration camp prisoners, who were overrepresented among those protesting injustices against Sudeten Germans. But even Catholics had difficulty siding with a view (propagated by Pius XII) that the expulsions as such represented an "imperialist tendency of the time." Perhaps not surprisingly, the Czechoslovak Church was least favorable toward Germans.

Space does not permit more than passing reference to other intriguing, well-researched studies in this volume: Jaroslav Cuhra on the successful efforts of the Czechoslovak regime to cut the Vatican out of interaction with the local Catholic church; Martin Těplý

on unofficial ways of reducing religious freedom in the immediate postwar years (of the "Third Republic") despite technical guarantees of religious freedom; or Michal Pehr on political Catholicism in postwar Czechoslovakia. The volume also includes some excellent detailed studies on the border areas by Miroslav Kunštát, Johann Grossruck, and Rainer Bendel. The leading student on Czech Catholicism Jiří Hanuš contributes a fascinating but unfortunately brief consideration on changes in Catholic mentalities.

Only one contribution to this volume deals with Jewish life in Czechoslovakia: the essay by Monika Hanková on the attempts to reconstitute Jewish community life in the immediate postwar years. The decimated community returned to life, largely connecting to traditions of the interwar period, only to be reduced to a minimum of activity after February 1948. It did not help matters that Czech society as a whole had become largely indifferent to religion. Nevertheless, Hanková suggests a community life, especially in Prague, that tenaciously maintained itself from the 1930s into the 1960s.

Above all this volume gives witness to the energy currently invigorating studies of religion in Central Europe. It manages the extraordinary achievement of having scholars from two countries not only speak to one another, but advance each other's understanding. The volume opens a window on unknown Czech scholarship. The editors represent their work as a first step in awakening interest in religious history in the Czech lands, and perhaps that explains why there is no final essay attempting to draw together some of the many strands woven over these well-researched essays. However, the introduction by the editors does work through a range of fascinating questions, including those some the essays here can only suggest: for example the divergent effects of the war upon the two national communities in the Czech lands. For all the doubt historians in the United States have cast upon the reality of ethnicity and nationality in the Czech lands, such identities do appear a hard irreducible core when one studies questions of society and religion.

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Frank Grelka: Die ukrainische Nationalbewegung unter deutscher Besatzungsherrschaft 1918 und 1941/42. (Studien der Forschungsstelle Ostmitteleuropa an der Universität Dortmund, Bd. 38.) Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden 2005. 507 S. (€ 78,-)

Sowohl im Ersten als auch im Zweiten Weltkrieg marschierten deutsche Truppen in das Gebiet der heutigen Ukraine ein. Ziel war die Schwächung des Kriegsgegners, und in beiden Fällen wurden die Invasoren von autochthonen ukrainischen Politikern unterstützt, welche im weitesten Sinne dem nationalen Lager zuzurechnen waren. Diese hegten den sich weder 1918 noch 1941 erfüllenden Wunsch, an der Seite und mit Hilfe der deutschen Besatzer einen eigenen, von Sowjetrussland bzw. der Sowjetunion unabhängigen ukrainischen Staat zu errichten. In beiden Weltkriegen scheiterte dieses Projekt aus vielerlei Gründen: Der Kriegsverlauf entwickelte sich zu Ungunsten des Kaiserreichs bzw. des nationalsozialistischen Staates, dem großen russischen Nachbarn gelang es zweimal, das „kleinrussische“ Brudervolk weiter an sich zu binden, große Teile der ukrainischen Bevölkerung hatten (und haben teilweise bis heute) ein nur rudimentär entwickeltes Nationalbewusstsein, und zudem hatte die deutsche Seite entweder nur ein höchst pragmatisches (wie sich beispielhaft im sog. Brotfrieden ausdrückte) oder gar kein (die deutsche Reaktion auf die Unabhängigkeitsdeklaration der OUN-B am 30.6.1941 zeigt dies) Interesse an einem ukrainischen Staat. In der Rückschau erscheint das ukrainischerseits in „die Deutschen“ gesetzte Vertrauen fast unbegreiflich naiv (Zentralrada) bzw. als Indiz für eine maßlose Selbstüberschätzung (im Falle der OUN).

Die von Frank Grelka in seiner 2003 in Bochum verteidigten Dissertation gestellte Frage nach der Bedeutung des „ukrainischen Faktors“ für die deutschen Planungen steht im Zusammenhang eines Forschungsproblems, das schon Historiker mehrerer Generationen beschäftigt hat: die Analogien und Kontinuitäten deutscher Kriegszielpolitik im Ersten und Zweiten Weltkrieg bzw., je nach Sicht, die Singularität des nationalsozialistischen Ost-