

Abstract

Presented diploma thesis focuses on research and analysis of the only decoration founded in the name of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. It is not only focusing on the timeframe of the Second World War, but it also tracks the phenomenon of civil decorations and medals across entire modern Czech history. The main research question is following: why was not the preceding First Czechoslovak Republic creating similar institutions and why after 1945, or more precisely 1948, the time has come to create enormous inflation of them. The main aim of the thesis is to define the *Honour Shield of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia* as probably the very first civil decoration of modern Czech history.

The thesis is not only focusing on the period of the occupation (1944-45), when the decoration was distributed. It also concentrates in detail on the previous thinking of the Nazi occupation authorities, which then resulted in founding of the decoration, together with the postwar retribution, with which were the awarded people confronted after 1945. The thesis is modifying so far common purely phaleristical approach to the topic, which it is supplementing with wider context. It is assessing the reaction of the Czech population on this particular award and on the term of honour, which it was supposed to represent. It is explaining the function of the decoration within the misusing the Saint Wenceslaus myth; it is opening the question of the relation between the institution of the “state” decoration and the “statehood” of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. It is comparing the *Honour Shield* with similar decorations in the occupied Europe. It is trying to define the institution of the *Honour Shield* in the evolution of the state decorations of the Czech area during the whole 20th century and it is pointing out such noticeable shift in state decorations, which the Czech society in this period went through.

Key words

Protectorate, decoration, phaleristics, collaboration, retribution, propaganda, society, second world war, Czech statehood, occupation.