

Abstract

The principal objective of the rigorosum thesis is to explain in detail the personality of an influential economist, pedagogue and politician, Professor Albin Braf (1851-1912), and his influence on the solution of pressing social issues of his time. The work captures Braf's professional and intellectual development associated with theoretical literary activity and practical needs of the era in which the attraction to social issues constituted a permanent part of his political and academic career. Furthermore, the thesis focuses on Braf's share in establishing important public institutions and theoretical preparations of social legislation concerning so-called labour issues and social insurance. Finally, the thesis illustrates Braf's academic practice which later resulted in the successful work of Winter, Preiss, Rašín, Engliš, Macek and Gruber, his scholars. In the period of the First Republic, those mentioned above represented the second generation of "Czech social school", with Braf being one of its founders. The following part concentrates on the influence of *Rerum Novarum*, the first social Papal encyclical, on Braf's social thinking and attitudes concerning the development of social insurance regulations. Historical research using content analysis contributed to achieving the aims of the paper. The synthesis of the findings described the steps that preceded the introduction of the system of compulsory social insurance in our countries. The rigorosum thesis will help the readers comprehend the era of forming the foundations of the modern-day welfare state.