

Abstract:

The dissertation thesis deals with urban historical monographs that were published in 1860-1900 in Czech, German, and Polish language, and covered towns in Bohemia, Moravia, and Galicia. Adopting a broadly comparative perspective, the study focuses on the social dimension of the books through the lens of local and national identities. It presupposes that the urban histories essentially created local identities but at the same time makes a hypothesis that nationalization of society in the 19th century had significant impact on local urban history.

The first chapter shows that the urban historiography in each of the regional-language spheres developed unevenly. One of the reasons was the different significance of towns and urban past in national thoughts. The following chapter analyses urban monographs as books. It poses questions about who wrote urban histories, with what intentions, and for what readership. It reveals that the books had essentially two roles: they served local purposes and at the same time they were integrated in the national programme

The two remaining chapters deal with the analysis of historical representations. The fourth chapter compares urban histories with regard to periodization of urban past. It confirms that the national historical frame significantly influenced the ways of writing urban histories. The fifth chapter analyses historical text from the perspective of the rise and decline theme. It deals with the role this theme played in the construction of local identity.