Abstract in English

The Monument of the “Benes Letters”?
(The Statue of the President Benes in Prague
as a “Place of Memory”)

This dissertation shows the gallery of various moods of recollections the Czech politician Edvard Beneš (1884−1948) during the years 2002−2005, it means around the great easterly enlargement of the European Union. In these period many controversies were led internationally and bilaterally about the “Benes Letters” and about the displacement of Germans after the WW2, in the Czech Republic about the issue “Benes and communism”, too. The introduction sketches the theoretical and methodological starting points of this dissertation, and then recapitulates the European context of the problems and the structure of this study. The second chapter looks into the research of E. Benes in the milieu of the Czech pro-Benes contemporary witnesses of him and their organizations, characterizes their narrative and shows their activities, which were done in direction to the celebration of this hero. The third chapter analyzes another one type of the Benes recollection in Czech − the example of one caricatural bust of Benes, artwork of artistic group Pode Bal, and shows the contemporary political context of this intervention. The fourth chapter analyzes the pictures of Benes in the Czech political discourse (the question of the “lex Benes” in the Parliament, 2003−2004). The fifth chapter describes the project of the Benes-Monument at the Loretan-Square in Prague (2002−2005), analyzes the sharp (not only) media polemics around the unveiling ceremony of this monument (16th of May, 2005), and drafts the Benes’s picture in the Sudetes Germans and Hungarian discourses. The last sixth chapter summarizes the main ideas and conclusions of the topic. The ending component of the all study is the pictorial and textual supplement.

Key words: Memory, Recollection, Monument, “Place of Memory”, “Benes Letters”, Edvard Benes