

Abstract

This thesis deals with the personality of prominent lawyer and a political scientist Zdenek Mlynar during his tenure at the Institute of State and Law of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences. Mlynar was one of the leading figures and ideologues of the Prague Spring; in the first half of 1968 he was a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party and later he became its secretary. He was also one of the authors of the 'Action Programme' of the Communist Party, precisely of its political part. Nevertheless his ideological development was not straightforward; he started as a devoted ideologue and dogmatist in the 1950s to become a reformer in the second half of the 1960s. And during that whole time period Mlynar had been employed as a scientist at the Academy of Sciences in the field of the legal theory.

For the purpose of this thesis was Mlynar's more than twelve-year long tenure at the Academy of Sciences is divided into three periods: a research assistantship between 1957 and 1959, his tenure as a head of the Department of Theory of State and Law between 1960 and 1966 and then the time of his work on the political reform in 1968, with a special attention being paid to the interdisciplinary team "Development of the political system in the socialistic society" which was initiated and subsequently lead by Mlynar himself. The final chapter discusses ways in which the administration of the Institute of State and Law coped with the change of policy in 1968 and with the beginning of the normalization. Later was Mlynar, who at the time was already expelled from the Communist Party and was no longer employed by the institute, named one of the most prominent representatives of revisionism and its work have been subjected to a sharp criticism.

The thesis intends to present Mlynar's ideological and academic evolution in the broader context of the development of socialistic jurisprudence in 1950s and 1960s. The aim is to provide an overview of the Mlynar's scientific work in connection with his political activities, which were very often crucial to his work in academia.