

Legal Forms of persecution of citizens in the Protectorate 1939-1945 in comparison with the occupied Netherlands

In 1939, Czechoslovakia was destroyed by Nazi Germany without a single shot. Less than a year later, the Netherlands was conquered by the German army in the course of Blitzkrieg in the West. Both countries remained under occupation for almost six years, while their citizens faced an unprecedented persecution. Since these countries share a lot of commonalities, concerning size of their territory, wartime development and the form of occupation, they proved to be an ideal example to provide the comparison of the Nazi occupation regime in Western and Eastern Europe. Bohemia and Moravia joined the Reich as a protectorate, an institute of international public law that was very rare in the European context. Kingdom of Netherlands was transformed into so-called Reichskommissariat, a provisional arrangement that was supposed mainly to maintain public order in order to secure the industrial production. In the first place, this thesis trying to describe the distinction that the Nazis were making between occupied territories in the West and in the East in terms of ideology, because it greatly affected their approach to these countries and the intensity of the repression. The Netherlands was perceived by Nazi ideologists to be a Germanic nation that naturally belonged to the Reich. Meanwhile, Czechs as Slavs were seen as subhuman and were intended to be partially Germanized and partially exterminated. In the main part of the thesis, the Nazi persecution is examined from three aspects. Firstly, it is the administration of the occupied territories and occupation authorities. Secondly, it is the organization of police and security forces, mainly of the infamous Gestapo, which is described from its development in the Reich to its later operational history in the occupied territories. Finally, the work describes criminal law and the administration of justice. Each of these aspects is dealt with in two separate subchapters, concerned with situation in the Protectorate and the Netherlands respectively, describing the development in these countries throughout the occupation from the abovementioned points of view, and also the most important representatives of this era.