Abstract and key words

Politics and Social Practice of Collective Violence in Bohemian Lands 1944–1946

Doctoral Thesis

Jaromír Mrňka, Charles University, Prague, 2017.

The thesis is focused on the acts of collective violence that took place in the territory of the Bohemian lands in the period between years 1944 and 1946. Despite the traditional interpretation of the May 1945 as a crucial reversal, the general explanation focuses on the collective violence as a phenomenon overlapping traditional turning points. Remaining high amount of violent interactions is an element connecting the final war operations with the first weeks and months after.

Applying concepts of political sociology (Charles Tilly), social psychology (Philip Zimbardo) and microsociology (Randall Collins) the thesis strive to capture interdependent nature of collective violence between its structural preconditions and situational dynamics. Based on the quantitative evaluation of the acts of collective violence, the first step outlines a macro social topography of collective violence. The main point is an identification of key actors of the politics of collective violence and their correlation to basic configurations of particular political regimes (i.e. occupational regime of the so called Protectorate and limited democratic regime of Czechoslovakia after May 1945). The second step evaluates social mechanisms facilitating escalation of violent situations into mass atrocities as illustrated by several case studies.

The main point of the thesis is an identification of impulsive acts of collective violence as limited to temporary transitive violent rituals and turns attention to the important role of the state organised specialists in concrete violent situations.

Keywords