

6. Social and political background of the Czech society – “velvet revolution” and “velvet divorce”

Lecturer: Pavel Pšejda

Objective: to explain trends leading towards the change of the regime and consequent dissolution of Czechoslovakia.

Lecture: Analysis of reasons leading to the so-called “velvet revolution” will be presented in the first part of the lecture. Attention will be paid not only to internal influences but also to the quality of the international environment as a background to the change of the regime in Czechoslovakia. In the second part, differences between the Czech and Slovak parts of the state will be discussed with a special emphasis on the role of the economy and nationalism in the process of the gradual break-up of Czechoslovakia.

Assigned reading:

- Kraus, Michael, Stanger, Allison (eds.) *Irreconcilable Differences? Explaining Czechoslovakia's Dissolution*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000, pp. 7-25.
- Additional reading:
- Večerník, Jiří; Matějů, Petr, (eds.) *Ten Years of Rebuilding Capitalism: Czech Society after 1989*. Praha: Academia, 1999.
- Olson, David M. “Democratization and Political Participation: The Experience of the Czech Republic”. In Dawisha, K., Parrott, B., *The Consolidation of Democracy in East-Central Europe*. Cambridge: CUP, 1997, pp. 150-196.

Issues for discussion:

The role played by the Czech and Slovak political parties in the “velvet divorce”.

The role played by the Czech and Slovak mass media at the “velvet divorce”.