

4. Czech history as a key to understanding contemporary behaviour: ideas, trends, cornerstones

Lecturer: Pavel Pšejda

Objective: To explain importance of history for contemporary social and political behaviour.

Lecture: In this session, key points in the older Czech (and Czechoslovak) history will be discussed and presented as fundamentals of present political culture and public policy in the Czech Republic. Historical relations of Czechs and Germans, psychological dimensions of the Czech identity, fears of assimilation as a reason for political views, language as a myth legitimizing self-perceptions of the Czech nation, creation of Czechoslovakia, all these issues and many others are to be elaborated in as much details as possible.

Assigned reading:

Fawn, Rick (2000), *The Czech Republic: A Nation of Velvet*, Harwood Publishers, Amsterdam, pp. 1-13.

Innes, Abby (2001), *Czechoslovakia: The Short Goodbye*, Yale University Press, New Haven, pp. 1-16.

Additional reading:

Hájek, Jan; Kolář, František; Matoušek, Václav; Vágner, Petr. *The Heart of Europe*, Theo Publishing, Pardubice, 2000.

Issues for discussion:

Explain the relation of Czechs and Slovaks.

Describe circumstances of dismemberment of Czechoslovakia in 1938.