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This original collection of essays offers an account of key moments and themes in the history of the Czech Lands from the time of the rise of the Přemyslide dynasty in the ninth century to the fall of socialism in 1989. The essays, commissioned specially for this volume, are written by prominent scholars almost all teaching and researching in the present-day Czech Republic. There is no comparable book in English on the subject.

Along with eleven historical essays on socio-political lines are four contributions which focus broadly on the arts, sciences and education, emphasizing political, economic and other aspects. Of these, two concentrate on the reigns and courts of Charles I/IV (1346 [1355]–1378) and of Rudolf II (1576–1612). Two further essays consider the worlds of the university and of science in the period 1800–1914 and 1800–1930 respectively, as parts of the educational system of the Habsburg monarchy and in the context of the Czech–German bilingualism that pervaded the political and cultural atmosphere of the Czech Lands. The co-existence and encounters between Czechs and Germans are embedded in Czech history and are therefore emphasized throughout the book, while the conflicts between the two nationalities in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries are examined in a separate chapter. Lastly, pursuing the ‘ethnic’ theme, there are essays on both the little-explored question of Czech–Jewish relations and on the sensitive Czech–Slovak question.

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Sadly two contributors, Josef Macek (1922–1991) and Otto Urban (1938–1996), died before the publication of the book. To their memory and to the memory of František Graus (1921–1989), the editor of a previous collection in which the attempt was made to assess the state of research and reflection in Czech historiography, this work is dedicated.

M.T.

Editorial note

As Robert Evans pointed out in his influential *The Making of the Habsburg Monarchy 1550–1700* (Oxford, 1979) ‘Bohemia’ is not a simple notion. Largely but not exclusively in this book it is co-extensive with ‘Czech Lands’, encompassing historically the Kingdom of Bohemia, the Margravate of Moravia and (the duchies of) Silesia. They were constituent parts, with Slovakia and Subcarpathian Ruthenia, of Czechoslovakia between 1918 and 1939, and again (without Subcarpathian Ruthenia) between 1945 and 1992. The links in the histories of the Czech Lands and Slovakia are addressed particularly in chapters 13, 15 and 18.

Names of some towns in Czech and German

<i>Czech</i>	<i>German</i>
Brno	Brünn
České Budějovice	Budweis
Hradec Králové	Königgrätz
Cheb	Eger
Chomutov	Komotau
Jachymov	Joachimsthal
Jihlava	Iglau
Kroměříž	Kremsier
Kutná Hora	Kuttenberg
Litoměřice	Leitmeritz
Mikulov	Nikolsburg
Minstrberk	Münsterberg Ziębice (Polish)
Mladá Boleslav	Jungbunzlau
Most	Brüx
Olomouc	Olmütz
Opava	Troppau
Ostrava	Ostrau
Plzeň	Pilsen
Prostějov	Prossnitz
Stará Boleslav	Altbunzlau
Terezín	Theresienstadt
Ústí nad Labem	Aussig
Vranov nad Dyjí	Frain
Vratislav	Breslau Wrocław (Polish)
Znojmo	Znaim
Žatec	Saaz