

DOCUMENTA BOHEMICA BELLUM TRICENNALE ILLUSTRANTIA. Vol. 2: DER BEGINN DES DREISSIGJÄHRIGEN KRIEGES. DER KAMPF UM BÖHMEN. QUELLEN ZUR GESCHICHTE DES BÖHMISCHEN KRIEGES (1618–1621). Edited by *Miroslav Toegel* et al. Introduction by *Josef Polišenský*. Prague: Academia, 1972. 341 pp. + 16 pp. black and white illustrations. Distributed by Hermann Böhlau, Vienna.

This volume is likely to become as indispensable a manual for the student of Bohemia in the first four years of the Thirty Years' War as the *Calendar of State Papers* is for his counterpart in England. For the *Documenta Bohemica* is also a calendar, with lengthy extracts from the more important items (about 10 percent) and brief descriptions of the rest. The selections are the cream of the holdings of the major Czech archives, especially those in Brno, Třeboň (Wittingau), and Prague—close to one thousand documents in all.

The quotations are not as generous as those of the *Calendar of State Papers*, but in these fundless times one can hardly expect more. And there are still some juicy extracts, notably the unwaveringly ideological description by Martinicz of his own ejection from the window in Prague on May 23, 1618. As he fell, he recalled, he loudly invoked “allzeit oft nacheinander” the name of the Virgin, and she herself, “die allerseeligste und lobwürdigste Jungfrau Maria,” instantly became his patroness by breaking his fall with her own “unterlegten Mantl” (pp. 48–49). The confessional lines were apparently drawn the second he crossed the windowsill. Yet, as Josef Polišenský points out in his admirable introduction, the documents reveal that some months elapsed before the realization took hold that the defenestration would lead to war.

Indeed, a better appreciation of timing is one of the chief benefits to be gained from so detailed a presentation of developing events. We see how early the grumbling against Wallenstein began—and how much he was being paid: 3,500 florins for a regiment of three thousand foot soldiers (p. 55). We learn also that sufficient speed could be generated to have a description of the Battle of the White Mountain printed in Dresden before the end of 1620 (that is, within seven weeks). One obtains a real sense of how the month-by-month changes must have been perceived by contemporaries.

Most of the documents are diplomatic, military, or financial communications. And, as Polišenský notes, they are heavily weighted toward the Habsburg side. Few of the records of the losers survived the war, and as a result it is a somewhat one-sided picture that emerges.

But the conclusion is nevertheless inescapable that the Bohemians never had a chance. While the Catholic powers rallied massively around Ferdinand, the Protestants gave the Winter King pitiful support. Throughout this excellent edition, for all the emphasis on the social context of events that is the hallmark of modern, Marxist Czech history, there hangs the pall of that much older Czech obsession, the tragedy of Bohemia.

THEODORE K. RABB
Princeton University