

REVIEWS AND ANNOTATIONS

Zavacká, Katarina. *Politické trestné činy pred Slovenským najvyšším súdom v rokoch 1939–1944*, Bratislava 2013, 189 s. [Political crimes before the Supreme Court of the Slovak Republic between 1939 and 1944, Bratislava 2013, 189 pp.]

Research fellow at the Institute of state and law SAS, Katarina Zavacká, needs no introduction. Dr. Zavacká is well-known not just in Slovakia; also the members of Czech professional audience know her well thanks to her numerous publications. Recently came to book shops another of her monographs titled *Political crimes before the Supreme Court of the Slovak Republic between 1939 and 1944*, published by the Slovak Academy of Sciences.

The main source base of her monograph are the published decisions of the Supreme Court of the Slovak Republic between 1939 and 1944 in criminal cases which were classified at the time, based on then applicable laws, as political.

The author also notes that the Supreme Court of the Slovak Republic ruled definitively also in matters, which had been previously, before the act on Independent Slovak Republic came into force, decided by the Supreme Court of the Czechoslovak Republic.

In the context of the position of the Supreme Court the author follows the reform of the judicial system in the given period. The activities of courts were influenced by two acts (No. 31 col. and 33 Col., both from 1940). The first one changed some provisions of the Civil Procedure and the second cancelled jury courts and temporarily modified certain aspects of criminal justice. The author here presents the individual explanatory reports for these laws and also points out critical lack of judges at that time.

This work also reflects the history of the creation of criminal law and its application. The author points out that this development was influenced not just by internal but also by external political and military situation.

Based on government regulation No. 32 Col. from 1939 the criminal procedure skipped basic institutions, such as state prosecution, court decision and attorneys with defense, the right of the prosecuted to appeal etc.

The author in her work presents legal standards related e.g. to personal and property rights, standards directed against Jews (here it was government regulation No. 63 Col. from April 1939) and others.

In chapter titled *Defense Readiness of the State* we read about crimes and cases processed at the time by the Supreme Court of the Slovak Republic. These are precisely analyzed at the level of individual decisions. Crimes include e.g. presidential insults, unauthorized possession of weapons, defamation of the republic, possession of weapons etc.

With respect to the foreign political context the books also includes an analysis of the impact of relevant treaties between Germany and Slovakia and agreements regarding legal standing of Slovak citizens.

In attachments, that are a part of the monograph, we find selected excerpts from the individual laws, regulations and decrees from this period, including an example of a decision from a regional court in Bratislava. Included is also extensive bibliography with resources the author used.

We can wholeheartedly recommend the publications to all who are interested in understanding the political situation in Slovakia during the period of independent Slovak Republic, the criminal law as such, justice system and other aspects of this historical time period.

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