

## **Abstract**

The doctoral thesis *Czechoslovakia, Mexico and Central America 1945-1989* analyses political, economic and cultural relations between that country of the called Iron Curtain and the Mesoamerican countries during the Cold War in the twentieth century. The research is based mainly on unpublished archival materials, mainly of Czech origin. It is also complemented by fewer materials obtained at the Central American countries' official archives. The wider context of international politics is primarily outlined in the introductory chapters, which aims, on one hand, to inform readers about the development of the Czechoslovak diplomacy and foreign policy and how it was influenced by the Soviet Union and, on the other hand, to describe the unstable political situation prevailing then in the Central American countries, which were also under the constant scrutiny of the United States of America. Thereafter, the analysis focuses on the Czechoslovak-Mexican relations, which is thematically divided into political, cultural and economic sections. A special chapter is dedicated to the activities of the Czechoslovak secret service in Mexico, as a country conveniently located near to the United States. Other chapters study the bilateral relations between Prague and the individual capitals of Central America. The work finishes with a short analyses of the book *Usměvavá Guatemala* from the Czechoslovak diplomat and writer, Norbert Frýd, and also focuses on the stay in Prague of Roque Dalton, a Salvadorian revolutionary and poet. Both authors' observations bring more light into the long period when all sort of diplomatic relations remained frozen.

Unlike Mexico, where diplomatic relations were continuously developed since 1922 (interrupted only during the years 1939-1942) and as from 1959 proclaimed at the level of embassies, Czechoslovakia did not develop an active diplomacy with the Central American countries or had to suspended it along most of the period (Prague normalized relations with Costa Rica in 1968, with Honduras in 1976, with Nicaragua in 1979 and with El Salvador in 1990). However, there were important exceptions when relations with Czechoslovakia were restored. These cases include the little-known period of the Czechoslovak relations with the regime of Jacob Arbenz in Guatemala (1953-1954) and later a significant period of intensive contacts with Nicaragua, which followed the victory of the Sandinista revolution in June 1979. The Central American countries experienced, during those years, a serious military and economic intervention and their territory became one of the most important areas of ideological conflict between the two superpowers.

## **Keywords**

Czechoslovakia, Latin America, international relations, diplomacy and politics, Cold War, Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, El Salvador