

Abstract

The present thesis deals with the life and work of the Czech-German priest Michael Joseph Fesl (1788-1864), one of the most important followers of Bernard Bolzano and a leading representative of his school of thought. It follows him especially in the context of Bolzanism as it developed in the Leitmeritz seminary where Fesl was a preses. In this context, the thesis also notes the personality and work of Bishop Josef František Hurdálek (1747-1833), who was affected by the trial of the Bolzanians in a similarly tangible way as Fesl. However, it does not neglect the fate of these personalities after they were forced to leave the seminary. It follows Fesl during his years of involuntary exile in Austria. It does not omit also other aspects of Fesl's activities either, such as the publication of Bolzano's works abroad (especially in Sulzbach, Bavaria), or the bequest of books to the Czech National Museum in the spirit of Bolzanist charity.

With the help of sources such as correspondence and articles of reminiscence in the contemporary press, the thesis tries to capture the way of working and the atmosphere of the Leitmeritz seminary. It seeks to interpret in the light of the religious thought of the Bolzanists and in the context of Enlightenment Catholicism in general Fesl's works, for the example the pseudonymous *Nachrichten und Betrachtungen über die ungarische Nazionalsynode vom Jahre 1822*. The thesis also does not neglect the so-called *second life* of this personality, i.e. the way in which Fesl's legacy worked in Czech society. It traces, for example, the references to this fundamental figure of Czech intellectual life in Petr Fingal's novel *Naomi*, or its appearance in Václav Řezníček's fiction series on Prague, *Naše zlatá matička*. The determining method of the thesis is textual analysis. It does not aim to present an exhaustive biography, but rather to offer some new insights into the persons and settings under study on the basis of the source material (including previously untouched sources such as *Nachrichten und Betrachtungen*). As a partly biographical text, it attempts not to isolate historical actors from their *milieu*, but at the same time it does not want to diminish the importance of personality in the historical process.