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VZDĚLÁVÁNÍ

**THE RELATION BETWEEN NATURAL CONDITIONS AND
HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM AND
THE CZECH REPUBLIC**

BAKALÁŘSKÁ PRÁCE

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Prohlašuji, že jsem závěrečnou práci vypracovala samostatně a použila jen uvedených pramenů a literatury.

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Abstract

This work deals with the comparison of geographic data of the Czech Republic and the United Kingdom in the context of the effect of these facts on the historical development of both countries. Specifically, the work compares the development of these lands during the twentieth century with a brief introduction to the situation at the end of the nineteenth century. Apart from the fundamental comparison of these two countries the thesis largely deals with the summary of data to enable the comparison, the contemporary geographical conditions and historical development of the country with important milestones since the late nineteenth century to the present.

Table of Contents:

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ABSTRACT

1. INTRODUCTION.....	7
2. GEOGRAPHICAL RESEARCH OF UK AND CZ	9
2. 1 LOCATION AND ADMINISTRATIVE GEOGRAPHY.....	9
2. 1. 1 <i>Location and administrative geography of Great Britain</i>	<i>9</i>
2. 1. 2 <i>Location and administrative geography of CZ.....</i>	<i>10</i>
2. 1. 3 <i>Summary</i>	<i>11</i>
2. 2 PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY AND CLIMATE.....	11
2. 2. 1 <i>Physical geography and climate in UK.....</i>	<i>11</i>
2. 2. 2 <i>Physical geography and climate in CZ.....</i>	<i>13</i>
2. 2. 3 <i>Summary</i>	<i>14</i>
2. 3 POLITICS.....	14
2. 3. 1 <i>Politics of the UK</i>	<i>14</i>
2. 3. 2 <i>Politics of CZ.....</i>	<i>15</i>
2. 3. 3 <i>Summary</i>	<i>16</i>
2. 4 DEPENDENCIES OF UK AND COMMONWEALTH OF NATIONS	16
3. HISTORICAL MILESTONES OF 20TH CENTURY	18
3. 1 THE SITUATION IN THE 19 TH CENTURY	18
3. 1. 1 <i>The situation in United Kingdom in the 19th century.....</i>	<i>18</i>
3. 1. 2 <i>British Empire in the 19th century.....</i>	<i>18</i>
3. 1. 4 <i>Summary</i>	<i>20</i>
3. 2 THE SITUATION DURING WW I	20
3. 2. 1 <i>The situation in Great Britain during WW I.....</i>	<i>20</i>
3. 2. 2 <i>The situation in British Empire during WW I.....</i>	<i>21</i>
3. 2. 3 <i>The loss of Ireland</i>	<i>22</i>
3. 2. 4 <i>The situation in Czech Republic during WW I</i>	<i>23</i>
3. 2. 5 <i>Summary</i>	<i>24</i>
3. 3 INTER-WAR PERIOD.....	24
3. 3. 1 <i>Inter-war period in Great Britain.....</i>	<i>24</i>
3. 3. 2 <i>British Empire during inter-war period</i>	<i>25</i>
3. 3. 3 <i>Inter-war period in Czechoslovakia</i>	<i>25</i>
3. 3. 4 <i>Summary</i>	<i>27</i>
3. 4 THE SITUATION DURING WW II	27
3. 4. 1 <i>The situation during WW II in Great Britain</i>	<i>27</i>
3. 4. 2 <i>British Empire during the WWII.....</i>	<i>28</i>
3. 4. 3 <i>The situation during WW II in Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia.....</i>	<i>29</i>
3. 4. 4 <i>Summary</i>	<i>30</i>

3.	5 AFTER-WAR PERIOD.....	31
3.	5. 1 <i>After-war period in Great Britain</i>	31
3.	5. 2 <i>Decolonization and formation of the Commonwealth of Nations</i>	32
3.	5. 3 <i>After-war period in Czech Republic</i>	32
3.	5. 4 <i>Summary</i>	34
4.	COMPARISON OF THE TWO COUNTRIES	36
4.	1 GENERAL COMPARISON OF THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF GREAT BRITAIN AND CZECH REPUBLIC	36
4.	2 THE PRESENCE OF ACCESS TO THE SEA.....	37
4.	3 THE NATURAL BARRIERS	38
4.	4 NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES.....	38
5.	CONCLUSION	40
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	43
	APPENDICES	47
	RESUMÉ.....	56
	ANNOTATION	57

1. INTRODUCTION

This project aims to analyse the problems concerning the relation between the geographical positions and other geographical conditions of the United Kingdom ¹and the Czech Republic and the historical development of these two countries within the twentieth century. The thesis deals with the most notable differences and similarities in the various fields of interest that occurs in the subsequent chapters. The thesis is focused on the comparison of the two countries during the twentieth century.

The whole work is divided into three main sections. The first deals with collecting facts about the countries in the field of geography. This section offers several subsections, providing the descriptions of relevant topics, e.g. location and administrative geography, physical geography and political systems of both countries are described. Chapters also contain a brief comparison of the two phenomena.

The second major part of the thesis is a historical section that introduces the individual periods of development of the two countries and describes the main events and processes that have affected the Great Britain and the Czech Republic during 20th century and which led to the final formations of the countries into their present forms. A special section is also devoted to the British Empire.

The final section is devoted to the complex comparison of the historical development of the two countries, of the geographic position of the two countries and the effects of important natural conditions.

Focused on the level of development, it could be expected that natural conditions in the United Kingdom are much better compared to the situation in the Czech Republic. Based on this hypothesis, it could be declared that the United Kingdom is more developed country than the Czech Republic, thanks to natural conditions like the position of the country, the presence of the seas, climate, and others.

The aim of this project is to address the following issues:

- a. Whether natural conditions of the particular country had a major impact on the evolution and development of the territory.

¹ The whole name is abbreviated within the text, "the Great Britain" or "the United Kingdom" only is used instead of The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

- b. Whether the development of the country and its defences are related to the existence of natural barriers of the country and to the location of the country within the European continent.
- c. Whether the presence of particular neighbouring countries affected the development of the countries.

To evaluate all the research questions concerning the influence of natural conditions on the development of these two countries is a very complex and challenging task. Every effort is made to determine objectively the extent to which these conditions affect the development of the two countries. Additionally, certain points, which, according to the research were important milestones for the development of the Great Britain and the Czech Republic are introduced.

The choice of the topic of this thesis reflects the author's interest of the current situation in the Czech Republic in the field of the influence among other European countries. It was necessary to select more powerful European country for the comparison, and due to the author's field of study it was appropriate to pick an English speaking country, thus the Great Britain was chosen.

2. GEOGRAPHICAL RESEARCH OF GREAT BRITAIN AND CZECH REPUBLIC

The opening geographical section introduces some important and influential facts connected to contemporary situations of the two countries. This section is divided into several subsections, the introductory one states the facts generally and further chapters mention detailed information related to particular parts of the countries. At the end of the subchapters there occurs a brief summary of differences and similarities of the countries on the field of the facts that are discussed within corresponding subchapter.

2. 1 Location and administrative geography

Both subchapters “Location and administrative geography of Great Britain” and “Location and administrative geography of Czech Republic” offer the basic information related to the facts about geographical positions, divisions and other important facts about these two countries.

2. 1. 1 *Location and administrative geography of Great Britain*

According to both Gardener (1993) and United Kingdom Profile (2013), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is a sovereign state that covers the western coastal part of Europe. The state is located on the major part of the British Isles archipelago that consists of two main islands and several smaller surrounding islands. The biggest one is the Island of Great Britain and the second is the Island of Ireland, where the north-eastern one-sixth of the island belongs to the United Kingdom. The country is separated from the continent by the English Channel under which is built the Channel tunnel connecting the island with the mainland. The whole territory of Great Britain occupies an area of 243,610 km² and the population of the country is 63,181,775 inhabitants (Gardener, 1993). Focused on the exact geographic location in terms of latitude and longitude, Gardener (1993) states that the occupied area lies between latitudes 49° and 61° N and longitudes 9° W and 2° E. Besides that, the Prime Meridian goes through the land of UK; the defining point of this one is the Royal Greenwich Observatory in London. The positioning within the European Continent shows Map No. within the Appendices.

For Gardener (1993), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland formally consist of four constituent countries: England, Scotland, Wales (these three forms Great Britain) and Northern Ireland. Each of the country has its own administrative system and a geographical demarcation, which have been created before the United Kingdom was established. Thus, each of these four countries keeps its own degree of autonomy in terms of politics.

According to United Kingdom Profile (2013), another area of interest that belongs to a basic geographical overview covers the issue of important facts about the country's borders and neighbouring countries. The boundaries of this country are made up mainly naturally, by the waters. The northern and western part of the Great Britain is bounded by the Atlantic Ocean; the east border is made up of the North Sea. The southern boundary is formed by the English Channel, which also separates Great Britain from the continent as previously stated, and finally the western part of the country is bordered by the only land border, which is located on the island of Ireland, between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. The total length of the United Kingdom's coastline is 17, 820 km, while the length of the land border with Ireland is only 360 km.

2. 1. 2 Location and administrative geography of CZ

Ludvík (1997) claims, that Czech Republic is an independent republic which lies in Central Europe. This inland country borders with four countries: Germany in the west, Austria in the south, Slovakia in the east and Poland in the northeast. The boundaries of these states are formed mainly by natural units: mountains or rivers. The total area of the republic is 78, 867 km² and its population counts 10,513,209 inhabitants. The Republic lies between 51° and 48° N Latitudes, and 12° and 18° W longitudes (Gardener, 1993). The contemporary geographical position of the Republic is shown in Appendix No. 1, and in Appendix No. 2, on Map No. 10.

The Czech Republic consists of three territories, Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia. These parts of the country are divided only notionally and all of them fall under the control of the central politic of the CZ and does not have high level of autonomy. This geographical demarcation is only in the historical context (Gardener, 1993).

As for the borders of the republic, in the north it is made of Ore Mountains, Giant Mountains, Jizera Mountains, Orlické Mountains and Jeseníky range; in the east the border

create Beskydy range, Javorníky Mountains and White Carpathian range. In the south the border follows the river Morava and Dyje and south-west border creates Šumava range and Novohradské Mountains. The total length of border of contemporary area of CZ is 1, 989 km (Czech Republic Land boundaries, 2013).

2. 1. 3 Summary

In summary, according to the research mentioned above, these two countries differ widely in the location of their area and in administrative geography. The first major difference is the size of the countries. The Great Britain is in comparison with the Czech Republic a much larger country with a higher number of inhabitants. Another difference represents the placement of countries within the European continent. The Czech Republic lies in the midst of the Central Europe, while the United Kingdom is located right on the edge of the continent and moreover it is an island nation, therefore it has direct access to the sea. Another important factor in which these countries differ are also the borders. The Czech borders are not formed by any great natural barrier, contrary to the UK, that is separated from its neighbours by the water barrier, English Channel. The only exception is the land border with Ireland.

2. 2 Physical geography and climate

This chapter offers an introduction to the terms of physical geography which deals with the segmentation of the land, natural and climatic conditions and natural wealth.

2. 2. 1 Physical geography and climate in Great Britain

This chapter deals with the conditions of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland respectively. Gardener and Scott (1993) present that the area of England is located in most of central and southern areas of the island of Great Britain and a number of small islands around, the most famous and largest are the Isle of Wight or the Isles of Scilly. In terms of physical-geographic characteristics, United Kingdom is a highly sectioned area. England is marked generally flatter and lower than the rest of United Kingdom; however the high hills and peaks occurs in England too. Topographically could be distinguished two main parts within

England. South and Southeast part of England is mainly lowland area; in the Eastern part of England there could be found large areas of fens, which is definitely the lowest part of this land. These lowlands are mainly used to growing grain and to other agricultural purposes. The Central England consists of green rolling hills, like Cotswold Hills, Chiltern Hills, North and South Downs. These terrains are composed mainly of chalk subsoil, as evidenced by the sharp hills bordering the sea coast and forming the chalk cliffs. The best known of these cliffs are the Cliffs of Dover. From the middle England to the north lies Pennines and north of them occurs Cheviot Hills, which forms a natural border with Scotland. Scotland occupies northern two thirds of the Isle of Britain and it the most indented part of the United Kingdom. Moving to the north, South-Scottish Highlands gradually falls into Scottish lowlands, following the Caledonian Canal with the famous Loch Ness. At the southern end of the canal is the highest mountain in Scotland and in the United Kingdom, Ben Nevis. Further to the north rises the highest mountain Isles, Grampians and Caledonian mountains. The most north part of Britain creates Orkney Islands, Hebrides and Shetland (Gardener, Scott, 1993).

The most mountainous area of the islands is Wales, whose inner region fill Cambrian Mountains and where the second longest river of UK, Severn, rises. On the other side of the Irish Sea is Northern Ireland, where on the north from Belfast Antrim hills with impressive chalk cliffs are located. Westwards of Belfast is the largest British lake, Lough Neagh (United Kingdom Profile, 2013).

As for the climatic conditions of UK, according to Gardener and Scott (1993), United Kingdom falls into the mild coastal climatic zone, from which is derived the frequent rain throughout the year and relatively stable temperature fluctuations. During the year, the cold and wet winds from the northwest direction (from the Arctic and Island) meets the hot winds from Africa and these are the cause of mild, windy and wet weather of England. The northwest part of Scotland is the windiest part of UK. One point of interest is that England is roughly in the same plane with the peninsula of Quebec, where the climate is much cooler. However the reason why England is not that cold is that its coast is washed with warm Gulf Stream, which makes the country a mild climate.

Focused on the field of the natural resources of Great Britain, mineral reserves in Britain are currently very limited or completely depleted, among the most important articles Gardener (1993) presents oil and gas in the North Sea. Gaining of these began in the sixties of the twentieth century and Britain has even begun to export these materials. Other important

natural resources include coal, petroleum, tin, limestone, iron ore, salt, clay, chalk, gypsum, lead. However, Britain possessed the most natural resource in the early twentieth century, when Britain used its colonies to extract a large assortment of materials and to buy them from the countries for a very low price. Such materials included such as cotton, sugar, salt, gold, wood and many more.

2. 2. 2 Physical geography and climate in Czech Republic

As Ludvík (1997) points out, the territory of the Czech Republic is divided into two parts, Bohemian Massif on the west, which covers most of the territory of the Czech Republic and the Western Carpathians that covers the eastern part of CZ. The western part of the country consists of lowland formed by cretaceous sediments and by occasionally occurring basalt and sandstone rock cities. The whole area of central lowland is surrounded by the frontier mountains, that are mentioned in Chapter 2. 1. 1. 2 above, and Bohemian-Moravian highlands in the west. The eastern part of Moravia belongs to the system of Carpathians and from the Bohemian Massif is separated by important depressions, Moravian valleys and Moravian Gate. The western border, which is with Slovakia, is also formed by frontier mountains.

The climate in the country is mild and intermediate between oceanic and continental. Due to the prevailing western air flow and due to the position in relation to the Atlantic Ocean continental character of the climate is increasing from west to east. But contrary to the UK, which climatic conditions differ significantly throughout the lands of Kingdom, within Czech Republic the climate differs very little between East and West and between North and South. Local weather patterns and climate are more influenced by the topography and altitude of the land. In addition, Czech territory is the main European watershed (Gardener, 1993).

As for the natural resources of the Czech Republic, contemporarily the most important are large deposits of the black and brown coal and uranium, which is an important export item of the Czech Republic. Additionally, the country disposes of other raw materials such as limestone, clay, and very high quality oil, which is used primarily in the cosmetics industry (Gardener, 1993).

2. 2. 3 Summary

To sum up, the two countries differ in climatic conditions especially in terms of climate comparisons across the whole countries. Great Britain is much more rugged country than the Czech Republic and thus the climatic conditions differ more throughout the country, the South Britain which is more flat is as well warmer region, compared to mountainous areas in the north and in Wales, which are cooler. Even though the two countries lie in the same temperate climatic zone, this parameter is also different. While in Great Britain there is maritime climate with small temperature variations during the year, the Czech Republic has a mediterranean climate, with large temperature variations according to the current season.

2. 3 Politics

This chapter provides a brief description of the political system of the countries. The reason of the description of this topic is that the political systems of both countries described are quite different and so were in the past.

2. 3. 1 Politics of the Great Britain

Gardener (2003) points out that focused on the basic political facts, the United Kingdom is a constitutional federative monarchy whose contemporary official ruler is Queen Elizabeth II. The political system of the country is based on three branches: the executive, legislative and judicial. The executive power is exercised by the Sovereign, Her Majesty's Government and devolved national authorities. The nominal and constitutional holder of the executive power is the sovereign but the functional head of the executive power is represented by prime minister (PM), who is the highest democratically elected representative of the government. The daily routines of the sovereign of Great Britain consist mainly of performing ceremonial duties, e.g. the ceremonial appointment of prime minister (What is the UK Constitution, 2012). The Queen has some possibilities to act more executively in certain situations, although her options are strictly marked. She has three rights: the right to be consulted, the right to encourage and the right to warn. *"According to Bagehot, a Sovereign would, over the course of a long reign, accumulate far more knowledge and experience than any minister."* (History and Background, 2008). Finally, the head of the state has several theoretical personal

prerogatives, called the reserve power. Nevertheless, these rights were rarely exercised during the last century by the sovereign, with the exception of the appointment of the prime minister.

The legislative power is covered by the Great Britain's Parliament, which consist of the House of Commons and the House of Lords, and devolved parliaments of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (Parliament's role, 2009).

Finally, there is a judicial power. United Kingdom has not a single legal system because of being created as the political union of previously independent countries (Queen and the Law, 2009).

Parliament's role (2009) shows, that the United Kingdom's politics is based on the parliamentary government which relies on the principles of the Westminster system. The general system of the government is based on multi-party system, where the two largest parties are the Conservative party and the Labour party, which hold their posts since 1920s'.

As Queen and Government (2009) states, formally, the leading government is called Her Majesty's Government and the opposition is called Her Majesty's Most Loyal Opposition, this post is occupied by the party that ended on the second place in elections. The Westminster system consist of several procedures which aim is to handle the legislature. This system is used apart of the UK in other countries and its legislations, but the main difference between another countries' usage of this system and that of the UK is that the legislature of the United Kingdom is based on the "unwritten constitution", while most of other countries using the Westminster system has contrarily the "written constitution". It also is, or once was, used in legislature of the Commonwealth countries or former colonies of the UK.

2. 3. 2 Politics of Czech Republic

The Czech Republic is a unitary country, which came into existence on 1st January 1993 when Czechoslovakia split up into two successor states. Contemporary president of CZ is Miloš Zeman. The political system of the Czech Republic is characterized by a division of political power and its institutional establishing in the state. Czech Republic is a representative democracy and a parliamentary republic with multi-party system. As in the UK, the Czech Republic political system is based on three branches: Executive power is represented by the President and the Government, legislative power by the bicameral

parliament and judiciary is carried by a four-level judicial system and the Constitutional Court (Gardener, 1993).

2. 3. 3 Summary

It would seem that the political systems of both countries are very similar, but this is not entirely true statement. A major difference in the politics of these countries is the establishment of the states themselves. While the United Kingdom is a constitutional monarchy headed by the Queen, which acts as a parliamentary monarchy, the Czech Republic is a republic headed by the president. Another difference is in the form of a constitution of the countries. The Constitution of the Great Britain is unwritten, that has evolved substantially throughout the existence of the country, while the Constitution of the Czech Republic was created in 1993 with the formation of the Czech Republic. There exists much more differences but only two additional are mentioned. The first is the difference of the rulers of countries. Queen of Great Britain has relatively influential powers, which guarantees the Constitution, although they are rarely used by the Queen, while the President of the Czech Republic does not have quite the same powers. And finally, the biggest difference lies in the system of government. While in Great Britain the majority two-party system rules, in the Czech Republic is introduced multiparty system that is not able to enforce fundamental changes as effectively as two-party systems do.

2. 4 Dependencies of Great Britain and the Commonwealth of Nations

This chapter deals with the areas that formally belong to the United Kingdom but they have their own autonomous rights which do not fall under the direct control of the Government of the United Kingdom. Such countries are included within the Commonwealth of Nations, Overseas Territories and Crown dependencies. All these lands have formerly been the part of the British Empire.

There are fourteen British overseas territories which are listed in the Appendix 1, Chart No. 1. These areas are remnants of the British Empire while some of the countries even voted to stay in the statement of British Territories (Davison, 1995). The territories approximately cover the area of 667,018 square miles with the population about 260,000 people.

The Crown dependencies are the possessions of the British Crown, although not formally part of the UK or the European Union (Chief Minister to meet Channel Islands counterparts, 2013). These states are independent on jurisdiction of the United Kingdom, but the British government manages their foreign affairs and defence, the Parliament of UK has also the power to pass a law affecting these lands. The Crown dependencies are: Channel Islands (Bailiwicks of Jersey and Guernsey) and the Isle of Man (Crown dependencies, 2013).

According to Gardener, 1993, the Commonwealth of Nations developed from the British Empire, of which almost all of the current countries were part. Exceptions are Mozambique and Rwanda. Commonwealth of Nations is not a political union but intergovernmental organisation. The member countries differ in political, social and economic background but share equality in status. This organisation consists of 54 independent countries which are listed in Appendix 1, Chart No. 2 and shown on Map No. 3. The total area of the Commonwealth countries comprises 31,462,574 km² and the approximate population of the member states is 2.5 billion with the average density 61.09persons/km². All Member States follow the principles of Singapore Declaration, which was issued in 1971 and includes the promotion of democracy, human rights, individual liberty, free trade and other important tasks (Singapore Declaration of Commonwealth Principles, 1971). According to the London Declaration the Head of Commonwealth is Queen Elizabeth II; however this does not mean she is simultaneously the head of the member states. Only sixteen members, known as Commonwealth realms recognize Queen Elizabeth II as a head of their state, the very majority of Commonwealth, 33 states are republics and five states are monarchies of different royal houses (Head of the Commonwealth, 2011).

The importance of British Dependencies lies primarily in the history of Great Britain; however the current situation also provides a kind of advantage to the UK. The difference with the Czech Republic is clear-Czech Republic has no dependence and never had (Gardener, 1993).

3. HISTORICAL MILESTONES OF 20th CENTURY

This part of thesis is focused on most important events that took place during the 20th century and which influenced the development of subsequent events, political and social affairs and geographical changes (connected to the geographical positions of the countries mainly) in both countries. The introductory chapters deal with a brief summary of the situation in the 19th century, to show the situation of both countries before the turn of the 19th to the 20th century, which forms a sort of starting point for comparing the development of both countries. Subsequently, the text is divided into subsections according to important milestones in each country separately, thus not all subchapters are divided according to the same range of years.

3. 1 The situation in the 19th century

3. 1. 1 The situation in United Kingdom in the 19th century

This chapter briefly introduces the situation in Britain and British Empire before the key year 1914, the attention is directed on the 19th century.

Peprník (1970, p 157.) states that in the 19th century, after the defeat of France's Napoleonic army, Britain kept the greatest power in Europe, and despite the loss of American colonies, Britain remained the greatest colonial power. Therefore Britain used trade routes all around the world and until 1914, Britain did not compete with any other state. Thus after the approach of Germany as a rival, the ratio of an economic potential was disadvantaged in Britain. In addition, thanks to the Industrial Revolution, Britain had to restrict agriculture and thus become agriculturally non-self-sufficient and had many important commodities, like grain, imported (Peprník, 1970, p 159).

3. 1. 2 British Empire in the 19th century

As McDowall (2003, p. 145) writes, the overseas colonies represented the size of national greatness and economic support of the maternal country in terms of source of raw materials and market places for products. The British Empire at that time consisted of several components: dominions, colonies, protectorates, mandates and other territories ruled or

administered by the United Kingdom. After the loss of the American colonies in 18th century the policy of the country was focused on the development of colonial empire besides America for the whole second half of the 19th century. British attention thus turned towards Asia, Africa, and the Pacific and during this age Great Britain effectively controlled the economies of its colonies and also of countries that did not belong to the British Empire (informal empire). Among those countries of "informal empire" were ones such as China, Argentina and Siam. At the turn of the 18th and 19th century, British Empire included Canada, number of small colonies in the Pacific and South America, a huge number of colonies in Africa and two other great countries were in possession of Britain, India and Australia. Both Fergusson (2004) and McDowall (2003) agrees that by 1914, the territory of Britain increased by almost 26, 000, 000 km² and the population of the empire has increased by 400 million people.

1. 3 The situation in Czech lands in the 19th century

According to Bartoš and Kovářová (1997), after 1867 the area of contemporary Czech Republic became a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which was basically a union of two great states. The whole state formation had a total area of 676, 615 km (for the year 1910) and population of 51, 390, 223 inhabitants (Peschka, 2010). The territory of Austria-Hungary included today's Czech Republic, Slovakia, part of Poland and Ukraine, Romania, Croatia, Serbia, Slovenia, a small part of Italy and Austria, the whole area is depicted in Appendix 2, on Map No. 5. The whole empire was officially ruled by one sovereign, but two virtually independent parts, the Austria and Hungary kept a certain amount of autonomy and both parts had their own parliament, government, administration and the judicial system (Bartoš, Kovářová, 1997).

Bartoš and Kovářová (1997) say, that the current Czech Republic belonged to the Austrian part of ("Cisleithania") and thus it fell under the rule of Austrian. The territory was ruled by the government with the task of modernizing the country especially in the education and economy, due to the fact that in various regions of the empire was considerable disparity within mentioned fields. In Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia there was a rapid development of industry and infrastructure. Another important fact is that during these years existed efforts of Czech political scene to make a Union of Austria, Hungary and the Czech lands separately, which Czech politicians unfortunately did not achieve. There were also the first attempts to

use the name "Czech Republic" for Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia which was not allowed too. The only achievement of Czech nation was partial acceptance of the Czech language at offices, but generally, the relations with the German people and the governing empire still remained rather negative (Bartoš, Kovářová,1997).

3. 1. 4 Summary

At the turn of the twentieth century the situation in both countries varied considerably. Great Britain was a great world power, which owned large number of colonies and in fact greatly influenced events in Europe and in the countries it traded with. In contrast, the Czech lands were part of another great empire, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and thus fell under the domination of larger country and had almost no independence gained. Although the Czechs tried to regain the independence, they did not find support in the larger powers that would help the nation to do that.

3. 2 The situation during WW I

During 1914 the local Austro-Serbian war began and unfortunately arose into the world war by the occupation of neutral Belgium and northern France by German army. Both Britain and the Czech lands (under the rule of Austria-Hungary) were involved in this war with different levels of involvement. The following subsections are dealing with British and Czech situation respectively. Within the subchapters the major events of the war and the importance of the participation of both lands during the war are summarized. The last part of each subchapter is devoted to the effects that war had on both countries. Special chapters deal with the British Empire with which is connected the loss of Ireland.

3. 2. 1 The situation in Great Britain during WW I

The reason of Great Britain's joining the war as Peprník (1970) claims, besides the occupation of the neutral country, was the occupation of the French Channel coast by enemy forces, which threatened Great Britain and "*although Britain had no treaty with France, in practise it had no choice but to stand by France if it was attacked by Germany*" (McDowall,

2003, p. 157). During the war England fought along with France, Italy and Russia (Allied Powers) against the Central Powers, which consisted of Germany, Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire. England did not become a battleground thanks to the protection by the Royal Navy, and during these times air powers were used rarely. But the problem was set in disturbance of England sea trade routes, which supplied England food and raw materials from overseas. However, the help came with the United States that have supplied the new vessels, and on top of that in 1917 US entered the war. The war ended in 1918, after the signing of the peace agreement. At the end of the war, League of Nations, which job was to ensure the recovery of war-affected countries, was founded and via this League, Great Britain achieved the mandate over a number of former colonies of Germany and the Ottoman Empire and the British Empire reached its greatest expansion. In these years the UK included nearly a fifth of the Earth's continental surface and nearly a quarter of its population (McDowall, 2003, p.160). But despite this huge increase in power, the war left Britain with large national debts and weakened by heavy losses of lives of the population. With these enormous losses, the Britain mood remained very intolerant towards Germany, and this atmosphere lasted till signing of the peace Treaty of Versailles, which gave Germany a huge financial penalty and the official loss of its colonies (Keene, 2006; Keegan, 2002).

The First World War brought to the UK a few changes. With the founding of the League of Nations Great Britain acquired sovereignty over other territories, which in turn expanded area of the British Empire. Another change is the improvement and emphasis on industrialization of the country, which is also related to the replacement of men working in factories, by women. In 1918, 29% of the workforce represented women because many men were sent to the front. With these changes women also gained the vote right and the women's suffrage movement strived to equality in right within society. The law of civil service was also approved after the war (Keene, 2006).

3. 2. 2 The situation in British Empire during WW I

Ferguson (2004) points out that by declaring war on Germany and its allies by Britain, British colonies and Dominions became involved within the war too. These territories were invaluable assistance in the military, financial and material needs and thanks to these, British Empire quickly occupied the German colonies in Africa and the Pacific, New Guinea and Samoa. Australian and New Zealand troops have played an important role in the fight against the Ottoman Empire, which they occupied and thus marked an important watershed in the

Australian sea trade routes. Importance of the role of Dominions in the war was emphasized in 1917 when all the Dominion Prime Ministers were invited to attend the Imperial War Cabinet, which aim was to coordinate imperial policy. German colonies and the Ottoman Empire were divided between British Allies as the League of Nations was founded. Britain reached sovereignty over Palestine, Transjordan, Iran, parts of Cameroon, Togo and Tanganyika. It was thus joined the area of 4,700, 000 square kilometres and about 13, 000, 000 inhabitants to the previous territory of Britain. Also dominions itself gained mandates over other territories: The Union of South Africa gained South-West Africa (contemporary Namibia), Australia gained German New Guinea, and New Zealand Western Samoa (Ferguson, 2004).

3. 2. 3 The loss of Ireland

Both Ferguson (2004) and Brown (1998) state that one of the important chapters of the history of Britain is the independence of Ireland, by which Britain lost a large area of land within the British Isles. This could be marked as one of the most painful losses for Britain. When the World War I began in 1914, British government called on the Irishmen to join the army. Many of the men agreed, because at the instigation of their MP's they believed that such a demonstration of loyalty to UK would reach a creation of the Irish Republic, after the war was ended. Some Irish, however, refused to participate in the war and formed a resistance group in complete independence for the Republic, but it was hardly put down and leaders were executed by the British government, which shocked not only the Irish, but also British and American public (McDowall, 2003, p. 163). With this, in 1918 Republicans have won elections in Ireland except Northern Ireland, and established their own government that subsequently proclaimed their own Irish free state. To maintain peace, Britain agreed to the independence of southern Ireland with the condition that Northern Ireland will remain under the rule of Great Britain. This agreement was signed in 1921 as the Anglo-Irish Treaty. Despite the fact that the pro-treaty forces won this time, the Republicans, who demanded independence of Northern Ireland, formed in 1932 a new party which cancelled the treaty and since this year, Northern Ireland was established the part of Irish Republic (Ferguson, 2004).

3. 2. 4 *The situation in Czech Republic during WW I*

Gardener (1993) together with Broklová (1992) state, that in the First World War the territory of today's Czech Republic was still in the possession of Austro-Hungarian Empire. It was the Empire that obviously caused the war conflict by declaring war on Serbia after the assassination of Franz Ferdinand d'Este. Because of that, the Czechs were unfortunately unable to make any own initiative nor refuse to join the war, even though it can be suggested that according to literary and artistic movements, the Czechs did not want to be involved within this war and moreover, they did not want to be a part of the whole Empire. As part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Czechs fought with Germany on the side of the Central Powers against the Alliance. During the war a few crucial moments happened, which did not influenced the war affairs, nor Czech independence, but strengthened the confidence of the population to undertake this step (Gardener, 1993; Broklová, 1992).

The first was the move of the Western Front in 1914, closer to the contemporary Slovakia and to the Czech Republic in the north, which raised the hope among people that the Russian troops would succeed in Czech and Slovakia to free the territory and help to develop the independent republic (Keene, 2006). The exemption actually did not happen, but this event marked the strengthening influence of patriotism among the Czechs. Further support for this condition represented the overthrow of Czarism in Russia during the February Revolution in 1917, this situation the activation of national liberation struggle of the Czechs and Slovaks. So the revolt arose, during which Czech-Slovak troops in Russia, Italy, Ukraine and France rebelled and started to fight alongside the Alliance to "earn" the Czechs and Slovaks the creation of an independent state (Broklová, 1992).

After the success of these legions in Ukraine, the number of Czechoslovak legions rose and so did the authority of the Czechoslovak resistance, among the countries of Alliance. Thanks to these rebellious legions, Czechs earned the recognition by the Allied powers and these countries began gradually accept the Czechoslovak National Council. From there it was only a small step towards the creation of Czechoslovakia after the war. Then the situation changed after Bolsheviks came to power in Russia, which in practise meant subsequent country's own capitulation and formation of Soviet Union. With exhausted armies in 1918 it was clear that the end of the war was coming, and that Austria-Hungary and Germany cannot win the war. Thus began negotiations for peace, which was affirmed in 1919 by the Treaty of Versailles and war officially ended (Broklová, 1992).

The war and its end had several consequences; the most important ones related to Czech will be mentioned. With the collapse of Austria-Hungary Empire, the Czechs and Slovaks established an independent state, the Republic of Czechoslovakia, which consisted of the present-day Czech Republic, Slovakia and Carpathian Ruthenia, which now belongs to Ukraine (Pop, 2005). Broklová (1992) also mentions that due to the fact that Austria-Hungary was a huge multicultural power, it was not difficult to move away within the empire, and it was normal that there was no sharp boundary between the territories, which inhabited different nationalities. Therefore, when Czechoslovakia was founded, a huge number of Germans lived at the Czech area surrounding the Czech-German boundaries (and vice versa in Germany) and a huge amount of the Hungarians lived in Slovakia. This fact strongly manifested during the Second World War.

3. 2. 5 Summary

An important information of this period is the fact that both countries have in fact fought against each other, the United Kingdom of the side of Alliance and the Czech lands under Austria-Hungary fought on the other side. Allied troops won the war and thus basically Austria-Hungary Empire collapsed and thus Czechoslovakia could be formed. Among other important events that happened during this period is separation of Ireland from the territory of Great Britain.

3. 3 Inter-war period

During the interwar period occurred major events that greatly influenced life in the next few years in both countries. These events led to the outbreak of the Second World War and the subsequent changes in both countries. As a result mainly the British actions in the interwar period had fundamental influence on the war conflict.

3. 3. 1 Inter-war period in Great Britain

Pepník (1970) states that in the period after the First World War, there occurred social and economic consequences in Great Britain. With post-war debts it was “*necessary to increase taxes and demands of the war also led to a doubling in the size of the civil service*”

and greater government control of national life" (McDowall, 2003, p. 157). This led to the culmination of strikes that approached in a general strike in 1926. In addition, Britain was affected by the Great Depression (in years 1929-1932), which together with strikes led to increased unemployment and also to political and social unrest. In the 30's, the British economy began to recover slowly, but it has not been able to catch up with the economy and heavy industry of Germany, which was already led by Adolf Hitler. At that time it was known that he wanted to regain Germany's position as a European superpower and Britain endeavoured to catch up German lead in the armaments. In 1938, Britain paid 7% of its GDP on the military, while Germany devoted to armaments up to a quarter of its GDP. However, British economy quickly switched to war preparations. In 1938, 2800 aircrafts were produced and in 1939 the production of planes rose to 8000 units. Additionally, the civil anti-aircraft defence was organized. When Hitler's troops invaded Poland in September 1939, Britain declared war on Germany (Peprník, 1970, p.165).

3. 3. 2 *British Empire during inter-war period*

The growth of United States and Japan as naval forces caused the reorganization of British imperial policy and concluded a naval alliance with the United States, due to fear of attack by Germany, which with its new military forces represented a considerable threat not only to Britain. In the interwar period, some of the countries of the British Empire began to show interest in the formation of its own government. This fact supports the gaining of independence in Ireland and similar situation in India, which became a dominion in 1922 and in Egypt that later in 30's became a member of the League of Nations (Ferguson, 2004).

At the Imperial Conference, held in 1923, the possibility of Dominions to set their own foreign policy independent of Britain was declared and in 1926 after the pressure from Ireland and South Africa was issued the Balfour Declaration, declaring British Dominions to be "*autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status, and in no way subordinate one to another*" (McDowall, 2003, p. 163). The current size of the Empire in 1921 is shown on Map No. 1 within Appendix 2.

3. 3. 3 *Inter-war period in Czechoslovakia*

According to Bartoš and Kovářová (1997), Czechoslovakia, also called the First Republic, was a parliamentary democratic republic with the first president Tomas Garrigue

Masaryk, which was in 1935 replaced by Edvard Beneš. Republic was composed of the Czech Crown Lands (historical area consisted of contemporary Czech Republic and a part of Poland), Slovakia and Carpathian Ruthenia. The extend of the land is depicted in Appendix 2, Charn. After the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and formation of the First Republic, the consequences of disunity throughout the empire occurred. During the era of empire were Czech lands basically the centre of the Austrian Empire and was thus economically highly developed. The modern infrastructure was built there and the country was focused on the industrial sector. In contrast, Slovak and Carpathian Ruthenia part, which were formerly under the rule of Hungary was not so advanced. This was most evident after the establishment of an independent state composed of these parts, when the economy had to submit underdeveloped Slovakia and instead of growing modernization of the Czech, the government had to equalize the level of economy throughout the whole republic (Bartoš, Kovářová, 1997).

As Keene (2006) states, another problem was that the First Republic was a multinational state. The largest proportions of minorities were Germans and Hungarians, who strongly disagreed with the new state. Czechoslovak Republic faced in the thirties strong international pressure from Germany and to a lesser extent, Hungary. The main reason was the ethnic conflict and the issue of the Sudetenland (German-Czech border), where many Germans lived. Adolf Hitler who came to power in Germany led to the founding of Sudeten German Party, which gave rise to the anti-Czech mood along German-Czech border and which presented the Hitler's requirements to the Czechoslovak authorities. According to Bartoš and Kovářová (1997), the whole feud culminated at the end of September 1938, when at a conference in Munich four superpowers agreed at the result of Czechoslovakia resign over Sudetenland to Germany. Subsequently, after this first arbitration Czechoslovakia lost another territory which had to give to Poland and Hungary. This truncated Czechoslovakia existed for a short time only, because in the following years, Slovakia was forced in 1939 to create a separate Slovak Republic under Hitler's threats. This new republic basically functioned as a "satellite of Hitler's Germany." The remaining Czech territory was occupied in 1939 Nazi troops and was subsequently declared a Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia (Bartoš and Kovářová, 1997).

3. 3. 4 Summary

During the interwar period several crucial changes and operations happened. Great Britain as one of the victorious countries of the First World War gained sovereignty over other countries besides colonies and other dependencies. Thus Great Britain practically enlarged its area and gained control over these countries, which was also favourable in the field of trade opportunities. Unfortunately, in this period the United Kingdom and basically its Prime Minister did not pay attention to rapid development of German industry and especially its armaments. Thus basically thanks to this Great Britain and its allies did not prevent the emergence of the Second World War.

Czech country after the war underwent a fundamental change that it became an independent republic, which was a great win for its inhabitants. However, at the end of the interwar period the republic lost Slovak and Carpathian part and border areas with Germany, thus it entered the Second World War as a very curtailed country.

3. 4 The situation during WW II

The outbreak of the Second World War was caused in the period between the two wars, and the whole Europe with both countries discussed was greatly affected by this war and coped with the consequences until the end of the century. The declaration of war happened because Germany with its prohibited rearmament and Hitler's efforts to expand its territory represented a growing threat to European countries. Unfortunately, this war eventually evolved into a world war, besides other things because both sides had an interest to control the oil in the Middle East and to control the Suez Canal, the British trade route to India.

3. 4. 1 *The situation during WW II in Great Britain*

As McDowall (2003) pointed out: *“The British felt again that they were fighting for the weaker nations of Europe and for democracy”*. The war begun by Europe's and Britain's efforts to maintain peace in Europe and to ensure the control of the Atlantic Ocean and seas that wash British shores. In 1940, Germany attacked and defeated France in a few days, and

British troops were forced to retreat to the sea, which was a rescue from the military disaster. Germany continued by bomb attacks on England, which aim was to prepare the ground for the landing of enemy troops. This finally did not happen, thanks to the effective defence of Britain by the British Air Force. However, the British Air Force could not prevent the bombing of major British cities, for example, during which almost a million and a half inhabitants of London became homeless. In 1941, Germany and Japan made a major mistake by joining two most powerful countries in the world into the war, the Soviet Union and the United States, by attacking their areas. Thanks to this, the war undoubtedly ended in favour of Britain and its allies, because Britain almost certainly could not defeat Germany without the help of the two superpowers. In 1945, Germany after the raids on the city surrendered and Japan did the same thing after the bombing of Nagasaki and Hiroshima (McDowall, 2003).

Such a horrible end of the war inevitably affected the post-war period; nevertheless, there was a great relief in Britain that the war finally ended. WWII lasted longer than the WWI, but with less than half of the British troops died this time. Despite these numbers the cause of this war was certainly enshrined in mistakes and inactions of British and European policy during the interwar period (McDowall, 2003).

3. 4. 2 *British Empire during the WWII*

British war declaration on Germany in September 1939 included the Crown Colonies, but did not mean automatic entry into the war of English dominions, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Newfoundland, South Africa and Ireland. These countries independently decided to join the war shortly after its declaration, only Ireland remained neutral during the war. The British Empire mainly meant the source of materials, supplies and food to Britain during the war, not the source of military force. This proves especially Japanese attack on Singapore, who resigned shortly after the attack. In 1941, Japan also attacked British Malaya, the United States naval base at Pearl Harbour, and Hong Kong, which has caused the entry of United States to the war. Churchill commented this fundamental action by saying: “*thanks to United States, Britain comes out of the war as the winner and the British Empire will continue to be maintained*” (McDowall, 2003, p. 166). However, due to the way in which Britain gave up its attacked colonies, the country irreversibly lost its position as the greatest imperial power in the world, which resulted in the following years by successive losses of colonies (McDowall,

2003). With the gradual loss of British influence and disappearing ability to protect its colonies, many of the colonies and British dominions (Australia and New Zealand) created closer links with the United States, which in 1951 resulted in ANZUS Pact between these three countries, which ensures the security of countries and military cooperation and the protection of the Pacific Ocean (Peprník, 1970).

Another important milestone in the history of Britain and its Empire was the collapse of the League of Nations in 1946 and its replacement by the new organization called United Nations, which was established in 1945. Within this intergovernmental organization belongs to the year 2011 193 Member States, and its task is to cooperate in international law and security, economic development, social progress, human and rights and liberties, political freedoms, democracy, and the achievement of lasting world peace (Charter of the United Nations, 1945).

3. 4.3 The situation during WW II in Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia

Broklová (1992) states, that in 1939, World War II begun by invading Poland by Germany and subsequent occupation of the weaker countries surrounding Germany, among these was also the Protectorate. Even before the outbreak of war, the first wave of emigrants left the country and went abroad, one of these was current president Edvard Beneš. He managed in London to establish the Provisional policy and in 1940 Czechoslovakian government in exile was recognized. Czechoslovakian foreign troops fought on the side of the Allies, the Centre of communist resistance was based in Moscow and in his forehead stood Klement Gottwald, who later became president of Czechoslovakia. During the German occupation of the Czech lands resistance groups were formed in order to restore the pre-war borders and to deal with the Sudeten Germans. This defence, however, was broken by the Reich Protector, Reinhard Heydrich, who was later assassinated, and therefore two Czech villages, Lidice and Ležáky were destroyed (Broklová, 1992).

The rebellion against the regime was also in the Slovakia that as semi-independent republic sharply disagreed with the dominance of Germany above their independence. But this resistance unfortunately resulted in a form of cruel terror and 90 Slovakian villages were burned, and after the war 211 mass graves was discovered. The turnaround came in the operation of Russian troops, which joined Slovakian and Czech troops and in 1945 gradually exempted Slovakia and Czech Republic from the east. This operation also contributed to

rebellion in Czechoslovakian towns that developed into the May Uprising of the Czech people's, which goal was the liberation of Czech territory from German domination and to minimize further war damage, in particular in the field of industry. Thus in 9th May 1945, Prague was liberated by Soviet troops, by which de facto World War II ended in Europe (Broklová, 1992; Keegan, 2002).

Focused on the impact of the Second World War in the Czech Republic, Keene (2006) together with Broklová (1992) introduce a crucial consequence in the form of the Holocaust and the loss of part of the territory that was given to Germany and Poland. Another impact of the war was secession of Slovakia, so in conclusion, the losses on Czech territory during the war were very important because that meant loss of important industrial territory and economical changes. In addition, though the status of the country was the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, the country was due to the occupation under constant supervision of the German leadership and basically at this time there was no freedom of the population allowed.

3. 4. 4 Summary

In summary, during the Second World War the Great Britain and Protectorate fought against each other as during the First World War. The difference, however, was that the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia was occupied by German troops and therefore Czechs did not have an opportunity to choose which side to join or to remain neutral. At this time, the Protectorate was the centre of industrial production and the armaments of German army; the manufacture was especially in large cities. Czechs earned admiration of Great Britain thanks to Czech Rebel Legions, which had converted to the side of GB and fought against the German armies and their allies.

Great Britain during the war still suffered from a deficit of finances after the First World War, which also had an impact on access to the colonies. Great Britain did not care much of these areas and thus it did not effectively support the colonies against the attack of enemy troops. This was one of the reasons why colonies started to gain independence. Therefore Britain moved on from the first place between world powers beyond the United States and Russia.

3. 5 After-war period

3. 5. 1 After-war period in Great Britain

McDowall (2003) finds that after the Second World War was ended the "security council" of a winning Allies (the United States, Britain, France and the Soviet Union) was created. This council was supposed to ensure peace in post-war areas and in particular to ensure the recovery of central Europe. Unfortunately, cooperation between these four powers collapsed and Europe was divided into two parts, the East was controlled by the communist Soviet Union, while the eastern by the United States. Both sides wanted to dominate the other and so the sharp boundaries between these territories. For Britain's position was crucial growth of these two powers, both the Soviet Union and the United States were becoming increasingly powerful and dangerous states, which are definitely not going to cooperate. This armament race left Britain in the background and it was clear that Britain is far from the power, which was at the beginning of the century. This was most evident during the Suez crisis, when Britain at the instigation of the United States had to remove its troops from Egypt. *"Until Suez, Britain had been able to deal with the United States and the Soviet Union as an equal, but after Suez this was no longer possible"*(McDowall, 1989, p. 169). Britain fell from the most powerful positions also because of the enhanced debt after the war, so its international obligations (which were also related to the colonies) and their expenses had to be reduced. The United States offered assistance in the form of the Marshall Plan and large loans to UK which were repaid in 2006. Since the fifties the renewal and modernization of the war affected Britain and Empire continued. In those years in England number of emigrants moved from colonies into Britain to help the process of reconstruction. In these years there was relatively low unemployment, and living standards of the population slowly increased (40% rise in average real wages from 1950 to 1965, earnings for men in industry rose by 95% between 1951 and 1964, while during that same period the official workweek was reduced and five reductions in income tax were made). Fifties and sixties were prosperous times, but the beginning of decolonization (McDowall, 2003).

Since the sixties, the growth in the British economy and the average standard of living of the population and their education continued, but compared to more powerful states, such as France, the United States and Japan, England still holds in the background (McDowall, 2003).

3. 5. 2 Decolonization and formation of the Commonwealth of Nations

As Ferguson (2004) states, gaining the mandate over the lands within the League of Nations entailed several advantages, but also certain obligations. Britain has expanded its territory and its influence at the same time, but according to the agreements of the League, Britain was assigned to help these territories to establish their own government. But it was not determined how long this assistance to achieve independence should last. League of Nations was established in 1939 and in 1945 of a number of these countries, only Iraq became an independent republic, however, its foreign policy was still largely influenced by Britain. After the establishment of the Commonwealth of Nations instead of the League of Nations, other nations under the rule of Britain began to call for independence, and so Britain was slowly losing its empire (Ferguson, 2004).

Calls for freedom in India prevailed during the 20's to 30's and as late as in 1947 British finally left India and subsequently Palestine and a year later Ceylon also gained independence. In the fifties featured local independence movements in Africa and between 1945-1965, 500 million of people in the former colonies gained independence for their countries (Ferguson, 2004).

Overall, the whole decolonization of the British colonies in Africa could be depicted as a peaceful process, in comparison with the decolonization of French or Belgian territory which was carried out by force. The year 1960 is sometimes referred to as the "Year of Africa" thanks to the fact that seventeen African colonies gained their independence, and also because the sudden appearance of the continent as a major force in the United Nations. Britain partly maintained its power by creating the Commonwealth of Nations, which all the old colonies were invited to join as free and equal members. In 1985, Britain still had a few of its original colonies, and they returned to other countries, Hong Kong China, Argentina, Falkland Islands Gibraltar and Spain (Ferguson, 2004).

3. 5. 3 After-war period in Czech Republic

According to Bartoš and Kovářová (1997), after the war ended in 1945, Czechoslovakia was restored again, including the Sudetenland. Only the Carpathian Ruthenia, which was annexed to Soviet Ukraine, was not added back to the area of Czechoslovakia. However, though Czechoslovakia was restored and gained its independence after the war, it was

weakened and undermined by the influence of the Soviet Union, which was strengthened by the influence of the upcoming Communist party that came to power in 1946. This is also reflected in the composition of the government. Communists retained not only leading position in the Ministry of Interior, Information and agriculture, but also gained the chair of the Prime Minister, which won Klement Gottwald. Yet during the Second World War, the Exile government headed by President Beneš published decrees which controlled actions in the Czech lands. However, the most serious impacts of these "Benes decrees" occurred after the war. The most controversial decrees were devoted to Sudeten Germans from the Sudeten part of the Czech Republic and moving out of the Hungarians from Slovakia. In addition, these minorities had their Czech citizenship cancelled, their possessions were confiscated and the German schools were abolished. Thus the result was that in 1946 2,232,544 of German inhabitants was moved away from Czech lands (in 1947 there was a further displacement of 80,000 Germans). Because the Act dealing with Germans refused to approve such transfer of the citizens of Hungarian nationality, Czechoslovakian government entered the agreement with the Hungarian Government that any member of the Slovakian minority in Hungary could move in Czechoslovakia via the exchange of one member of Hungarian minority in Czechoslovakia, who moved to Hungary. Under this agreement 90, 000 of Slovakian Hungarians has been pushed back to Hungary. Among other impacts of the Decrees that were also influenced by the communist regime, was nationalization of up to 95% industry and industrial companies, a massive redistribution of large farms, nationalization of insurance companies, banks, introduction of central planning and general work duties. The regime leaders liquidated its political opponents, religious leaders and non-communist intelligence, sought to limit higher education for politically reliable individuals only and for unreliable people were set up forced labour camps in uranium mines and auxiliary technical battalions. The economy was centrally designed according to the model of the Soviet Union, with an emphasis on heavy industry and especially the army. These acts sparked a second wave of emigration from the Czech Republic (Bartoš, Kovářová, 1997)

Bartoš and Kovářová (1997) and Broklová (1992) present that in the sixties there was a transformation of the Czechoslovak Republic into the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, which provided hope for the people in the more relaxed government than in previous years. However, these hopes then unfortunately disappeared when Warsaw Pact troops invaded the republic in 1968, and the Czech government was not able to undertake any action to stop them. Thus in 1969 became another change in the state regime, the Czechoslovak Socialist

Republic evolved into a federation of the Czech Socialist Republic and the Slovak Socialist Republic. After this year, a third wave of emigrants began to escape from the country. In the seventies, the “normalization” started. Inspection Commissions were established that examined the attitudes of individual members of the Communist Party over the past few years and also their attitude to the intervention of the Warsaw Pact. Based on the results that have been reached by the Commission a number of members of the Communist Party were excluded (Bartoš, Kovářová, 1997; Broklová, 1992).

During the following years, a complete consolidation of the society happened. The first greater expression of resistance against the regime occurred in 1977, when Charter 77 was founded. The ruling regime stroked against Charter by repressive apparatus (arrests and trials) as well as the organization of propaganda. During the eighties there was an increase in the activities of opposition organizations, to which criticism from economists about unsustainable model of planned economy was added. Another feature which destabilized much of the regime in Czech federative republic was gradual diversion from the socialist regime in Poland and Hungary, which made a pattern for Czechs. Shortly after these events, performances of celebrities against the regime and public demonstrations happened, which culminated in the end of 90's and led to the Velvet Revolution in November 1989. This revolution led to the fall of the communist regime and the transition to democratic political principles. The disintegration of the former Eastern Bloc and growing popular discontent with the economic and political situation in the country contributed to speed up these changes (Broklová 1992).

Another consequence of the post-war period is the loss of a large number of people. Lots of Czech inhabitants died because of the holocaust during the war and the loss of inhabitants continued after the war as well, although it fortunately was not by this cruel way. Many people went into the exile, because they disagreed with the ruling regime. In Britain, this trend was reversed, the population grew by more immigrants from British colonies and from countries like Czechoslovakia, where inhabitants did not agree with their government (Broklová 1992).

3. 5. 4 Summary

The post-war period was full of changes in both countries. Great Britain was recovering from the financial crisis caused by two wars, because of that the country had to take a loan from the United States. Thanks to this, United Kingdom was gradually losing its global

influence and power. Decolonization also contributed to this loss, however most former colonies subsequently entered the Commonwealth of Nations and thus Britain maintained at least minimum impact on some of these countries. The Cold War also influence the British post-war politics to the emphasis was put on the armament again.

Post-war Czechoslovakia went through several changes. First, although regained independence, the country was not freed from the influence of the Soviet Union. Several years immediately after the war the country dominated hard communism and when the government tried to loosen the strict communist regime, the troops of the Soviet Union broke into the republic and established a period of normalization. Therefore the independence of the country was established almost fifty years after the war, in 1990, when the regime was overthrown. The democratic Czech Republic was established in 1993.

4. COMPARISON OF THE TWO COUNTRIES

This final chapter is devoted to a comparison of the Great Britain and the Czech Republic in terms of their historical development in the twentieth century, and the geographic location and geographic conditions of these two countries. It cannot be confirmed that the geographical position and geographic conditions of countries are the only causes of exact the historical development of both countries. However, the geographical positions and conditions are certainly one of the key factors that influenced the historical development of the countries. Findings in this section correspond to the hypotheses proposed in the introduction.

4. 1 General comparison of the historical development of Great Britain and Czech Republic

This chapter offers a comparison of the historical development of the two countries in the twentieth century on the basis of the research, which appears in the previous two parts of this thesis.

Based on the research, at the beginning of the twentieth century Britain was one of the greatest world powers that was confirmed by the progress and the ending of the First World War. However, during interwar period and with the declaration of the Second World War Britain started to lose its influential powers. By the middle of the century, Britain was clearly weaker than either United States or the Soviet Union, but it still was one of the “Big Three”. By the end of the century Britain was no longer the world power and it was not even one of the richest European countries. There occurs to be a several reasons of the sudden fall during the twentieth century. One of them was definitely the two wars that were extremely expensive for United Kingdom, other expensive thing was the British Empire that Britain still tried to keep up although finally Britain lost the Empire just because of the economic problems caused by the Empire. According to McDowall (2003, p. 159), *“the basic weakness was in Britain’s industrial power, and particularly its failure to spend as much as other industrial nations in developing its industry.”* However, at the end of the century Great Britain still belonged among the most influential countries in the world and this status kept till the present. Summing up, Great Britain is due to events in the twentieth century a country that partly lost its power, but it is still very influential country.

In contrast, the Czech Republic was for much of its history under the rule of other, more powerful countries. At the beginning of the century the Czech lands were under the domination of the large empire, and became independent after the First World War. This could be rated as the great progress within the century. As the independent country it could begin to build its own economy and its own influence on other nations. At this time, the independent Czechoslovakia had a great potential in comparison to the situation in which the Czech lands were before the war. Unfortunately, this improving situation did not maintain and the Czech lands were basically constantly under pressure from other countries or regimes until the nineties. Thus it can be summarized that the Czech Republic has established an independent democratic republic at the end of the century, which is a fundamental difference between Great Britain, which is essentially its entire history independent country.

Summarized, due to the events that happened in the Czech lands from the beginning of the twentieth century could be the lands classified as country with a slightly growing power that rose mostly at the end of the century.

4. 2 The presence of access to the sea

Another essential fact is the presence of the sea for the mentioned countries. Great Britain as a coastal state has available access to the ocean and sea that surrounds the country. This allowed the country to build and use a lot of ports around the islands which it could use for trade routes but ports had influential role during the wars as one of the strategic positions. The approach to the sea allowed Britain to take sea routes, thanks to what it could become a colonial superpower and also because it has become a great maritime power. In contrast, the Czech Republic does not have access to the sea and therefore could not have these benefits that Great Britain exploits. Great Britain had at the beginning of the twentieth century enormous influence through the colonies, which owned and through commercial pathways that dominated.

4. 3 The natural barriers

This chapter discusses the advantages and disadvantages of natural barriers that surround the country, and additionally state borders of both countries are compared. Emphasis is placed primarily on the state borders and barriers that are or have in the past been crucial for both countries.

In the Great Britain the indisputable natural barrier is the sea that repeatedly provided the refuge as a bulwark against enemies attacking from the continental mainland for the country during the world wars. It seems that the width of the English Channel represents a kind of ideal size. It is far enough from the Continent, therefore the defence units (vessels, aircraft, etc..) would be able to manoeuvre in the waters. That means that it provides an adequate defensive barrier. Another advantage is that the danger of attack would threaten Britain on one side only, so there is additional obvious advantageous position on the edge of the Continent. On the other hand, an overcoming of this sea barrier in peacetime means no technical problem therefore the contact with the rest of Europe means no problem both in the field of water or air transportation.

In comparison, the Czech Republic has around its territory mountains or the borders are made up by historical events. The frontier mountains do not constitute an insurmountable barrier for the potentially threatening countries because they are neither significantly high or continuous along the entire length of the border. Between the a units of mountains there occur amounts of depression and passes that these enemies are easily able to overcome.

4. 4 Neighbouring countries

This chapter is quite related to the Chapter 4. 3. “The natural boundaries” above, therefore similar results are stated.

Concentrated on the Great Britain, it borders with the Atlantic Ocean on the west side, and with France, Belgium, the Netherlands, the Netherlands and Norway on the eastern side. The presence of the English Channel in fact prevents neighbouring countries with tendencies to attack Britain to realize it. Military conflicts in the twentieth century led mainly Germany, which had to overcome a large area ended by the English Channel to get into Britain.

In contrast, the Czech Republic, which directly neighbours with the most influential countries, had worse position. The lands were often the target of occupations, and it was the part of another country for considerable part of its history. At the end of the nineteenth century and during the First World War, Czech lands were part of a large empire that bordered with it in the South and during the Second World War, Czech Republic was occupied by Germany from the north, and in the second half of the twentieth century it was occupied by the Soviet Union.

5. CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to determine if and how have geographical conditions and positions of Great Britain and the Czech Republic contributed to the historical development of the two countries. This last chapter's task is to summarize the results of the findings listed in previous parts and to come up with a conclusion dealing with the level of influence of geographical conditions and natural barriers on the overall development of the country and its territory. Basically, this chapter offers the answers for the questions addressed in the Introduction.

Based on the previous research, it could be concluded that the natural conditions and geographical positions of the two countries had a major influence on the development of both countries and their territories. Focused on Great Britain, it could be summed up that thanks to its position on the edge of the continent the country was able to take overseas trips and build colonies that contributed to the development of the size of its territory and of the development of the economic situation of the country.

Unfortunately, according to the facts researched in previous chapters, during the twentieth century the strength of Britain gradually fell down, which could have several causes. Firstly, the loss of colonies was one of the great reasons for this decline; nevertheless this loss was rather due to the poor economic management of the country (not a natural condition). Thus, focused on the overall position of Great Britain and its empire within the whole world, it can be declared that during this unfavourable economic situation this great fragmented area was very unfavourable, especially for the access to all the colonies and for the attempts to defend it during the World Wars.

Secondly, focused on the decline of power of Great Britain during the twentieth century in comparison with other superpowers, it could be stated that countries like United States or Soviet Union replaced United Kingdom in the leading post of the world influence. It can be estimate that this happened right due to the fact that these great countries had much more favourable natural conditions to develop their influence and power than United Kingdom.

Compared to the situation in the Czech Republic, the conclusion states that the Czech Republic has slightly disadvantageous natural conditions in the field of the progress within twentieth century. However, the problem starts in history, due to the fact that Czech lands

were a long time in its history a part of any other state, thus independence nor influence on other countries basically cannot be built. After gaining the independence in the inter-war period the natural conditions showed as disadvantageous again, because with no natural barrier Czech had almost no chance to defend the attacks from other lands. However, it could be declared, that for the time of peace are natural conditions for further development of the Czech Republic quite convenient, e.g. such favourable are climatic conditions for the economy, proximity of neighbouring countries for the trade.

Development of the two countries and its defence is certainly associated with the presence of natural barriers and the location of the country within Europe. Focused on the Great Britain, its location on the edge of the continent was very convenient for the events of the twentieth century. During the wars the area of Great Britain was not hit by ground troops and basically, the country was not threatened from several directions. For Great Britain English Channel in combination with a very strong navy functioned very effectively as a natural barrier. Thanks to this, the development of the country was in fact not significantly threatened.

In comparison, Czech Republic lacks such effective barriers, thus it quickly became the target of the occupation and its development was strongly affected. The country had to manage foreign government and as a part of another country in could only follow orders instead to concentrate on its own independent development.

The final question dealt with the neighbouring countries. The answer on this survey states that the presence of neighbouring countries did not affect the development of Great Britain in the twentieth century, due to the fact that all the countries failed to defeat or to conquer Great Britain during the wars. In contrast, neighbouring countries of the Czech Republic, particularly Germany and the Soviet Union influenced the development of the country very much, thanks to their occupation of the Czech lands.

Final summary shows that natural conditions largely influenced the development of both countries. The influence of these conditions on Great Britain was rather positive, in the twentieth century, while the situation of the Czech lands was affected a little worse. This conclusion is applied for the examined century, nevertheless, it is very unlikely that, even during the peaceful period within this century, the Czech Republic would become a superpower comparable with Great Britain with its current geographical conditions and position.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: The charts of British Overseas Territories and Commonwealth of Nations

Appendix 2: Map appendices depicting the evolution of the area of Great Britain and Czech Republic

Appendix 1: The charts of British Overseas Territories and Commonwealth of Nations

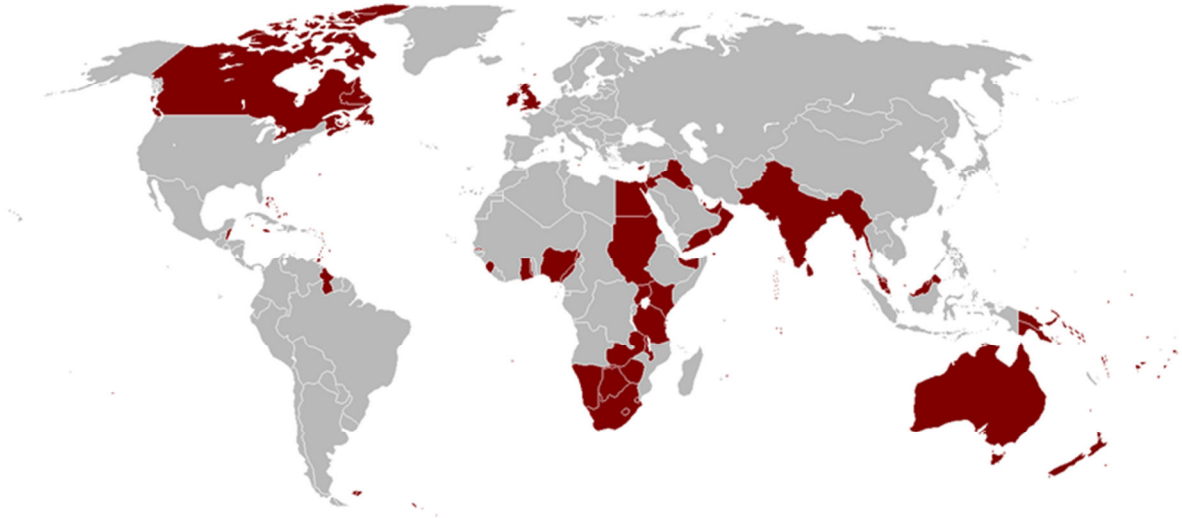
CHART No. 1: British Overseas Territories (Crown dependencies, 2013)
Akrotiri and Dhekelia
Anguilla
Bermuda
British Antarctic Territory
British Indian Ocean Territory
British Virgin Islands
Cayman Islands
Falkland Islands
Gibraltar
Montserrat
Pitcairn Islands
Saint Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha
South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands
Turks and Caicos Islands

CHART No. 2: Members of Commonwealth of Nation (Gardener, 2003)	
Commonwealth realms	Republics and Monarchies of different Royal house
Antigua and Barbuda	Bangladesh
Australia	Botswana
The Bahamas	Brunei
Barbados	Cameroon
Belize	Cyprus
Canada	Dominica
Grenada	The Gambia
Jamaica	Ghana
New Zealand	Guyana

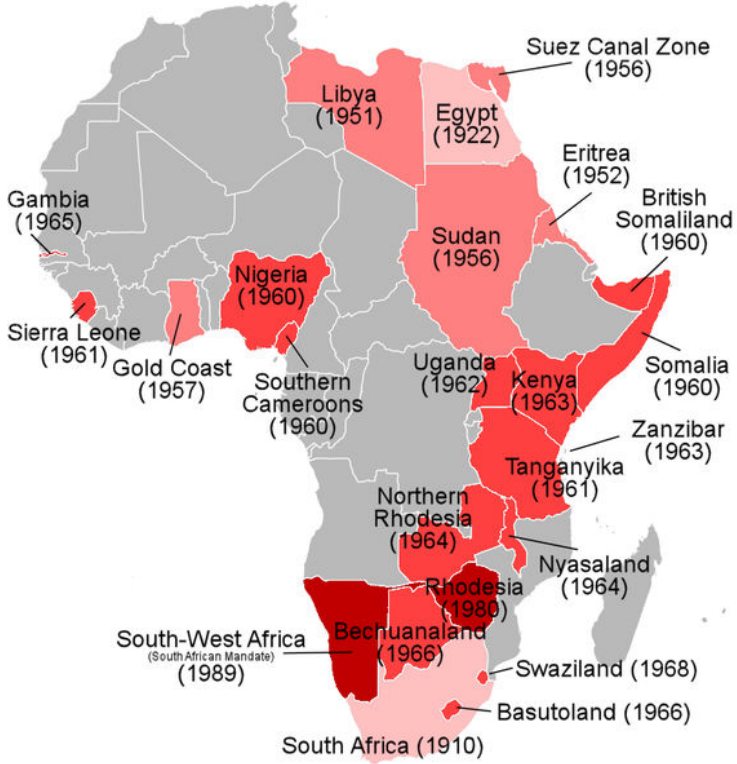
Papua New Guinea	India
Saint Kitts and Nevis	Kenya
Saint Lucia	Kiribati
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	Lesotho
Solomon Isles	Malawi
Tuvalu	Malaysia
United Kingdom	Maldives
	Malta
	Mauritius
	Mozambique
	Namibia
	Nauru
	Nigeria
	Pakistan
	Rwanda
	Samoa
	Seychelles
	Sierra Leone
	Singapore
	South Africa
	Sri Lanka
	Swaziland
	Tanzania
	Tonga
	Trinidad and Tobago
	Uganda
	Zambia

Appendix 2: Map appendices depicting the evolution of the area of Great Britain and Czech Republic

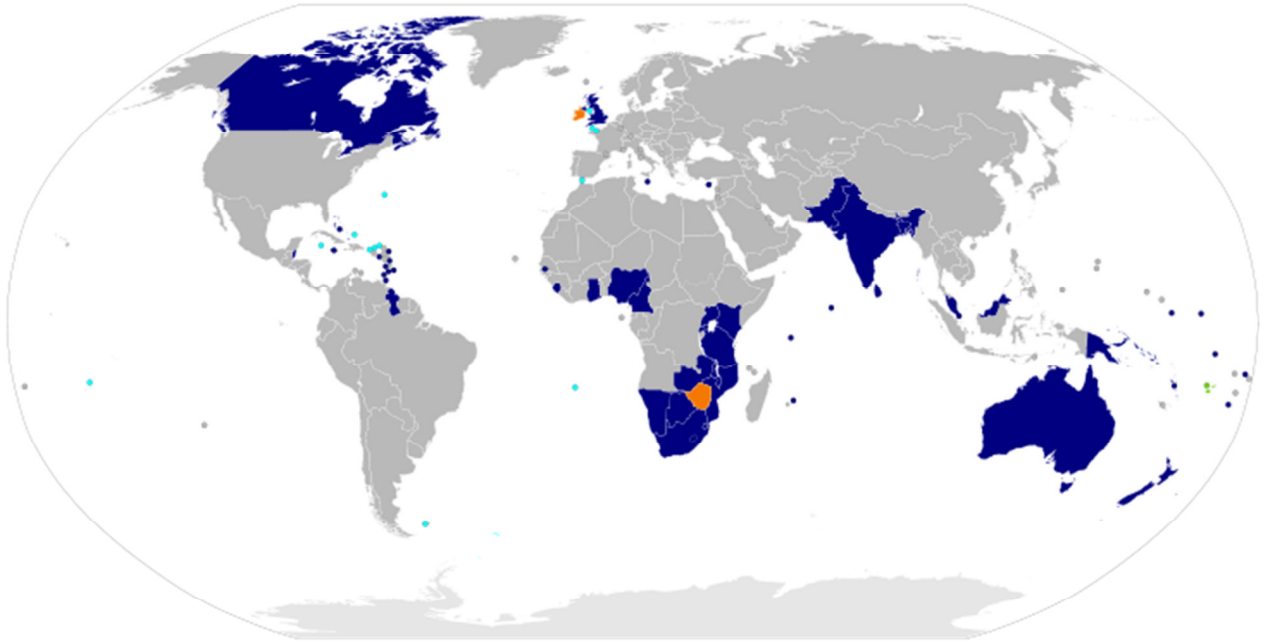
Maps depicting the evolution of the area of Great Britain



MAP No 1.: British Empire in 1921 (British Empire 1921, 2013)







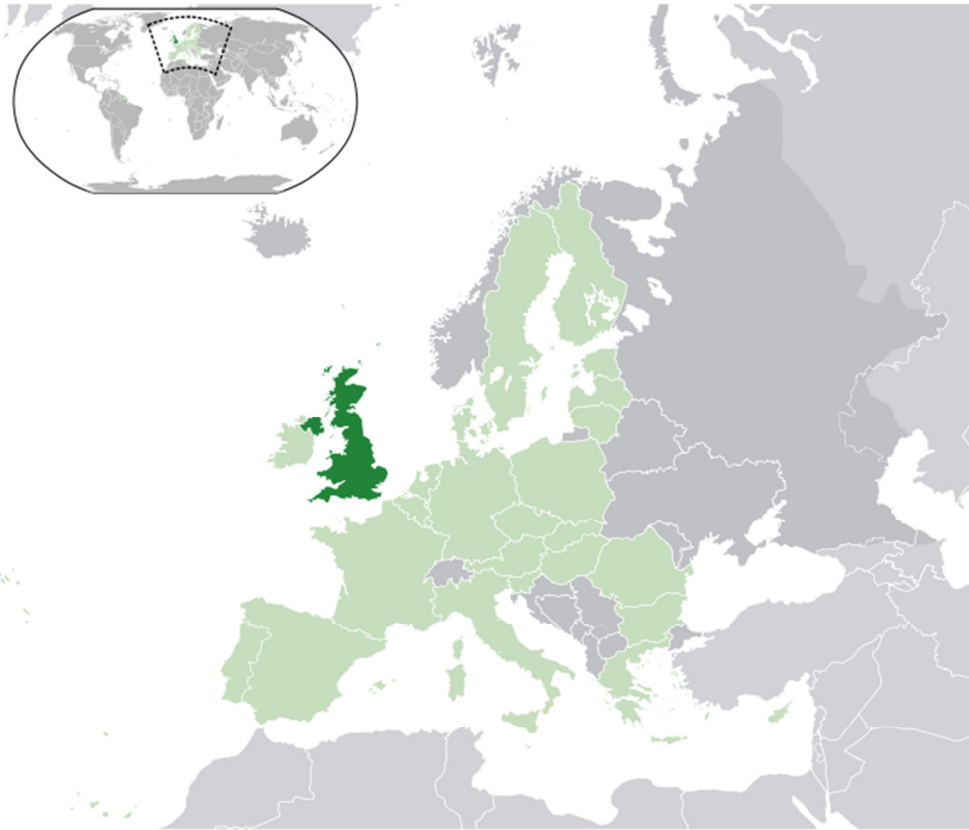
MAP No 2.: Decolonization in Africa in 60's (British Decolonization in Africa, 2013)



MAP No 3.: Commonwealth of Nations (Commonwealth of Nations, 2013)

Description:

-  Commonwealth of Nations members
-  British Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies
-  Former Commonwealth of Nations members (Ireland and Zimbabwe)
-  Suspended Commonwealth of Nations members (Fiji)



MAP No 4.: Contemporary United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (EU-United Kingdom, 2013)

Desription:

- (Green)** United Kingdom.
- (Light-green)** The European Union

Maps depicting the evolution of the Czech lands



MAP No 5.: Austria-Hungary in 1914 (Austro-Hungarian Monarchy 1914, 2013)



MAP No 6.: Czechoslovakia in 1938 (Czechoslovak Republic (1938), 2013)



MAP No 7.: Czechoslovakia in 1939 (Czechoslovak Republic (1939), 2013)



MAP No 8.: Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia in 1939 (ProtectoradoBohemiaMoravia, 2013)



MAP No 9.: Czech lands from 1945 to 1992 (Czechoslovakia location map, 2013)



MAP No 10.: Czech Republic after 1993 (EU-Czechia, 2013)

Description:

-  **(Green)** the Czech Republic.
-  **(Light-green)** The European Union

Resumé

Práce se zabývá problematikou přírodních podmínek území Spojeného království a České republiky, a to zejména po stránce jejich vlivu na historický vývoj území. Text stručně popisuje vývoj území obou zemí v jednotlivých historických etapách a navzájem je srovnává. Dále se práce zaměřuje na odlišnosti v geografické poloze obou území a upozorňuje na zásadní zvraty, které byly těmito rozdíly způsobeny nebo ovlivněny. Práce také obsahuje úvahy nad mírou vlivu jednotlivých faktorů na míru rozvoje obou zemí.

Annotation

Jméno a příjmení:	Eliška Viznerová
Katedra:	Katedra anglického jazyka
Vedoucí práce:	Mgr. Josef Nevařil, Ph.D.
Rok obhajoby:	2013

Název práce:	Vztah přírodních podmínek k historickému vývoji Spojeného Království a České republiky
Název v angličtině:	The relation between natural conditions and historical development of the United Kingdom and the Czech Republic
Anotace práce:	Práce se zabývá srovnáním vlivu přírodních podmínek a polohy zemí na historický vývoj území Velké Británie a České republiky. Poukazuje na klíčové aspekty ovlivňující míru dopadu jednotlivých vlivů a jejich důsledky během jednotlivých etap vývoje obou území a upozorňuje na zásadní zvraty ve vývoji, které ve svém součtu vedly k jejich rozdílnému stupni rozvoje.
Klíčová slova:	Spojené Království, Česká republika, historické milníky, historický vývoj, geografické podmínky, politický systém, vliv válek, Společenství národů, Britské impérium,
Anotace v angličtině:	This thesis deals with the influence of natural conditions and the position of the Great Britain and Czech Republic on the historical development of the two countries. It points out to the key aspects that influence the impact of individual factors and their effects during various levels of development in both countries. Additionally, in the thesis are highlighted the crucial turning points in the development, which resulted in the different stages of development of the mentioned countries.
Klíčová slova v angličtině:	United Kingdom, Czech Republic, historical milestones, historical development, geographical conditions, political system, influence of wars, Commonwealth of Nations, British

	Empire
Přílohy vázané v práci:	Příloha č. 1 – Tabulky členů Zámořských území Velké Británie, a Společenství národů Příloha č. 2 – Mapy znázorňující historický vývoj území Velké Británie a České republiky
Rozsah práce:	56 stran
Jazyk práce:	anglicky