and with the concept of a “political religion” taken into account, the answer is “yes.” The fourth and final part takes a critical look at the attempts at de-totalizing (de-Stalinizing) society in the 1960s. In a digression, the efforts at research into fascism of the period examined are interpreted as a proof of an irrational animosity against civilisation common to both totalitarian systems.

UNEXPECTED PARALLELS – OR CURRENTS HIDDEN BELOW THE SURFACE

Jan Dobeš

This contribution deals with the tendencies that evolved in Czech society during the mid-1930s and exerted a hidden influence in the years that followed. The principal pillars on which modern Czech society had rested since its formation in the 19th century were unsettled even before World War II began. Previously unknown features began to evolve in the political system, the economic order, the social relations, the way the public looked upon cultural developments, and societal atmosphere in general. The dramatic course of events that was framed by “Munich,” the Second Republic, the emergence of the protectorate, occupation, liberation, and finally the events of February 1948, accelerated this development.

The aim of the author is to demonstrate that beneath the surface of all these separate political developments a continual process of change was at work. Even though the various regimes of this period showed considerable differences in their external appearance, they offered surprising similarities internally. In spite of these new qualities it does not seem appropriate to call this period totalitarian according to the criteria of the classical theory of totalitarianism.

THE FORGOTTEN CONTINUITIES OF THE PARAGON OF DEMOCRACY

Marína Zavacká

In her brief commentary to Miloš Havelka’s study, Zavacká makes the point that a discussion of the crisis of Czech democracy since the 1930s ought to take into account long-term continuities to a greater degree than has so far been the case. Although xenophobic and anti-pluralist tendencies were marginalized in the First Republic with the raison d’état being the main consideration for this course of action, they did exist in the range of political thought and were connected with political ambitions of their own. That Czech society after 1945 was susceptible to nationalist politics exploiting social demagoguery was thus not an abrupt breach of tradition, but rather a return to another, parallel line of tradition. Moreover, the radicalism of postwar Czech society was not altogether out of step with the contemporary European mainstream.