

UNEXPECTED PARRALLELS – OR CURRENTS HIDDEN BELOW THE SURFACE

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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.