

THEATER TRADITIONS BETWEEN NATION AND STATE
CZECH AND GERMAN THEATER IN INTERWAR PRAGUE

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After the first Czechoslovak Republic had been founded in 1918, the two representative theaters in Prague, the New German Theater and the National Theater, had to redefine their respective place and role in society. With the Czechoslovak state having been founded, the "political mission" of the National Theater had exhausted itself, whereas the New German Theater had become, in the ČSR, a theater representing a minority. The two national theater environments, which had in this way been strictly separated from each other, continued to exist for the time being, the separation experiencing its peak in 1920 when the Theater of the Estates was seized by Czech actors. Thereafter, with political détente progressing, national views gradually disappeared from the image the respective theaters cultivated of themselves, from literature and journalism, and from the respective repertoires. A new politicization came about for both theaters only with the threat of National Socialism. Now, however, the actors closely cooperated as defenders of Czechoslovak democracy and as champions of a (German) culture separate from that of the Reich proper.