

Efforts to revive the autonomy of Moravia and Silesia, abolished by the newly established communist dictatorship in 1949, became an integral part of the comprehensive transformation of Czech society following the Velvet Revolution of 1989. The efforts were closely related to a rise in regional consciousness, which marked the creation of new, or rather the redefinition of old, collective identities at a time of deep social changes. Popular view links these efforts to a couple of Moravian initiatives, which entered the public sphere in the early 1990s and later turned into political parties. The Moravian regional parties were able to win over parts of the Moravian and Silesian public to support their goals. The support even brought some of them seats in the Czech National Council and in top-level federal assemblies in the 1990 election, the first free election since the communist takeover. Moravian regional parties were represented in the Czech Parliament until 1996, yet they had failed to push through their goals and had been, especially after 1992, quickly losing their influence. Although the Moravian Regional Movement, as the parties and their activities came to be collectively referred to, gained no permanent ground, it still represented a significant aspect of the social development at the time.

The aim of the thesis has been to offer a closer look at the Moravian Regional Movement as a special type of social movement, formed on the grounds of a collective effort at enforcing demands declared on the basis of regional specifications and the history of autonomous administration of Moravia and Silesia, the two former historical provinces. The thesis discusses the scope of the Movement's activities over the period of 1990-1992 (the subject of the present research), which saw the establishment and rise of the Movement but also its relatively fast marginalisation at the end of the period. The cause of this marginalisation is to be seen in factors relating to the inner developments within the Movement: the lack of unity, internal disagreements and an inappropriate choice of the negotiation strategy.