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“What the Heart Unites, the Sea Shall Not Divide”: Claiming Overseas Czechs for the Nation

By

Michael Whitaker Dean

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

History

in the

Graduate Division

of the

University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

Professor John Connelly, Chair
Professor David Henkin
Professor David Frick

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“What the Heart Unites, the Sea Shall not Divide”:
Claiming Overseas Czechs for the Nation

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Michael Whitaker Dean

Abstract

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This is a study of nation-building, liberal politics, and overseas migration among a small people in a supranational empire. By 1914 around one million Czechs (from a nation of six million) permanently resided outside the Bohemian Lands. About half of these expatriates settled in the United States. In feuilletons, travel narratives, brochures, works of scholarship, theatrical plays, popular fiction, and above all in journalism, patriotic Czechs grappled with the question of mass emigration. What did it mean for the existence of a small people in a supranational empire that one of every six co-nationals lived outside the homeland? When confronting this question, leaders of the Czech national movement reacted with ambivalence. As self-proclaimed liberals they lacked a language with which to oppose the free movement of labor. But as nationalists they worried over the loss of Czech hands and hearts. Ambivalence was at the core of the emigration question; a discourse that developed from an appeal to the emigrant's sense of patriotism to a systematic critique of the Habsburg state and the call for State Rights. This dissertation examines the first decades of mass labor migration from Bohemia and the emergence of the Czech national movement between 1848 and 1873. It argues that Czech liberals adapted a vocabulary of European expansion in order to justify their claim to State Rights within the Habsburg Empire and their leadership role within the national movement. Mass emigration made this possible; the presence of co-nationals in distant lands enabled national leaders to portray their nation as a carrier of civilization to backward parts of the world. By the period's end this project of overseas nation-building had adopted ethnic, even racial overtones. The image of Czech national expansion (a surprising formulation for a stateless and landlocked people) was projected as far afield as the American West and the Russian Far East, and national activists worked to transform Bohemian emigrants into Czech colonists.

I dedicate this work to my wife,
Frederike,
for her patience and care. Without that, everything would have been impossible.

Thank you.

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Acknowledgements

I typed the first words of this dissertation not long after the birth of my daughter, Greta. Now she is two and a half years old—and one last keystroke sends the completed manuscript off to ProQuest. These last few years have been a time of profound change in my life, a period during which it has been impossible to separate academics from family life and friendship. I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to colleagues, friends, and loved ones who provided advice and companionship along the way.

My first debt of gratitude belongs to the members of my dissertation committee, each of whom has provided valuable guidance during my time at Berkeley. David Frick has shared with me his broad knowledge of Slavic languages, literature, and philology. The dexterity with which he extracts evidence from even the most reluctant of texts inspires me. David Henkin taught the first seminar that I attended in graduate school. From that first meeting on, he has been a model seminar leader and lecturer as well as an outstanding mentor whose comments are unfailingly insightful and relevant. One could not ask for a better *Doktorvater* than John Connelly, a scholar who combines brilliance with honesty and humility in a way that I strive to emulate. Among other things, he has taught me that to be a historian means to be a writer, that writing is about patience and discipline, and, most important, that one must have faith that what is written today can be improved upon tomorrow.

Two scholars who supported this project at an earlier stage are no longer with us. I wish to remember them here. Susanna Barrows, the historian of French society and culture, provided guidance during my first years of graduate school. I will always draw inspiration from her words of encouragement, her enthusiasm, and authenticity. Jon Gjerde introduced me to the study of transatlantic migration and led me to a research agenda that will shape my work for years to come. He was a leader of his field and a very kind man. I miss them both.

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Long before I began work on this dissertation, I fell in love with the Czech language. The present study can be understood as a token of that affection. I owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to everyone who has guided me along the many rendezvous I enjoyed with this beautiful language. My best teachers have been teachers of Czech: Jaroslava Soldanová at the University

of Washington and Zdeňka Řeháková at the Institute of Language and Preparatory Studies in Prague.

I am told that those who submit their final paperwork to U.C. Berkeley's Graduate Division receive a lollipop in recognition of their hard work. I'll find out soon enough if this is true. If so, then the lollipop will go to my daughter. This dissertation, however, I dedicate with to my wife—to Frieda.

Introduction

"A nation that cultivates the field is never inclined to migrate and wander, unlike those others who chase game in the forest or live from cattle for which they must always be on the search for new pastures."

Jakub Malý, *Prostonárodní dějepis české země*

Nationalism is an elemental force. This sentence may ring old-fashioned at a time when historians feel compelled to cross borders, pitch themselves as transnational or global scholars, and to move "beyond the study of nationalism."[1] Nonetheless, this sentence marks the present work's starting point. Languages of belonging represent singularly powerful tools for mobilizing hearts and hands, able to rally large numbers of people in a way that appeals to individual interests or universal values cannot. Among the languages of belonging, nationalism has proven especially potent. The trick is to translate the elemental force unleashed by nationalism into political power. How to take popular energies and shape them into a national program? How to institutionalize shared passions and thereby transform a multitude into a people? "Has anyone ever asked what it means, for a group, to exist?" asked the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. He immediately supplied his own answer: "Belonging to a group is something you build up, negotiate and bargain over, and play for."[2] This dissertation is about making groups, about the negotiation and play—and hard work—that goes into forming a nation.

Historians have demonstrated a special capacity to lend form to the raw strength of nationalism. The narratives they produce tell of change over time, but they also speak of endurance. Indeed, stories of change are often modes of highlighting that which remains constant. In many historical narratives, that which endures is the nation. History as the effort to mold living, breathing pasts into forms useful for the present always projects a language of belonging back into former times.

Let us begin with an example by turning to the Czech author and publicist, Jakub Malý. "Ein ungemein fruchtbarer Schriftsteller," according to one commentator, Malý authored dozens of historical works in addition to numerous translations, grammars, and journal articles.[3] In 1845 Malý published a book called *Prostonárodní dějepis české země,* a title we can translate here as *A People's History of the Bohemian Lands*.[4] As he explained in the work's preface, his historical study of the Czech nation was to be cheaper than the still unfinished five-volume masterpiece by the historian František Palacký and composed in a straightforward and popular (*prostonárodní*)

[1] The reference is to Brian Porter-Szűcs's essay, "Beyond the Study of Nationalism," in *Nationalism Today* edited by Krzysztof Jakułowski and Tomasz Kamusella (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2009), 3-15.

[2] Pierre Bourdieu, "Social Space and Symbolic Power," in *In Other Words: Essays Towards a Reflexive Sociology* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990).

[3] In English, "an extraordinarily fruitful author." The entry immediately continues, "but more of a reproductive than creative talent, he is a critic rather than an actual aesthete [*Schöngeist*]." I consider this estimation to be accurate. *Biographisches Lexikon des Kaiserthum Österreich,* s.v. "Malý, Jakub Josef." See also *Riegrův slovník naučný,* s.v. "Jakub Malý."

[4] Similar efforts included *Dějiny národu českého. Pro školy* (History of the Czech Nation. For Elementary Schools, 1849) and *Dějepis národu českého pro čtenáře každého stavu* (History of the Czech Nation for Readers of Every Estate, 1863).

idiom. He offered his work to the public, he wrote, in order "to disseminate knowledge of patriotic history among a wide audience and to explain its meaning, connecting it insofar as possible to universal European history."[5] Written in the mid-1840s, Malý's work did not belong to that genre dedicated to recording history "as it actually was." Instead, it served to raise his people's consciousness, to instill in them a sense of the past as a common fate. Not overly concerned with the boundary that separated history from myth, Malý moved freely from one realm to the other, tracing the course of his nation's progress from its distant, mythic origin to more recent times.

In the beginning were the Boii, a Celtic people after whom the region received the name Bohemia. Around the time of Christ these earliest inhabitants of the land were forced out by the Markomanni and Quadi, Germanic tribes, according to Malý, known for their rudeness and cruelty. Romans vanquished the Markomanni and the great migrations witnessed "hordes of Germanic peoples" passing through the region, most notably the Lombardi on their way to northern Italy. None of them, however, settled permanently in the territory. "This land had no settled people until the Czechs took control of it, a nation of the glorious and expansive Slavic tribe, who has maintained the greater part of it up to the present day."[6] In other words, the Czechs had staked a claim, the first in Bohemia that counted.

Malý took care to legitimize this claim in the very first pages of his history. He emphasized the antiquity and expansiveness of Slavic settlement "in our part of the world." "As far back as human memory reaches, the Slavs have always inhabited the same territory in which they live today," he wrote. "Yes, long ago they spread out far into present day Germany."[7] The author even speculated that Czechs had arrived to Bohemia before the Celtic Boii, quietly tending to their fields under Markomanni rule, displaying a characteristic tranquility that explained their absence in chronicles of the period.[8] Only after the departure of the semi-nomadic Germans, "urged on by a natural restlessness," were Czechs left as the sole lords of Bohemia. Slavs, concluded the author, represented the most historic (*nejstarožitnější*) inhabitants of the country.

Together with the venerability of the Czech claim to Bohemia belonged the character of those who inhabited it. Among the Slavic peoples, Malý continued, Czechs counted as *nejvzdělanější,* an important word in this study best translated as "the most civilized."[9] Malý

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[5] The statement of intention comes from the preface to a later edition, quoted here for clarity: "If I now develop a similar patriotic history, I do it partly because of the higher vantage point that historical science has achieved over the last few years and partly in consideration of the rising maturity of our readerhip to whom, thank God! one can now speak in a different way than in 1845. The contrast is obvious between my *Prostonárodní dějepis České země* and the present work, which nevertheless shares the same goal, namely to disseminate knowledge of patriotic history among a wide audience and to explain its meaning, connecting it insofar as possible to universal European history." Jakub Malý, *Dějepis národu českého* (Prague: Náklad Jaroslava Pospíšila, 1862).

[6] Jakub Malý, *Prostonárodní dějepis české země* (Prague: Jar. Pospíšila, 1845), 4.

[7] Malý, *Prostonárodní dějepis*, 5.

[8] Malý wrote: "Experts believe that Slavs were present in Bohemia already before the Boii and were by no means expelled by them, but instead were turned into tributaries. So was it also under the Markomanni, after whose departure the Slavs were left as the sole lords of the land. That the older chronicles do not mention them in those times is of no consequence. For the Slavs, being peaceful tillers of the soil, lived quietly under their conquorors and did not create a ruckus in the world." Malý, *Prostonárodní dějepis*, 8-9.

[9] In *Riegrův Slovník naučný* (Rieger's Encyclopedia, 1872), the article on *vzdělanost* comments, "Under ***vzdělanost*** belongs everything that determines the physical and spiritual life of the nation: thus notions of divinity, life and death, religion, philosophy, morals and customs; political relations, state and community; social formations; the development of science and art, and finally literature as the enduring expression of every age." Notice the

described the Czechs as "a peace loving people, occupied with cultivation, but tolerating no lord above them. No other nation of the time enjoyed as much freedom."[10] Czechs displayed their innate qualities of honesty and hospitality. Their musicality demonstrated a "cheerfulness of the spirit and goodness in the heart" (evil men have no songs, after all).[11] Desiring neither to wage war nor to lord over others, the Slavs in Bohemia "cultivated their fields peacefully and quietly."[12] This contrasted with invading Germans, natural thieves he called them, who were restive and intemperate. They showed cruelty in their treatment of women, for example, whom they handled as slaves rather than companions. "Yes," Malý explained, "when their lords began to learn agriculture from their neighbors, nations more peaceful and civilized, they attached their women to the plow like animals."[13] Unlike Germans, who made their prisoners into slaves, Slavs showed mercy to their captives, requiring only a short labor service before sending them home; "or they accepted them into their community, even giving their daughters to them in marriage."[14] As much as physical presence, the Slavic capacity to make the land productive through cultivation, to live in peace and freedom, and even to assimilate foreign peoples into their tribe made Czechs natural guardians over the lands of Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia.

This way of establishing an ethnic claim to physical territory—by appealing to history, national character, and civilizing capacity—will surface again and again in this dissertation, as will the reverse side of positive Czech qualities. Their honesty, *poctivost,* all too easily crossed over to credulity, *lehkomyslnost.* In other words, Czechs fell victim to their own virtue. As a result, they often found themselves "outwitted and deceived by other nations who, unable to attain power over them by force, resorted to trickery and betrayal."[15] In a later edition from 1862, Malý immediately added that "the most persistent enemies of the Slavs have always been their western neighbors, the Germans," who ceaselessly encroached upon Czech territory.[16] Malý had set an important precedent, one that neared contradiction. For while his narrative told of self-

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comprehensiveness of the definition. Civil society represents a precondition of *vzdělanost* and is the primary sign of it, "from which fact the Latin name *civilization* [*civilisace*] is formed; that is to say, *the process of becoming a citizen* [*zobčanštění*] (*civis*—citizen)." More than a state of being, *vzdělanost* represents a process of becoming: "We divide nations into those that are *vzdělané,* or civilized [*civilisované*], and those nations without *vzdělanost.* In both cases there are a number of gradual transitions from sheer brutality (savages) to the first foundations of *vzdělanost.* […] ***Vzdělanost*** is an artificial product, that is, such a one toward which one must work with conscious intention, but which is nonetheless necessary because the self-awareness of human endeavor must arise at a certain point. This awareness and intentionality is precisely that which separates the artificial from the natural. In its course of its development, ***vzdělanost*** leads to numerous divergences, which in the final instance rest in human nature, but whose equalization belongs to further civilizing work [*práce civilizační*]." Because the concept as defined encompassed such breadth and involved the development of an entire society from a state of nature to one of increasingly refinement and sophistication, the word is most accurately translated as *civilization.*

[10] Malý, *Prostonárodní dějepis,* 5.

[11] "For evil and cunning people do not have the habit of singing to one another but instead they cover up their spitefulness in gloom." Malý, *Prostonárodní dějepis,* 6.

[12] Malý, *Prostonárodní dějepis,* 7.

[13] Malý, *Prostonárodní dějepis*, 2.

[14] In 1862, Malý appended to his description of Czech-German relations a longer commentary on the theme of enslavement, writing that "[the Germans] assigned to the Slavs who fell into their subjection the hardest tasks, degrading them to a status equal of slaves or draft animals; the enslavement of Slavs became so common among Germans that even to the present day the word *Sklave* (Slav) in their language means slave. Another fault of the Slavs made this subjugation all that much easier, namely their constant quarrelling among each other, resulting from the overly libertine manner in which they lived." Malý, *Dějepis národu českého,* 9; *Prostonárodní dějepis,* 6-7.

[15] Malý, *Prostonárodní dějepis*, 7.

[16] Malý, *Dějepis národu českého*, 9.

victimization, it also described the Czechs as victims at the hands of foreign agents. The label *nepřítel,* "enemy," might encompass the entire West or just one representative of it, such as the Germans, but Czech patriots like Malý worried that weaknesses of the simple Czech character would be exploited by more sophisticated neighbors.

Ultimately neither history nor character grounded the Czech claim to Bohemia; the originary moment belonged to legend. What others referred to as Bohemia, the Czechs called *Čechy.* "On the origin of that name," reported the historian,

> a legend has been passed down to us about a man of noble birth named *Čech* who with his brother *Lech* and all his kin left White Croatia [*Charvátsko*][17] due to some sort of transgression and migrated to this land. After crossing three rivers he is said to have stopped below the mountain Říp, not far from Roudnice, five miles from Prague. Ascending it, he looked upon his surroundings and was so pleased by the fertile landscape that he at once chose the site for his settlement. His brother Lech is said to have continued further on to the East and settled Poland, hence are Poles today called Lechs and Czechs named after their forefather Čech. Čech set himself down so to speak in the heart of the entire country, from where his kinsmen began to spread out in every direction […].[18]

The Czech claim to Bohemia went back to forefather Čech's declaration that the country was fertile, and his decision to bring his wandering people to a halt in what would become the center, or heart, of their new homeland. "There she is," announced Čech in another version of the legend, "there is the country I have so often promised you; the country that belongs to no one, full of game and fowl, flowing with sweet honey and milk, and, as you see for yourselves, with a climate suitable for settlement."[19] The images evoked by this legend bring to mind classical tales of voyage such as the Odyssey or Aeneid, or perhaps even the biblical Exodus.[20] Čech presented his people the Promised Land, which differs from territory merely discovered. In a sense, the wandering of Čech's people truly represented a homecoming, the return to a place previously imagined, the making good of an ancient pledge.

Acts of claiming—of territories, people, or power—figure centrally in the present work, whether they proceed from history, national character, legend, or fantasy. Malý rested his account of this primeval claim to Bohemia on medieval and early modern sources, on the eleventh-century *Chronica Boemorum* of Kosmas and Hájek's *Kronika Czeska* of the fifteenth century. Both works meld legend and historical fact to describe the origin of the Czechs from the Tower of Babylon, for Kosmas, or the arrival of Čech to Bohemia in 644 AD, according to

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[17] *Chorvátsko*, or "White Croatia," designates an area "somewhere in Central Europe, near Bavaria, beyond Hungary, and next to the Frankish Empire" (Curta), or "the inland regions of Silesia and Lesser Poland, thirty days' journey, according to the Greek computation, from the sea of darkness" (Gibbon). Slavs traditionally used the word *white* to designate northerly territories. Whatever the case may be, *Chorvátsko* was understood by Cosmos in his chronicles and subsequent writers to be the *Ur*-territory of the Czechs. Florin Curta, *Southeastern Europe in the Middle Ages, 500-1250* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 138; Edward Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,* Vol. 5 (London: ElecBook, 1999), 511.

[18] Malý, *Prostonárodní dějepis,* 11-12.

[19] "Kosmův letopis český s pokračovateli," in *Prameny dějin českých* vol. 2, edited by Fr. Palacký (Prague: Nákladem Musea Kŕaloství českého, 1874), 5.

[20] Milada Součková, "*Locus Amoenus:* An Aspect of National Tradition," in *The Czech Renascence of the Nineteenth Century,* ed. Peter Brock and H. Gordon Skilling (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970), 26-32.

Hájek, to the authors' present.[21] But the source from which he drew the most information, and inspiration, was a manuscript "discovered" two decades earlier in a western Bohemian chateau, the so-called Green Mountain Manuscript. Purportedly dating to the turn of the ninth century, the chronicle, composed in Czech, provided historical evidence of a sovereign polity predating the arrival of Christianity in Bohemia. It contained the legend called "The Judgment of Libuše."[22] The youngest yet wisest daughter of Krok, so went the tale, Libuše was beloved among the Czechs for her greatness of spirit and graceful heart.[23] The people elected Libuše to inherit her father's leadership, though unanimity did not long prevail. She soon became involved in a dispute over land after two brothers, Chrudoš and Šťáhlav, inherited their father's field. While tradition held that the property should be equally divided or held in common, Chrudoš insisted the entire property should fall to him as the older brother—the custom among the Germans, he said. When Libuše judged in favor of the partible inheritance tradition, the older brother, "proud and wild," leapt forth and objected; "Woe unto men who are ruled by women," he shouted, "for men should be ruled by men!" Libuše glanced about her people, saw that many of them agreed with Chrudoš, and so she consented. "A girl's hand is evidently too weak for you," Libuše remarked and suggesting that the Czechs send out messengers to find a new prince. "But know this;" she cautioned them, "he will not be lenient with you and gentle as I have been, but will be cruel and strict, for he will rule over you with an iron fist." Despite Libuše's warning, the people sent out an entourage to find their prince. When the messengers arrived the following day to a village called Stadice, where they found a plowman named Přemysl tending to his field, they offered to the simple farmer the title of prince. Přemysl agreed, mounted his horse for the castle Vyšehrad, and sat beside his new bride to become the founder of the first Czech dynasty.

The moral of this digression? "Czechs may take pride that they chose for themselves a prince from the plow," Malý commented. "Domains and empires are customarily founded not by a peaceful farmer, but rather by powerful conquerors and those who cruelly spill human blood." The legend offered evidence of a primal Slavic self-governance, demonstrating "the tranquil and peaceful character of the Czech nation, whose primary occupation has always been tending to the land […].[24] We need not dwell on the fact that the manuscript upon which Malý's based his account was a fake (maybe a forgery, possibly a hoax) resulting from the overzealous patriotism of the respected Czech philologist, Václav Hanka.[25] It served to reassure authors such as Malý during a formative period of nation building that the Czechs were an essentially democratic

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[21] *Lexikon české literatury,* s.v. "Hájek, Václav"; Václav Flajšhans, "Úvod," in *Kronika česká,* vol. 1 (Prague, 1918);Josef Hrabák, ed., *Dějiny české literatury* (Prague: ÚČL ČSAV, 1958), 1:73-85.

[22] The following draws from Malý's relation of the legend in *Prostonárodní dějepis,* 19-25.

[23] This version of the Libuše myth presented a much more somber and serious princess than earlier accounts, which related the legend in a humorous or even picaresque manner. See Vladimír Macura, "Sen o Libuši," in *Český sen* (Praha: Nakl. Lidové novin, 1998), 88-96.

[24] It is interesting to note that these sentences were cut from the 1862 edition of the word. Malý, *Prostonárodní dějepis*, 24.

[25] The text was composed by Hanka sometime around 1830 and sent anonymously to Franz-Anton von Kolowrat—Liebsteinsky, a patriotic noble who first publicized the manuscript. Together with another "discovery" from the same period, the so-called Manuscript of Dvůr Králové, the text became an important source of national pride and historical awareness in Czech patriotic society, zealously defended up to the end of the century. František Palacký drew from them in composing his magisterial history of the Czech nation in the Bohemian lands. Both Czech and German philologists doubted the texts' authenticity from the very beginning, but it wasn't until Jan Gebauer and Tomáš Masaryk scrutinized the manuscripts in the 1880s that the texts were exposed as forgeries. On the cultural significance of the controversy for Czech national identity, see Vladimír Macura's essential commentary in *Znamení zrodu: České národní obrození jako kulturní typ* (Jihočany: H & H, 1995), chapters 4 and 5.

people who could claim political sovereignty over the Bohemian lands dating back to the earliest times. Somewhere in this wandering from history to myth and back to history, precedence had been set and the claim established that Czechs belonged to the land and the land belonged to them. Not the power of fact, but the strength of words made Czechs the heirs to Bohemia.

***

I dwell on Malý's popular history of the Bohemian lands because it illustrates the manner in which a group comes into being, in part, through the writing of history. Like Malý's study, this dissertation describes the Czechs in the process of becoming a people. Unlike Malý, who located the legitimacy of the Czech claim to Bohemia in the distant past, this work portrays those who looked outward to the edges of European civilization. Between 1848 and 1873, some sixty thousand Czechs emigrated from the Habsburg Empire to destinations across the world. The great majority of them settled in the United States, particularly in the Midwestern states Wisconsin, Missouri, and Iowa. These same years witnessed the consolidation of the modern Czech nation as a single political body: the liberal Czech National Party as its mind, the Czechs-speaking masses its arms, its heart given to the rural folk, and its voice being the political daily *Národní listy.* The present study brings these two processes together. At the birth of Czech nationhood as a political community, as a "complete society," thousands of its own sons and daughters left permanently to seek their fortunes abroad. By claiming overseas Czechs for the nation, I argue, liberals reinforced their claim to Bohemian territory at this critical juncture and legitimized their position as head of the national body.

In other words, rather than explore how contemporary understandings of nationhood were projected back into the past, this dissertation examines how Czechs projected self-understandings across distance. Emigration played an essential role in this shift from a historical to a geographical imagination. The elements forwarded by Malý in his history would remain constant, but their context would change. Looking out into the abroad, commentators would engage in contest with Germans and the West in general. Like Malý, later commentators demonstrated a concern to link their experiences to "universal European history" while at the same time showing themselves to be unique. They would lay claim to territory and to people. Above all, those Czech liberals who engaged in the emigration debate would elaborate upon what they understood to be the Czech character: peaceful rather than martial; a lover of freedom and democratic in his ways; a settler who cultivates the land rather than an aggressor who raids the fields of others; honest, hospitable, musical; above all, just as civilized as his Central European neighbors. At the same time, liberals would also claim that the very same traits all too easily passed over into vice; that simplicity and honesty might lead to credulity. The liberal take on mass emigration represented just such a tale of slippery transition. Working-class Czech emigrants were as yet unable to negotiate the global market on their own, for their easy going nature was all too easily manipulated by sophisticated foreigners. And so they required the guidance of national leaders, at least until they proved themselves able to act as independent members of the nation.

The discourse referred to here as the emigration question melded two vocabularies, nationalism and colonialism. It is to these key words that we now turn.

Nationalism

In his history, Malý narrated the journey of the Czech people from its archeological and mythic beginnings up to the Battle of White Mountain in 1620, when Austrian armies definitively crushed the revolt of the Bohemian estates.[26] The protagonist of the drama, the nation, experienced moments of hope and betrayal, but its identity endured through time. There were periods of optimism and ascent, also of uncertainty and confusion. White Mountain represented a collective defeat, a blow that sunk the nation into two centuries of darkness. Later, at the end of the eighteenth century, Czechs could rejoice in the "resurrection" of their nation, its "revival" and "awakening." Malý's contribution to this celebration included his six-volume history called *Our Rebirth.*[27] The nation obviously figured centrally as an actor in Malý's historical universe. But what sort of entity was this nation? What did Malý and his contemporaries mean when they spoke of existence of the *národ,* "nation," through time?

Between 1860 and 1874, Malý contributed hundreds of entries to *Riegrův Slovník naučný* (Rieger's Conversation Lexicon), the first Czech encyclopedia and a standard reference work of its day.[28] One of them was an article under the heading *národ,* published in 1866 as the series' fifth volume. The entry provides insight into the liberal Czech understanding of nationhood. Not only did the article's author count among the most respected members of the patriotic community, but it appeared under the editorship of František Ladislav Rieger, chairman of the Czech National Party and son-in-law of the historian Palacký. It is difficult to imagine a better pedigree for any definition of such an important concept.

Malý offered both a historical and primordial understanding of nationhood, one that stressed ethnic belonging as well as civic association. It provided a flexible basis for the national movement during the transition from neoabsolutism to parliamentary politics. Malý presented the concept of *národ* as a stage in the historical development of civilization. In the "natural progress of human society," he wrote, one encountered first the *rodina*, "family," children together with their natural parents. Further on, families developed into a *rod,* "clan," composed of relatives sharing an awareness of common origins. "At the third stage," Malý continued, "we find the nation, more or less numerous clans united into a larger whole whose distinctive feature is the language." Further levels of development introduced the *kmen,* "tribe," a set of related nations, which ultimately led to the *plémě,* "race" or "stock." "In the development of humanity, the clan transforms into a community [*obec*], and the nation into a state. At a higher stage of political unification stands the association of nations into a single tribe. […] The race, finally, contains within itself the perimeter of a unique *civilization* [*civilisace*] with a common mentality and direction. The Indo-European civilization, for example, differs fundamentally and in essence from the civilization of other races." *Národ* occupied a middle position in the evolution from family to clan, nation, tribe, and race.

Such was the evolutionary understanding of nationhood in the Czech patriotic universe. This division of humanity can be read on many levels (including biological and linguistic), but

[26] The 1862 edition, *Dějeny národu českého,* followed its history up to 1848 and included an appendix addressing that revolutionary year.
[27] *Naše znovuzrození: Přehled národního života českého za posledního půlstoletí,* 6 vols. (Prague, 1880-1884)
[28] Dagmar Hartmanová, "Historie československé encyklopedistiky do roku 1945," *Národní knihovna: Knihovnická revue* 11, no. 1 (2000): 15-17.

Malý's emphasis fell on historical development.[29] *Rodina,* "family," stood for the most primitive form of social organization followed by clan then nation. Nations subsumed families and clans, but each nation remained distinct from the others by virtue of its own distinct essence, language. Through the instrument of statehood, nations of a related tribe formed multi-national associations. Civilization, finally, represented the highest form of social organization; no common form of humanity, according to Malý's definition, could cross the divide between civilizations. The gap remained unbridgeable.

Only nations and civilizations represented truly sovereign entities. Family, clan, and tribe merely intermediated between these two fundamental forms of community. This was because both nation and civilization contained essences—language, for the nation, and a more abstract *duch a směr,* "spirit and direction," for civilizations. Neither of the two could be assimilated or made to merge with any other of its kind, for doing so would destroy the essence lying at the heart of its identity. States had come into existence to protect the essence of nationhood against the threat of assimilation.

Malý deduced from this that all original states were founded on the basis of nationality. This principle, however, had been violated "by all sorts of artificial means" throughout history; redrawn boarders, treaties, dynastic alliances, and military conquests had led to the mixing of peoples. Looking at the present world, one thus found individual nations divided among many states—such was the case with Germans and Italians, said Malý—or many nations under a single government—he identified the Czechs and Magyars. "This state of affairs is unnatural," insisted Malý, "and now, in the modern era, the effort has entered the forefront of political life to bring things back to their natural, primordial state." The modern period rested on the principle of nationhood. This entailed, on the one hand, political centralization and the effort to bring the entire people within the boundaries of a single state. On the other hand, those who inhabited multi-national empires strove in the opposite direction, seeking instead "complete *autonomy,* such that every one of those nations has its own government, appropriate to its own unique character, circumstances and historical development." Such was the case with the peoples of the Habsburg Empire. No one among the Czechs advocated secession from the monarchy nor did anyone envision a truly independent Czech state. Instead, Malý and others foresaw "an alliance of states in the form of a voluntary union or *federation* for their mutual self-defense. Only within such a state-form can each individual nation live its individual life and develop further on the basis of its own character and capacity, whereas in the form of a centralized state this freedom is lacking and the nation is as if subjugated, handed over to certain destruction."[30] In the modern era, the principle of *národ* implied a politics of national unification and the federalization of empire.

Malý's comment took aim at the centralism of the 1850s, a decade of neoabsolutism from which Austrian society was only just emerging. This dissertation follows the campaign for Czech national autonomy within the bounds of empire—the so-called State Rights movement. State Rights was rooted in the provincial patriotism of the Bohemian estates prior to 1848, when large

[29] *Národ* can be interpreted as a place on a taxonomic ranking between phylum (*kmen*) and genus (*rod*). *Kmen* also means stem, as in the stem of a word, and *rod* is the term for grammatical gender. Sticking with the linguistic analogy, Malý's hierarchy could be interpreted as follows: The Indo-European *Ur*-language (*plémě*), the Slavic language group (*kmen*), the Czech language (*národ*), and various dialects (*rod*) and idiolects (*rodina*) of Czech. Unlike his more explicit narrative of development, with these biological and linguistic/ethnic analogies Malý emphasizes the synchronic features of nationhood.

[30] Italics in original.

landholders demanded more independence from authorities in Vienna. Federation belonged to the watchwords of 1848, receiving in the Czech instance its most precise formulation by Palacký in his famous Letter to Frankfurt. While ringing progressive to Czech ears, the word federalism struck German liberals as suspicious for its association with conservative landowners. In any case, the issue became a mute point during the 1850s as central authorities in Vienna jealously guarded over power in the provinces. Following the collapse of neoabsolutism and the beginnings of constitutional life in the early 1860s, Czech liberals once again advocated increased autonomy for the Bohemian lands as a means to safeguard their nation's interests. The movement for State Rights radicalized after 1867, the year when the *Ausgleich* between Austria and Hungary led to the founding of a Dual Monarchy. State Rights represented a call for a tripartite empire of Austrians (read: Germans), Hungarians (Magyars) and Bohemians (Czechs). At the dawn of the constitutional age in Austria, Czech national leaders sought an Austro-Bohemian compromise to parallel that reached between the Austrian Germans and Magyars.

State Rights became the banner of a newly politicized Czech national movement, behind which national activists set out to mobilize the Czech-speaking masses. When Czech delegates of the National Party boycotted first the Reichsrat in Vienna then the provincial assembly in Bohemia, the State Rights movement entered an era of passive resistance. During the 1860s and early 1870s, spectacle and symbolic gesture replaced the speechifying of parliamentary deputies. During this time, Czech national leaders claimed for their nation the capacity for self-government and autonomy, desiring to share the status of "ruling nation" alongside the Germans and Magyars. It is this atmosphere of political mobilization and national competition that this dissertation addresses.

State Rights was the closest that Czechs came to having a nationalist program before World War One.[31] It stood for the political strategy Czech liberals adopted during the transition from a closed world of patriotic activism to an era of mass national agitation. As such, its message had to be communicated in a political language that was symbolic, spectacular, and accessible to Czech-speakers of every background. This dissertation offers a study of that political language from neoabsolutism through the beginnings of parliamentary life in Austria. But it is an *indirect* history of the Czech movement for State Rights. It does not focus exclusively, or even primarily, on those moments when Czech politicians spoke directly to that theme. Instead, important questions about sovereignty and national autonomy are approached by way of detour. When Czech liberals addressed the problem of mass emigration and imagined the lives of overseas compatriots, they indirectly addressed their own capacity for self-rule. Debates about "the Czech abroad" were really debates about the place of Czechs within the Habsburg Empire. The connection between the two—mass emigration and nationalist politics—needs explaining. This dissertation shows how to bring them together.

Language played a central role in drawing together overseas labor migration and nation building in the homeland. In order to understand the role of language in nationalist politics, it is necessary to examine briefly the ways in which contemporary scholarship conceptualizes nationhood.[32] In the context of Czech studies, it is impossible to overemphasize the influence of

[31] Peter Bugge offers an nuanced interpretation of State Rights as a "national fetish" in his "Czech Nation Building," chapter 6.

[32] Here I only discuss scholarship about the Bohemian lands, which has shown remarkable innovation over the last decades. Scholarship about other regions of the Habsburg Empire have also provided important studies about nationalism, only a few of which I cite here: Max Bergholz, "Sudden Nationhood: The Microdynamics of Intercommunal Relations in Bosnia-Herzegovina after World War II," *American Historical Review* 118, no. 3 (June

sociologist Rogers Brubaker.[33] In his 1996 work, *Nationalism Reframed*, Brubaker introduced what he called an institutionalist account of the nation. The majority of studies dedicated to nationalism, he claimed, share a certain realist approach to their subject. Regardless of where one stands on the relative modernity of nations (the worn-out "modernist" attack on that straw-man primordialism), both sides accept the existence of nations as entities. Brubaker's accomplishment was to shift the terms of debate from the question of relative modernity of the nation to an analysis of nationalism as an idiom.[34] That is to say, rather than treating nations as entities (as agents, real or imagined communities, categories of analysis etc.), Brubaker conceived of the nation as a way of talking about the world. Nationalism, according to his account, represents the attempt to vest language with the power of institutions. Brubaker thereby introduced a discursive element into the study of nationality, which now becomes the study of "the practical uses of the category 'nation,' the ways it can come to structure perception, to inform thought and experience, to organize discourse and political action."[35] Far from being the inevitable outgrowth of modernization, the rise of nations and nationalism is an event contingent upon timely questions of language, legitimacy, politics and power.[36]

Current Czech studies reveals Brubaker's influence in its preoccupation with borderlands, language frontiers, and various forms of interethnic identity (so-called "amphibians," "crossed wires," "linguistic hermaphrodites," "utraquists" etc.). Historians have focused on such liminal cases of identity not because they mistake them for typical, but because in these instances the discursive element that is always present in the construction of nationality becomes most apparent. Jeremy King, whose important essay "The Nationalization of East Central Europe" introduced Brubaker's influence to Czech studies, focused on national conflict surrounding a

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2013), 679-707; James Bjork, *Neither German nor Pole: Catholicism and National Indifference in a Central European Borderland* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2008); Kate Brown, *A Biography of No Place: From Ethnic Borderland to Soviet Heartland.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2004); Alison Frank, *Oil Empire: Visions of Prosperity in Austrian Galicia* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005); Timothy Snyder, *The Reconstruction of Nations: Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus, 1569-1999* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003); Keely Stauter-Halsted. *The Nation in the Village: The Genesis of Peasant National Identity in Austrian Poland, 1848-1914* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001); Larry Wolff. *The Idea of Galicia: History and Fantasy in Habsburg Political Culture*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010.

[33] There are, of course, other seminal works in the field, though Brubaker's most closely fits the purposes of my own work. In addition to Brubaker's book, the work of Gary Cohen, Miroslav Hroch and Peter Bugge are of primary importance. Rogers Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Gary Cohen, *The Politics of Ethnic Survival: Germans in Prague, 1861-1914* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981); Miroslav Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe: A Comparative Analysis of the Social Composition of Patriotic Groups Among the Smaller European Nations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Peter Bugge, "Czech Nation Building." Together, these four authors formed the methodological foundation of contemporary English-language Czech studies. Cohen made an early attempt to explain how national identities emerged from previously non-national contexts in Prague. Hroch urged historians to abandon generalized theories of nationalism in favor of comparative case studies. Bugge, finally, stressed the irreducible role played by national self-perception in the nation-building process.

[34] A project he continues in subsequent works. Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, 10; Rogers Brubaker, *Ethnicity Without Groups* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006); Rogers Brubaker, Margit Feischmidt, and Jon Fox, *Nationalist Politics and Everyday Ethnicity in a Transylvanian Town* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006).

[35] Brubaker *Nationalism Reframed*, 7.

[36] Brian Porter-Szűcs provides a parallel argument in "Beyond the Study of Nationalism."

statue in a southern Bohemian town between the years 1848 and 1948.[37] In that essay, King used ideas borrowed from Brubaker to explain how a statue was claimed first by one national community only to be later "reclaimed" by the other, how this hewn representation of a Habsburg loyalist became a national cause and how a previously non-national community of Czech and German-speakers became nationalized Czechs and Germans.[38] In his explanation, King eschews the teleology of what he calls "ethnicism"; an all-too ubiquitous school of thought that explains the contours of modern national consciousness by appealing to a deeply-rooted ethnic past (which is really, he claims, a kind of "closet primordialism"). Instead, he follows Brubaker in describing nationhood as a sudden and transformative event contingent upon political questions of the day.

A similar concern motivates Pieter Judson's study of the construction of language frontiers in the Habsburg Empire, *Guardians of the Nation*.[39] In this work, Judson explains how nationalist activists transformed rural social conflicts into national ones as a strategy to mobilize populations for political gain. Again we find politics and contingency central to the historian's explanation of the nationalization process. Various political reforms emanating from Vienna at the end of the nineteenth century (constitutional reforms and enfranchisement in the 1860s, economic development and education reforms in the 1870s and 80s, progressive election reforms in the 1880s and 1890s and censuses conducted in the 1880s-1900s) motivated nationalist activists to win a constituency for "their" side. It was not so much the possible defeat of a national other that concerned these activists, nor did they seek the downfall of the multi-national Habsburg Empire. Instead, Judson claims, nationalists "deployed a harshly radical rhetoric in order to gain mastery over rival groups within their own nationalist movements."[40] Winning a population to a particular vision of the nation, battling alternative understandings of collective identity and above all, countering popular national indifference were primary factors behind the rise of mass nationalist politics.[41]

An emphasis on language enhances our understanding of the national movement in Bohemia. The discursive shift marked by Rogers Brubaker enables historians to portray the

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[37] Jeremy King, "The Nationalization of East Central Europe: Ethnicism, Ethnicity, and Beyond," in Nancy Wingfield and Maria Bucur, eds., *Staging the Past: The Politics of Commemoration in Habsburg Central Europe, 1848 to the Present* (West Lafayette, 2001), 112-152.

[38] On the gradual erosion of the spaces, processes, identities, and institutions that predated, transcended or blurred national boundaries, see also Chad Bryant, "Either Czech or German: Fixing Nationality in Bohemia and Moravia, 1939-1946" *Slavic Review* 61, no. 4 (Winter 2002): 683-706; Chad Bryant, *Prague in Black: Nazi Rule and Czech Nationalism* (Cambridge:Harvard University Press, 2007); Jeremy King, *Budweisers into Czechs and Germans: A Local History of Bohemian Politics, 1848-1948* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2002); Eagle Glassheim, *Noble Nationalists: the Transformation of the Bohemian Aristocracy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005); Nancy Wingfield, *Flag Wars and Stone Saints: How the Bohemian Lands Became Czech* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007).

[39] Pieter Judson, *Guardians of the Nation: Activists on the Language Frontiers of Imperial Austria*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

[40] Judson, *Guardians of the Nation*, 9.

[41] Tara Zahra offers another fascinating and detailed work on national indifference and nationalist activism in the Bohemian lands. See Tara Zahra, *Kidnapped Souls: National Indifference and the Battle for Children in the Bohemian Lands, 1900-1948* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008). See also the essays collected in Pieter Judson and Marsha Rozenblit, eds., *Constructing Nationalities in East Central Europe* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2005); and more recently the special forum "Sites of Indifference to Nationhood" in *Austrian History Yearbook* 43 (April 2012): 21-137. The most concise formulation of national indifference is Tara Zara, "Imagined Noncommunities: National Indifference as a Category of Analysis," *Slavic Review* 69 (Spring 2010): 93-119.

nation not as an internally homogenous whole, but as a porously bounded field of competing representations. The task for the historian is to unearth alternative visions of the nation and to show the contingencies involved in one national vision coming to dominate the others. In this study, we explore how Czech liberals shaped perceptions of the nation by articulating mass labor migration in the vocabulary of European overseas expansion.

Colonialism

The connection between states and colonies appears obvious. Where there is no state, there can be no colony. It would seem to follow that the study of colonialism and the history of "small nations" have little to do with one other. The Czechs, landlocked in the center of Europe, seem far removed from any reasonable understanding of overseas expansion. To hold colonies means to extend the powers of state abroad, to secure foreign territory by gunboat diplomacy. "A language is a dialect with an army and a navy," quipped the German-Jewish linguist Max Weinreich. Colonialism was the affair of big nations with states, not small peoples belonging to supranational empires; the British, French, and, after 1884, also the Germans took possession of colonies by sending out their militaries to protect state interests. As a small people just emerging from what they called a national awakening, still a dialect without an army or a navy, the Czechs seem to have had little at stake in the project of European overseas expansion.

Yet this dissertation contends that Czech nation-building and European colonialism interpenetrated and overlapped, that Czech national activists drew from the colonial vocabulary in order to articulate their own national aspirations at home. In order to understand how this might work, we can turn to some recent histories of Germany to see how scholars have rethought the notion of colonization. Much of this rethinking draws on the ambiguity of the word *colony.* In her recent study about German understandings of Poland as colonial space, Kristin Kopp remarks on the transition in imperial Germany from the use of *Kolonie* in its weak sense, as a synonym for any kind of settlement, to the strong sense of the word as "a territory, particularly an overseas territory, that has been conquered by a (foreign) state and economically exploited, and is held in political dependency."[42] For centuries speakers referred to German settlements in eastern Europe as colonies in the weak sense of the word. After Germany claimed its first overseas territories in the last decades of the nineteenth century, however, colonial enthusiasts began to reiterate this eastward migration in the strong sense, speaking of colonization as a collective effort of national expansion, systematic settlement, and civilizing mission. By conflating the two forms of *colony,* through a "strategic substitution" of one for the other as Kopp explains, German scholars both reinvented the meaning of traditional eastward migration and set a precedent for their state's more recent acquisitions. A way of speaking about colonies that originally described the relation between a state and its overseas territories was adapted by Germans to define their nation's relationship to a neighboring people.[43]

Kopp does not label Germans' presence in the East colonial. Instead, she seeks to understand the implications that this conceptual framing entailed for relations between Germans

[42] *Das Digitale Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache des 20. Jh.* s.v. "Kolonie," accessed March 4, 2014, http://www.dwds.de/?qu=Kolonie. Cited, though somewhat differently translated, by Kristin Kopp *Germany's Wild East: Constructing Poland and Colonial Space.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012), 3.
[43] Kopp, *Germany's Wild East*, 2-5.

and Poles. She here formulates a second distinction, one that is also important for the present study, that between material and discursive colonization. The former refers to the word's strong sense, the economic, political, and cultural subjugation of a native population by intruding foreigners. Discursive colonization, on the other hand, Kopp defines as "a historically situated process that repositions a specific relationship between self and Other into colonial categories."[44] Discursive colonization implies the creation of a colonial subjectivity for the (would be) colonizer. German scholars invented for themselves a colonizing tradition, for example, and characterized their people as especially fit for the colonizing project. The colonized Other, of course, must become the legitimate object of outside intervention. Kopp accordingly examines the portrayal of Poles and "eastern space" in German literature, film, and cartography to show stereotypes of a primitive people without history, static and incapable of autonomous progress, a threat to its western neighbor. Finally, the relationship between these constructed identities had to be narrated in colonial terms; the more advanced brought order and progress to the more backward peoples.

Though separate processes, discursive colonization forms a prerequisite for material colonization. The sense of mission and cultural work essential to colonialism results from the discursive framing of territorial expansion. Indeed, colonization can occur discursively without actual territorial enlargement—even without a national state. In her study about conquest, family, and the nation in precolonial Germany, Susan Zantop explored how Germans understood their relationship to South America in colonial terms despite the fact that the continent had been colonized by others.[45] By portraying Central European emigrants as German colonists (once again playing on the ambiguity of *colony*) the authors that Zantop examines repeat the fundamental distinction between civilized Europe and the primitive global periphery, inserting Germans into the project of European expansion.

Here we begin to see how representatives of a small nation like the Czechs might narrate themselves into the position of a colonial power. The ambiguity of the word *colony* allowed for the interpretation of unsystematic settlement as a collective project. Again and again in this study we will find working-class emigrants transformed into Czech colonists. By framing emigration as the spread of European or Slavic culture to backward parts of the world, small peoples could present themselves as agents of modernity. Discursively, if not materially, Czechs could think of theirs as a progressive and expanding nation. The means by which Czech patriots exploited the colonial narrative in order to shape social experience in Bohemia forms the primary subject of this dissertation.

Colonization occurs in various forms, each of which offered Czechs a means to emplot mass emigration. Jürgen Osterhammel, one of the more innovative scholars writing about global history today, calls attention to the distinctions between "colonization," a process, "colony," a form of association, and "colonialism," which expresses a relationship of power. Fundamental to all three concepts, he writes, is the idea of a society expanding beyond its tradition living space.[46]

It is not the argument here that the Czechs engaged in material colonization or that they succeeded in forming colonies in the strong sense. Emigration from Bohemia during the middle and late nineteenth century was a form of mass labor emigration familiar to everybody: the

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[44] Kopp, *Germany's Wild East*, 6.
[45] Susan Zantop, *Colonial Fantasies*: *Conquest, Family, and the Nation in Precolonial Germany, 1770-1870,* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997).
[46] Jürgen Osterhammel, *Kolonialismus: Geschichte, Formen, Folgen* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2003), 8-9.

transatlantic journey of individuals, or entire families, in search of economic opportunity abroad. These expatriates did not form their own colonies but instead became members of a multi-ethnic society. True, ethnic enclaves did exist (colonies in the weak sense), but mainly as stopovers on the path to assimilation.[47] Czechs abroad never truly formed an overseas branch of the nation. Nevertheless, the presence of tens of thousands of Czechs overseas could be *interpreted* by contemporaries both at home and abroad as the expansion of their national society beyond its "traditional living space."

In this study we will find that Czech liberals appealed to two related forms of colonization when they tried to make mass emigration meaningful. Osterhammel identifies these forms as frontier colonization and overseas settler colonization.[48] The former represents a pushing out into unclaimed territory to take possession of "wilderness." The image of "pushing out" recalls the proximity of the colonized territory. It stands at an arm's length; a nation need only give a firm shove in order to break out of its present spatial constraints. Almost always, frontier colonization is about agriculture or the acquisition of natural resources. While these are rooted in the land or buried beneath the Earth's surface, labor-power and capital are mobile. Frontier colonization simply opens up the border to release the built-up energies of the national economy. Czechs adapted the vocabulary of American westward expansion or Russian inner colonization when discussing the settlement of compatriots, especially in eastern parts of the Habsburg Empire.

The second framing device was overseas settler colonization. Its exemplary form, the colonization of North America, often involved the founding of "plantations" in lands far away from the metropole. Distance led to a clearer demarcation between home and colony than was normally the case with frontier colonization. Fantasy and projection therefore figured into overseas colonization to an even greater effect than could have been the case with contiguous expansion. Overseas colonies aspired to self-sufficiency. A mature colony no longer relied upon imports from the homeland nor did its economy revolve around exporting natural resources. At the same time, overseas colonization overlapped with the concept of frontier colonization. Both entailed the occupation of unclaimed territory. For the Czechs, this often meant grafting their own virtual acts of colonization onto the actual practices of American or Russian frontier expansion. Despite the "parasitic" relationship between Czech discursive colonization and the material colonization of greater powers, Czech national leaders could nonetheless exploit the distance that separated metropole from colony in order to generate fantasy. On the one hand, the distinction between natives and settlers provided Czechs the opportunity to contrast their own westerness (or Slavicness) with the uncultivated Other. On the other hand, the language of development that comes along with overseas colonization enabled them to project aspirations for national autonomy abroad, envisioning a "free Čechia" or "New Prague" arising on the American plains or Russian steppe.

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[47] Assimilation, of course, is anything but a straightforward process, and writing about it requires considerable nuance. For an overview of the literature see Gjerde, "New Growth on Old Vines—The State of the Field: The Social History of Immigration to and Ethnicity in the United States," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 18, no. 4 (Summer 1999): 40-65; Russell A. Kazal, "Revisiting Assimilation: The Rise, Fall, and Reappraisal of a Concept in American Ethnic History," *American Historical Review* 100, no. 2 (April 1995): 437-441; Brubaker, "The Return of Assimilation? Changing Perspectives on Immigration and Its Sequels in France, Germany, and the United States," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 24, no. 4 (July 2001): 531-548.

[48] Osterhammel, *Kolonialismus*, 10-13.

In addition to these forms (or genres) of colonization, Czechs borrowed from what Osterhammel calls *kolonialistisches Denken,* "colonial thinking," when they discussed mass emigration. Three basic elements characterize colonial thinking. The first Osterhammel describes as anthropological, involving construction of an inferior Otherness.[49] Religious prejudice might lead to the description of natives as heathens or environmental factors may contribute to them being labeled as inherently lazy or lethargic. By the end of the nineteenth century biological factors had begun to shape this thinking, with scientists establishing hierarchies among the races. Racial difference asserted an unbridgeable gap between the colonizer and the colonized. Although we will find Czechs sometimes borrowing from the vocabulary of biological difference (speaking of *plemena,* "races"), more often they dwelled on differences of character resulting from historical experience. This lent itself to an Orientalizing discourse that juxtaposed the dynamism and modernity of the West (or, at other times, Slavdom) with the stasis and ahistoricity of non-European or non-Slavic peoples.

Historical difference also left open the possibilities of assimilation and the carrying of backward peoples into modernity. This leads to a second mode of thought identified by Osterhammel, the belief in a cultural mission or duty to guard over primitive peoples. Here Czechs spoke of establishing settlements among people who were *nevzdělaní* or *malo vzdělaní*; literally, people who were uncivilized or "little cultured." Long isolated from the humanity's progress, these underdeveloped peoples now required the guidance of more sophisticated nations to find their way to the modern world. Here one spoke not of the conqueror's *right* to rule, but referred instead to the *duty* that obliges the strong to care for the weak.[50] Colonizers conceived of it as a mutually beneficial relationship that would lead both parties toward prosperity; developed industries sought outlets for its products, labor-power, and capital as well as sources of raw material, newcomers required special treatment before they themselves reached maturity. It was a vision of guardianship, a style of thinking applied above all to eastward expansion into lands inhabited by more primitive Slavs.

Finally, Osterhammel describes as a third habit of colonial thought the "utopia of the non-political," by which he means the dream of a colonial administration unburdened by political contest.[51] Colonization brought order to a chaotic world and as such represented a purely scientific and administrative endeavor. As Osterhammel points out, this aspect of colonization began long before physical possession with the scholarly naming, recording, and mapping of territories and peoples. "By putting regions on a map and native words on a list, explorers laid the first, and deepest, foundations of colonial power," writes Johannes Fabian, a historian of the Belgian Congo.[52] To those familiar with Czech history, or the revival of any small nation, such words sound eerily familiar. Does this not describe the approach of the *buditelé,* Awakeners, at the turn of the nineteenth century? Czech linguists and folklorists also set regions onto maps and compiled lists of words spoken by Bohemian peasants, their own "natives." Czech philologists first construed a literary code from the spectrum of Slavic dialects before Czech liberals proceeded to educate their plebian countrymen, much like colonial administrations organized

[49] Osterhammel, *Kolonialismus,* 113-114.
[50] Osterhammel, *Kolonialismus,* 115.
[51] Osterhammel, *Kolonialismus,* 116-118.
[52] Johannes Fabian, *Language and Colonial Power: The Appropriation of Swahili in the Former Belgian Congo, 1880-1938* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 24.

territorial resources, eliminated native corruption and superstition, and set the basis for effective administration.[53]

Here one might anticipate the complexity of colonial thinking in the Central European context. In the following pages we will encounter ambitious patriots entertaining visions of apolitical administration overseas, forming blueprints for concentrated settlements of Czech emigrants. Yet these fantasies stood proxy for a particular vision of Czech national belonging at home. It was an instance of parallel thinking. The "inferior Otherness" separating the western Slav from the native paralleled that distance setting the Czech liberal apart from his peasant or working-class compatriot. The latter was also backward or underdeveloped and required the guidance, or guardianship, of his better-educated peer. Czech-speaking workers, day laborers, cottagers, smallholders and landless peasants might one day qualify for full membership in the nation, but so long as they remained "dependent" (on tradition, superstition, or on other people's capital) they would do well to follow the lead of more qualified men. Building the nation, cultivating it, and spreading it out across territory were the tasks faced by Czech liberals from the 1840s on. As a community, the nation was imagined to be internally non-political, an administrative effort to put regions onto the map or compile native vocabularies into a list. Within the nation harmony was to prevail.

And emigration? The strategy of Czech liberals described here consisted in reiterating mass labor migration as a project of national expansion abroad. By expressing the economically motivated migration of Czech-speaking peasants and artisans in the language of frontier settlement and overseas colonization, working-class emigrants became Czech colonists. In this way, a fantasy of overseas expansion thought through the process of inner colonization. In the discursive colonization of the abroad as in the material colonization of their own nation, liberals placed themselves in a position of leadership. It was not the feasibility of colonial fantasies that counted, but the habits of speech instilled by such daydreams. Colonial modes of thinking, pointing outward to the peripheries of the West, shaped understandings of national belonging at home. This dissertation shows that the emigration question, expressed in the language of colonization, secured for Czech liberals a position of hegemony within the national movement at a crucial moment of transition.

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"What the heart unites, the sea shall not divide," *Co srdce pojí, moře nerozdvojí,* belonged the repertoire of Czech proverbs current during the era of mass labor migration.[54] The saying recalls several other pieces of folk wisdom pertaining to the relationship between home and the abroad: *Tam domov, kde dobře; Člověk je doma tam, kde si pověsí klobouk; Všude*

[53] This seems to provide a new frame for understanding familiar claims about the relationship between linguistic codification and nation-building, such as those of Miroslav Hroch: "Language as an expression of national character could exist only as a written or literary language. We cannot imagine spoken language as an instrument of national identification. Only the written standard identifies the individual speakers with a larger 'national community.'" I suggest that this process of forming a literary language from a continuum of spoken dialects has its parallels (and perhaps not just parallels) in forms of colonial knowledge. Hroch, "Language and National Identity," 67.

[54] The patriot and one-time emigrant Vojtěch Náprstek placed the words above the entrance to his home in honor of a visit by American Czechs in 1885. Whether the proverb was coined by Náprstek or if it circulated before that date remains unclear. The earliest mention of the proverb of which I am aware occurred in 1885 in a report about Náprstek's welcoming a group of visiting compatriots from the U.S.A., "Američtí Češi na cestě do Prahy," *Národní listy*, June 15, 1885.

dobře, doma nejlíp; Ten, kdo pobývá všude, není nikde doma; Lepší doma krajíc chleba, než v cizině kráva celá, and so on.[55] Unlike these other sayings, which either display a broad and flexible understanding of "home" or express a critical attitude toward leaving it, the proverb from which this dissertation takes its title concerns ties that bind "the heart," *srdce*, across distance. Sentimental, even maudlin, it expresses something important about the mentality of Central Europe's middle classes at mid-nineteenth century. This was a time of domesticated passions in Central Europe, when the outlook of Biedermeier still shaped lifestyles in Bohemia as much as it had in the German lands—a "taming of romanticism" as one literary scholar aptly expresses it.[56] Middle-class sentiment must be brought to bear in considering emigration during these years. Teary-eyed farewells of peasant families taking leave from the homeland struck emotional cords with audiences. But overseas migration represented only one form of departure. While many left for America, many more laborers migrated from the countryside to earn a living in the growing urban centers of Bohemia and Lower Austria, or in neighboring Germany. Migration overseas occurred in the midst of numerous local migrations that formed a tapestry of sentimental attachment and nostalgic longing for what had been left behind. To maintain contact with the people one cared about and to remember familiar places; for most people that was the primary sense conveyed by *srdce.*

Besides sentiment, the proverb also expressed intent: What the heart unites, the sea shall not *be allowed* to divide. Here, *srdce* signaled a rather different sense of desire. This notion of the heart also played with sentimentality, but assigned the emotion to a different task. Together with the image of distant family members, friends or lovers separated by an ocean, and neighbors gone but not forgotten, the proverb also conveyed a more assertive and categorical notion of group identity. "What the heart unites, the sea shall not divide" can be taken as a vision of political and cultural unity that transcended geographical boundaries. This was the imagined community of nationhood, language, custom, and even blood that supposedly united emigrants on the farthest ends of the Earth to compatriots in the homeland. How contemporaries understood the attachment of *srdce* during an era of national mobilization and mass labor migration forms the subject of the present study.

This dissertation explores the evolution of *srdce* and the ways in which mass emigration shaped the language of national belonging between 1848 and 1873. The study divides this period into two parts. The first three chapters explore the rise of the emigration question during the era of neoabsolutism, 1851 to 1859, explaining who the emigrants were and describing the reactions of Czech patriots and Austrian state officials. This excursion to the origins of the emigration question reveals that lower-class mobility mattered to contemporaries in ways that transcended actual emigrant numbers. Emigration came to symbolize the anxieties, hopes, and concerns both of Czech liberals and Austrian state officials during a time of profound social and economic change. The years of constitutional experimentation from 1861 to 1873 provide the setting for the last two chapters, which examine the place of mass emigration in a new political culture. These chapters national politics in Austria from the outside, so to speak, by examining two attempts to redirect overseas migration from North America to Russia's imperial borderlands. With these visions of eastward colonization, Czech liberals sought not only to demonstrate their

[55] Literal translations: Home is there, where one feels well; A person is at home where he hangs his hat; Everwhere well, best at home; He who lives everywhere is at home nowhere; Better a slice of bread at home than an whole cow abroad.

[56] Virgil Nemoianu, *The Taming of Romanticism: European Literature and the Age of Biedermeier* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984).

capacity to become a ruling nation alongside the Germans and Hungarians in the monarchy, but also to legitimize their claim to authority with the Czech national community. Taken together, these five chapters provide a global history of Czech nation building, showing that debates about mass emigration, clothed in the trappings of colonization, provided Czech liberals a guise in which to exhibit their own national ambitions as part of the wider project of European expansion.

As its title suggests, the first chapter explains why emigration mattered. Timing had everything to do with it. It was in the aftermath of 1848, when Czech patriots and the Austrian state both turned from political drama to a more organic approach to development, that peasants and artisans began to emigrate in large numbers from southern Bohemia's villages and small towns. Those families who departed the homeland were neither wealthy nor impoverished, but belonged to the lower half of the middle class, small landholders struggling to compete or artisans who feared for their independent livelihood. Significantly, they were almost exclusively Czech-speakers. The Austrian state reacted ambivalently to the exodus, refusing to address the social and economic issues underlying mass emigration, and decided instead to engage in a futile campaign against the agents of foreign shipping companies. Emigration reached crisis proportions by the second half of the decade and became a daily reminder of the economic stagnation, growing unemployment, and inflation that plagued Austria during the 1850s. In this way, emigrants made plain the failure of neoabsolutism to deliver on its promise of providing material prosperity in exchange for political passivity—the very premise upon which the regime based its existence.

The first wave of mass emigration represented no less an existential crisis for the emerging Czech national movement. Czech activists set out to recruit peasants and artisans for their nation-building efforts precisely at a time when members of this very class began to abandon Bohemia in droves. In patriotic journalism of the 1850s one finds Czech entrepreneurs advocating ethnic solidarity as a strategy to consolidate "Czech capital" against that which they labeled as foreign, Viennese, German, and Jewish. In the countryside and small towns, national activists advocated the establishment of cooperative credit unions from peasant and artisan savings—nationhood was the glue that would hold the project together. Emigration upset this plan, as thousands of Czechs withdrew their savings instead to make a new start abroad. If emigration stood for the stagnation of economic and social life under neoabsolutism, for Czech patriots it symbolized the dangerous penetration of "foreign" markets into rural Bohemian and provided a vexing example of popular indifference to the national cause.

The patriotic stance on the issue of mass emigration, implicit in the first chapter, comes to the forefront in Chapter Two, "The Emigrant Narrative." First articulated on the theatrical stage, the emigrant narrative presented a tale of departure and return: the departure of indifferent peasants who leave for America only to come back, after much suffering, with a new understanding of home and an appreciation for the national community. The emigrant narrative contrasted the familiar values of *domov*, "homeland," with the exotic dangers of *cizina*, "foreign lands," and warned lower-class compatriots never to cross the line between the two. Emigrants were placed in the company of gypsies, Indians, and even religious fanatics who transgressed the boundary between *domov* and *cizina.* Most nefarious of all, however, was the figure of the emigration agent, the "unscrupulous" representative of foreign shipping interests, himself a representative of "German-Jewish" capital that fed upon peasant suffering. Although formulated as a fictional device for the stage, this chapter shows the emigrant narrative itself migrating onto the pages of Czech journals, crossing the line from fiction to fact where it shaped social experience and perceptions of mass emigration during the 1850s and after.

There were variations on the theme, of course, and the following chapters describe attempts by Czech patriots and government officials to take control of emigration. Chapter Three initiates a long discussion of *kolonisace,* "colonization," a word whose deep ambiguity provided Czech liberals a means to refashion working-class emigration as a collective project of national expansion. Drawing from memoirs, emigrant letters, newspapers, and encyclopedias this chapter describes three efforts to organize emigration and concentrate settlement during the neoabsolutist era. Each one involved groups who lived in relatively close proximity to the communities affected by mass emigration. Each also drew from the language of colonization in order to transform labor migration into a national asset. Provincial officials in Bohemia provide the first example. Unlike their counterparts in Vienna, local authorities could not ignore the social realities that gave rise to mass emigration. Yet with their hands tied by political ossification under neoabsolutism, they were in no position to advocate thoroughgoing reform. Instead, the Bohemian governor and district prefects devised plans to remove impoverished weavers and unemployed workers from their overpopulated districts to the underdeveloped parts of Hungary. These attempts to relieve social tension by means of internal colonization crashed against the rock of government suspicion and popular ambivalence. Unable to win the favor of Vienna or to enthuse potential colonists, provincial authorities were never able to realize their plans.

No figure was more abused in the emigration debate than that of the agent of foreign shipping companies. It is all the more surprising, then, to find among the "unscrupulous agents" one of the leading Czech patriots of his day. Alois Kareš earned a fortune working for shipping companies in Bremen, yet he also cultivated a reputation as a conscientious Czech through his many donations to patriotic charities and other worthy causes. The conspiracy thought up by Kareš and his associates to concentrate Czech settlement somewhere in the American West is another example of how colonization shaped the emigration debate. For the patriotic agent, namely, colonization offered a means to transform support for emigration into a patriotic cause. The physician and publicist František Cyril Kampelík, the third example offered in the chapter, adopted a similar approach at the end of the decade, when he published a set of "industrial proposals" that repeated the internal colonization scheme of provincial authorities, although now in the language of Czech nationalism. Like Kareš, Kampelík believed labor migration to be an inevitable consequence of capitalism and encouraged his compatriots to take control of demographic shifts. However fruitless they might have been, colonization schemes provided convenient escape routes from contradictions between ideology and actual social conditions. No less significantly, they projected frustrated political desires onto a distance canvas.

Colonization, introduced to the rhetoric of Czech nationalism during the 1850s, continued to shape developments into the following decade. Chapter Four expands the geographical scope of the study to capture the fantasy of a prospering Czech colony in the Far East. "For Our Slavonic Future" recounts one of the stranger events in Czech cultural history, the attempt to pioneer Slavic expansion into the Orient by settling Russia's eastern frontier with Czechs who had earlier emigrated to America. Between 1861 and 1863, amid the onset of a second wave of mass emigration from Bohemia, polemics raged in the liberal Czech press about a plan to direct emigration from North America to the distant borderlands of imperial Russia. The fantastical vision involved Russian officials, Czech politicians in Bohemia, and ethnic leaders in the United States in an effort as delusional as it was ambitious: to secure for thousands of American Czechs territory along the Russian border with Manchuria where a "New Čechia" might arise under the patronage of the Tsar. This chapter analyzes newspaper debates through the lens of Orientalism, arguing that visions of a Czech civilizing mission abroad legitimized claims to power within the

national community at home while at the same time contributing to the formation of an ethnic leadership among Czechs in the United States. By creating a contrasting identity through the employment of a shared European colonial discourse, in other words, the debate about Amur settlement provided ethnic elites in Bohemia and in America the opportunity to perform their role as leaders.

The 1860s represented a time of political uncertainty in the Habsburg realm. Everyone knew that neoabsolutism had collapsed and all expected important reforms to follow, but no one could predict the direction that these reforms would take and how far they would go. The "Amur dream" expressed this feeling of uncertainty. Chapter Five, "California in the Caucasus," examines a parallel endeavor less than a decade later, the effort to redirect emigration to Russian territory on the Black Sea coast. By 1868, however, the Habsburg Empire had undergone profound and painful transformations that lent a new relevance to Czech colonial discourse. Defeated by Prussian armies in 1866, the monarchy abandoned any hope of playing a leading role in Central European affairs. One year later, the *Ausgleich,* a "compromise" between Austria and the Hungarian estates, divided the Empire into a Dual Monarchy. As a concession to German liberals, the Austrian government announced a new constitution in 1867, which transformed the monarchy into a constitutional state (recognizing, among other things, the right to emigrate).

No less fanciful than its predecessor, the plan to establish a (Czech) California on the northern foothills of the Caucasus reflected this new reality and shaped the language of nationhood during this important political transition. After briefly examining the new political culture in Bohemia during the 1860s, which replaced learned treatises with a language of mass spectacle and publicly displayed emotion, the chapter recounts the 1867 journey of western Slavs to attend a Slavic Congress and ethnographic fair in Russia. The "pilgrimage to Moscow," as publicists referred to the event, belonged to that new political idiom of symbolic gesture amplified through the mass circulating political press. Rather than interpreting the pilgrimage straightforwardly as a protest against the *Ausgleich* of the same year, which it certainly was, this chapter focuses on reports sent home from the ethnographic fair in Moscow. Leading Czech political dailies published richly detailed descriptions of the artifacts and carefully dressed mannequins that populated the fairgrounds, concentrating not only on representations of Slavic peoples, but devoting special attention to the non-Slavic inhabitants of Siberia, Central Asia, and the Caucasus. By contrasting western Slavs with the exotic peoples of Asia, Czech liberals set themselves beside the Germans and Hungarians, now ruling nations in the Dual Monarchy, as equally European, equally civilized, and therefore equally legitimate in their demand for national sovereignty within the bounds of Empire. The last section of the chapter shifts from "scientific" descriptions of cultural difference to political efforts at cultural diffusion. In order to compete against other "high cultures," Czech liberals had to demonstrate their capacity to carry civilization to backward parts of the world. The chapter concludes by reconstructing the effort to direct working-class emigration to the Black Sea coast, where one enthusiast foresaw a new California emerging on the foothills of the Caucasus. By settling lower-class compatriots on the Russian frontier, liberals not only aimed to secure markets for "Czech capital" but, just as importantly, hoped to transform proletarians into productive members of the nation.

Chapter One

Why Emigration Mattered

Three Lessons

"Every truth requires its own garb," wrote Jakub Malý in 1852. "Not every truth is useful to everyone at all times," he added.[1] With an expression of ambivalence, the patriot distanced himself from the politics of 1848. Malý directed his comments specifically to Karel Havlíček-Borovský, the emblem of liberal journalism, a man whom he admired but nevertheless accused of doing "great harm" to Czech literature. Not that Malý questioned the content of Havlíček's liberal ideals. But like many conservatively minded Czechs, he objected to the manner in which democrats had pursued their goals in 1848.[2] Prague's June uprising that year had overwhelmed Czech patriotic society and demonstrated to liberals the danger of even restrained democratic activism. For six confusing days, tumult and violence overtook the streets as workers and students occupied the city center. Popular passions upset the carefully orchestrated Slavic Congress, the Czech liberals' rejoinder to the German parliament in Frankfurt, and made the Czech liberal program unworkable. Although his comments ostensibly concerned recent literary efforts, one easily discerned in Malý's essay a critique of broader cultural and political trends. Havlíček stood for a discredited form of political activism, one that Malý held to be unsuited to the tasks of the present. With satire and sharp polemics, Havlíček and others had only enflamed the temperament of the masses. "Especially the lower class or readers," said Malý, "who have spoiled their stomachs through writings too strongly spiced, so that milder fare, though it be healthier and more substantial, no longer appeals to them."[3] In order to cultivate the Czech public, to provide it with sustenance it might digest, the patriot had to offer the people a diet of consistency, steadfastness, and dignity rather than cater to the common passions.

Despite the political setback of 1848, Malý looked upon the past four years with satisfaction and felt optimistic about the future. "Our nationality has expanded its territory remarkably," he concluded in the essay, "it has achieved public acceptance and, as a result, Czech literature has changed from well-nigh private speculation to a truly natural and organic means of developing the nation. We are on a good path […]. With our patriotic strivings we have forfeited the luster of poetry and bare prose remains. That luster, however, was mere illusion, and prose is the reality." Malý's essayistic review of recent Czech literature marked a turning point for patriotic society. After 1848, Czech liberals transitioned from open political engagement to a more gradual process of nation building, one that better corresponded to the

[1] Jakub Malý, "Přehled literární činnosti Čechů od roku 1848 až do nynější doby," *Časopis českého museum* 26, no. 3 (1852): 88.
[2] On the reaction Czech liberals and conservatives in the aftermath of 1848, see Otto Urban *Die tschechische Gesellschaft 1848 bis 1918* (Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 1994), 82-87; 186-187; See also Peter Bugge, "Czech Nation-Building, National Self-Perception and Politics" (PhD diss., University of Aarhus, 1994), 93
[3] Jakub Malý, "Přehled literární činnosti Čechů od roku 1848 až do nynější doby," *Časopis českého museum* 26, no. 4 (1852): 27.

realities of neoabsolutism. The transition from the cultural endeavors of the National Revival to a phase of national activism, and, finally, to nationalism as a mass social movement was not as sudden as some scholars have imagined.[4] It occurred fitfully, and 1848 represented more of a false start than a revolutionary breakthrough. Like Malý, patriots were painfully aware that the bulk of the people had escaped the nation's symbolic embrace in 1848. Mass national agitation had failed, at least temporarily, to recruit the lower classes to the national cause, and now Czech patriots were advised to avoid overly spicy fare, to forego politics by adopting a more "organic and natural" diet of practical work. It was neither retreat nor resignation, but retrenchment—the pursuit of politics by other means. For all its poetry, the national idea in 1848 had been only luster. After the 1850s, the nation would become prosaic reality. In the meantime, Czechs were to clothe their truths modestly and present them selectively.

That was the lesson learned by Czech national leaders. The Austrian state also took stock after 1848. While Czech liberals sought to find a home between the aristocracy and working classes, the monarchy confronted the challenge of maintaining control over society during a time of rapid change. Modernization may be too broad a word and too strong, implying as it does the inexorability and uniformity of social change over time, yet the situation of Austria during the 1850s cannot be understood without it. This great transformation from a traditional to a recognizably modern society, in particular the rise of industry, integration of local markets into the world economy, secularization of power and politics, increased mobility, and an expanding public sphere, gave rise to the tensions that the state set out to master. How to survive this transition without losing its grip on power? That was the test faced by state authorities after 1848.

Neoabsolutism was their answer. Its axiom, "that political problems are but a negligible appendix to material questions," as historian Christoph Stölzl summarized it, conveyed the spirit in which Austria was governed during the 1850s.[5] The strategy adopted by the new Kaiser Franz Joseph and his Interior Minister, Alexander Bach, was to placate the liberal bourgeoisie by guaranteeing a steadily rising level of prosperity. Reform from above, rather than revolution from below, would force through the necessary social and economic change while bypassing politics to carefully guide society into modernity. The stability of this political system depended on the state's ability to guarantee material prosperity for all. Neoabsolutism experienced its era of ascent between 1849 and 1857, the so-called *Gründer- und Spekulationsperiode.* From the end of revolution's collapse to the first crisis that shook the world economy, it represented a program of centralization, unification, and modernization. Headed by the Kaiser and overseen by Bach, the Austrian state successfully consolidated power during this time, overcame provincial feudalism, integrated the Empire into the world market, and engaged in great power diplomacy. Success, however, was not long lasting. Because its foundation rested on the political apathy of the public, which in turn depended on economic prosperity, the authoritarian structure inevitably collapsed under the pressure of constant inflation, economic crisis, and, finally, a disastrous military campaign in 1859.

That broad layer of the population that social scientists call the working classes, not yet really a class at all but instead an assortment of all those excluded from the higher ranks of society, also took away a lesson from 1848. Of course, a group as varied as this could not present

[4] Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe,* esp. 44-45.
[5] Christoph Stölzl, *Die Ära Bach in Böhmen: Sozialgeschichtliche Studien zum Neoabsolutismus 1849-1859* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1971), 13, 57ff.

its knowledge in a programmatic fashion. Instead, working-class Bohemians (cottagers, weavers, servants, innkeepers, industrial workers and, above all, peasant-farmers and artisans) put their plans into motion by emigrating abroad. Collapse of revolution in 1848 and 1849, and the reaction that followed, removed any vestige of hope that conditions in the monarchy might improve. During the first wave of mass emigration to affect the Austrian Empire between 1851 and 1859, some sixty thousand Czech-speaking peasants and handworkers left the Bohemian lands. More than anything else, the departure of so many subjects from the monarchy demonstrated the false premise on which the argument for neoabsolutism rested. Even though political exiles formed but a very small minority of emigrants after 1848, one could portray mass labor migration as a collective act of protest. At least in part, emigration represented a reaction to conditions that predated 1848: the long and difficult transition from agriculture to industry left many farmers unable to support their families on their small plots of land; the integration of Bohemia into the world market meant that Bohemian farmers had to keep pace with producers from abroad; independent artisans found it impossible to compete with mechanized production. These accumulated tensions contributed to the popular revolt of 1848, and it is not a stretch to claim that emigration represented for the lower classes a continuation of 1848 by other means. Alongside the continuing struggle with long-term social transformation belonged the confrontation with peasant indebtedness and rampant inflation during the 1850s. In each of these cases, emigrants learned from 1848 and the aftermath, choosing to pick up and try their luck abroad.

The lesson learned by tens of thousands of working-class Czechs—that a better life was to be had elsewhere—contradicted the other two lessons. As a visible and dramatic demonstration of peoples lack of faith in the future, emigration symbolized the Habsburg state's failure to make good on its promise (and existential premise) of rising prosperity. Czech patriots, who learned in 1848 that their project could not move forward without the support of the broader masses, watched as thousands of artisans and farmers left the homeland. These conflicted visions of the future produced a tension from which the emigration question arose. And it is this origin of this conflict between the state, Czech society, and the Bohemian laboring classes that the present chapter addresses.

Neoabsolutism and the Transformation of Czech Society

Neoabsolutism was a modernizing project. This is true despite the false promises of governments, the unchecked power of leaders, and the pervasiveness of their police forces that has led neoabsolutism to be portrayed as a betrayal of the ideals of 1848. Historians most often describe the new authoritarianism in Central Europe as reactionary, backwards-looking, or even a mistake of history—the turning point at which history failed to turn.[6] Closer to Bohemia, Peter Bugge has headed a chapter on the subject, "the abortive year of politics."[7] As elsewhere, the revolution in Austria was ultimately quashed and even the most basic political rights as envisioned by democrats failed to materialize. Although these facts cannot be disputed, it would be a mistake to interpret neoabsolutism as the simple termination of an embryonic liberalism. To

[6] A.J.P. Taylor, *The Course of German History: A Survey of the Development of Germany since 1815* (New York: Capricorn Books, 1961 [1946]), 68.
[7] Bugge, "Czech Nation-Building," 60.

do so would miss the progressive aspects of the regime. Many of the leading men in the reorganized government, including the new Interior Minister Alexander Bach, considered themselves liberals and in many ways used their positions of power to reshape society according to a liberal worldview.[8] Opening Austria to the world market belonged among the central projects of neoabsolutism, as did the attempt to stimulate domestic industry by creating a system of wage labor through pressure on the guilds and releasing peasants from obligatory labor. Bach saw to the integration of Cisleithania in the German *Zollverein* (tariff union) and broke the back of feudal power in the provinces. If it seems a paradox to label a repressive state without a constitution liberal, one must understand the irony involved in doing so. In these respects neoabsolutism can be seen rather as the state cooption of the liberal project, or even as the realization of liberal aspirations minus the democratic facade.

Nor was national life during the 1850s "in a state of suspended animation," as the historian Miroslav Hroch described it.[9] It was not the case that Czech society entered a period of hibernation only to reemerge at the beginning of the constitutional era in the early 1860s. What 1848 had shown, after all, was the incomplete state of Czech society. Without a social base upon which to rest its claim to authority, Czech national leaders of 1848 sought refuge in symbolic ritual and the halls of the Slavic Congress. The revolutionary year did not signal the arrival of a mass national movement, but rather the persistence of traits and habits inherited from the National Revival period. It was only during neoabsolutism that Czech patriotic society would find its social base and later emerge in the following decade as a full-fledged national movement.

In an era of authoritarianism and centralization the state was bound to play a decisive role in determining the contours of this journey. The growing presence of the Austrian state in provincial relations—the abolition of *robota* (obligatory labor duties), for instance, or the end of seigniorial justice and formal equality before the law—represents a case of modernization from above. Nonetheless, it was the activism of a "middle group" of Czech-speaking peasant farmers and urban artisans, caught between large landowners and industrialists of Bohemia and a mass of indebted peasants, which gave rise to a modern Czech national ideology. The outlook of this social class framed debates about lower class mobility during the 1850s and after, just as mass emigration shaped the language of national belonging.

Progress as conceived by the neoabsolutist regime and the development of national life during the decade can best be seen in the transformation of rural society. It counts among Bach's greatest accomplishments that he succeeded in overcoming noble resistance to thoroughgoing reorganization of the countryside. The period of agrarian reform began with the abolition of serfdom on September 7, 1848, an imperial edict which relieved half a million Bohemian peasants from obligatory labor duties, and was more or less completed within five years.[10] The goals of the reform, from the government's perspective, were to increase agricultural production by freeing up labor power, introduce a money economy, and apply market principles to production.

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[8] Bach himself had long counted among the liberal camp. The minister of trade, Karl von Bruck, and the interior minister until 1849, Franz Stadion, were both liberal figures. A good number of former radical democrats also made peace (and often careers) with the regime. Stölzl, *Die Ära Bach in Böhmen*, 20, 59-60.

[9] Hroch, *Social Preconditions*, 44.

[10] Peter Huemos, *Agrarische Interessen und Nationale Politik in Böhmen 1848-1889* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1979), 6-21; František Kutnar, "Pokroková generace rolnictva z doby po zrušení poddanství," *Sociologie a historie zemědělství* 2 (1966), 39-52; Stölzl, *Die Ära Bach in Böhmen*, 25-55; Urban, *Die tschechische Gesellschaft*, 87-95.

With the abolition of labor duties, reiterated in the octroyed constitution of 1849 and confirmed by the New Year's Eve Patent (*Silvesterpatent*) of 1851, which provided the legal basis for neoabsolutism, subject and lord became (partially, and only on paper) equal citizens. Whether working one's own small plot of land or overseeing an entire manorial operation, both were now effectively independent farmers. Landowners, however, enjoyed the advantage of being compensated for their sacrifice, with some families receiving upwards of a million gulden in exchange for the lost labor of their peasants. The following numbers provide an idea of the sums involved: The Schwarzenberg estate received 2,212,290 gulden in compensation; the Lobkowitz estate 1,205,429 gulden; the Waldstein estate 875,000 gulden; the Lichtenstein estate 890,747 gulden; and the Kinsky estate 604,940 gulden. The average journeyman at the time earned between 100 and 150 gulden annually.[11]

While estate owners, the true beneficiaries of emancipation, received large sums of capital to provide a start in commercial agriculture, former serfs, now nominally free peasant farmers, were compelled to produce for market in order to pay off the debt incurred through their liberation. Indebtedness, fear of pauperization, and the desire to increase profits motivated small land-owners to increase yields and maximize incomes by intensifying the use of land, investing in newer machinery, and experimenting with techniques of fertilization. Realizing that social prestige now rested on economic success, landowners also invested in the development of their estates. In this way, through the legislated indebtedness of the peasantry and a transfer of wealth upward to great landowners, the government successfully introduced a market economy to the countryside.

For the peasants, emancipation proved to be a mixed blessing. Although relieved of feudal obligations, they had also lost their feudal privileges. Land-owning nobles were no longer responsible for the welfare of their charges, common lands were enclosed, and ever more peasants sank to the ranks of rural proletariat. Under the burden of debt and market relations, peasants without enough land to produce for market became cottagers, domestic servants, or day laborers. It was this specter of downward social mobility and impoverishment that would drive tens of thousands to emigrate.

Although smaller in number, conservative elite among the peasantry benefited from agrarian reform. The latter, often buying up the land of struggling smallholders, prospered under the new order and became at least passive supporters of the Bach regime. The abolition of *robota* satisfied the most important demand of the peasantry and transformed the more prosperous land-holders among them into a conservative force. Describing the reactions in his community to the Sylvester Patent and other legislation signaling the beginning of neoabsolutism, a peasant informant from western Bohemia indicated that Bach had succeeded in his aims; "The neighbors said to me that they don't make a big deal of it, […] so long as it affects only imperial authorities; but were they again made to provide labor service, they would sooner be struck dead." [12] If the Bach administration did not tamper with the emancipation edict, they could count on that class not to oppose further government reforms, or, more precisely, not to object as liberal concessions were pealed back one-by-one. Agrarian reform directly resulted in the withering away of the small peasantry and consequent polarization of rural society. The peasant elite competed against big landowners while small-holding peasants and the rural proletariat

[11] Stölzl, *Die Ära Bach in Böhmen*, 29; on the average wage of various professions during the 1850s, see Stölzl, *Die Ära Bach in Böhmen*, 343.

[12] Regional prefect in Pilsen to governor Mecséry, April 2, 1852. Cited in Stölzl, *Die Ära Bach in Böhmen*, 26n10.

struggled for survival. Feudal hierarchy in the countryside had been replaced by antagonistic social classes.

The reshuffling of economic relations carried implications for national existence as well. During the period of agrarian reform, the Patriotic-Economic Society (*Patriotisch-ökonomische Gesellschaft*/*Vlastenecká hospodářská společnost*), originally a feudal-oriented association from the previous century, became a province-wide organization dedicated to modernizing agricultural practices through campaigns of popular enlightenment.[13] By the mid-1850s the association was the largest of its kind in Bohemia, with numerous subchapters and over two thousand members.[14] The society propagated the application of science to agriculture and published two provincial-wide newspapers, one in Czech and one in German, in order to spread its message.

One fact, however profoundly affected later developments: the majority of the society's subchapters were located in Czech-speaking regions. Popular enlightenment therefore entailed the organization and propagation of commercial agricultural techniques to peasants in the Czech language. This demographic fact would prove a valuable wedge for the small yet influential peasant elite in its struggle within the Patriotic-Economic Society against the better-connected, wealthier, German-speaking estate holders. By reiterating the goals of the progressive movement in the idiom of nationhood and claiming to speak in the name of the peasantry as a whole on the basis of national identity, this class of propertied peasants would redraw agrarian reform as a project of national renewal.[15]

The Czech-language press was originally designed to promote pro-government reform in the countryside. In effect, it became an indispensable aid for nationalizing the rural progressive movement.[16] Of the two newspapers published by the Patriotic-Economic Association, the Czech journal won an especially devoted readership. [17] At first named *Tydeník* (The Weekly), "A Journal for Field, Forest and Domestic Economy to Benefit the Peasant Estate," the paper initially sought to improve agricultural practices in order to supply towns and industry with cheaper agricultural products. After the rural activist and patriot Filip Stanislav Kodym took over in 1852, the journal shifted emphasis from supporting urban industry to improving the condition of the peasant farmer. Kodym enlightened his rural compatriots not only through the many articles and brochures he wrote, but also with his popular "field sermons" (*polní kázání*), lectures he delivered to farmers directly on their fields. Renamed *Hospodářské noviny* (Agricultural Gazette) in 1854, the journal continued to explain modern equipment, fertilization methods, and to report on the activities of farmers' associations. Of crucial importance for the development of rural society were letters sent in from across Bohemia and Moravia, composed by peasant farmers who wanted to exchange experiences and opinions. By publishing the letters together with the names and address of their authors, Kodym facilitated direct contact between Czechs in

[13] Kutnar, "Pokroková generace rolnictva," 40.

[14] During the 1850s, chapters were opened in Budějovice (Budweis), Pardubice (Pardubitz), Cheb (Eger), Česká lípa (Böhmisch-Leipa), Liberec (Reichenberg), Beroun (Beraun), Hradiště (Münchengrätz), Jičín (Gitschen), Sedlčany (Seltschan), Žatec (Saaz), Louny (Laun), Třebíč (Trebitsch), (Jungbunzlau), Kolín (Köln an der Elbe), Příbram (Freiberg in Böhmen), Dobřichovice (Dobrichowitz), Šluknov (Schluckenau), and Plzeň (Pilsen). Stölzl, *Die Ära Bach in Böhmen*, 43.

[15] Kutnar, "Pokroková generace rolnictva," 40-41.

[16] Stölzl, *Die Ära Bach in Böhmen*, 47-49.

[17] The German paper, *Wochenblatt der Land-, Forst-, und Hauswirtschaft für den Bürger und Landmann,* was not so widely read. Kutnar, "Pokroková generace rolnictva," 40-41.

the countryside. For its social inclusion, geographical expanse, and ability to bring readers into connection, *Hospodářské noviny* earned the nickname "parliament of the peasants."[18]

Like Kodym's paper, the journal *Posel z Prahy*, edited since 1857 by the jurist František Šimáček under the pseudonym Vojtěch Bělák, was also read by a large and enthusiastic public.[19] Šimáček concerned himself with questions of culture, education, and language as well as agricultural reform. With the motto beneath its masthead proclaiming "Work Yields Prosperity and Strength. With United Forces. The Same Law for Everyone!", the journal made clear its liberal stance.[20] Supporters of both papers included mostly wealthy peasants, sometimes holders of local public office, and hailed overwhelmingly from the relatively dense and developed region of central and eastern Bohemia.[21] A smaller but not insignificant number land tenants, small estate owners, millers, country priests, and teachers also subscribed. Common to all the subscribers of was the fact that they belonged to the younger generation.

Czech-language periodicals distributed in the countryside necessarily remained aloof from politics during the Bach era, although the very fact of their existence fostered journalistic practices and networks of readership that would prove central to the nationalization of political discourse in subsequent decades.[22] A list of subscribers and contributors provides an accurate picture of the national movement's early backers. The journals circulated in precisely those regions that became central to national life in the 1860s, and it was in their pages that the emigration debate initially took shape. With association chapters in places like Pilsen, Budějovice, Příbram, and Pardubice, the Patriotic Economic Society placed its members directly in the centers of mass emigration. In this way, the progressive movement provided a training ground for many of the Czech nation's future leaders, not a few having gained their first experiences as activists in the agricultural reform movement.

Together with this infrastructural aspect of the progressive movement came an important ideological revision. During the early stage of the National Revival, the concept *lid* ("the people," particularly of the countryside) figured only marginally to patriotic activity. True, it was the rural people who had continued to speak Czech even after Bohemia's literate culture had been Germanized in the seventeenth century. But rural Bohemians spoke a vulgarized version of early modern written Czech while those members of the urban intelligentsia who were engaged in reviving the language preferred to draw from archaic texts or to employ loan translations from German and borrowings from neighboring Slavic literatures. Scholars remained aloof from the rural Czech speaker, another reminder that national society as it existed in the first decades of the century was constructed as much in opposition to the contemporary Czech folk culture in the countryside as it was to the German-speaking society of the cities.[23]

With the younger generation of the 1830s, however, the rural Czech speaker assumed a central place in the program of patriotic agitation.[24] *Lid*, previously one symbol of the fatherland

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[18] Milena Beránková, *Dějiny žurnalistiky: Český periodický tisk do roku 1918* (Prague: Nakladatelství novinář, 1981), 137-138.
[19] Beránková, *Dějiny žurnalistiky*, 132n61.
[20] As well as loyalty to the monarchy; Franz Joseph chose *Viribus Unitis* (With United Forces) as his motto after coming to power.
[21] Kutnar, "Pokroková generace rolnictva," 41.
[22] Stölzl, *Die Ära Bach in Böhmen*, 44-45.
[23] Macura, *Znamení zrodu*, 39, 118.
[24] Miroslav Hroch, "From Ethnic Group toward the Modern Nation: The Czech Case," *Nations and Nationalism* 10 nos. 1 and 2, (2004), 95-107; Miroslav Hroch, *Na prahu národní existence: Touha a skutečnost* (Prague: Mladá fronta, 1999), 221-224.

among many, became the crucial figure of continuity linking present revivalist efforts to an early modern high culture. It was then that the "thatched roof cottage" became the symbolic cradle of the modern nation. When Czech-speaking peasants migrated from the countryside to the cities, so the story went, they encountered a foreign environment, cosmopolitan and Germanized, against which the simple but authentic Czech peasant instinctually rebelled. This was the world of Josef Kajetán Tyl, who belonged among the most influential cultural figures of his era, and his 1834 satire about artisan life in Prague, the *Fidlovačka.* And like Tyl, patriots set for themselves the task of advancing the interests of the *lid.* Now, as Peter Bugge writes, they spoke "not only *to the people* as the object of an education project, but also figuratively *from the people* on behalf of the national community."[25]

The events of 1848 signaled a new inclusiveness in the national movement as Czech patriots appealed directly to the peasantry for support. Many of the petitions to reach the National Committee in Prague that year arrived from the countryside.[26] Peasants and rural handworkers as well as millers and pub owners voiced their political demands as Czechs, took part in public demonstrations for Bohemian state rights and were even among those elected to the Reichsrat in June.[27]

But after legislation abolished serfdom and labor duties in September, the large mass of the peasantry lost interest in social and political demands. As reported in a dispatch by an official in Mladá Boleslav to Bohemian governor Karl Mecséry in May 1849, "[the peasant] will sign petitions of the agitators to whom he feels himself bound for the abolition of the mandatory labor service and beer levies out of gratitude, but outside of discussion and signatures he will not undertake anything to jeopardize his life or personal freedom." [28] The sudden turn to indifference left many patriots cold.

The shock of Czech liberals at the uncoordinated uprising of students and workers in June 1848, which upset the Slavic Congress, also betrayed a new vulnerability to social questions. "I do not know of any event in memory," František Palacký later reflected, "which would have had more fateful and more harmful consequences for the nation than the 'Whitsunday uprising'."[29] The rebellion made the national program as outlined by Palacký and the National Assembly simply unworkable. Rather than marking the transition to a period of mass national agitation, the revolution of 1848 revealed the very limited reach of the nationalist message. It also made clear the necessity of better incorporating the masses into the national project. As a result, an ideological revision that began in the 1830s rapidly accelerated pace during the 1850s; not only did patriots speak on behalf of the people, they sought actively to recruit the *lid* for their nation-building efforts.

This new preoccupation of Czech patriotic society with the peasantry can best be seen in the language used by patriots themselves. Progressive voices ignored the reality of a transformed peasantry split into antagonistic camps: the prospering few, and the many more hopelessly stuck in poverty. Instead, they celebrated the peasant as "the sole, but significant, power standing ominously behind national endeavors and the only one to have a true future, the burgher hardly

[25] Bugge, "Czech Nation-Building," 25.
[26] František Roubík, *Petice venkovského lidu z Čech k Národnímu výboru* (Prague, 1954).
[27] Heumos, *Agrarische Interessen*, 7-8.
[28] K.A. Bunzlau an Mecséry, May 15, 1849. Cited in Stölzl, *Die Ära Bach in Böhmen*, 27n12.
[29] František Palacký, "Doslow," in *Radhost: Sbírka spisův drobných* volume 3 (Prague: Nákladem B. Tempský, 1873), 281.

excepted, for in Bohemia the burgher is for the most part a peasant living in the cities."[30] The category *peasant* was universalized, its uniformity emphasized, and it was made to stand in solidarity with the aims of national renewal. When Jan Palacký, son of the historian, described Bohemian burghers as urban peasants, he did so as an expression of respect.

A contributor to *Posel z Prahy* in 1859 elaborated on the same idea when he claimed that the Czech nation in Bohemia and Moravia had survived over the centuries thanks to the peasantry. "The aristocracy," he wrote, "having partially lost memory of its original nationality, has lost its predominant position in the nation […] the burgher is in part of good stock and still capable of rejuvenation, although his national character has been rubbed away by contact with business and industry. The peasant alone remains the still-intact offspring of his ancestors."[31] Just as capitalism, pushed forward by government-backed agrarian reform, was in the process of fracturing the social landscape of the Bohemian countryside, pathfinders of the national movement had rediscovered within themselves the peasantry as a link—*the* link—between a thoroughly transformed present and a distant national past. By glossing over social antagonisms within the peasantry, the national idea in its new agrarian garb provided the ideological cover necessary for the peasant elite to further its aim of modernizing the countryside.[32] National activists coded their social ascent, which occurred in competition with the large estates and at the cost of mass impoverishment in the countryside, as a project of democratization and patriotic renewal.

In the meantime, capitalism was dramatically refashioning the world of the burgher and artisan in Bohemia's towns and cities. Initially, the government's strategy of preempting calls for democratic reform by guaranteeing social stability and delivering economic prosperity to all (relevant) social classes appeared to be working. The peasantry had been neutralized as a political force through agrarian reform (although only to lay the foundation for future polarization along national lines). During the period of economic upswing between 1849 and 1857, the more affluent bourgeois circles had also been placated by the "democratization of capital," the increased availability of state credit. In a time of transition from state capitalism to private capitalism, Bohemia's urban burghers took advantage of opened markets, liberalized access to credit, and the release of cheap labor-power following agrarian reform in order to found new industries and realize heretofore unseen profits. The sudden inflow of precious metals from California and Australia and more generally the atmosphere of stability following 1848 added to the positive effects of agrarian reform.[33] *Konjunkturoptimismus*, "business confidence," was the defining feature of the period's *Zeitgeist*.[34] With an eye to France, Bohemia's big bourgeoisie developed a taste for Bonapartism in politics. Cosmopolitanism triumphed over provincialism and national particularism among this class. The Bach administration found an important pillar of support among capitalist entrepreneurs—at least, until the neoabsolutist combination of liberal economic policies and authoritarian politics began to crack amidst recession in 1855 and, in conjunction with the first worldwide economic crisis, finally collapsed two years later.[35]

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[30] Jan Palacký, *Böhmischen Skizzen von einem Landeskinde* (Leitomischl, 1861), 53.
[31] "Svobodná práce a její prospěchy," *Posel z Prahy* 5, no. 5 (June 1859), 389-390.
[32] Kutnar, "Pokroková generace rolnictva," 50.
[33] One might add that the neoabsolutist regime's need to deliver on its own promises of economic growth provided another, if less tangible, impetus to deliver prosperity. Stölzl, *Die Ära Bach in Böhmen*, 100.
[34] Stölzl, *Die Ära Bach in Böhmen*, 64-72.
[35] Stölzl, *Die Ära Bach in Böhmen*, 57-58.

Economic growth was predicated upon the creation of new markets for investment. In order to stimulate market activity, the state needed to provide credit by issuing state bonds. This it sought to do by concentrating capital in Viennese banks, which was certainly in keeping with the centralizing imperative of the Bach era. The contrary desire of many investors from Bohemia, large land owners looking to dispense with capital gained from peasant emancipation, to bring the province's industry into closer connection with the German economies struck Austrian authorities as deeply suspicious. A closer alliance of the Bohemian elite with states from the German lands, either in politics or in economics, fell beyond the limits of what the Bach administration would allow. The imperial government prohibited the establishment of provincial banks, such as one planned for Prague. Although investors from Bohemia initially viewed financial centralism as a burden, eventually they managed to benefit from the new arrangement by taking advantage of traditional contacts.[36]

Middle-level, petty bourgeois investors from the province, unable to compete with the quickly emerging moneyed aristocracy, were less fortunate.[37] That ethnic distinctions here overlapped with inner-class tensions would have fateful consequences for the development of capitalism and national politics in Bohemia. Against Viennese capital, marked as German, there emerged a self-consciously Czech class of small investors and peasant land holders struggling for economic survival. Backing up this dissatisfaction was a serious shortage of credit on the provincial level, for which the smaller capitalists in Bohemia compensated by initiating a campaign of national self-help.[38] This state of affairs led to frustration with the status quo among the petty bourgeoisie in Bohemia, a resentment saturated with anti-capitalist sentiment and that, given the particularities of Austrian economic life, acquired anti-Semitic and anti-German overtones.[39]

The materialism of the 1850s thus contributed to the radicalization of the Czech-speaking petty bourgeoisie who, unable to compete with Viennese capital, intensified their appeals to the national idea as a way to safeguard social status within the province. The campaign for national self-help was directed above all at the class of handworkers, local merchants, and small investors—those who possessed sufficient capital to stand on their own, but not enough to feel secure in their footing. Clerks, teachers, and lower clericals who suffered from inflation due to fixed incomes must also be added to the list. Loss of socioeconomic status—a rather dry term obfuscating feelings of anxiety, anger, and humiliation—provide new incentive to deepen ties with the national movement. Even the state bureaucracy, no longer the route to social ascent that it once was, began to lose its assimilatory function and member became targets of national campaigning.[40]

At a time when the guild no longer provided a source of stability in the trades, artisanal independence increasingly gave way to dependence upon capital and the caprice of the market. Fear of proletarianization among independent artisans spread as competition arose from centralized factory production, open markets, rampant inflation, and periodic crises. A deep pessimism set in regarding the future prospects of the trades. Rather than become life-long wage laborers, thousands decided to try their chances overseas. Others found in nationhood a response to these feelings of doubt, and the national movement became an integrative factor taking the

[36] Stölzl, *Die Ära Bach in Böhmen*, 77.
[37] Stölzl, *Die Ära Bach in Böhmen*, 82-92passim; 96.
[38] Stölzl, *Die Ära Bach in Böhmen*, 68.
[39] Stölzl, *Die Ära Bach in Böhmen*, 88.
[40] Stölzl, *Die Ära Bach in Böhmen*, 112-120.

place of a vanished guild system. The fact that the vast majority of handworkers in Bohemia happened to be Czech-speakers, an ethnic division of labor long observed by travelers to the region, made it possible to frame tensions between labor and capital as nation conflict. This was precisely the strategy adopted by the self-help movement. By offering concrete solutions to the immediate problems of an anxious middle-class, national activists sought to fill the vacuum created by sunken prestige, loss of independence, and the absence of guild solidarity. Emigration would reveal the limits of their nation-building efforts.

Just as he had advocated the progressive cause in the countryside, the publicist František Šimáček used the pages of his *Posel z Prahy* to further the campaign of national self-help in the cities and small towns. Those lacking capital, claimed Šimáček, should join together in solidarity and mutual liability according to the slogan, "one for all and all for one." The self-help movement envisioned the establishment of cooperative credit associations (*záložny*) in Bohemia and Moravia so as to provide the capital necessary to build up the national, ethnically Czech economy.[41]

Alongside this vision of national self-sufficiency came a deep ambivalence toward capitalism itself. "Woe to the man who falls into the raven's claws," Šimáček wrote of foreign (i.e. non-Czech) money lenders, "for he will have every last bit of flesh torn from him. […] Such a type understands his trade well, manages to found a small pawnshop and soon thereafter becomes a true baron; for he knows no difference between friend and foe and is more relentless than death."[42] This will not be the last time we find the grim embodiment of capital characterized as German or Jewish (and often both). Elsewhere, for example, Šimáček's paper reported the misery of the Czech handworker who is forced to "pawn his last shred to the Jew for a few groschen."[43]

This banishment of capitalism's ill effects onto the ethnic other smoothed over contradictions awkward for the petty bourgeoisie, a class committed to maintaining the status quo yet living in fear of it. Unable either to oppose capitalism or to make peace with it, the Czech petty-bourgeois reiterated the effects of capitalism in national terms. "Foreign agents" came to stand for all the uncertainties accompanying the introduction of capitalism to Bohemia, being a good Czech was offered as a solution. This petty bourgeois outlook expressed in nationally polarized terms would shape the emigration debate in Czech patriotic society. In turn, emigration would expose the limits of nationalist activism and reveal the ambivalent attitude of national leaders toward the rise of global capitalism.

The urban campaign of national self-help paralleled the agrarian progressive movement. Like its rural counterpart, the self-help movement laid the groundwork for a Czech national movement that would arise in the 1860s. Both in the countryside and in Bohemia's small towns, contacts were fostered between future national activists, networks of readers were established, and both campaigns had the effect of anchoring the national movement outside of Prague.[44] In each instance a segment of the smaller bourgeoisie, fearful of slipping to the status of proletariat, appealed to ethnically defined nationhood as a means of consolidating power within its sphere of

[41] The banks were to earn profits only by charging moderate interest. The rest of the profits were to be reinvested in the (Czech) community to build schools, libraries and so on. "Záložní kasy," *Posel z Prahy* 3, no. 4 (May 1857), 311-316.
[42] "Záložní či výpomocné kasy," *Posel z Prahy* 4, no. 7 (August 1858), 149.
[43] "Záložní kasy: Ústavy k pomožení stavu pracovnému, čili cesta k nabytí zámožnosti," *Posel z Prahy* 3, no. 4 (May 1857), 313.
[44] Stölzl, *Die Ära Bach in Böhmen*, 99.

interest. For the progressive rural elite, this meant establishing a claim to leadership of the peasantry by speaking in the name of the Czech nation. For the urban petty bourgeoisie this entailed mobilizing financial resources by appealing to notions of ethnic solidarity.

Over the course of the 1850s, Czech patriotic society secured a social base in the landholding peasantry and small manufacturers. In the allegiance of these classes to the national idea the way was prepared for the rise of nationalism as a political movement after the fall of neoabsolutism. The Czech national movement as it emerged from the 1850s was the petty-bourgeois cause of small local capital competing with big capital, ethnically coded as German, Jewish, and Viennese; it was driven by fear of downward social mobility and a desire to gloss over inner-class antagonisms. It forwarded a negative definition of national identity. To be a Czech patriot meant, above all, not to be German, not to be Jewish, and not to be accepted among the big bourgeoisie. Against the vampiric qualities of Viennese capital—without solidarity, willing to adopt any national guise so as to make a profit, ruthless and free of scruples—rural progressives posed the petty-bourgeois qualities of the "good Czech" as hard working, honest and helpful, and sentimentally attached to the homeland. These elemental qualities of Czech national identity—the idealization of rural life, anti-cosmopolitanism, and a petty bourgeois outlook—defined the terms of the emigration debate as it evolved during the 1850s and after.

The Onset of Mass Emigration

The exodus of Czech-speaking artisans and peasant farmers from Bohemian territory accompanied this process of social transformation at every stage. When patriots in the countryside and small towns turned to working-class Czechs with their message of ethnic solidarity and mutual aid, these very same masses began to leave the homeland for destinations overseas. A symbol of national indifference to patriots, and to everyone else a sign that the state had failed to deliver prosperity, the question of mass emigration gained significance during the 1850s that transcended its actual numbers. In order to understand the role played by lower-class mobility in the shaping of Czech national identity (explored further in Chapter Three), one must first know something about the emigrants' background. Who left the Bohemian lands? Where did they come from? Why did they leave?

Emigration from Bohemia can be seen as part of the old migration from western, central, and northern Europe. The onset of mass emigration from Bohemia occurred in tandem with the first distinct emigration wave to affect German-speaking Central Europe between 1846 and 1857.[45] Sparked by an agricultural crisis that affected peasants and craftsmen in 1846 and brought to a close by the first world financial crisis in 1857, this initial wave of mass labor migration carried nearly 1.3 million Central Europeans (mostly, but not exclusively, Germans) overseas, 85 percent of them bound for North America.[46] Long-term population growth, the rationalization of agriculture, and laissez-faire economics changed peasants into agricultural

[45] Klaus Bade identifies four distinct waves of nineteenth and early twentieth-century German emigration: 1846-1857, 1864-1873, 1880-1893, and one final surge in 1923. Klaus J. Bade, "German Transatlantic Emigration in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," in *European Expansion and Migration,* ed. P.C. Emmer and M. Mörner, 121-155 (New York: Berg, 1992).
[46] Bade, "German Transatlantic Emigration," 125.

laborers, overcrowded the towns and resulted in steep unemployment. Relative overpopulation resulted from the inability of a proto-industrial economy to absorb the labor-power released from the countryside; the motor of mass overseas emigration. To these structural conditions must be added the hunger crises of 1830 and early 1848. Long-term developments and more immediate events together set off a wave of emigration across Central Europe, including Bohemia.

Emigration did not take off in Bohemia until the early 1850s, the initial wave lasting until 1859. Otherwise, Czech emigration followed the Central European trend. The historian Jiří Kořalka points out a combination of demographic changes and economic developments that, while specific to Bohemia, resemble the German case.[47] Among the long-term causes was a steadily rising birth rate leading to relative overpopulation in the region. The elimination of serfdom in 1781, but especially the abolition of the patrimonial system and labor duties on estates in 1848 released a supply of labor that could not yet be completely absorbed by the budding industrial centers of Lower Austria and central Bohemia. Most of southwestern Bohemia had very little or no industry at all (95 percent of the establishments employed fewer than five persons) and even the introduction of the railroad there did more to facilitate emigration than further industrialization. A series of poor harvests affected the south rather severely, and never had food prices been so high in the nineteenth century as during the 1850s. In other parts of the province, craftsmen and cottagers suffered from the mechanization of their trades and the emerging factory system. Summarizing a correlation valid for the entire province, Kořalka postulates that "the most extensive emigration afflicted those regions that remained, to a large extent, apart from the process of industrialization and intensification but that were deprived by this process of their previous economic basis."[48]

Alongside these economic developments must be considered social and political factors unique to the Bohemian context. In Austria as in the German lands, political repression following 1848 triggered many decisions to emigrate. All of this had a pushing effect, as scholars of migration say. Political motives, however, were of secondary importance and represented an exception to the rule of economically motivated labor migration.

The contrasting perception of the United States as a land of prosperity and entrepreneurial opportunity, amplified by the discovery of gold in California in 1848, had what migration scholars call a pulling effect. Political freedom, a lower cost of living, greater income, free land, and exemption from military service were all ideas that drew the attention of European masses to America as a destination. Agents of shipping companies and overseas employers did their part to propagate a positive image of life in the United States. Not to be underestimated, too, was the effect of messages intimately communicated in private letters. Sent from friends and relatives already in America, and then circulated to the point of disintegration, letters were the most important factor in many decisions to emigrate.[49]

Within the Austrian Monarchy, this Central European-wide wave of mass emigration affected only Bohemia. According to tables kept by authorities, 21,449 individuals were issued passports to emigrate from Bohemia and Moravia over the course of the 1850s, a sum

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[47] Jiří Kořalka and Květa Kořalková, "Basic features of Mass Emigration from the Czech Lands during the Capitalist Era," in *Les Migrations Internales de la Fin du XVIIIe siecle a nous jours*, edited by Denise Fouvel Rouif (Paris: Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1980), 505-508. About demographic change more generally, see Ludmila Kárníková, *Vývoj obyvatelstva v českých zemích 1754-1914* (Prague: Československá akademie věd, 1965).
[48] Kořalka, "Basic Features of Mass Emigration," 507.
[49] Kutnar, *Počátky hromadného vystěhovalectví z Čech v období Bachova absolutismu* (Prague: Nakladatelství Československé akademie věd), 25.

representing three-fourths of the total emigration from the monarchy (see table 1). The vast majority of those who received passports travelled to the United States. Official statistics from Vienna indicated departures in the mere hundreds during the first two years of the decade, but much higher numbers over the next five years, a period of economic stagnation and political crisis accompanying the Crimean War. In 1853, for instance, 3,691 individuals emigrated from Bohemia and Moravia to lands outside of the monarchy. The next year represented the decade's peak with 6,426 departures (90 percent of the Austrian total for the year), and averaged 3,626 (85 percent of total) between 1853 and 1857.[50] After that, numbers reported by the government dropped to 1853 levels and below, remaining low during the period of the American Civil War, and rising again in the late 1860s when a second wave of emigration affected the province (together with the German lands).[51] With an average of 2,145 officially reported cases of emigration each year during the 1850s (78 percent of the monarchy's total), Bohemia stood out as an area particularly vulnerable to mass emigration.

Government statistics, however, capture only a small fragment of overall migration from the province. The government defined emigration narrowly and its statistics recorded only those who were issued special passports. Those who left the monarchy illegally or semi-legally escaped official notice. A majority of emigrants, for instance, left the monarchy using the common traveler's passport, which was valid for one to three years and safeguarded the right to return should a venture overseas prove unsuccessful. Others, especially journeymen, chose to emigrate while practicing an apprenticeship abroad. Many young men simply left the country illegally, particularly those fleeing military service.[52] Both Czech historians and their German Austrian colleagues have indicated that government figures must be doubled or trebled in order to establish a more realistic picture of the emigration.[53] According to these estimates the true number of emigrants from Bohemia and Moravia between 1850 and 1859 lies around 64,347. Taken as a proportion of the total population of the Bohemian lands at the time (a little over 6.1

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[50] Hejret and Kutnar give 6,128 departures to the U.S. for 1854. Vojtěch Mastný, "Statistika vystěhovalectví českého proletariátu do Spojených států," *Sociologie a historie zemědělství* 2, no. 1 (1966), 208; Jan Hejret, *Vystěhovalecká otázka: Přispěvek k české a slovanské otázce* (Prague: Dr. Ant. Hejn a spol., 1909); Kutnar, *Počátky hromadného vystěhovalectví*, 17n38.

[51] Bedřich Šindelář, "Několik poznámek k otázce našeho vystěhovelectví v epoše kapitalismu," *Sborník prací filosofické fakulty Brněnské univerzity* 3, no. 1 (1954), 25; Mastný, "Statistika vystěhovalectví," 208; Kutnar, *Počátky hromadného vystěhovalectví*, 17n38. Regarding emigration from Germany, see Bade, "German Transatlantic Emigration," 124.

[52] Tomáš Čapek, *Padesát let českého tisku v Americe* (New York: Bank of Europe, 1911), 5; Polišenský, *Úvod do studia vystěhovalectví* Vol. 1*, Obecké problem dějin českého vystěhovalectví do Ameriky 1848-1914* (Prague: Univerzita Karlova, 1992), 17-18; Bedřich Šindelář, "Kořeny a povaha českého vystěhovalectví za kapitalismu," in *Začiatky českej a slovenskej emigrácie do USA,* ed. Josef Polišenský (Bratislava: Vydavateľstvo Slovenskej akadémie vied, 1970), 18.

[53] Regarding the need to multiply government numbers for an accurate count, see Josef Buzek, "Das Auswanderungsproblem und die Regelung des Auswanderungswesens in Österreich," *Zeitschrift für Volkswirtschaft, Sozialpolitik und Verwaltung* 10 (1901): 446, 452; see Jan Hejrat, *Vystěhovalecká otázka* (Prague: Dr. Antonín Hajn a spol., 1909), 18; Leopold Caro, "Unsere überseeischen Auswanderer und die Enquete vom Jahre 1905," *Zeitschrift für Volkswirtschaft, Sozialpolitik und Verwaltung* 16 (1907): 530, 539. For more recent treatment, see Bedřich Šindelář, "Několik poznámek k otázce našeho vystěhovalectví," 23; Mastný, "Statistika vystěhovalectví," 205, 208-9, 211; Kutnar, *Počátky hromadného vystěhovalectví,* 8ff; Ernő Deák. "Die Auswanderung aus Österreich im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert—Ein Überblick," in *Siedlungs- und Bevölkerungsgeschichte Österreichs* (Vienna: Institut für Österreichkunde, 1974), 174; Hans Sturmberger, "Die Amerika-Auswanderung aus Oberösterreich zur Zeit des Neo-Absolutismus," in *Mitteilungen des Oberösterreichischen Landesarchivs*, Vol. 7 (Graz-Köln: Hermann Böhlaus, 1960), 9.

million) the first wave of mass emigration carried about one of every hundred inhabitants overseas.[54]

State records should thus should not be taken to reflect real emigration numbers, but rather to indicate general trends and exemplify the state's newfound interest in tracking the phenomenon. At the provincial level, where emigration was experienced as a drain on city coffers when taxpayers left or impoverished emigrants returned, authorities strove to gain a clearer understanding of emigrant numbers and backgrounds. Unlike in Vienna, offices in Bohemia included in their calculations those who applied for the common traveler's passport along with applications for the more difficult to obtain emigration pass. Provincial and regional officials regarded imperial statistics skeptically. Whereas Vienna reported a mere 934 cases of emigration between 1850 and 1853, Bohemian provincial authorities estimated the number at six thousand or more.[55] For the first eight months of 1852 alone, Bohemian provincial statistics reported that 999 families (or 3,650 family members) had emigrated from the province. The vast majority of these, 890 families, chose America as their destination.[56]

It was not only the rapid increase in numbers that alarmed provincial and regional authorities, but also the fact that the "emigration fever" appeared to spread from one county to another. In the first eight months of 1852, reports from the province indicated extreme emigration activity in the western Pilsen region.[57] In that year some 574 families (with 2,174 members) emigrated overseas, accounting for over 60 percent of the Bohemian total. The vast majority of these emigrants, 513 families, hailed from four southwestern counties particularly susceptible to emigration (Březnice, Přeštice, Rokycany, and Strakonice).[58] These numbers provided by local authorities certainly exceed the official figures from Vienna, but even according to the latter's conservative estimates, Pilsen stood out as a major source of emigration early on with 1,311 inhabitants emigrating from the region in 1853 and 1,946 the year thereafter.[59]

The eastern Pardubice region also experienced a surprising population drain. Although the entire region represented only 29 percent of the overall Bohemian emigration for 1852, the eastern counties Lanškroun, Vysoké Mýto, and Litomyšl paralleled their counterparts in western Bohemia, with a total of 239 families along with 777 family members leaving the monarchy, according to local authorities.[60] Those from Lanškroun, many of whom were Germans, emigrated to North America, whereas many of the Czech families from Vysoké Mýto and

[54] To be specific, 1.04% of the total population emigrated between 1850 and 1859. If it is agreed with Mastný that "the emigration of nationalities other than Czech was negligible," (209n3) then 1.656 of every 100 ethnic Czechs chose to emigrate. Considering that emigration was concentrated in certain counties of southwestern and southeastern Bohemia rather than evenly spread out across the provinces provides a sense of the proportions involved. Regarding population numbers, refer to Urbanitsch, "Die Deutschen," table 1.

[55] Kutnar, *Počátky hromadého vystěhovalectví*, 8.

[56] 109 families settled in Serbia. Kutnar, *Počátky hromadného vystěhovalectví,* 13.

[57] The subdivisions of the Austrian half of the Empire are translated as follows in the present work: *Land* (in German) and *země* (in Czech) are translated as *province*, *Kreis* and *kraj* as *region*, *Bezirk* and *okres* as *county*, and *Gemeinde* and *obec* as *township*.

[58] Kutnar, *Počátky hromadného vystěhovalectví,* 14.

[59] Following redistricting in 1855, which decreased the size and population of the Pilsen region, emigration numbers still remained high: 426 individuals in 1855, 636 in 1856, and 756 in 1857. Buzek, "Das Auswanderungsproblem," 446.

[60] Kutnar, *Počátky hromadného vystěhovalectví,* 14.

Litomyšl headed for Serbia.[61] In 1854, according to the Vienna statistics, 1,068 individuals from the region left the monarchy.[62]

Tying together the emigration centers to the east and west was Budějovice, Bohemia's southern region and an important symbol of Czech folk culture. A police report submitted to the provincial governor's office the following year placed the Budějovice region alongside Pilsen and Pardubice as an early site of emigration fever. In December alone, to cite provincial statistics, twenty-one families with one hundred family members left their home counties. Almost half of the eighty-seven families to have left Bohemia in February and March the following year, according to the police directorate in Prague, came from the southern region. Other reports submitted between January and March 1854 featured similar numbers.[63] Over one thousand of those emigrating from Bohemia in 1853 hailed from Budějovice (about thirty percent of the provincial total for the year), and 1,386 people left southern Bohemia in 1854.[64] During the first years of mass emigration from the province, a belt of high emigration activity emerged along the southwest and southeast of Bohemia.

Considering that the emigration of an estimated 64,347 people was concentrated in a few counties of rural southern and eastern Bohemia, it becomes evident that these departures left a hole in the community fabric. Unlike emigration from further east later in the century, characterized by seasonal labor migration of single males, emigrants from Bohemia left as entire families with the intent of permanently relocating overseas.[65] When a dozen to a hundred families disappeared from a village, the absence did not go unnoticed. The western Bohemian county Březnice can be taken as an extreme example. With a population of just a couple thousand at the time, 281 families with 1,160 members left the county for overseas in 1852.[66] It is perhaps difficult for the modern reader to comprehend the significance of these numbers. Neighbors in rural towns relied upon one another not just economically but also socially. Day to day life ceased when half a village evaporated. Neither work nor festivities could continue absent relations that had been built over generations.

A significant amount of wealth disappeared along with the emigrants, as well. The twenty-one families who left the Budějovice region in December, 1853, carried with them a total of 13,519 gulden, or 648 gulden per family.[67] This represented the annual earnings of 90 to 135

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[61] A third of east Bohemian emigrants went to Serbia. Most of these (and 4/5 of the emigration to Serbia in 1852) came from the Litomyšl and Vysoké Mýto counties. Emigrants from Lanškroun for the most part headed to Texas, Wisconsin and Iowa. Kutnar, *Počátky hromadného vystěhovalectví,* 14-15; cf. Polišenský, *Úvod do studia vystěhovalectví*, 10.

[62] Buzek, "Das Auswanderungsproblem," 446.

[63] Kutnar, *Počátky hromadného vystěhovalectví* , 17-18.

[64] Buzek, "Das Auswanderungsproblem," 446.

[65] During the entire decade, the number of men and women emigrating was roughly equal and children were well represented (47.56 percent of the emigrants were women, 19.21 percent were children under 7 years old), a sign taken to indicate that emigrants left as entire family units to settle permanently rather than as seasonal workers. See the tables from Buzek, "Das Auswanderungsproblem," 446, 447, 451.

[66]Kutnar gives numbers for specific townships within the Březnice county: Kasejovice (17 families with 73 members total), Březnice (15/64), Bělčice (17/51), Varvašov (9/47), Rožmitál (11/44), Mladý Smolivec (9/43), Mirovice (10/38), Leletice (19/35), Hradiště (6/29), Hvožďany (6/29), Blatná (5/23), Březí (4/24), Roželov (5-22), Tochovice (5/21), Drahenice (5/21), Škvoretice (4/21). Kutnar, *Počátky hromadného vystěhovalectví*, 14, 14n26.

[67] For reference, a journeyman in Bohemia during the 1850s earned an average of one hundred to 150 gulden anually. A factory worker made by with an average of one hundred to two hundred gulden. A home weaver (*Hausweber*) or domestic servant had to survive on fifty to one hundred gulden or twenty-five to forty gulden (plus room and board) a year, respectively. A hundredweight (*Zentner*) of cole ranged from fourteen to twenty-two gulden

journeymen. A little more than 135 gulden per individual, roughly an artisan's yearly wage, barely sufficed for the track to Hamburg or Bremen to say nothing of the long trip overseas, which officials then estimated to cost around 140 gulden.[68] Only three families from the party actually made it to America, the rest presumably returning home without means, dependent upon their neighbors and townships for support.[69] Emigration therefore entailed not just a direct loss to urban coffers, but also a further drain when returnees came back destitute and in need of public support.

Of all the emigrants, peasant farmers were in general the wealthiest, typically carrying four hundred to four thousand gulden; cottagers held between three hundred and seven hundred gulden; day laborers around two hundred or 250; craftsmen were the poorest, especially weavers, cobblers, and tailors, who possessed on average a mere ninety to 150 gulden.[70] Anything remaining after the journey to port was hardly enough for passage aboard even the cheapest sailing vessels. Many families were forced to split apart, the father travelling overseas and later sending money to his wife and children for passage. Officials estimated that during the first quarter of 1854, at least 750,000 gulden had been carried abroad by emigrants.[71]

As the numbers make clear, it was not the poorest who left, but rather those with some means and skills in demand abroad. The character of emigration in the Pilsen and Pardubice regions was above all artisanal. Of the 599 heads-of-families that emigrated from western Bohemia in 1852, 278 were master craftsmen or journeymen. Day laborers and domestic servants made up a further 238. Only about ten percent of the first emigrants from this region were peasants.[72] In contrast to the west and east, emigration from the southern region was more agricultural in character. Of the eighty-seven families to emigrate from the province in February and March, 1854, thirteen were moderately wealthy peasants, mostly from the south. Yet even here artisans, day laborers, and domestic servants were commonly found among their ranks.[73] Of the 683 applications for an emigration passport to America in early 1854, 411 were from families headed by artisans (114 of these from the Pilsen region and seventy-nine from the Budweiser region).[74] The first wave of mass emigration to affect Bohemia was thus concentrated in certain counties of the southwest and east and included above all artisans and moderately well-off agricultural workers. Emigration at the time represented an investment by society's middle layer, a group in possession of some capital and in search of better prospects abroad.

Overseas emigration affected ethnically Czech regions more than German ones during this period. Inhabitants of German-speaking areas tended to search for employment and social ascent within the monarchy or at least inside of Central Europe, most often by migrating to

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over the decade. Between 1856 and 1860, a fathom (*Klafter*) of hardwood cost 9.65 gulden and softwood cost 7.57 gulden. The average price for wheat, corn, and barley over the decade ranged from, respectively, 3.64 to 4.29 gulden; 2.73 to 2.67 gulden; and 2.14 to 2.40 gulden per hundredweight. A hundredweight of beef during the 1850s ran between 21.87 and 23.35 gulden. Stölzl, *Die Ära Bach in Böhmen*, 343.

[68] Polišenský, *Úvod do studia vystěhovalectví*, 17.

[69] Kutnar, *Počátky hromadného vystěhovalectví* , 17.

[70] František Kutnar, "Dopisy českých vystěhovaltců z padesátých let 19. století ze zámoří do vlasti," in *Začiatky českej a slovenskej emigrácie do USA,* ed. Josef Polišenský (Bratislava: Vydavateľstvo Slovenskej akadémie vied, 1970): 215.

[71] Kutnar, *Počátky hromadného vystěhovalectví* , 19-20.

[72] Kutnar, *Počátky hromadného vystěhovalectví* , 15.

[73] Kutnar, *Počátky hromadného vystěhovalectví* , 18.

[74] Kutnar, *Počátky hromadného vystěhovalectví* , 19.

Vienna or Transylvania, or to neighboring German lands.[75] This may be due to the privileged position of Germans in the monarchy, as some Czech historians have insisted, or simply to the fact that the mostly German inhabitants of northern Bohemia were too poor to travel overseas.[76] As it turns out, both interpretations correspond to the facts. Wealthier Austrian Germans in the cities, who hardly needed to emigrate, benefited from the wide reach of German culture in Central Europe and tended to remain within the monarchy. The impoverished German-speaking peasants, artisans, cottagers and day laborers of the provincial borderlands could not afford the trip to America and chose seasonal migration across the border to Germany. Only in Tirol, in upper Austria, did significant numbers of Austrian Germans emigrate across the Atlantic (about nineteen thousand persons between 1846 and 1869).[77] Within Bohemia there was some emigration of ethnic Germans to the United States from the eastern and northwestern counties, although until the early twentieth century the number of ethnic Germans to have emigrated from Austria was negligible.[78] As a rule, Germans in Bohemia were either too wealthy or too poor to make suitable candidates for emigration; rural Czech speakers, on the other hand, better fit the emigrant profile.

Neither impersonal market forces nor industrialization (nor any other modernizing process) *compelled* the Bohemian worker or peasant to abandon his homeland. Even in the case of labor migration, economic forces that "push" and "pull" can provide only partial explanations.[79] The emigrant was aware of his social position and considered his future economic prospects in light of cultural values when making the strategic choice to leave. Neither penniless nor prosperous, emigrants are best understood as entrepreneurs who chose to invest in a new start abroad rather than continue on at home. Social and economic factors provided the context; yet fundamental to the phenomenon was the emigrant's awareness of his place in the community, of the networks that connected him to those already overseas, his sense of responsibility to family and homeland, and the expectation of what the future might hold in store.

Placed between western European emigration and that from further east, between old and new emigration, the Czechs occupied a transitional space during the 1850s. Czech emigration was special for another reason. The timing of the first wave of mass emigration from Bohemia overlapped with the transition of the national movement to a period of mass national agitation, what Miroslav Hroch identifies as the final stage of the Czech nation's "completion." Whereas educated elites had agitated for the spread of national consciousness among the wider population since the 1820s, only between 1848 and the 1860s did nationalism begin to receive mass

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[75] Peter Urbanitsch, "Die Deutschen in Österreich. Statistisch-deskriptiver Überblick" in *Die Habsburgermonarchie 1848-1918*, ed. Adam Wandruszka and Peter Urbanitsch, vol. 3, *Die Völker des Reiches* (VIenna: Verlag der Österreichischer Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1980), 47.

[76] Compare Šindelář, who maintains the former view, with Stölzl, representing the latter: Šindelář, "Kořeny a povaha českého vystěhovalectví," 31; Stölzl, *Die Ära Bach in Böhmen*, 180-181.

[77] Urbanitsch, "Die Deutschen," 47.

[78] Lanškroun/Landskron in the Pardubice region formed a partial exception, and a good number of families emigrated from the northern Bohemian regions to the United States. In 1852, twenty-eight families are reported to have left the Leipaer/Česká Lípa region and thirty-two families the neighboring region, Eger/Cheb. During the first months of 1854, furthermore, eighty-seven families from these two regions applied for emigration passports. See Kutnar, *Počátky hromadného vystěhovalectví* , 16 and 19. That the numbers of Germans to emigrate from Bohemia was relatively slight, see Urbanitsch, "Die Deutschen," 47-48.

[79] This point is made effectively by Klaus J. Bade, "German Transatlantic Emigration in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," in *European Expansion and Migration*, ed. P.C. Emmer and M. Mörner (New York: Berg Publishers, 1992), 132-133.

support.[80]Yet just as members of the peasantry and craftsmen became carriers of the national cause, members of their social class began to abandon the homeland in droves. Worse yet, the great majority of emigrants hailed from regions of significance for the national movement. Eastern Bohemia, as Hroch has shown, was home to a great number of patriots of the earlier generation.[81] Bohemia's south, moreover, figured as a symbol of uncorrupted Czech folk culture, ore so during the 1850s than a decade previously.[82] Emigration thus posed a challenge to rural progressives and national activists. Add to this the fact that emigrants and patriots shared similar social backgrounds—land-owning peasants and independent artisans—and one comprehends that emigration represented an inner-class conflict within the Czech petty bourgeoisie. Both were entrepreneurs of a sort; the one choosing to invest capital in resettlement overseas while the other worked to consolidate 'national' capital at home. This conflict between migrant and ethnic entrepreneurs lent the emigration debate a significance that transcended actual numbers.

Emigrants, Agents, and the State

The failure of the Austrian state to master the problem opened the door to the nationalization of the emigration question. The ineffective anti-emigration policy of the Austrian state has appropriately been described by Czech historians as "divided and inconsistent" or "double track."[83] Authorities in Vienna sought to curb emigration by various means, although they never proscribed it outright. Two approaches to the problem emerged in government circles at the time. On the one hand there was the line coming from Vienna, represented by interior minister Alexander Bach and the police chief Johann Franz Kempen.[84] For them, emigration was the straightforward result of foreign machinations. Agents sent from shipping companies abroad to recruit passengers for their lines were to blame. Accordingly, the imperial government initiated a campaign of censorship, persecution, and counter-propaganda to counteract the activities of these "foreign emissaries." Closer to the ground, on the other hand, were provincial authorities and county officials headed by governor seated in Prague, Karl Mecséry. More intimately familiar with the everyday social conditions underlying emigration, these officials were unable to so easily pass off emigration as the result of conspiracy. The demands of Bach's neoabsolutist system, however, tied their hands. To enact the social reforms necessary to truly ease emigration, even to articulate the need for such reform, would have amounted to an open

[80] Hroch, *Social Preconditions*, esp. 44-45.
[81] Regarding the chronology of the national movement and the social and geographical background of Czech patriots, see Hroch, *Social Preconditions,* 44-61.
[82] The publication of Božena Němcová's iconic novel *Babička* as well as her *Pictures from the Area Around Domažlice* (*Obrazky z okolí Domažlické*) and other travel narratives and short tales about village life published during the 1850s testify to the increasing importance of southern Bohemia as a national symbol.
[83] Kutnar uses the adjectives *nejednotná a nedůsledná* to describe Austrian policy; Polišenský characterizes it as *dvoukolejná politika*. On Austrian emigration policy in Bohemia during the 1850s, see Kutnar, *Počatky hromadného vystěhovalectví,* 27-28; Kutnar, *Dopisy českých vystěhovalců*, 216-217. See also Šindelář, "Kořeny a povaha českého vystěhovalectví za kapitalismu," 31-33; Polišenský, *Úvod do studia vystěhovalectví,* 10-13.
[84] The interpretation here differs somewhat from Kutnar's, where the distinction is made between the reaction of the administrative organs of the Austrian state and the ministry of police. Here, it is rather two levels of government administration that are contrasted: the imperial level (the Ministry of the Interior and Police Ministerium in Vienna) and the provincial and county levels.

critique of the political status-quo. Local initiative was therefore doomed to frustration (as discussed further in Chapter Two).

Police authorities were not long in taking steps to counter this first swell of labor migration from Bohemia. On April 23, 1850, Bach cancelled the passport requirement for travel within the monarchy, replacing the passport with a more basic *Heimatschein* (identity card).[85] Journeymen, however, did not enjoy the benefits of liberalized passport policy. In order to maintain oversight of wandering journeymen, Bach reduced the period during which apprentices were allowed to travel abroad, the *Wandererlaubnis*, to a period of one year with the possibility of extension conditioned on official review and approval. Obligatory work papers, *Arbeitsbücher*, were also introduced to provide information on the past whereabouts of individual workers.[86] Whereas better-off citizens could travel freely within the Empire and even abroad, this category of wage workers and journeymen faced new restrictions that legislatively separated them from the rest of the population. Such legislation imposed a legal distinction between bourgeois society and the lower classes, whose mobility across borders was inherently suspect. Of course, the consolidation of power during the first years of the decade made the separate legal status for lower classes redundant, since the passport law of May 1853 curtailed mobility for the population as a whole.[87]

Already in October, 1852, the ministry of the interior forbade the establishment of agencies facilitating the emigration of Austrian subjects. Days later, the police commissariat confiscated advertisement fliers and brochures as well as private letters promoting emigration. Titles such as *Advisor and Guide for Emigrants from Austria to the United States* and *A Guide for Those who Want to Emigrate to North America* were included in the roundup.[88] When letters intercepted by authorities contained negative commentary about the United States, these were handed over to local newspapers for publication.[89] In November that same year, a further decree called for the prosecution of agents for "criminal enticement" (*strafbare Verleitung*).[90] As far as the Austrian police were concerned, emigration was clearly the result of pro-emigration propaganda and outside agitation. Authorities increased police surveillance and initiated a propaganda campaign designed to intimidate would-be migrants. The Minister of Police, Johann Kempen, saw to it in July 1852 that returnees be observed as to their political activities and whether or not they propagated emigration among fellow subjects. In his weekly reports to superiors in Vienna (the so-called *Stimmungsberichte*), Prague police chief Leopold von Sacher-Masoch (father of the famous writer) warned that returning emigrants threatened "to infect countrymen with pernicious and misled teachings about a poorly understood notion of freedom. […] The more families of the lower, popular classes that are ruined by unsuccessful emigration, the more families that return to the fatherland devastated in body, spirit, and property, the more will revolutionary minds find perceptive and fertile ground for the spread of their pernicious

[85] The reference is to ministerial order no. 8143. Stölzl, *Die Ära Bach in Böhmen*, 268n3.
[86] Stölzl, *Die Ära Bach in Böhmen*, 269.
[87] Stölzl *Die Ära Bach in Böhmen*, 270, 270n10; W. Rogge, *Österreich von Vilagos bis zur Gegenwart*, Vol. 1 (Vienna, 1873): 285
[88] F. Jürnemann, *Ratgeber und Wegweiser für Auswanderer aus Osterreich nach den Vereinigten Staaten* (Vienna, 1849); NA, *Průvodníček těch, jenž chtějí se vystěhovati do Severní Ameriky* (Brno, 1852).
[89] According to contemporary press reports, at least 20 agents of German shipping companies were operating in Bohemia at the time. Leopold Caro, *Auswanderung und Auswanderungspolitik in Österreich* (Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1909), 174-175; Šindelář, "Několik poznámek," 27; Polišenský, *Úvod do studia vystěhovalectví,* 14; Šindelář, "Kořeny a povaha českého vystěhovalectví," 33.
[90] Polišenský, *Úvod do studia vystěhovalectví*, 13-14.

communistic and socialistic teachings."[91] Those accused of propagating emigration were persecuted. Police forces were even instructed to ascertain whether or not such radicals were involved in a secret plot to transport, *en masse,* Austrian Slavs to the United States.[92] Unable or unwilling to probe any deeper into the background of emigration, the Police Ministry grasped at conspiracy theories as a possible explanation.

Nearer to the mark was the suspicion that an illicit network of agents operating on behalf of foreign shipping companies was responsible for the sudden rise of emigration numbers. In the absence of state support, those considering resettlement overseas were forced to rely on non-state actors for information and assistance. Commissioned representatives of foreign shipping companies and overseas employers rose to meet this demand. Recruited for the most part by firms based in Hamburg and Bremen, although sometimes employed by American railroad companies, these emigration agents were responsible for advertising the services of shipping companies and providing information about employment opportunities abroad. Inevitably prefaced by the adjective *skrupellos* in German or *nesvědomitý* in Czech, both words meaning "unscrupulous," the agent figured large in government and patriotic discourse about emigration. Because of its centrality to the emigration question, the figure of the emigration agent deserves some detailed treatment.

Shipping firms in Bremen and Hamburg quickly took notice of the growing traffic from Bohemia, a market they attempted to penetrate already in the late 1840s. One of the first to be active in Bohemia was the shipping company Morris and Co. Columbia operating out of Hamburg. Morris started by sending out fliers to addresses in Bohemia, concentrating primarily on innkeepers, hoping to establish contact with potential agents. So in 1854 the firm provided the barkeep J. Waitze of Prague with a number of colorful fliers to pass along to his customers. Printed in both Czech and German, the sheets proclaimed Columbia lines to be "the fastest passage for Emigrants to America and Australia" and provided instructions for the journey to Hamburg.[93] Another example was W. Stisser, representing a company from Bremen, who passed through the Bohemian countryside seeking to recruit agents for his employer. He approached men of influence in their communities—innkeepers, notaries, village teachers, shopkeepers—and offered ten gulden for every emigrant they recruited.[94]

The best candidates for the job, we learn state from police files, were unemployed journeymen and business assistants returning from Germany to Bohemia.[95] These would usually be recruited by emigration agencies in Bremen or Hamburg, sometimes also in Leipzig, and given materials to distribute in their homeland. They were also encouraged to recruit additional agents in Bohemia and promised a commission of one taler for every emigrant sent along to port. Antonín Weber, an out-of-work journeyman, was an example. Traveling from one public house to another in southern Bohemia, he would inconspicuously leave behind copies of "A letter from Texas" at each stop, hoping to capture the imagination of some local drinker. According to

[91] Quoted in Kutnar, *Počátky hromadného vystěhovalectví*, 10-11.
[92] Polišenský, *Úvod do studia vystěhovalectví*, 11.
[93] Polišenský, *Úvod do studia vystěhovalectví*, 14.
[94] Polišenský, *Úvod do studia vystěhovalectví*, 14.
[95] The Bach administration, it might be noted, found the itinerate journeymen especially subversive and suspected this class of laborers to be members of democratic workers' societies abroad. Here is another instance where the government's approach to emigration overlapped with its campaign against social unrest. Stölzl, *Die Ära Bach in Böhmen*, 264, 266.

police reports, he was also known to operate among peasants and apprentices at the mills.[96] Dealers in seeds and grain were also sought after as agents, since their business often brought them to various parts of the province and they were frequently in contact with moderately wealthy peasants. A certain J.B. Poppenberg, seed handler from Prague, was one such case. Working in the service of L. Honer from Hamburg, Poppenberg used his business as a pretext for travelling through southern and southwestern Bohemia in search of customers. In villages particularly affected by overseas emigration, he was able to recruit dozens of passengers for his employer. He was said to have convinced two hundred people to emigrate from Domažlice and some twenty families from Strakonice. As was common practice, he accepted from the emigrants a deposit before accompanying them to Leipzig, where they would then be placed under the charge of another agent and taken to port.[97] In addition to innkeepers, notaries, journeymen, and travelling salesmen, emigrants themselves sometimes served shipping companies by recruiting fellow emigrants in exchange for one free passage overseas.

In the very first years of the decade, agents operated more or less freely in the monarchy and shipping companies could advertise their services in daily newspapers, distribute pamphlets and brochures by post, and hang posters in railway stations. Legislation passed in October 1852 pushed these activities underground. Companies were no longer able to post advertisements in public and many of the foreign employees of Bremen or Hamburg agencies were deported. Yet it was no secret that the foreign representatives had simply been replaced by locals working illicitly for the German companies.[98] Convicting anyone on grounds of "criminal enticement," however, was difficult, although police forces did sometimes report success. In 1852, for example, the mayor of Choceň in the Pardubice region was exposed as an agent of a Bremen firm, Lüdering and Co. A haberdasher and a businessman from Prague were also detained that year, and in 1853 a wine dealer was arrested in the city. Agents were identified all the way from western Pilsen clear to eastern Chrudim. In 1854, a notary from Ústí nad Orlicí in eastern Bohemia was arrested for helping emigrants sign contracts with shipping companies, and that same year a man in the southern town of Soběslav was detained after promotional material revealed him to be an agent of the Hamburg firm, Mertens and Co. Also in 1854, police caught up with J.B. Poppenburg, the seed dealer from Prague, when a house search uncovered his illicit activities.[99] Most of the men arrested for their illegal dealings could not be prosecuted, since it was unlikely that a former customer would testify against the agent. Similarly ineffective was the order that emigration announcements, posters and brochures sent from Germany be held at the post office and destroyed.

Some agents were better known than others. The most notorious of the period was a businessman from Vamberk named Alois Kareš.[100] Even before taking up work in the emigration business, Kareš had made himself a suspicious figure to Austrian authorities. Originally trained as a merchant in eastern Bohemia and in charge of a factory he inherited from his father, Kareš

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[96] Kutnar, *Počátky hromadného vystěhovalectví*, 23.
[97] Polišenský, *Úvod do studia vystěhovalectví*, 14.
[98] Kutnar, *Počátky hromadného vystěhovalectví*, 22.
[99] Kutnar, *Počátky hromadného vystěhovalectví*, 23n67.
[100] "Alois Kareš," *Květy americké,* October 15, 1885; Jan Neruda, "Alois Kareš," in *Spisy Jana Nerudy*, vol. 3, *Podobizny* (Prague: Státní nakladatelství krásné literatury, 1950/1885-1888), 52-54; Josef Štolba, *Z mých paměti,* Vol. 1 (Prague: Nakladatelství družstvo Máje, 1906), 111-122; Josef Vilímek, *Ze zašlých dob* (Prague: J.R. Vilímek, 1908), 14-23. See also Kutnar, *Počátky hromadného vystěhovalectví*, 23, 49; Polišenský, *Úvod do studia vystěhovalectví*, 15-16.

became infatuated with radical notions during the 1840s. He was not afraid to give voice to his democratic and national sentiments openly, and paid dearly for it over the next decade. After losing his wife's dowry in a series of failed business ventures at home, he decided to move his family to Transleithania near Pest. In Hungary he set himself up as a textile manufacturer, although he devoted his attention more to politics than commerce. In 1848 he joined Kossuth's struggle for the liberation of Hungary from Habsburg rule and earned the rank of lieutenant. The collapse of the revolutionary movement spelled doom for Kareš's political activism and commercial ventures. During the early 1850s, the former rebel eked out a living in Prague, supported by family through handouts from his mother-in-law. Perhaps motivated by financial problems and the desire to free himself from dependence on his wife's family, or due to political pressures, Kareš left Bohemia and took a position as an agent of the firm Rübke and Woellmer, who placed him in charge of directing emigration from central and eastern Bohemia to their port in Hamburg. Always the entrepreneur, Kareš understood well the opportunity presented by increasing numbers of emigrants from the countryside passing through Prague en route to the North Sea. Having built up a solid network of sub-agents in his home province, Kareš moved to Hamburg in 1854 and, soon thereafter, to Bremen in order to dedicate himself fully to the emigration business. It was there that Kareš opened his office on Langenstrasse, where he ran a subsidiary of the F.M. Bödecker lines overseeing the booming traffic from Bohemia and Moravia.

By 1856 Kareš had established himself in the emigration business. Recruits for his agency were drawn from Czech students and journeymen residing in Germany, who were instructed to return to Bohemia and form connections with other potential agents. Those working with Kareš earned a commission of five to six percent of the ticket price for each passenger booked onto a Bödecker line. Emigrants passing through Bremen also provided Kareš with the addresses of individuals at municipal and parish offices who might agree to propagate emigration. In this way, the network of agents and sub-agents gradually expanded to cover the territory from the Elbe across the Bohemian lands. A few numbers testify to Kareš's ability: from 1858 to 1865 the agent recruited anywhere from three hundred to three thousand emigrants each year, in 1867, a boom year in the emigration business, he earned a commission of twenty-four thousand talers, and in 1867 and 1868 he earned six thousand gulden annually (according to a former colleague).[101]

During the mid-1850s, Kareš became a topic of concerned discussion among municipal officials in Rychnov nad Kněžnou, where city leaders deliberated on the agent's influence among the locals of Lanškroun, Ústí nad Orlicí, and Vysoké Mýto. Elsewhere, authorities seized large quantities of informational brochures, letters, and fliers sent by Kareš from Bremen. Not much could be done to stop the agent's activities, however, since he composed his advertising material ambiguously enough to avoid a conviction of criminal enticement. A brochure from 1856, for example, explained the purpose of his enterprise "to be of service to our former homeland, respectively to our patriots remaining back home, in matters concerning industry, to where products may be sent, answering the enquiries of industrialists and workers."[102] The agent made a clean case for his activities and no legal ground could be found to forbid his activities.

Men like Alois Kareš were the first targets of police reaction. Although agents really did influence emigration during the 1850s, officials' accounts of their impact during that decade and

[101] Polišenský, *Úvod do studia vystěhovalectví*, 16.
[102] Cited in Polišenský, *Úvod do studia vystěhovalectví*, 15.

especially in later years were wildly exaggerated. Networks of agents did exploit social tension and economic conditions in order to win passengers for their respective companies, yet their role was more to facilitate rather than instigate the first wave of mass emigration. As ever more emigrants travelled with tickets purchased by friends or relatives abroad (as did half of European emigrants in 1890 and two-thirds ten years later), shipping companies shifted investments to building up networks of agents in North America.[103] Although agents continued to operate in Bohemia, their influence waned. Nonetheless, the Austrian police commissariat continued to regard emigration as the result of outside agitation and doggedly made illicit agents the scapegoat for an absent social policy.

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Neoabsolutism represented a forward-looking and dynamic project of social and economic modernization. Of all the transformations carried through during Bach's tenure, none proved more thorough-going and fateful than agricultural reform. By transforming lord and peasant into commercial farmers, the regime introduced rural Bohemia into the modern, world economy. At the same time, however, the reform set forth a dynamic that the regime could not control. Moderate farmers in Bohemia, Czechs, who could not compete with the larger landowners, nobles enjoying traditional ties to Vienna, adopted a strategy of ethnic solidarity as a means to advance their status in Bohemia. At the same time, artisans struggling to maintain an independent status in a society where guilds no longer provided a traditional source of security engaged in an analogous project of ethnic self-help. Struggles of small, landholding peasant-farmers and independent producers to maintain social status amid radical economic change led to a campaign of mass national agitation. This campaign laid the foundation for the national politics of the constitutional era to come.

At the same time, the transformation of the countryside and the entry of Bohemia into an international market led to a crisis among peasants unable to produce enough for market and artisans no longer capable of leading an independent existence. Of the same class as the Czech national activists, but more threatened by the specter of proletarianization, these small producers invested whatever capital they could muster in an attempt to resettle abroad. During the same decade that patriots set out to extend their influence to the larger Czech-speaking public, the very people they hoped to recruit abandoned the homeland in droves.

As a symbol of economic stagnation and social pessimism, emigration exposed neoabsolutism's failure to deliver on its promise of increasing material prosperity. For its timing and the social context, the overseas migration of Czech-speaking peasants and artisans was bound to become a charged topic in Czech patriotic circles. The reaction of Czech patriotic society to mass emigration will be treated in the following chapter, but one can already sense its implications. The figures of the emigrant and the unscrupulous emigration came to stand for capitalism's penetration into the Bohemian countryside, betrayed neoabsolutism's failure to successfully modernize society, and frustrated the attempt by Czech patriots to incorporate the wider masses into its national project.

[103] Polišenský, *Úvod do studia vystěhovalectví*, 23.

Chapter Two

The Emigrant Narrative: Patriotic Society and the Meaning of Mass Migration

Alarmed memos, circulars, and official enquiries passed between government ministries marked the beginning of the Austrian state's interest in mass emigration. It was only appropriate to the era of forced political quiescence that the first systematic treatment of the issue by Czech patriotic society should take place on the theatrical stage. Czech theater enjoyed a long tradition of political engagement.[1] Since its origin as a program of enlightenment and national awakening in the late eighteenth century, theater produced in the Czech language had of necessity been oriented toward the common people. This followed from the simple fact that until later in the nineteenth century most Czech speakers belonged to society's lower strata. While early translations of plays by Gottsched, Lessing, and Shakespeare aimed to show the capacity of Czech to communicate profound ideas, *Singspiele* and farce comedies enjoyed greater popularity. But even these genres instilled in audiences patriotic virtues such as love for the language and historical awareness. "Not only is it intellectual recreation pure and simple," wrote Václav Tham, one such playwright, of enlightened theater, "but it also enlightens the reason, cultivates and improves the heart and morals."[2] From its beginnings Czech theater had been connected with the development of national consciousness among the lower-classes and the encouragement of patriotic activity.

Mass emigration affected the very class of people from which patriotic activists hoped to draw support for the national cause; inevitably, then, lower-class mobility would become a charged topic in Czech patriotic society and lend itself to theatrical representation. This chapter discusses the treatment of emigration in Czech theater and in the pages of patriotic newspapers during the 1850s. It recounts how one playwright, Josef Kajetán Tyl, fancifully pieced together a narrative of departure and return, one in which the credulous Czech peasant foolishly abandons his home only to return later, penitent, with a newfound appreciation of the homeland and his place in the national community. Transposing this theatrical narrative from the stage to the pages of their newspapers, patriotic journalists shaped the Czech public's understanding of lower-class mobility, turning the emigration debate into an expression of concern about nationhood, the national character, and social change.

Across the Ocean and Back

It is in many ways fitting that the emigration question should find its first articulation in a text written Josef Kajetán Tyl, perhaps the most important figure in the history of Czech theater.[3] Tyl personified the way in which theater could bond a rising national culture to the broader

[1] Hugh Agnew, *Origins of the Czech National Renascence* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1993), 129-145; Felix Vodička, ed., *Dějiny české literatury* volume 2, (Prague: ČSAV, 1960), 216-231, 387-398.
[2] Cited in Agnew, *Origins of the Czech National Renascence*, 138.
[3] Vladimír Štěpanek, "Josef Kajetán Tyl," in *Dějiny české literatury* vol. 2, edited by Josef Hrabák (Prague: ÚČL ČSAV, 1958), 399-431.

Czech-speaking population, lending to a word like *národní* the dual sense of "national" and "popular." It was one of Tyl's plays that introduced to the public a song that would eventually become the nation's unofficial anthem and, after 1918, the first half of the Czechoslovak state hymn: *Kde domov můj?* ""Where is my homeland?" asked the short tune in its title. Following the question, an immediate reply:

> Waters murmur across the meads
> Pinewoods rustle upon the cliff rocks
> Bloom of spring shines in the orchard,
> Paradise on Earth to see!
> And that is the beautiful land,
> The Bohemian land, my home!
> The Bohemian land, my home![4]

A character in Tyl's play from 1834, the blind traveling singer Mareš, sang the idyllic melody at the annual cobbler's celebration, the *Fidlovačka.*[5] The hymn became an immediate sensation among Czechs of all backgrounds; but its origins—first performed by a vagabond musician at an artisan fair—forever associated the tune with the popular, working-class milieu. As an expression of nostalgia for a lost arcadia, a homeland described only in the most vague (and hence timeless) of imagery, the song expressed well the sentimentalism underlying the emigration question as it arose two decades later.[6] Indeed, this essential reference point for Czech national identity was often conceptualized as an emigrant's song of longing for a homeland left far behind (figure 1).

Tyl made the connection between emigration and Czech nationhood explicit in his four-act play, *Lesní panna, aneb, Cesta do Ameriky* (The Forest Nymph, or, a Journey to America), which premiered at the Pštroska summer theater in Vinohrady, then a suburb of Prague, on May 16, 1850.[7] Emigration had been thematized in Czech literature long before Tyl, of course, and stories of compatriots overseas had appeared in Czech periodicals already during the 1840s. Yet it was not until the 1850s that emigration was characterized as a social problem with political and national consequences. The experiences of 1848 and the political reaction that followed set the conditions that would turn mass emigration a matter of public controversy. Earlier, authors had used tales of Czechs in America to demonstrate their wit and fantasy.[8] Although Tyl drew from

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[4] The song was originally performed in Tyl's play *Fidlovačka aneb žádný hněv a žádná hanba* (1834). Tyl wrote the text and the music was composed by František Škroup. It's original text, in Czech, is as follows: *Kde domov můj,/ kde domov můj./ Voda hučí po lučinách,/ bory šumí po skalinách./ V sadě skví se jara květ/ zemský ráj to na pohled!/ A to jest ta krásná země/ země česká domov můj! Země česká domov můj!*" On *Kde domov můj* and its many interpretations see J.V. Šmejkal, *Píseň písní Národu Českého* (Prague: Nakladatel A. Neubert, 1935).

[5] The *fidlovačka* (from the word for the devise used by leather workers to smooth rough hides) was a popular artisan festival hosted annually throughout the nineteenth century in the working-class suburb of Prague.

[6] On *Kde domov můj* as arcadia, see Milada Součková, ed., *Locus Amoenus—Místo Líbezné* (Prague: Ústav pro klasická studia AV ČR, 1994).

[7] Mojmír Otruba and Miroslav Kačer, *Tvůrčí cesta Josefa Kajetána Tyla* (Prague: Státní nakladatelství krásné literatury a umění, 1961): 414; František Černý ed., *Dějiny českého divadla,* vol. 2 (Prague: Nakladatelství Československé akademie věd, 1969): 343; J.V. Frič and J. Otto Turnovský, eds., *Almanach Matice divadelní k slavnému otevření Národního divadla* (Prague: J. Otto, 1881): 83.

[8] Most notably, Josef Jiří Kolar, *Libussa am Missisippi* [*sic*], in *Libussa: Jahrbuch für 1842,* ed. Paul Aloys Klar (Prague: P.A. Klar, 1842), 1-69.

this fanciful tradition with his "dramatic fairy story" (*dramatická báchorka*), he was at the same time the first to use the theme of emigration as a source of social critique and a means for critical self reflection. In other words, he was the first in Czech patriotic society to pose emigration as a timely question.

Since Tyl's drama stands out as the prototypical treatment of emigration, it is worth exploring the story in detail. The play opens in an anonymous Bohemian village with the young village schoolteacher, Isidor, and his friend, the innkeeper Barnabáš, pouring over maps of North America, engrossed in brochures that portray the distant land in superlative terms. The two goad one another with tales of easy riches and adventure. "California! California!" exclaims the teacher, "just a tad to the right and you're standing in the cradle of gold!" "Land for a farthing—" his friend adds, "timber for free—enough meat to spare!" The two can no longer contain their enthusiasm and together cry out: "Oh America! Oh California!"

What fuels the pair's desire to emigrate becomes clear in the first lines. They are simply *europamüde*: weary of Europe. Fed up with the tedium of village life and tired of working for a pittance, they desire a change of scenery and long for adventure in a foreign land. "I'd like to get away—away—from Europe," says Barnabáš, "or at least from the village—to the end of the world—this here is no way to live!" The other concurs; "That's my political creed, too!" The men attempt to justify their yearning for America by blaming conditions at home and spewing political jargon. Isidor complains about the miserable salary he receives ("So this is how a teacher appears in the first half of the nineteenth century!") and Barnabáš cautions his friend not to be misled by the innkeeper's apparent prosperity ("That's just for show...on the inside it's like tinder, regular old consumption."); it is obvious, though, that both are just plain restless, they suffer from cabin fever and will grab at any excuse to get away.

Unfortunately for Isidor and Barnabáš, strings of a familiar nature bind them to the village. Try as he might, the innkeeper is unable to inspire in his wife, Voršila, the same sort of enthusiasm he himself feels for America.[9] In fact, the sober and practically-minded Voršila refuses even to hear her husband's reveries—"What, do you think baked birds over there just fly right into your mouth?" she asks incredulously.[10] Isidor, the young bachelor, has his heart set on the blacksmith's daughter, Terezka. Yet he fares no better with the hard-working Závora, the

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(published in 1842 and discussed at length in this dissertation's introduction.

[9] One might pause here to reflect on the significance of names. Barnabáš was a Cypriot Jew and early apostle of the Christian Church who traveled with the apostle Paul to defend Gentile converts against "Judaizers." His activities are recorded in Acts. According to a legend, Saint Ursula (in Czech, svatá Voršila) made a pilgrimage to Rome in the company of 11 (other sources say 11,000) maidens in order to delay her marriage to a nobleman she did not love. As she passed through Cologne on her homeward journey, her group was attacked by Huns. All of the girl's companions were murdered, but Ursula was spared because of her beauty. When she refused the Hun chief, he shot her dead with an arrow. John Francis Fenlon, *Catholic Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Barnabas"; *Catholic Encyclopedia,* s.v. "St. Ursula and the Eleven Thousand Virgins."

[10] Voršila's snide remark refers to a saying popular at the time and that occurred in various formulations (and not just in Czech); namely, the naïve belief purportedly entertained by all loafers that *tam litají lidem pečení ptáci do huby*, "over there, baked birds fly into people's mouths." The emigrant narrative as described here fits squarely in the tradition of *Schlaraffenland* stories, or tales of a glutton's paradise. In the modern period these stories often inversed bourgeois virtues—most obviously, that of delayed gratification—and mocked supposed peasant laziness and intemperance. On the tradition of *Schlaraffenland,* see Hans Hinrichs, *The Glutton's Paradise: Being a Pleasant Dissertation on Hans Sachs's 'Schlaraffenland' and Some Similar Utopias* (Mount Vernon, NY: Peter Pauper Press, 1955); Elfriede Marie Ackerman, "Das Schlaraffenland in German Literature and Folksong: Social Aspects of an Earthly Paradise, With an Inquiry Into its History in European Literature" (dissertation, University of Chicago, 1944).

girl's father, than did Barnabáš with his wife. Rather than pursue crazy schemes in foreign lands, the blacksmith admonishes the teacher to "remain in the schoolhouse and diligently impress upon the hearts of children love for the homeland and the nation." Závora refuses to hand his daughter over to a day-dreaming wanderer and advises the young man to stay at home where he belongs.

Things appear hopeless for the would-be emigrants until Šimon, the local Jew, enters the stage. Šimon waves before his neighbors a letter written by a friend, "the young Taussig," who emigrated only a few years before (see figure 2). "Yesterday the man didn't even have a pimpernel beneath his head," Šimon explains, "and now he's lying over there on silk cushions!" The newcomer stokes Barnabáš's fire with visions of a Bohemia in America, hinting that Barnabáš himself could become president, to which the barkeeper proclaims, "We'll make a new constitution!" Šimon then works his way over to the blacksmith's shop, where Isidor struggles to explain his intentions to Závora. Against the blacksmith's assertion that one should work honestly and remain "there, where God put him," Šimon forwards the principle *ubi bene, ibi patria*. Závora will have none of it (see figure 3). "You don't really understand that," he says about the Jew's lack of patriotism, "you don't feel it […] but don't corrupt other people with your lack of scruples […] don't plant that evil seed and make our people long for another homeland. If you don't have a place here which you would kiss as holy, don't lure those from it who should stay bound to it." Šimon shrugs his shoulders, claiming that for him America is a commodity to be peddled like any other. If one doesn't want it, then let it be; everyone is free to choose according to his own best interest.

Isidor, to spite the blacksmith, proclaims all the more emphatically his intention to emigrate. The schoolteacher intends to impress the blacksmith and win Terezka's heart by making it rich in America. Back at the inn, Voršila proves incapable of resisting her husband's persistence any longer and reluctantly agrees to give America a try. With the aid of Šimon, the barkeep sells his inn and his land in order to raise funds for the journey. The Jew promises to accompany the party to America and snickers to the side, satisfied with his gain; "The profit's secured! Now I've got him on the journey and Šimon Moreles will eat from his bowl all the way to New Jerusalem."

Thus cajoled by the unscrupulous Šimon into selling what little they possess, the emigrant party departs for the distant sea. It is at this point that Tyl introduces the supernatural element into his play. On St. John's Day the spirits are known to enter the natural world and intervene in human affairs. Having witnessed Terezka's sorrow at Isidor's departure, a forest nymph named Jasana vows to return the girl's lover safely from America. Before she can do that, however, the school teacher must prove his devotion to the Terezka by resisting a series of temptations.

And so the stage is set for the journey abroad, which will prove to be a painful ordeal for the entire party of Czech emigrants. The group is first led—or rather, misled—by the forest nymph disguised as a peasant maiden. The girl flirts with Isidor and tries to coax him into remaining with her in her village; "Well, one can get along with me," she suggests coquettishly, "you can be sure of that; I would do for you whatever I read your eyes telling me to do." At the last minute, however, the schoolteacher comes to his senses, thinking of his sweetheart back home. The nymph disappears, but only to return moments later at the head of a band of gypsies. The wandering gypsies appear in their stereotypical occupations of singing, dancing, and thieving. As the marauding band approaches, Šimon cowardly begs for mercy, Barnabáš throws up his arms to surrender, and Voršila stares at her husband with burning reproach. Now Isidor is

tempted a second time as the nymph offers to spare the lives of his friends if he finally agrees to become her husband. The teacher offers his own life in exchange for that of his friends, but he refuses to marry the nymph. Moved by Isidor's loyalty to the blacksmith's daughter, Jasana grants the travelers' their lives and wishes them a safe onward journey.

Yet even in America, the Czechs continue to suffer. Living somewhere among a community of Quakers, the emigrants get to know American hypocrisy first hand. Portrayed as a bizarre religious sect, the Quakers embody the qualities of selfishness and double-speak. Isidor, who has found work as a tutor in the Quaker household, sees the rhetoric of love, tolerance, and tranquility contradicted by fanaticism and narrow-mindedness. Making her third appearance to the teacher, now in the form of a servant girl, the forest nymph attempts to lure Isidor one last time. Yet Isidor can think of nothing but his distant homeland. "A person can be born anywhere in the world and thrown anywhere out into the world," the nymph sighs in resignation, "but the moment he thinks of home he has no peace." Isidor adds, "but I had to get myself into this mess before making that realization. Never did I think that I would long for Bohemia so." American freedom turns out to be the freedom of a vagabond. Left penniless and without prospects, Barnabáš has also changed his tune: "This here is no way to live at all!—Oh America! you have enlightened me. At home I could sit beside the oven—here I have to bake in the sun […] and this hovel is my palace." Even Šimon regrets his decision to emigrate and apologizes for having led his fellow travelers astray.

Naturally, the anger of the party focuses on Taussig, whose letter had so misinformed them. As fate (and the author's hand) would have it, the young Taussig enters the stage at that very moment, carrying upon his back the wood-frame rucksack marking him as a 'wandering Jew' figure. The emigrants reproach the young man for having tempted them with reports of easy wealth to be had overseas. Asked why he wrote all those nice things about life in America, Taussig insists that life really is good here—for one who has money. What about the silk cushions? "The moss here is as soft as silk," he replies defensively. He claimed America to be a new paradise! "And what of it? – There are a lot of Indians here – sons of Adam all of them." Just as the group moves on Taussig, threatening him with the worst, Barnabáš comes running onstage shouting about the approach of the aforesaid sons of Adam. And sure enough, Tyl sends the wild savages in on the warpath. Or to be exact: the author presents the natives as having been driven wild by the white man's greed, but not all that savage and, in fact, even righteous in their indignation. The chief cries out: "Ha, here is another nest of those foreign vultures who have come from across the great sea to cut down our forests, to kill our game, to burn our homes and to place us in shackles. […] Onward—into that nest! Destroy and burn, have no pity—a warning to all who turn a free nation into slaves!"[11]

The author chooses to spare the lives of his characters and has them return to their Bohemian village. Isidor, Barnabáš, and company come back humbled by their experiences in America and now hold the homeland in new esteem. The schoolteacher, rushing ahead of the others, enters town first and declares upon meeting the blacksmith that his earlier foolishness has been left overseas; he now returns home "as a penitent sinner." Asked if he has brought with him the bag of gold that he had sworn to find, Isidor replies, "not gold, but experience—and that is more valuable than gold, even if it was dearly bought." Even the Jew, Šimon, has learned a lesson. Liberated from his greed and moved by the protection offered to him by his companions, Šimon removes from his jacket a secret stash of coins that he had been saving for his old age.

[11] Tyl, *Lesní panna*, 3.8.

With this money, he says full of contrition, Barnabáš can buy back his inn. "I now feel as if my heart has burst its strings!" Barnabáš shouts for joy, "The Bohemian climate—and the beer! America can't measure up to that!"

Before the group can live happily ever after, Tyl has the forest nymph Jasana make her final appearance on the stage. Hearing a jealous rival accuse Isidor of infidelity while abroad, the fragile Terezka slips into a coma-like trance from which none of the characters can awaken her. As Závora explains, this has happened twice before while the emigrants were away, and each time in her sleep the girl mumbled confused words about Isidor, America, and fairies. At that moment enters a wandering saleswoman hawking tattered rags, her attire indicates that she has travelled from distant lands. She did not come, however, to sell merchandise, but rather to inform the blacksmith that only by forgiving Isidor and agreeing to the marriage can Terezka be saved. Against the blacksmith's objection that Isidor once left home, the woman points to her own example and claims that even abroad one can remain true to the homeland. She urges him to understand that one can be driven away "when things happen at home that depress one's heart." The emigrant, she explains, "runs off, vents his anger, quiets down and comes back again." The strange woman points to the surrounding fields and assures the blacksmith that "the groom will gladly till the local soil and pour his sweat upon it." After hearing Isidor's promise to dedicate himself to hard work on the field, the good-natured Závora finally assents to the wedding to the joy of all present. The last words of the play are given to Barnabáš, who prophesies many children for the young couple and encourages them to teach their young the familiar tune (a cue for the audience to sing along):

> Where is my home?
> Waters murmur across the meads
> Pinewoods rustle upon the cliff-rocks
> Bloom of spring shines in the orchard—
> An earthly paradise to see!
> And that is the beautiful land—
> The Bohemian land—my home![12]

These verses—*Kde domov můj,* the famous anthem discussed above—indicate the popular and inclusive nature of the play. With its patriotic themes, local dialect and folk idioms, and with its rural setting (to say nothing of the fantastical plot, the many sing-a-longs, and the exotic characters), *Lesní panna* was easily accessible to a wide audience. In it, one witnesses the difficult (at times comically difficult) process by which patriotic society came to terms with the rise of neoabsolutism and the onset of mass emigration. In fact, it provided the narrative structure according to which Czech patriotic society would interpret the historical phenomenon of mass emigration for the next half century—not only in works of fiction, but in journalism and scholarship as well. Tyl's work, moreover, supplied a set of memorable caricatures from which later commentators would borrow in order to make emigration meaningful to the reading public.[13] By applying this narrative structure and stock of characters to the social and political

[12] "Kde domov můj?/ Voda hučí po lučinách/ bory šumí po skalinách/ v sadě skví se jara květ—/ zemský raj to na pohled!/ A to je ta krásná země—/ země česká—domov můj!" Tyl, *Lesní panna*, 4.5.

[13] This comment refers not only to *Lesní panna*, but to the series of five "dramatic fairy stories" composed by the author between 1847 and 1851 and published together in Grund et al., *Spisy Josefa Kajetána Tyla* Vol. 19.

context of their time, Tyl offered his contemporaries a language with which to conceptualize and articulate the relationship between the Czech nation and the Austrian state as well as between Czech patriots and Czech emigrants. As made meaningful by the application of Tyl's narrative, mass emigration would come to affect national self-perception on a fundamental level.

Making Migration Meaningful

What exactly was the 'emigrant narrative' as articulated by Tyl? Let us begin with the most basic fact about the play's structure: it is organized into four acts, each act representing a stage of the emigrant experience. In the play's beginning we find the two good-natured but credulous Czechs cajoled by the wily Jew into emigrating. Ignoring the better advice of friends and neighbors, the emigrants sell their property (to the benefit of the Jew) and set out with their families to America. The second act describes the hazardous journey upon which the emigrants have embarked, an anabasis during which the characters are subject to various misfortunes. Gypsies rob the group before they have even left the province, yet the emigrants' pride and the Jew's promises drive them onward to their destination. Once in America, in Act Three, the suffering only continues. The New World is a strange land where intolerant locals show little consideration for newcomers. It is above all a setting for impoverishment and disillusionment. The emigrants realize that they have been misled by shipping companies' colorful brochures and maps, by the exaggerated accounts in emigrant letters and, above all, by the machinations of unscrupulous emigration agents. Victims of manipulation as well as of their own gullibility, the emigrants are humbled and show regret. A miserable death abroad is avoided only by the grace of God when the emigrants are finally transported back home in the fourth act. Wayward Czechs return humiliated and impoverished, but for that all the wiser.

The four stations of the emigrant's journey—the decision, the passage, time abroad, and homecoming—brought meaningful structure to the social phenomenon of mass emigration. According to the narrative, Czech emigrants came to be portrayed as prodigal sons of the nation. It is a story of anagnorisis. Through a series of misfortunes the protagonists arrive at a new self-understanding and an awareness of things as they truly stand. What matters in life is not individual material prosperity, but the fulfillment of one's duty to the national community. It is not Šimon's worldly maxim, *Ibi bene, ubi patria,* that rules the world, but rather the folksy idiom, *Ten, kdo pobývá všude, není nikde doma* (He who resides everywhere is nowhere at home).

Although in one sense a timeless archetype, this simple narrative also bore the marks of the social context from which it emerged. The fantasy and farce of Tyl's play notwithstanding, the emigrant narrative as presented in *Lesní panna* provided serious critical commentary on the social and political conditions prevailing at the time. As Tyl began work on the play a year after the revolution, it was still very far from clear what direction events would take. Austria had succeeded in suppressing unrest in Vienna and Prague, and with the help of the Russian tsar the revolution had been quashed in Hungary as well. A sign of the government's weak position was its willingness to include liberal concessions in its octroyed constitution of March, 1849. Among other things, the government had suspended censorship—Tyl's play *Jan Hus* was among the first

scripts to be performed in Bohemia without a censor.[14] By the time *Lesní panna* premiered in 1850, however, censorship had been reintroduced and the state's concessions to the democratic revolution were hurriedly being dismantled. This turn of events affected Josef Kajetán Tyl on a personal level. As a consequence of his journalistic and dramatic activities during the preceding years, he was subjected to government harassment and effectively black-listed from cultural life in Prague. Persecuted by authorities and given the cold shoulder by opportunistic colleagues, he was refused a concession to operate a theater and prohibited from publishing further works. The playwright spent the last years of his life traveling with a ragtag group of actors through the province. "From the time that he was effectively expelled from the Prague theater," Josef Václav Frič remembered Tyl's last days, "he toured with his troupe through Bohemia like the wandering Ahasver until he died of exhaustion […]."[15] Tyl passed away, impoverished, during a stop in Pilsen in 1856.

Thus directly affected by the revolution's aftermath, many of the moral issues addressed in the play—To escape abroad or suffer at home? To pursue one's personal interest or serve the collective good?—must have been questions that the author had posed to himself.[16] In this respect it is significant that it was not as political exiles that Tyl had his emigrants leave their homes.[17] The emigrants in *Lesní panna* were not revolutionary heroes—that would have been to idolize them, whereas Tyl's expertise lay rather in satire and farce.[18] Instead, he set his characters in the milieu of the village petty-bourgeoisie; the innkeeper, the schoolteacher, and the merchant comprise the emigrant party. We have already seen that it was not the most impoverished who left the monarchy—the rural proletariat and the propertyless factory worker—but rather the middle stratum of the rural population whose social outlook was less than positive. In this respect, Tyl's characterization of the emigrants was quite realistic. It was men such as Barnabáš

[14] The play was performed on December 26, 1848. Frič and Turnovský, *Almanach Matice divadelní*, 82.

[15] Frič and Turnovský, *Almanach Matice divadelní*, 85.

[16] Though there exists no evidence that Tyl ever considered emigrating, other Czech luminaries did. Most notably, Božena Němcová, maybe the most iconic of mid-century Czech writers and author of classic representations of the Bohemian countryside, repeatedly considered emigrating to Russia or the United States during the 1850s. In the summer of 1856 (one year after she published her tale *Babička*) she wrote her friend Josef Lešikar, a former tailor who emigrated to Texas some time earlier: "It was a smart move," she said of his decision to emigrate. "And I will regret till the day I die that I did not decide back then when you left and my husband was free to go America. I would have saved myself up to now many a bitter moment and freed myself from these miserable conditions. Today I no longer concern myself with how it will all turn out, I am prepared for everything, I do not even fear that dangerous journey across the ocean, if only I could bring the children to a country with a more certain future. […] Farewell, dear partriot and friend […] live happily in that new homeland and never regret that you left your country of birth, that you live in a foreign land—the homeland is there everywhere, where there are people of one language sharing customs and common endeavors." Němcová's letter reminds us to distinguish the public words of patriots from their private thoughts and circumstances. Němcová to Josef Lidumil Lešikar, August 12, 1856, in *Korespondence II 1853-1856*, ed. Robert Adam, Magdaléna Pokorná, Lucie Saicová Římalová and Stanislav Wimmer (Prague: Lidové Noviny, 2004), 264-5. See also Němcová to Karel Němec, in *Korespondence II*, 264-265, 273.

[17] A number of prominent revolutionaries active in the Prague uprising had either fled Austria or were expelled from the country immediately after the event, although their numbers and significance never paralleled that of their peers in the German lands. Zdeněk Šolle, "Czech Political Refugees in the United States during the Nineteenth Century," *Nebraska History* 74, nos. 3 and 4 (1993): 142-149.

[18] Czechs tend to avoid heroization in their literature and cultural narratives. When attempting such self-aggrandizement, it often comes across as patently ludicrous; hence the Czech penchant for self-irony. Taken together, Tyl's work from this period can be described as farcical comedies in which the small Czech attempts to become great, only to realize that his nation's greatness lies in its moderation.

who possessed just enough wealth to invest in a new start overseas and were anxious about maintaining social status at home that in fact chose to emigrate. This middle-class pessimism that formed the background to mass emigration was from its very beginning the bane of neoabsolutism: it showed not only that the government had failed to deliver economic prosperity to all, but that it had failed even to safeguard against downward socioeconomic mobility.

The emigrant narrative thus addressed the same constellation of social and economic tensions as did the Czech national movement itself: it too was part of the Czech-speaking petty bourgeoisie's strategy to transform social questions into national ones. But Tyl's play also shaped the manner in which contemporaries perceived Czech nationhood itself. For Tyl, the emigrant was a figure who tragically confused a series of mutually exclusive and polar opposite qualities. Foremost among the transgressions was the boundary separating *domov* (home) from *cizina* (foreign lands). The positive qualities associated with the former included family, diligence, love, and temperance. In fact, *domov* is characterized by precisely those qualities to which Tyl's Quakers professed but according to which they failed to live. It is the common-sense Voršila, the hardworking Závora, and the gentle Terezka who embody the qualities of *domov* in the play, and it is they who implore the teacher and barkeeper to remain at home.

Along their way, the Czech travelers are confronted by three 'nomadic' peoples, each of which represents some negation of *domov*. First among these 'foreign' characters is Šimon, and together with him the young Taussig, both playing upon native anti-Semitism and rehashing the worn legend of the wandering Jew. Egoistic, materialistic, and cosmopolitan, the Jew is taken as the very negation of *domov* and of all the qualities associated with Czech nationhood. It was Šimon, with Taussig's deceptive letter in hand, who convinced the gullible but otherwise congenial Barnabáš to sell his home and leave for America. Gypsies, portrayed positively for their musical talents and innate cheerfulness (both qualities attributed to Czechs, by the way), but at the same time rootless and reduced to thievery in order to survive, provide a different representation of *cizina.* Both Jew and gypsy were figures native to Bohemia and familiar to audience members and easily exploited as negative stereotypes. The former represented the exchange of heart and homeland for financial gain; the latter symbolized idleness and dishonesty. Against the backdrop of these familiar characters, the Czech stood out for his sincerity, industriousness, and honesty.

The American Indians, on the other hand, were more exotic characters confronted by most audience members only in storybooks. After the repeated demonstrations of Šimon's cowardice and Gypsy impotence, the proud Indian fares best as the negative picture of the Czech character. Arrogant and angry, the rampaging Indian acts as a warning to what happens when a free nation is reduced to slavery. America's natives have been turned savage by European greed, and it is as representatives of Europe that the emigrant party falls victim to the Indians' wrath. After witnessing how Tyl distinguished his Czech emigrants from the acquisitive Jew, the dishonest gypsy, and the fanatical Quakers, it is clear to the audience that the Indians, blinded by rage, fail to see in the Czech a brother. Both Indian and Czech, after all, are fiercely attached to the homeland and set against the overwhelming force of a colonizing people. The Indian warns of denationalization and, however tragically, fights against it. The Indians as much as the Jew and gypsy represent what happens when the values of *domov* are displaced by *cizina*, warning of the inevitable denationalization awaiting Czechs who emigrate and portending a similar fate for the nation as a whole.

Tyl's semiotics of the national character ran even deeper. Just because a Czech remained at home did not attribute to him all the qualities of *domov.* It was not enough to live in the village

or even to speak the language in order to attain the status of a true Czech. One can point to the wily Šimon as an obvious example. A comical character introduced in the last act, however, demonstrates the point from a different angle. During Isidor's absence, a newcomer to the village named Kapoun had been vying for Terezka's affection. Unable to make progress with the girl, he attempted to win the support of her father; "Do you want a *politikus*? Just ask—ahem—around at any office if they don't know me. A coat to fit all occasions; those are my politics. Or do you want a decent patriot? Come to my place and you will see how much I spend on books. For ten years already I've been buying—ahem—this Czech calendar." Kapoun represents the superficial patriotism so detested by Tyl; the patriot who confuses mere talk with real loyalty and substitutes with the consumption of books true inner commitment to the homeland. He is clearly an opportunistic, want-to-be Czech and as such stands no chance with the exemplary blacksmith. (Indeed, the name given to the character, *kapoun*, like the English word capon, denotes a castrated rooster raised for slaughter!) Like the cowardly Šimon, Kapoun is symbol of impotence and superficiality, demonstrating that simply living in Bohemia and speaking the Czech language does not make one a true Czech.

Drawing from a tradition going back to the days of the National Revival, Tyl emphasized the act of volition required to attain the status of an authentic (*pravý*) or true and loyal (*věrný*) member of the nation. Prior to emigration, Isidor and Barnabáš only happen to live in Bohemia and to speak Czech. After returning home with their new awareness of *domov*, each becomes a true and loyal Czech—a *věrný Čech*. The strong and straightforward Závora stands an embodiment of loyalty (*věrnost*) in the work. Tyl's representation of Závora anticipated Karel Purkyně's famous image of the blacksmith Jech from 1860, a masculine embodiment of labor and patriotic sentiment, displayed by the tools that surround him and the newspaper he holds in his hand (see figure 4). It is an obvious metaphor; the blacksmith with his hammer and anvil symbolizes strength and stability.

Being a true and loyal Czech was an affair of the heart and a matter of personal commitment, not merely an objective characteristic. Perhaps the best translation of the term *věrný* is *faithful,* as in the faithfulness shared between lovers. The true Czech does not stray; in his heart he remains bound to the homeland. This is the central plot in *Lesní panna,* after all: the schoolteacher Isidor remains faithful to his lover, Terezka. Despite the great distance and numerous temptations, Isidor feels in his heart that *domov*, personified by Terezka, is of irreducible value, not to be traded or exchanged for anything in the world. The return of four wayward Czechs culminates in Terezka's betrothal to Isidor and, together with the audience, a rendition of *Kde domov můj?*

From Fiction to Fact

The emigrant narrative was in this way a symbolic frame of reference shaped by—and in turn giving shape to—the social tensions from which it emerged. This story of departure and return made sense of mass emigration and brought order to the political and social transformations of the decade. Journalists and scholars also employed the narrative to interpret current events from a patriotic standpoint. In doing so, they transplanted the narrative from the theatrical stage to the oftentimes equally theatrical but purportedly factual pages of the periodical

press.[19] Filip Stanislav Kodym with his journals *Týdeník* and *Hospodářský kalendář* and František Šimáček with the *Posel z Prahy* were instrumental in adapting the emigrant narrative to fit current events. Jakub Malý, the translator, publicist, and historian, did much the same with his *Pražský prostonárodní list.* We have seen how journals such as these worked to nationalize the activities of the Patriotic-Economic Association and further the interests of the Czech-speaking peasant elite by framing agrarian reform as a project of national renewal. Czech journalism of the 1850s also pushed the campaign of national self-help to deliver 'Czech capital' to members of the artisanal and merchant middle class in Bohemia's towns. The anti-German and anti-Semitic tone that these writers adopted, together with the strong ambivalence toward liberal capitalism, also marked the emigration question as it was treated in Czech patriotic journals during the 1850s and after.[20] Mass emigration as narrated in the pages of these journals also became a story of subjective national renewal.

An early and representative example of this transposed emigrant narrative was a series of letters published in Jakub Malý's paper in late 1851.[21] The letters, excerpted from authentic originals, record the experiences of "Kateřina H-á" and her husband, "František H," who had emigrated from the eastern Bohemian Lanškroun region in April that year to start a new life in Cat Spring, Texas.[22] In the letters sent to family back home, one finds each of the essential elements of the emigrant narrative as previously recounted by Tyl, although this time the narrative was used to interpret the experiences of real emigrants.

According to the letters as published by Malý, it was news of the region sent from an evangelical pastor that had lured the family across the Atlantic. Jozef Ernst Bergmann had emigrated to Texas a year earlier and sent glowing reports back home, propagated settlement of Texas among Czechs and Germans in the Bohemian lands.[23] In his accounts of life in the state, the pastor promised his followers the opportunity to own land and become independent farmers; "Just come and take as much of this prairie as you want and as much forest as you can enclose," the pastor enticed, "clear the forest, build a home, burn the rest and get the best arable land for a large homestead, for a field and garden, for tobacco and cotton plantations." The H.'s were just one of over a thousand families to have followed Bergmann's call between 1851 and 1854.[24]

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[19] On the history of Czech journalism during the period, see Beránková, *Dějiny žurnalistiky,* 112-195.

[20] Representative use of the emigrant narrative in journalism of the 1850s include: F.S. Kodym, "Půjdeme do Ameriky?" *Týdeník* 1853, pg. 209; F.S. Kodym, "Čeho může se přistěhovalý hospodář v Americe nadíti?" *Hospodářské noviny*, 1854; E. Bruna, "Výstraha pro ty, kdož se ze své otčiny vystěhovati chtějí," *Hospodářský kalendář*, 1855; "Hlas Čecha z Ameriky," *Lumír,* April 19, 1855; "Není ani v Americe všecko zlato co se bliští," *Moravské noviny,* 1.4.1858; Müller, Karel, *Máme-liž stěhovat se do Ameriky?* (Jindřichův Hradec, 1856).

[21] The letters were published serially in the *Pražský prostonárodní list* on October 31, November 7, November 14, December 12, December 19, and December 24, 1851.

[22] The letters, as revealed by František Kutnar ("Dopisy českých vystěhovalců," 238), were composed by Kateřina and František Herrmann, parents of the Czech writer Ignát Herrmann. Kateřina Herrmann, née Pospíšil, belonged to the important Czech publishing family, whose firm produced many of the adventure tales discussed in later parts of this dissertation. It was probably from the woman's father that J. Malý acquired the letters, Ignát Herrmann later recounted his mother's Texas journey in the story, *Kátliny vdavky* (1912).

[23] The editor of *Moravské Noviny,* František Matouš Klácel, published a long letter by Bergmann in seven installments between November 21 and December 10, 1851. On Bergmann, see David Z. Chroust, "Jozef Ernst Bergmann: 'Father' of the Czech-speaking immigration in Texas?" *Kosmas* 20, no. 1 (Fall 2006), 48-64.

[24] The pastor evidently emptied out the villages of Dolní and Horní Čermná (Ober and Nieder Böhmisch Rothwasser) in the Pardubice region; Kutnar reports that a thousand families left from those two villages alone in the first half decade. See Kutnar, "Dopisy českých vystěhovalců," 222n1.

In the first letters of their letters to be published in Malý's newspaper, neither Kateřina nor František showed any signs of regret for having emigrated. Indeed, their first reports home expressed thanks to God for having delivered them "to the Promised Land." Sixty-six days at sea, to be sure, tested the family's endurance. But the seasickness, inedible provisions, and boredom along the way proved worthwhile in the end. It was taken to be a sign of promise when their daughter Marie was born shortly after land had been sighted.

Galveston, the party's port of entry into the United States, exceeded Kateřina's expectations. The Americans she described as a practical people, "quick to learn and polite, but without any flattery and empty compliments." There was no threat of impoverishment, she assured her parents. Beggars were nowhere to be found and on the faces of passersby she noticed only "the contentment born of freedom and a good income." She remembered a description of Galveston that she had read "in some Czech magazine" back home, "and I had to laugh to myself about this terrifying story; the gentleman who had written it had certainly never been in America." About the pastor who had encouraged the family to emigrate, Bergmann, she wrote that he was "just as I imagined him to be, direct and heartfelt." František, too, was pleased to be standing "firmly on the ground of free America," and dutifully listed available properties and the prices for readers at home. For a few hundred gulden, he reported, one can start a "good and independent existence" in Texas.

Cat Springs itself was romantically described in a subsequent letter as an undulating landscape covered with trees; the adjectives *fertile* and *cheap* being used to describe the land. No vocabulary was better suited to attract the attention of peasants and artisans back home. Initially, one wonders at the editor's motive in publishing the correspondence. Could the patriotic Malý really be pushing emigration? "Judging from all of my observations," one reads in a letter, "it seems to me that a comfortable future awaits us […] I must sincerely say that I sometimes sighed deeply upon that wreck of a ship, […] but since finding myself in this beautiful country I have not regretted our emigrating."

The first published letters resembled countless enthusiastic epistles that circulated in the Bohemian countryside. Readers of the journal, however, were soon to learn that impressions can be deceiving. The H's soon changed their opinion about Texas. Even in the first letters describing the moment of arrival there had been signs of the approaching ruin. Fricek, the couple's only son, had been healthy the entire voyage, but fell ill as soon as the family entered Galveston. František and Kateřina were assured that their son would soon recover; all the same, the child's condition grew worse in isolated Cat Springs. The summer heat had also become unbearable. The hot Texas sun took such a toll on the skin that "people here resemble Egyptian mummies," wrote František. Failing to heed the warnings, the emigrant party remained obstinate and pledged to stay for a year in hopes that things would improve. Nobody, the author swore, was considering a return to Bohemia.

Inevitably, romance gave way to disillusionment. In a subsequent letter the writer admitted that America "is not what we expected." The family was isolated and the few neighbors who visited their farm "are all unfamiliar faces and all Germans." There was no future for children in Texas other than farming, no schools and no culture. Kateřina wrote of local seventeen year-olds barely able to sound out the alphabet. Children "grow up with the animals" and received little in the way of religious instruction. "The people raised here remain forever coarse and they have no idea of the pleasantries of life in Europe; they are happy when they have enough corn, bacon, and milk—that is the entirety of their bliss." America, in short, turned out to be a brutal place without the comforts of civilization.

In her fourth letter, Kateřina wrote about devastation and hopelessness. Ten members of the party had died, and the distraught mother reported that her son, Fricek, also perished, and the daughter, born en route to America, "followed him eight days later." Overcome with grief and homesickness, the H's, along with everyone else, planned to leave Texas. There was no trace of Bergmann, whose eloquence withered along with everything else in Texas. "Many who left their homeland at his urging have returned again, others have left for other states; everybody reproaches him bitterly for having misled them and for describing things completely differently than as they are in reality." To escape the immigrants' indignation, it was implied, the pastor had skipped town, abandoning his wife and four daughters.

The emigrants' ordeal now reached its conclusion and the time for self-realization had come. In the last letter to be published in Malý's paper (on Christmas Eve, 1851), František H. reflected upon the wider significance of his time in America: "Only once here did I come to the realization that neither here or there does a person live forever, and that one can enjoy his life at home, too; so why grapple with such difficulties here, being separated from all friends and acquaintances? Of course, this understanding came to us rather late, but for that we have seen something, tried something and gotten to know America. I beg you eagerly to tell all to cool their heads and not give Texas anymore thought; it is a country only for those who own slaves and can sit in the shade."

Much like the schoolteacher Isidor, who came to recognize the significance of *domov* only after much suffering, so too did František realize that life is hard on both sides of the Atlantic and that solace is only to be found in the faces of loved ones at home. The emigration experience thus recounted is tragic yet full of meaning, and therefore deserved to be included in the pages of Malý's journal. The experience of exile liberated the Czech emigrant from his dangerous illusion and resituated him firmly in the bosom of the homeland. "The beginning sounds differently than the end," reflected Kateřina in an echo of her husband. "This is no wonder, for it is not written in a single day, and in the beginning everything seems different to a person than how he sees it after spending some time here." In a postscript, she expressed her thought more directly; "No, it is no longer to be endured […] Burn all the books that praise Texas!"

Malý's publication of the H.'s letters was typical of the patriotic journalism of the day.[25] In fact, the moralizing narrative emphasizing personal fault, outsider meddling, and the rehabilitation of individual emigrants continued to be a mainstay of Czech journalism throughout the entire period of mass emigration to the United States. Stories of subjective renewal through the experience of exile and return remained an important point of orientation for Czech liberals. That this was so can be seen in the countless articles, warnings, editorials, and dispatches published in Czech-language newspapers in Bohemia from the early 1850s up through the 1890s. It is not necessary to provide an exhaustive catalogue of such ephemera; a representative sample of selectively printed letters taken from the contemporary press demonstrates the remarkable staying power of the emigrant narrative in Czech liberal journalism during the nineteenth century.[26]

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[25] Clinton Machann and James W. Mendl, *Czech Voices: Stories From Texas in the American Národní Kalendař* (College Station: Texas A & M University, 1991), xi-xxxi.

[26] The periodicals to be examined in what follows include the following titles: *České noviny* (conservative liberal), *Hlas Národa* (Old Czech), *Národní listy* (Young Czech), *Pokrok* (Old Czech), *Posel z Prahy* (conservative liberal), *Pražské denník* (semi-governmental organ).

The story of a certain Jan Vaňourek, master cobbler from Dolany, can be used as a reference point for themes discussed in over thirty years of emigration reportage. The cobbler's story, published in 1893, exemplifies the sensationalistic narrative used by Czech publishers to dissuade their countrymen from leaving the homeland. In the space of a single extended paragraph, Vaňourek's tale of suffering in America is told from the fateful moment of decision to the event of homecoming. In the following, we will use excerpts from Vaňourek's story to introduce a brief discussion of each of the four stations of the emigrant experience. We begin with *the decision to emigrate.*

> **From the fate of a Czech emigrant.** Three years ago, the master cobbler Jan Vaňourek from Dolany longed for America and let himself be talked by some agent into selling his house and three acres of field. He withdrew money from his savings and, having gathered together a handsome sum of 3,780 gulden for the journey, he set out for the Promised Land with his spouse, Marie, and his two small children. As the agent explained, a man can work little but earn much there, pay no taxes and enjoy freedoms the likes of which no mortal European can imagine.[27]

Concerned letter writers and newspaper editors worked hard to dissuade men such as Mr. Vaňourek from heeding the agent's alluring call. In countless other articles titled, "A Warning to Emigrants," (variously formulated as *Výstraha vystěhovalcům, Na výstrahu vystěhovalcům, K výstraze vystěhovalcům,* or *Vystěhovalcům k výstraze!*), Czech peasants and working men were cautioned about false promises of easy wealth to be gained overseas and admonished their countrymen to remain at home and "work honestly." That a shoemaker the likes of Vaňourek might actively seek out opportunity beyond the borders of the monarchy was a fact to which little attention was given. Instead, writers portrayed the emigrant as a passive victim of outside manipulation, or as a convalescent suffering the effects of some malady. Commentators spoke of emigration fever and worried about contagion; peasant mobility was a plague that ravaged the Bohemian countryside.[28]

Traveling representatives of German shipping lines and American railroad companies were identified as the carriers of this virus—emigration agents who were inevitably described as *unscrupulous* (nesvědomitý). Although economic troubles might incline the worker to dream of opportunity abroad, it was this unscrupulous agent who exploited the weaknesses of the uneducated masses for his own gain. "The primary cause of mass emigration," as reported in one paper, "are the swarms of agents sent from shipping companies in Bremen and in Hamburg."[29] "The guilt for the spread of this unfortunate emigration malady," we read in another article, "falls solely on the agent of the ocean liner firms who receive very large commissions from their bread-givers."[30] It was above all the "inexperienced" country people who were "tricked" by such agents into selling all they own in order to fund the overseas journey. "Usually a cunning and

[27] "Z osudů českého vystěhovalce," *Česká politika*, January 30, 1893.
[28] "It is a sickness whose germ every completely unenlightened person carries within himself"; "The contagion has spread to our people"; "a pestilence across the entire homeland." For these and other referencess, see "Stěhování do Ameriky," *Slavie,* June 21, 1871; "Vystěhovalci—Vystěhovalečtí agenti," Zprávy z venova, *Národní listy*, August 17, 1867; Jos. Dumek "Stěhování se lidu rolnického do ciziny," *Hlas Národa*, September 16, 1886; "Mor vystěhovalecký," *Česká politika,* 6 September 1888.
[29] "Dopis od Čecha v Americe," *Pražský denník*, April 15, 1882.
[30] "K výstraze vystěhovalcům," *Pražský denník*, September 23, 1880.

greasy type," the above author added, "he gets five gulden for each person and thirty for an entire emigrant family."[31] "One must keep an eye out for this slippery fish," added another, "and try hard to frustrate his unscrupulous trade." [32]

Elsewhere, the shipping company representative was described as "a scoundrel wandering from one village to another […] urging the poor people to emigrate. For the money of Judas such monsters in human form are capable of selling their own countrymen into poverty and suffering and to take from them that which is most dear of all, the homeland."[33] Again and again one reads of emigrants "captured," "led astray," or "seduced" by outsiders: "Emigrants usually allow themselves to be seduced by unscrupulous agents who work in the interest of some firm, who show no concern for the fact that they are robbing from the people their last assets and leading them to poverty and destitution."[34] The emigration agent was certainly cast as an immoral figure, although it was the credulous peasant who offered himself for seduction.

Journalists often made the agent's status as a sexual predator explicit. Such was the case with a warning in 1880 about a man from Hamburg who was reported to be scouring the southwestern Bohemian countryside in search of young women. Once apprehended, the man turned out to possess some two hundred gulden (spoils from his victims, to be sure) as well as a number of printed forms and letters "from his master in Hamburg." Thirteen girls had reportedly fallen victim to the impostor; "each of the girls who fell into his hands had to give him an advanced payment of 10 gulden, for which he promised them everything under the sun in America, where supposedly the greatest happiness awaits them, where they will walk upon silk and enjoy a blissful future."[35]

Soon after that report, the conservative liberal daily *Pokrok* told of a certain T. Chochol, "a national of America" and "native Czech born in Volhynia," who had been creeping around the same region.[36] There, he had "strenuously persuaded young single women to emigrate to America, describing the country as some sort of Canaan where everything is in full bloom and prospering." Several women had already become victims of the stranger, "who was in fact nothing else than the agent of some American brothel." Fortunately, he too was taken into custody by police and prevented from further victimizing Czech women.

The agent was always portrayed as shrewd and astute, his intelligence however corrupted by greed. By contrast, the Czech peasant was by nature cheerful and honest, although these positive qualities all too easily passed into credulity. While the word agent was constantly preceded by the adjective *nesvědomitý* (unscrupulous), the word *lehkomyslný* (credulous) routinely described the emigrant. The emigrants acted impulsively and were ill-informed. "For the most part they are people who have no idea about conditions abroad, who lose all of their belongings while travelling and are then handed over to the cruelest sufferings," stated an author in *České noviny* from 1883.[37] Once convinced by conversations in the countryside taverns, persuaded by fancy brochures, or impressed the "beautiful pictures of steamers" posted at

[31] The author continues, "He has no other work than to write Mr. K. in Bremen or Mr. P. in Hamburg that he has captures so and so many people and what time the boat leaves." The reference is to Alois Kareš in Bremen and his competitor in Hamburg, the Czech agent Josef Pastor.
[32] "K výstraze vystěhovalcům," *Pražský denník*, September 23, 1880.
[33] "Vystěhovalcům k výstraze!" *České noviny*, 20.05.1882
[34] "Výstraha vystěhovalcům do Ameriky," *Pokrok*, June 9, 1880.
[35] "K výstraze vystěhovalcům," *Pražský denník*, September 23, 1880.
[36] "Zvlaštní agentura," *Pokrok*, August 31, 1880.
[37] "Jaké jsou vyhlídky pro vystěhovalce v Americe?" *České noviny,* May 4, 1883.

railway stations, the stubborn peasant "cannot be talked out of his intention to emigrate in any way whatsoever." "These people," said another author about emigrants from the Šumava/Böhmerwald, "are duped by the unscrupulous agents of steamship companies […] and do not want to be dissuaded from their intention at any cost. The fools [*lehkověrci*] don't give any mind to the sad news coming from compatriots Czechs in America who find themselves in poverty and suffering."[38]

Having thus developed an account of the emigrant's decision to leave his homeland, publicists described the experiences that followed rather straightforwardly. The moment of decision, after all, represented the story's real turning point; it was the tragic error from which the rest of the emigrant's fate deterministically followed. Always a premonition of things to come was *the journey overseas,* which in Vaňourek's case was condensed into a single sentence:

> Both of his children died at sea.[39]

The author wasted no time with psychological depth. "How the miserable emigrants fare along the journey is not necessary to describe in detail," stated an article from 1886.[40] When authors did spend some time sharing accounts of the overseas passage, the complaints were always the same: endless sea storms ("In a word: it was like what they say about judgment day, it cannot be worse."), unbearable sea sickness ("People constantly had to throw up, so you can imagine the stench."), and indigestible fare ("So salty and hideous that it couldn't be eaten […] they threw it straight into the sea.").[41] Of course, the consequences could be much worse. "Unused to the diet, the climate, and traveling, many die already at sea."[42]

Stubborn and blinded by exaggerated expectations, the emigrant could not be dissuaded by even the most tragic of losses. Having already ignored the advice of family and neighbors, having sold off his property and lost his position in society, the crossing marked a point of no return. "Even if they do make it safely to the foreign land," added one author, "they have been robbed, cheated, and deceived on all sides and usually have nothing of their savings remaining."[43] The emigrant arrived to the New World destitute and alone. From that point on, fate was left to work its course and there remained only the task of relating the emigrant's *sufferings abroad*:

> Once in New York Vaňourek stepped onto shore with his wife, who had been blessed with good health, and went to search for shelter. Unable to understand the foreign tongue and strange habits, he relied upon the assistance of an unfamiliar countryman who had offered his services at the wharf. Grateful for having run into a fellow Czech, Vaňourek accepted the offer and lodged with the man in a shared apartment. […] He did not long enjoy the company of his dear companion: two days later he awoke suddenly and searched for his friend, but to no avail: the fellow Czech had disappeared and with him was gone the all of the money from Vaňourek's locked suitcase: there remained only the spare change that was left from the previous day. […] Upon learning that they were now

[38] "Hromadné stěhování do Ameriky," *České noviny*, September 5, 1880.
[39] "Z osodů českého vystěhovalce," *Česká politika*, January 30, 1893.
[40] Jos. Dumek, "Stěhování se lidu rolnického do ciziny," *Hlas Národa*, September 16, 1886.
[41] "K výstraze vystěhovalcům do Ameriky," *Pražský denník*, September 4, 1881.
[42] Jos. Dumek, "Stěhování se lidu rolnického do ciziny," *Hlas Národa*, September 16, 1886.
[43] Jos. Dumek, "Stěhování se lidu rolnického do ciziny," *Hlas Národa*, September 16, 1886.

> impoverished, his wife was so beset with sorrow and grief that she became gravely ill and, giving premature birth to a dead child, she died. The unhappy man was at the point of despair, having lost his wife and two adorable children. Wanting at least to arrange a decent funeral for his dead wife, he sold his the last pieces of clothing and undergarments left over from the homeland. He did not manage to see the funeral, however, for he suddenly became ill and had to be transported immediately to the hospital. For a long time he wavered between life and death: finally his strong character prevailed and Vaňourek slowly recovered. Still weak and unable even to stand on his own two feet, he was released from the hospital after three months: without money or a place to live, in a foreign land and unable to communicate with people.[44]

Despite the prosaic description, the point was simple: suffering abroad was the unavoidable consequence of the decision to emigrate. *He paid bitterly for his credulity*—to summarize the point in so few words.[45] The forms that this punishment could take were limited only by the author's imagination. A rather abrupt end was found by the ex-bookkeeper from Pilsen, Josef Novinský. [46] After emigrating to the United States, Novinský engaged in various odd jobs before moving on to promote immigration on behalf of a Kansas railroad company. Parts of Bohemia, we read in the article, had recently been flooded with brochures and fliers about the state. Novinský's carrier as an emigration agent was brief, however. "About a month ago he was arrested for unknown reasons, and once in prison he shot a bullet through his head. He left his wife and three children behind in great poverty."

Most reports, however, indulged in long, sensationalistic descriptions of emigrant suffering before drawing their predictable conclusions. As in Vaňourek's case, troubles reportedly began immediately upon stepping onto American soil. The emigrant's funds were depleted by the time he reached his destination and he therefore had to accept whatever work was offered to him. If the unsuspecting peasant had already been duped by the agent back home, he stood no chance among the professional swindlers abroad, for "in America you find few people who are honest, and he who is honest here will perish of hunger."[47] English proved to be an insurmountable barrier and exposed the unwary Czech to all sorts of scams. "Unable to make himself understood, he stands there alone like a pole in a field among two million people. Nobody takes notice of him, even if he were to be dying of hunger."[48]

Even if the emigrant managed to find work and avoid starvation, it was of an unimaginably exploitative nature.[49] "Farmers are not allowed to have black slaves," reported the

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[44]"Z osudů českého vystěhovalce," *Česká politika,* January 30, 1893.

[45] "He, too, was misled by an unscrupulous agent of a Bremen shipping line into abandoning his homeland and now pays bitterly for his credulity." "Stran stěhování-se do Ameriky," *Pražský denník*, May 2, 1880.

[46] "K výstraze vystěhovalcům," *Pražský denník*, September 23, 1880.

[47] "Nejezděte do Ameriky," *Posel z Prahy*, November 9, 1878.

[48] "Dopis od Čecha v Americe," *Pražský denník,* April 15, 1882.

[49] Newspapers provided long lists of low wages compared to low costs of living and emphasized the poor labor conditions. (E.g., "K výstraze vystěhovalcům," *Pražský denník,* September 24, 1880.) "Everyday they truck men out of work like fallen pears, some dead, some injured or sick," wrote one Czech from Chicago. "The moon here is hotter than the sun over there," he continued, and "the water over there is better than the beer over here." ("K výstraze vystěhovalcům," *Pražský denník,* September 06, 1881.) Even more letters flowed in from farmers, who reported being swindled by land dealers in the East. ("Dopis od Čecha v Americe," *Pražský denník,* April 16, 1882; "Jaké jsou vyhlídky pro vystěhovalec v Americe?" *České noviny*, May 4, 1883; "K výstraze vystěhovalcům do Ameriky I, II, III, IV," *Pražský denník,* April 22, 23, 26, 27, 1882.)

writer of an article in 1886, "and so they hire white slaves, for they need the labor power."[50] The slave master keeps their subjects on a tight leash, and when the need for new workers arises, "he promises them relief and partial forgiveness of debts if they will write down in letters home whatever he dictates to them. Pushed to the edge of despair, the victims of these fraudsters don't hesitate to write everything that the usurer instructs them to, describing their enslavement as a paradise in order to allure countrymen to emigrate." Associations of these ruthless farmers will sometimes even insert fifty or a hundred dollars into the envelope, we are told, "and by these means they blind the imprudent and foolish people." The numbers of immigrants who are thus enslaved continues to rise, "even though there are enough cheap properties here, and he who wants to work will always find sustenance in the homeland."[51]

All the admonitions of liberal Czech newspaper editors were worthless, however, if the emigrant did not himself come to recognize the nature of his mistake. This scene, the moment of anagnorisis in which the emigrant realized the value of *domov* to become a true and loyal Czech, was captured by writers in descriptions of the *homecoming and lessons learned*. Returning now to the fate of Vaňourek, the master cobbler:

> When he left the hospital, he was given two dollars from doctors who pitied the severely tested emigrant. One dollar he used to pay for an apartment, the other he reserved for sustenance, and he went out in search of work. After searching with no results, he was finally taken on as a worker in the small cigar factory of the fellow Czech Mr. Arnošt Stejskal, who comes from Budějovice. He was paid five dollars a week, which for the high price of foodstuffs and cost of living was hardly sufficient. After three years of almost superhuman frugality and unbelievable effort he managed to save one hundred dollars and left for his homeland, from whence he had departed to a foreign land three years earlier in the company of his beloved family and with magnificent plans, hopes, and a decent amount of money. Arriving to his home county with neither friends nor relatives and with no property, he came to Prague last week and sought work in the homeland. He has been accepted as a worker for the railroad. Vaňourek is just thirty-five years old, but judging from his hunched figure, his careworn appearance, grey hair and graying full beard he can be mistaken a sixty-year-old."[52]

If Czech liberals underplayed the social background of mass emigration in favor of individualizing narratives of personal moral failure, the socioeconomic consequences of having left the homeland were always placed front and center in accounts of the emigrant's homecoming. Inevitably, the Czech handworker or peasant suffered as a result of emigration the very loss of independence that he had originally sought to avoid. Barnabáš was generously granted a return to his previous profession of innkeeper and Isidor was given land from his new father-in-law; patriotic editors of Czech newspapers did not shine such grace upon the purportedly real-life counterparts. Sometimes it was with descriptions of a few sentences that "a certain citizen of Harzdorf" in northern Bohemia or a "family Kessler" from Útěchov in Moravia

[50] Jos. Dumek, "Stěhování se lidu rolnického do ciziny," *Hlas Národa*, September 16, 1886.
[51] Even more sensationalistic was a report titled, "Czech Slaves in Virginia," in the Young Czech paper *Národní listy*, about a group of emigrants kept in bondage by a Jewish slave handler named Rosenthal. "Čeští otroci ve Virginii," *Národní listy*, March 24, 1891. A similar story, this time about Czechs kept as slaves in South America was published by the Old Czech daily, *Hlas národa.* "Osudy českého vystěhovalce v Americe," *Hlas národa*, January 1, 1893.
[52] "Z osudů českého vystěhovalce," *Česká politika*, January 30, 1893.

who had "lost their last groschen" in America were held up as warnings.[53] The former bookkeeper for a mill in Čistá and later promoter of settlement in Kansas, Jan Novinský, ended his life in prison with a bullet through the head. Seduced by the words of an unscrupulous agent, girls from Blovice lost their chastity in an American brothel. And Vaňourek, who was once a master cobbler, landowner, and head of a happy family in Dolany, returned from New York after three years—alone, aged, and impoverished.

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The emigrant narrative as related by patriots at home conveyed a message of downward social mobility in which the once proud artisan or land-owning peasant returns from America a humbled proletariat. "May this example," declared one editor, "serve as a warning to all those who, not being satisfied at home, want to search for their happiness in America, for they will not find it, but rather fall into greater misery than before."[54] The narrative reversed the actual state of affairs. Fearing a loss of social status, artisans and peasants from the middle strata of society chose emigration as a strategy to maintain economic independence. Yet according to both theatrical and journalistic representations, proletarianization was the consequence rather than the cause of mass emigration. The morality tale of good-natured but careless Czech peasants duped by the unscrupulous agents of foreign shipping companies obscured the social background of mass emigration. Loss of social status, meanwhile, was presented as an effect of emigration rather than its source. As a consequence of this reversal, patriotic Czech activists were able to present emigration as a national rather than social problem and by doing so advance their own claim to guardianship over the national community.

[53] "Stran stěhování-se do Ameriky," *Pražský denník.* 2.5.1880; "Na výstrahu vystěhovalcům," *České noviny,* July 18, 1880.
[54] "Na výstrahu vystěhovalcům," *České noviny,* July 18, 1880.

Chapter Three

Kolonisace: Visions of Collective Settlement

The word *colony* derives from the Latin, *colōnie*, which itself is formed on the noun *colōn-us*, "tiller, farmer, cultivator, planter, settler in a new country." The *Oxford English Dictionary* elaborates on the term's classical definition as a farm or landed estate, "a public settlement of Roman citizens in a hostile or newly conquered country, where they, retaining their Roman citizenship, received lands, and acted as a garrison, being mostly formed of veteran soldiers who had served their time […]."[1] At its most basic, then, the word associates rural settlement with military conquest and imperial expansion; colonies are established, or planted, in order to develop and grow. Tillage, the actual cultivation of new territory, transforms barren wilderness into fertile land by setting into the earth seeds carried over from the mother country. In its development, the colony represents the expansion of the homeland. By reproducing itself outside of itself, the metropole achieves new vitality.

In its classical sense, the word's meaning was ambiguous. Roman writers used *colōnie* to translate the Greek *apoikia*, a settlement of *apoikoi*, "people from home," emigrants who settled abroad to form an independent, self-governing polis or state, unconnected to the metropole or mother city save for certain cultural traits like religion, language, or customs. The Greek sense of the word conveyed a looser, less formal meaning than did the Latin. In this "weaker" sense, *colōnie* designated a group of countrymen abroad without direct political or military ties to the homeland, descendents of polity but not an expansion of it.

The present chapter begins a longer exploration of the ambiguous space where the weak and strong senses of the word overlap; it examines the uses put to *colonization* as a synonym for settlement, on the one hand, and as a project of cultural diffusion and national rejuvenation, on the other.[2] During a decade of profound economic change and political immobility, provincial authorities and Czech patriots turned to the language of colonization as a way to address the social consequences of neoabsolutism, Bach's revolution from above. They could not do otherwise. So long as dissent of any variety was branded treasonous, and so many among the liberals both Czech and German had made their peace with Bach's regime anyway, open debate about social questions remained off the table. Like a wish the conscious mind dare not articulate, not even to itself, mass emigration emerged during the 1850s as a symptom of repressed fears and desires. Dream-like, colonization provided a language of symbols in which these concerns could be expressed.

[1] *The Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "colony."
[2] Kopp, *Germany's Wild East,* 6.

The Colonial Lexicon

In the middle of the nineteenth century, Czech-speakers turned to Rieger's *Slovník naučny* to acquaint themselves with important topics, new phrases, and unfamiliar foreign terms. Edited mainly by František Ladislav Rieger and Jakub Malý between 1860 and 1874, the eleven-volume *Slovník naučný* became the first Czech-language encyclopedia and a standard reference for a generation.[3] It documented the socially accepted usage of literary Czech, a select vocabulary from which educated speakers might draw when engaged in intelligent conversation.[4] Glancing at the entry for *colonia,* readers found associations with the antique world. The author, a gymnasium professor in Prague, devoted his commentary to the word's classical definition, "what the Romans called settlements in conquered territories, established both to defend the incursion and to spread the Roman language."[5] Once upon a time sites of imperial expansion, these former colonies became important centers of modern nation states: *Agrippina,* Cologne on the Rhein; *Augusta,* now Saragosa in Spain; *Caesarea,* or York in England.

Readers were referred to the encyclopedia's fifth volume for a more detailed treatment of the Czech equivalent, *osada.* A word equally well translated as settlement or colony, *osada* encompassed the full denotational range of *colōnie.* This author of the article, a translator and publicist named Primus Sobotka, defined the *osada* in its weak sense as "any place settled by people, a commune, town, or village […]" before shifting to five densely printed columns addressing the word's strong sense as "a **colony** (*colonia*), i.e. a community founded either by an entire nation or by some emigrants in a foreign country."[6] More generally, he continued, "we designate as *osada* a settlement such as that founded by some state or city in a foreign country not subject to any foreign power but instead remaining dependent upon and continuously associated with the mother country." Sobotka transitioned from a definition of *osada* as a synonym for settlement in general, to a specifically collective form of settlement, and, finally, to a notion of colonization as an expansion of the metropole into foreign territory.

Sobotka's discussion of colonies in the last sense, as dependencies of the metropole, drew heavily from the four-volume *Kleineres Brockhaus'sches Conversations-Lexikon.* The small Brockhaus set, a condensed version of the larger fifteen-volume edition, formed the basis of Rieger and Malý's Czech encyclopedia.[7] Much can be revealed about how contemporaries, both

[3] The comprehensive *Ottův slovník naučný* was published in 28 volumes between 1888 and 1909.
[4] Important contributors to the encyclopedia included Fr. Aug. Brauner, Lad. Čelakovský, K.J. Erben, Ed. Grégr, Vác. Hanka, F.S. Kodym, Jos. Kolář, Fr. Palacký, J.E. Purkyně, V.V. Tomek, and Prav. Trojan. In addition to these famous patriots, a large number of less well-known gymnasium instructors, university professors, and clergy members contributed to the project. Dagmar Hartmanová, "Historie československé encyklopedistiky," 15-17.
[5] The author was Václav Zelený, a gymnasium professor in Prague.
[6] A reviewer wrote of Sobotka in 1884; "Sobotka belongs among the quietest yet best liked, least prolific but most sought after of our authors. As an author he is Czech to the core [*spisovatel nejčeštějšího zrna*] and his Czechness [*českost*] can be seen in the course of his life studies." "Primus Sobotka," *Humoristické listy* 26, no. 50 (1884), 430. See also "Primus Sobotka," Naše vyobrazení, *Světozor,* August 1, 1884.
[7] *Kleineres Brockhaus'sches Conversations-Lexikon für den Handgebrauch,* 4 vols. (Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1854-1856), an abridged version of the *Allgemeine deutsche Real-Encyklopädie für die gebildete Stände. Conversations-Lexikon,* 10th ed. 15 vols., (Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1851-1855). Hartmanová, "Historie československé encyklopedistiky," 15.

Czechs and Germans, thought about colonies by contrasting the encyclopedias. Both discussed the history of European expansion: Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, and French colonies had passed their prime; Danes and Swedes possessed colonies that were of little significance; in the Brockhaus it was argued that Russia's holdings in Transcaucasia and Siberia could be designated colonies in spite of the "very broad, uninterrupted geographical proximity" of the territories to the mother country. Sobotka also discussed Russia, recounting the Empire's expansion to the north and east, "where they founded archipelagoes around which *osady* were built, thereby expanding the Russian dominion across Siberia to Kamchatka and in the most modern period into Northwestern America and the Amur." Each of the works recognized the English as the first among colonizing nations (the Germans, complained Brockhaus, "unfortunately have no colonies at all," while the Czech source commented on Austria's inability to compete with the Dutch and English).

In both articles, authors distinguished between forms of colonization, devoting most space to trade and agriculture. The former sort of colony occurred where "there is much to buy and sell, but for whatever reason normal free trade cannot take place" (Brockhaus). Agricultural colonies required land and labor, and thus arose when mass emigration brought settlers to sparsely populated lands. Rieger's encyclopedia offered North America, South Africa, and Russian Crimea as examples of this. Plantation colonies like those found in the West Indies, in the American South, or in Brazil represented "greenhouses of the mother country" (Brockhaus) in which plants growing only in tropical zones may be cultivated, usually with the labor of Slaves. Interestingly, Rieger's encyclopedia left out the first type of colony mentioned in Brockhaus, *Eroberungscolonien* (colonies of conquest), "which aim only at the exploitation of conquered territory, whether this occurs directly or, as in trade colonies, indirectly."[8] Colonies were defined as commercial endeavors distinguished by their purpose, the relative freedom of labor, and manner of possession.[9]

Brockhaus figured as a primary source of reference for Czechs in Bohemia just as for the rest of Austria's population. The first attempt to publish a modern encyclopedia in Czech, under the editorship of František Palacký in the early 1830s, foresaw using the Brockhaus as its model. Rieger's encyclopedia, as remarked, also based itself on Brockhaus.[10] The expanded discussion of colonies found in the longer German edition informed Czech discussions of colonization as much as did Rieger's smaller encyclopedia. What motivated colonial expansion? According to the Brockhaus, three factors inspired outward expansion of the mother country: overpopulation, overaccumulation of capital, political disaffection, and religious zeal. The first of these, overpopulation (*Überbevölkerung*), affected primarily the lower classes, resulting in colonies of conquest or agriculture to satisfy the demand for more living space. Desires of the middle classes for investment opportunities led to the founding of trade or plantation colonies, which averted crises of overaccumulation (*Überfüllung mit Capital*). As implied by the prefix, *über-*, colonialism resulted from overabundance. When labor-power and wealth could no longer be

[8] *Kleineres Brockhaus'sches Conversations-Lexikon*, s.v. "Colonien."

[9] For the sake of comparison, here are the types of colonization identified by the encyclopedias in order of presentation: Colonies of conquest, trade colonies, agricultural colonies, plantation colonies, penal colonies (Brockhaus); agricultural colonies, plantation colonies, trade colonies, mining colonies, penal colonies, negro colonies (Rieger). One might also note that the longer Brockhaus article begins with typology before discussing history whereas Rieger's *slovník* begins with history before discussing types of colonies.

[10] Hartmanová, "Historie československé encyklopedistiky," 15.

contained within current political or ethnic boundaries, national expansion abroad became imperative. Colonization was not just a matter of commercial interest, but of national existence.

Agricultural settler colonies held a special place in both encyclopedias' entries. More than other forms of colonization, agricultural settlements could rescue nations from the constriction of space:

> They flourish in wealth and population at a remarkable pace because they combine the strength of capital and labor-power, and the social and cultural conditions of highly developed peoples generally, with the unexhausted nature of readily abundant virgin soil. All three factors of this production, nature, labor, and capital, which normally stand in an alternating relationship so that overabundance of soil but lack labor and capital predominate in young country while in old countries it is the other way around, are here brought together in the highest concentration.

The author employed organic, generative, even overtly sexual metaphors. Unexhausted nature—in German, *die unerschöpfte Natur eines jungfräulichen und im Überflusse vorhandenen Bodens*—awaited the experienced hand of a well developed nation to invest her virgin soil with its vital labor-power and capital. As a conjugal act between young and old, colonization restored the balance between nature, labor, and capital for the sake of (re)production.

At the same time, colonial territory transformed the colonizing nation. Without the familiar comforts of civilization, without tradition to guide or block development, said Brockhaus:

> Life takes on a rationalized character […].In all the main points, colonial people pass through the same stages of development as people in the mother country […]. However, the same stages of development in the colony tend to occur in a far less mixed form, more uncompromisingly than in the mother country. Agricultural colonies, especially, tend to develop in a democratic direction earliest and most strongly. This results from the simple fact that colonists find themselves in a sort of political *tabula rasa* where, as a result, their ideas and ideals can be realized without the thousand-fold opposition always at work in old countries, even unknowingly and so to speak subterraneously.[11]

This progressive, liberal understanding of colonization was typical of Central Europe. Writing in the immediate aftermath of 1848, liberals in the German states and Austria pictured their democratic ideals fulfilled in a far-away land removed from the reality of political reaction.

For liberals colonization represented a process of widening enfranchisement. By definition, dependent territories existed "to be exploited as vigorously and exclusively as possible in the interest of the mother country."[12] This basic fact of economic self-interest accorded with the laissez-faire worldview of liberalism, with the important difference that the state (or, more precisely, the mother country) took the place of the individual as rational actor. The narrative of social progress and political enfranchisement into which it was set also fit the liberal paradigm: as time went by the national community would grow more inclusive, more democratic, and as a consequence so would the interests of the mother country. Before the

[11] *Allgemeine deutsche Real-Encyklopädie,* 10th ed., s.v. "Colonien."
[12] *Allgemeine deutsches Real-Encyklopädie*, 10th ed., s.v. "Colonien."

sixteenth century, *motherland* stood for the government, nobility, and clergy in whose interest Spain and Portugal exploited their colonies. At a later stage, colonialism came to embody the interests of a more broadly defined motherland represented by traders and entrepreneurs. This was the spirit of Dutch and English colonialism. Most recently, the article continued, colonialism provided for the "diversion of pauperism, i.e. emigration," to benefit society as a whole. Now *motherland* stood for the interests of the people as a whole. "But even a liberal colonial politics will not prevent that the colony strive after independence once she is ready for it," concluded the little Brockhaus. Colonialism transcended itself in a dialectical fashion. Tutelage (*Bevormundung*) gradually gave way to freedom, and with that the colony gained political maturity, *Mündigkeit*.[13] Emancipation belonged to the logic of colonialism. Against this backdrop of European expansion, Czech liberals and Habsburg officials began to grapple with the problem of mass emigration. This chapter shifts discussion from reactions of the imperial government in Vienna to haphazard attempts by local officials and Czech patriots to confront the emigration of peasant and artisan workers from Bohemia. From the very beginning, provincial officials and liberal Czechs drew from the colonial vocabulary to make sense lower-class mobility. In emigration, provincial authorities and Czech patriots saw a threat, but also an opportunity to pursue commercial interests. Not only did the image of investing in foreign markets attract attention, but so too did the prospect of fertilizing virgin soil. Whether organizing emigrants abroad or shifting settlers from the west to the imperial east, local authorities and nationally aware Czechs entertained the vision of social transformation through colonization.

Internal Colonization

The state, at the provincial level at least, foresaw resettlement within the empire as a means to transform local societies. Whereas Austrian police and the Ministry the Interior dismissed emigration as the result of external intrigue, concentrating their efforts on uncovering networks of agents and countering pro-emigration agitation, provincial authorities confronted daily the social and economic realities that led to emigration. At the district level, officials could not so easily explain away the phenomenon. Responsible for the social and financial fallout resulting from mass exodus, local officials took a more sober view of emigration. Authorities at the provincial level struggled to impress upon their superiors in Vienna the severity of the problem, as when Mecséry impressed upon Bach in 1854 that underemployment and general lower-class misery lay at the heart of the problem, or when the regional prefect of Pelhřímov cited as "the sole" reason given by emigrants for leaving to be "the currently prevalent great poverty and insufficient wages."[14]

A still more forceful expression of conflicting interpretations came from one regional official who responded to Bach's warning about agents operating out of the eastern Bohemian town Polná. "No emissary has pushed the inhabitants of Polná to emigrate," he insisted, "and nobody from Polná is working with some foreign banking house to that end. Simple observation provides absolute certainty that the decision of Polná's inhabitants to emigrate is due solely to

[13] *Kleineres Brockhaus'sches Conversations-Lexikon,* s.v. "Colonien."
[14] Message from Mecséry to Bach from 9 April 1854; message from regional prefect of Pelhřimov from 9 May 1854. Both cited in Kutnar, *Počátky hromadného vystěhovalectví*, 21n63.

the poor incomes there and local conversations."[15] Authorities at the provincial level rejected the thesis that agents manipulated or seduced locals, arguing instead that emigration represented a reasoned (if inappropriate) reaction to prevailing conditions.

Central authorities in Vienna regarded lower-class mobility as a threat to internal stability. Local officials in Bohemia, on the other hand, had to deal with economic realities as they struggled to formulate an effective response from within the confines of Bach's absolutist system. The Bohemian governor, Mecséry, was charged with curbing the flow of emigrants and instructed to ensure that those who did leave would not return impoverished and susceptible to revolutionary ideology. This appears to have been the states overriding concern. Bach instructed provincial offices in 1854 that applicants for an emigration passport would now be required to show a savings of two hundred gulden per adult and 150 gulden for every accompanying child (the average journeyman and factory worker earned 100-150 and 100-200 gulden annually).[16] This requirement was intended to dissuade workers and peasants from emigrating and, when they left anyway, to make sure that they possessed the means to do so. At the same time, they required the applicant to appear before county authorities in order to be instructed about the risks of emigration and informed that upon leaving the monarchy, he would never be allowed to return. Upon hearing these words, the applicant was required to sign an indemnity.[17] Given the deference of the rural population toward higher officials, this requirement surely intimidated many potential emigrants.

Such prohibitive measures no more slowed emigration than did campaigns to prosecute agents and confiscate letters. Unable to address the root causes of emigration with political reform and social legislation, Mecséry and his provincial colleagues turned to colonization as a means of directing overseas migration. It is not too surprising that the Bohemian governor, Freiherr Mecséry de Tsoor, a native of Kutná Hora (Kuttenberg), would dedicate his energies to addressing the question. The son of a decorated officer in the military, Mecséry grew up in a household dedicated to serving the interests of Austria and the monarchy. He entered the state service as a young man, became district prefect to Hradec Králová (Königgrätz) and, in 1848, Count Thun appointed him the second highest ranking official in the province. Mecséry survived in his post after Thun's dismissal and even advanced to the office of Bohemia's provincial governor (*Statthalter*), a title he held until the early 1860s.[18] The locations of his service—Kutná Hora, Hradec Králové, and Prague—thus placed the state servant in regions sharply affected by the first wave of mass emigration during the 1850s.

The idea was simple enough: workers and peasants from parts of the Empire with high unemployment were to be resettled in regions where labor was scarce. As had been the case with the eighteenth-century colonization schemes from the reign of Maria Theresa, Mecséry and his colleagues looked to the more sparsely populated lands of the Hungarian crown as destinations for resettlement. In this, Mecséry hoped to make good on his vow upon taking office "to improve the lot of the worker so that, after his labor power is exploited in the interest of the employer, he

[15] Message from the Pardubice regional president (krajský president) to minister Bach from 11 February 1854. Cited in Kutnar, *Počátky hromadného vystěhovalectví*, 28

[16] Sturmberger, "Die Amerika-Auswanderung," 12. On the average income of various occupations during the 1850s, see Stölzl, *Die Ära Bach in Böhmen*, appendix 17.

[17] Sturmberger, "Die Amerika-Auswanderung," 12.

[18] *Biographisches Lexikon des Kaiserthum Österreich*, s.v. "Mecséry de Tsoor."

is not left helpless to confront his own fate."[19] In the southeastern districts where labor was scarce and the economy undeveloped, the "superfluous" (that is to say, unemployed) population of Bohemia could be put to more profitable use. Not only would such population transfers keep labor power and financial wealth within the monarchy while reducing unemployment in Bohemia and bringing down the cost of labor in Hungary, they were also designed to alleviate social tension and foster internal security—and all this while providing a profitable avenue of investment for Viennese capitalists.

Internal colonization was not a new idea in the 1850s. Various plans for resettling the mostly German inhabitants of northern Bohemia's mountainous regions had surfaced a decade earlier. A plan to resettle German spinners and weavers, pauperized by the mechanization of textile industry, appeared in the government *Prager Zeitung* in 1843. The anonymous article was soon forgotten, until taken up again by an association of private investors and textile entrepreneurs from Liberec (Reichenberg) a few years later.[20] Industrialists approached government authorities with a plan to remove unemployed workers from northern Bohemia to an underdeveloped region around the river Uzh in Subcarpathia. Members of the association traveled to Uzhhorod (Ungvár) in 1846 to inspect sites of possible settlement and petitioned for state support. Their plan foresaw the purchase of land in Hungary along the left bank of the river and the resettlement of at least a thousand families within ten to twelve years. Newcomers would be granted land, given seed for planting, and offered employment. Appealing for government backing, supporters presented the project as a lucrative investment of capital and a means to relieve social tension in northern Bohemia by reducing unemployment. Although it received a hearing from the Emperor, the state refused to provide any funds and the project soon went bankrupt.

Similar projects also met with government ambivalence. Such was the case with a scheme hatched by an association of industrialists from Carlsbad. Formed during the crisis of the textile industry in 1843, the association sought state support for an attempt to colonize Hungarian lands. This time impoverished weavers from the Ore Mountains were to be granted arable land in rural Hungary in return for an agreement to cultivate the property for a period of thirty years. Plots abandoned by the colonists in northern Bohemia were then to be taken over by the government, combined with manorial estates, and rented out to industrial workers in lots large enough to farm vegetables and graze three cows. In this way, workers would be provided with a means of sustenance during periods of unemployment. Here, too, investors requested state backing to guarantee a return on their investment. Once again, the state balked.

Hungarian magnates were in no better position when they offered tracts of uncultivated land to Viennese investors in 1851. Counting on emigration fever and the poor economic situation of workers and peasants in Bohemia's industrialized regions, the magnates hoped to turn a quick profit trading land. The Ministry of the Interior wanted to have nothing to do with the project, however, and Bach openly discouraged government officials from participating. Nevertheless, fliers were distributed among workers and peasants in Bohemia portraying Hungary as a more convenient and affordable alternative to America. In May 1851 an association of these investors, calling themselves the "*Comptoir* for the Advancement of Private

[19] An expression of optimism typical at neoabsolutism's start, but one that soon gave way to disillusionment and resignation—and not just in Mecséry's case. By 1855 the Bohemian Governor had become less sanguine, stating to Bach that there can be "no radical means to alleviating this cancerous evil of human society [i.e. unemployment and working-class militancy]." Mecséry to Bach, February 8, 1852. Cited in Stölzl, *Die Ära Bach in Böhmen*, 282-283.
[20] Kutnar, *Počátky hromadného vystěhovelectví*, 32.

Colonization in Hungary," acquired an estate in the western Hungarian county Vas (Eisenburg, Železna županija), which it then parceled out and advertised to potential settlers from the České lípa (Lipaer) region of northern Bohemia. Investors offered moderate allotments of land for about 1,375 gulden, a sum wildly beyond the means of even prosperous textile workers, to say nothing of the unemployed. The unreasonable requirement that colonists pay two-thirds of the price upfront sealed the enterprise's unhappy fate.

Early attempts to colonize Hungary with Bohemian weavers and handworkers failed, as far as is known, without exception. Not only did the private endeavors represent poor investments, but the colonists often regretted their decision to participate. Artisans unable to find employment and peasants unable to buy land were sent home by Hungarian authorities. Others, like a group of miners who settled in the area around Košice (Kassai), petitioned authorities for help returning to Bohemia. Indebted and even more destitute then when they first departed, failed colonization schemes only exacerbated the problem they were intended to resolve.[21]

None of these attempts at population transfer can be described as national in character, neither in the sense of having been supported by the state nor by way of any patriotic aims. But a series of articles published in *Pražské noviny,* a semi-official organ, in the summer of 1851 show how easily the language of private enterprise might slip into the rhetoric of Czech nationalisms. The five articles addressed the challenge of "colonization on a larger scale in Hungary.[22] "The Bohemian people," the author wrote, "advanced in field agriculture and industrious, would of course earn a good living here and be a model for the locals; and that would benefit the Hungarian lands." Yet poor record keeping and frequent disputes over land ownership reportedly made Hungary unsuitable for settlement. Local land owners resisted having their properties measured and registered for fear of taxation, an aversion that slowed the process of land consolidation. Land in Hungary could not be bought and sold freely on the market and, so long as ownership remained uncertain, settlers would hesitate to invest in their properties. Thus, it remained impossible "for someone to emigrate spontaneously to Hungary and settle where land was the most affordable and fertile."

In addition to material shortcomings, other factors discouraged colonization. "The government remains silent," he wrote, referring to requests of German entrepreneurs that the state back colonization efforts. More significantly, ethnic Magyars opposed immigration from beyond the Leitha. Citing articles published in the Hungarian press, the author for *Pražské noviny* pointed to fears that western colonization would weaken the hold Magyars enjoyed over non-Magyar peoples, in particular the Slovaks. "The Magyars and Magyarones," he wrote, the latter phrase in reference to Magyarized Slovaks, "want to have colonization only by Magyars and Hungarians Slavs." Their insistence to defend privilege, said the author, held back development of the region. "Even after several centuries, the Magyars and the local Slavs—especially since the governing party removed itself from the civilized West—have not been able to bring the Hungarian lands up to the level where other countries were already long ago, and they will hardly be able to do so. And—to mention it in passing—even in two hundred years Hungary will not be at the same level of development [*vzdělanost*] as, for example, Bohemia is now." Bohemian settlers would become agents of modernization in Hungary. Here the author hinted toward the "national and humanitarian" (*národní a humanitní*) role that colonization

[21] These and other examples discussed by Kutnar in *Počátky hromadného vystěhovalectví,* 32-35.

[22] The author of the articles was identified by the initials, "V.P.". "Z východního Slovenska v Uhrách," Rakouské mocnářství, *Pražské noviny*, June 7, June 10, June 11, June 12, and June 13, 1851.

would play, using language upon which Czech patriots would later build: "It is also desirable that support from Bohemia and Moravia be sent to the poor, oppressed Hungarian Slavs; for the Slav here does not have anything good to expect from the Magyar. Here Bohemian and Moravian settlers would become true teachers for the Hungarian Slav in field agriculture as also in the arts and sciences generally."

Interesting was the way the author shifted emphasis from the advocacy of land reform in Hungary, which would benefit the Empire as a whole, to a critique of persistent Hungarian backwardness and national oppression. One can only speculate whether some kind of pan-Slavism motivated the author; he did not speak overtly of any Slavic mission and identified himself only by the initial V.P. The text however clearly played on the ambiguity of the settlers, *Čechové,* which one could translate as either "Bohemians" or "Czechs," depending on whether stress falls on the westernizing influence of (Bohemian) colonization or ethnic (Czech) expansion. In any case, the distinction would increasingly fade; over the next twenty years, progressive qualities of the West would come to be understood as intrinsic components of Czechness. More immediately relevant, however, was the author's distinction among three kinds of colonization: "entrepreneurial" German, "oppressive" Magyar, and "progressive" Bohemian-Slavic. In the early 1850s the antagonism among these three interests remained implicit and could be overlooked. This would change.

The government attempted to remedy some of these concerns starting in the spring and summer of 1852. With emigration numbers on the rise, the provincial government in Bohemia began to seriously contemplate internal colonization as a response to regional unemployment, which they recognized as the root cause of overseas migration. Citing the failure of previous colonization enterprises founded on private initiative, governor Mecséry communicated to Bach that the colonization of the monarchy's eastern and southeastern lands would require active state support. The governor made a similar point in a reply to police chief Kempen, when he remarked pointedly that that "the consistent colonization of Hungary would work against emigration to America more powerfully than all instructional and repressive measures, it would redirect the flow of excess labor power in the interest of the entire state."[23] Any effective countering of emigration, Mecséry insisted, must rely on strategies more far-sighted than simple prohibition, persecution, and censorship.

As with previous efforts, several state-sponsored colonization projects set out to relieve unemployment in northern Bohemia, prevent social conflict, and to lower the cost of labor in the Hungarian province. In 1854, officials devised a scheme to move unemployed weavers from the Krkonoše (Riesengebirge) foothills to the Banat region in Hungary. Unlike earlier settlement enterprises, this one was backed by the government. Workers in Bohemia would be informed about locations where they could find immediate employment, insofar as possible they would be settled in groups, and the state was to cover costs of transportation. Certain social provisions were also included to protect workers from abusive employers and ensure that they did not return home poor and indebted. Bach's ministry took up the issue fleetingly before replying in October 1854 that colleagues in the Banat appeared to show little interest in housing immigrants from Bohemia.

More promising was the proposal of Friedrich Thiemann, a provincial authority in Hungary. Like many other figures of the Bach era, Thiemann was a liberal who became a local

[23]Memo from Kempen to Mecséry from February 14, 1854; Mecséry's reply to Kempen from March 3, 1854. Both cited in Kutnár, *Počatky hromadného vystěhovalectví*, 29.

official in the neoabsolutist regime. He had served in the National Guard in Bohemia, became a Reichstag delegate in 1848, and participated in the Kremsier Parliament.[24] During the 1850s, Thiemann helped to push through Bach's program of reform in his own modest capacity as the regional prefect of Broos (Orăştia) in Transylvania.[25] He had earlier occupied the same function in Teplice (Töplitz), where he became familiar with the plight of handworkers and weavers in northern Bohemia. Aware of earlier efforts at colonization, Thiemann considered his new district an appropriate site for resettlement. Conditions in Transylvania, he reported, were primitive, the agriculture non-intensive, and two-thirds of the arable land left fallow. Peasants manufactured their own tools out of wood, did not rotate crops, and devoted most of the land to livestock. If properly farmed, Thiemann estimated that the area could support thousands of families. The region lacked agricultural workers and master craftsmen. Beside experts in agriculture and horticulture, Transylvania needed tanners, potters, watchmakers, tailors, glass blowers, butchers, millers, and tavern keepers. Not only did authorities see in colonization a safety valve for social tensions, they also contrasted the backwardness of the monarchy's eastern territories and emphasized the positive modernizing influences to be brought by settlers from the West.[26]

Thiemann passed his ideas on to Mecséry in a memo dated February 1855.[27] Again, the governor backed the cause of internal colonization. Already frustrated by lack of support from Vienna, the governor decided this time to seize the initiative and lay the groundwork for colonization of Thiemann's district without the aid of Bach's ministry. The endeavor aimed to create entirely new settlements on previously uncultivated state-owned lands. Mecséry conceived of settling farmers along with craftsmen who would provide tools for working the land and expertise in processing the products of labor. The resettlement of peasants and craftsmen would occur in stages as part of a well thought-out process. Colonists would settle together on lands purchased with collective funds. Craftsmen, the pioneers of the scheme, would arrive first to build the physical settlements before agricultural colonists moved in. In this gradual manner, Bohemian artisans and farmers would establish themselves as a self-sustaining community.

By spring 1855, Thiemann received inquiries from individuals who originally intended to leave Bohemia for America. At first, the plan appeared to successfully redirect a portion of overseas emigration to Transylvania. Twenty families headed by craftsmen changed their itineraries and followed Thiemann's call to settle in Broos. These were not limited to the

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[24] Biographical information on Thiemann is fragmentary. He served as lieutenant (*Oberleutnant*) in a National Guard unit and a delegate to the Reichstag and Kremsier Parliament but disapproved of the radical turn taken by events in Vienna in October 1848 and privately welcomed the octroyed constitution of March 1849. He aided the escape of Baron Johann von Wessenberg, Minister President of a short-lived liberal cabinet from Vienna to Olmütz via Prague. He wrote down his own account of his activities in a pamphlet titled "Fragmente meines Anteils an den Ereignissen der Jahre 1848 and 1849*"* (Prague: Gottlieb Haase Söhne, 1851), which is partially reprinted in Franz de Paula Graf von Hartig, *Genesis der Revolution in Oesterreich im Jahre 1848*, 3rd edition (Leipzig: F. Fleischer, 1851), 276-277. See also Wessenberg, Johann Philipp, *Briefe von Johann Philipp Freiherrn von Wessenberg aus den Jahren 1848-1858 an Isfordink-Kostnitz* (Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1877), 155; Joseph Alexander von Helfert, *Geschichte Oesterreichs vom Ausgange des Wiener October Aufstandes 1848,* volume 4 (Leipzig: G.E. Schulze, 1886), 322-324.

[25] Josef Ritter von Grimm, *Carl, Fürst zu Schwarzenberg, Gouverneur von Siebenbürgen; Ein Denkblatt* (Vienna: F. Förster & Brüder, 1861), 27; "Siebenbürgische Stiftungen und Fonde unter der Verwaltung des Ministeriums des Innern," *Siebenbürgisch-Deutsches Wochenblatt*, March 9, 1870.

[26] Kutnar, *Počátky hromadného vystěhovalectví*, 37-38.

[27] The publicist František Cyril Kampelík received a copy of Thiemann's letter from a "dear friend" identified by the initials "J.V." Kampelík reprinted a Czech translation of the circular in his 1859 book, *Průmyslné návrhy* […], 85-88.

northern Bohemian Germans, but also included Czechs from districts in the southwest and southeast. Over the course of a year, another forty-two families (of 176 members) resettled, the largest parties arriving from Pacov and Litomyšl in the east. Groups of German-speakers also arrived from the Cheb (Eger) and Česká Lípa (Lipaer) regions. During the first half of 1856, fifty-eight families with 134 members also resettled, mostly craftsmen from southwest and southern Bohemia.[28]

Despite this promising start, the project did not succeed as Thiemann and Mecséry had hoped. When informed of the effort, Bach's administration refused to provide either financial or moral support and instead expressed concern about the potential unrest that might result from the massive resettlement of populations. Instead of giving the project his blessing, Bach instructed Mecséry to allow only those to resettle who could demonstrate adequate means. Nor was the governor of Transylvania all too pleased by the newcomers, who often arrived spontaneously, without a plan, and lacking funds to purchase land.[29] Unable to find work, many of the would-be colonists sought employment building state roads or simply remained unemployed. Alcoholism among the colonists was said to be rampant. After all, only the most destitute layer of the Bohemian population participated in the scheme. The colonists, for the most part, would not have been able to afford the passage to America in the first place, and often made the trek to Transylvania on foot. Nor did they possess the qualifications that Thiemann had called for. In the end, applications for resettlement had to be refused, and Thiemann urged interested parties to await the passage of a colonization law that would provide some coherency to the whole project.

Bohemian officials realized that internal colonization was impossible without thorough organization. An emigration association was needed to coordinate efforts, significant financial support from the state was absolutely essential, and legislation ensuring legal protections for colonists and investors was also necessary. A condition for any scheme of resettlement was therefore to be a colonization law that would systematize and support future projects.

As emigration numbers rose at an alarming rate over the course of the decade, the government in Vienna was forced to heed calls from provincial authorities for legislation to coordinate colonization projects. On December 23, 1858, the government finally passed legislation to regulate colonizing enterprises, but it only partially satisfied the demands of governor Mecséry and other Bohemian administrators.[30] True, the new law fostered colonization as a collective rather than individual enterprise and regulated the size and distribution of land, communities were required to be linguistically and religiously homogeneous, and colonists fulfilling these criteria would enjoy an exemption from land taxes for six years and from all other state taxes and obligatory services for a period of twelve years. State financing for colonization enterprises, however, was not a part of the legislation. Neither were land prices to be regulated nor were subsidies to be provided for the purchase of building materials and equipment. The form that the colonization should take and its source of initial capital were topics more or less ignored: would the projects be funded and coordinated by the state, private investors, or cooperatives of settlers themselves? As the historian František Kutnar summarized, the law was "merely a legal norm without a life of its own."[31]

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[28] Kutnar, *Počátky hromadného vystěhovalectví*, 37.
[29] "Colonisation in Siebenbürgen," *Oesterreichische Zeitung*, November 27, 1856.
[30] Kaiserliche Verordnung vom 23. December 1858, LIX. Stück 242, in *Reichs-Gesetz-Blatt für das Kaiserthum Oesterreich Jahrgang 1858*.
[31] Kutnar, *Počátky hromadného vystěhovalectví*, 39.

The Iowa Conspiracy, or, Czech-Loyal Emigration

Czech liberals also proved ambivalent, though the unease caused by lower-class emigration in Czech society penetrated far deeper into questions of identity than it did for the Austrian state. No figure better illustrates the ambivalence felt by Czech liberals toward the emerging global market than the emigration agent, who appeared to grow rich from the traffic of human beings. We have seen these representatives of foreign shipping companies portrayed unflatteringly as opportunistic, nationally indifferent scoundrels willing (even eager) to sell out their countrymen for "Judas money." Habsburg authorities railed against the outside meddlers, blamed their agitation for the unstoppable increase in migrant numbers, and did their best to suppress their activities. In this case, the Bach administration enjoyed the full support of Czech patriotic society, whose members contributed to the government's anti-emigration campaign and admonished their charges to "not emigrate to America, but stay at home and earn an honest living."[32]

Forced to recognize the social and political background of emigration but unable to address these issues adequately from within the framework of neoabsolutism, provincial authorities grasped at internal colonization as a strategy to relieve regional unemployment and ease social tension. Czechs who lived in close contact with emigrants and the communities from which they hailed also could not ignore the social and economic basis of mass emigration. Lacking the power to affect social reform (and the will to do so), Czech liberals also sought a means to reconcile ideology and everyday experience. No figure faced a greater burden on this score than that of the patriotic emigration agent, whose livelihood depended on a business that national sentiment would seem to demand he oppose.

Here too colonization provided a way to square the circle. A plan to concentrate Czech settlement abroad was hatched by a group of patriotic Czech businessmen and journalists from eastern Bohemia and Moravia gathered around the familiar Bremen agent, Alois Kareš, discussed in the dissertation's first chapter. A closer look at Kareš, his associates, and their plan to found a Czech colony in the United States reveals the emigration agent to have been a much more complicated figure than that portrayed in the anti-emigration propaganda discussed above. The Czech-loyal agent carefully maneuvered between patriotism and the pursuit of profit, blurring the boundary between national interests and market values. To the conservative authors of folk literature and newspaper editorials, these two forces—the nation and the market place—appeared to be mutually exclusive. For them, emigrants were suspect because they seemed to place personal gain above duty to the nation. Kareš and his followers, on the other hand, recognized emigration as a valid means of social ascent for working-class Czechs and sought to coordinate emigration in such a way that could reconcile personal interest and patriotic duty.

The Czech publisher Josef R. Vilímek counted among Kareš's oldest friends, a fellow native of Vamberk, and one of the agent's earliest supporters. Known best as the founding editor of *Humoristické listy* (since 1858) and later owner of one of Bohemia's largest publishing houses, during the mid-1850s Vilímek was a twenty year-old student at the Prague Polytechnic,

[32] The title of an anti-emigration novel from 1859, *Wystěhovanci do Ameriky, anebo: Nechodťe do Ameriky, ale zůstaňte doma a poctivě se živte* (Prague).

an engineering school.[33] In his later memoirs, Vilímek provided an account of Kareš's entry into the emigration business. It was during the Bach era when, "for cruel oppression of the spirit and precipitously rising taxes, every one of us lost hope that one day the situation might improve, and so we turned our sights to the country where freedom had long been complete and where at the time one could earn a good living: to North America."[34] According to Vilímek, it was this sense of desperation experienced by all social classes during the 1850s that compelled tens of thousands of Czechs to emigrate overseas. Letters from those who had departed for America soon began to arrive in Vilímek's native eastern Bohemian county. While praising life in the United States, these letters also "complained bitterly about emigration agents in all of Germany, who without scruples swindled our countrymen all the way from [Bohemia's] border to the sea."[35]

This was also a painful period for Kareš personally. His participation in the events of 1848 cost him his livelihood, and poor investments made during the 1840s had obliterated his family's savings. He had lost the factory in Vamberk inherited from his father, spent his wife's dowry and relied on the goodwill of his mother-in-law while eking out a living in Prague.[36] It was then that Kareš, according to his old school friend Vilímek, "had the bright idea to become an advisor and honest mediator for Czech emigrants."[37] One can only speculate as to his true motives for entering the emigration business, whether they were genuinely patriotic or if the position abroad offered an escape from financial straits and political difficulties at home.

Whatever the case may be, Kareš soon offered his services to Czech emigrants passing through Bremen en route to destinations overseas; he answered written enquiries in Czech, and provided accurate information and useful advice to his countrymen in Bohemia. Kareš also supplied compatriots with tips on navigating officialdom in Austria, mediated between emigrants and port officials, wired money where needed, and posted letters to families back home. It did not take long for Kareš to create a reputation as the *good* emigration agent, the *Czech* agent.

Service to his countrymen by no means prevented Kareš from becoming very wealthy. He quickly established himself as a major figure in the Central European emigration business, which was just then booming, as a subsidiary of the Bödecker lines. Kareš later partnered up with an entrepreneur from Strakonice named Petr A. Stocký to found the firm "Kareš & Stocký" in 1870. Advertisements for the new, purely Czech agency became ubiquitous not only in Bohemia, but across the monarchy and in Germany. A capable organizer, Kareš built up a network of agents spread across Bohemia and Moravia, reaching as far as into Galicia and Upper Hungary. While working for Bödecker, Kareš reportedly earned eight hundred Reichsthaler annually. His agents in the homeland were rewarded in the form of commissions, usually around five gulden; they proved to be prodigious workers, sometimes "processing" three hundred emigrants per month.[38]

In the emigration business Kareš demonstrated not only his entrepreneurial sensibility, but also displayed ardor as a patriot. He was careful to cultivate a reputation as a supporter of

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[33] *Lexikon české literatury*, s.v. "Vilímek, Josef Richard."
[34] Josef R. Vilímek, *Ze zešlých dob* (Prague: J.R. Vilímek, 1908), 14.
[35] Vilímek, *Ze zešlých dob*, 14.
[36] Štolba, *Z mých paměti,* 112; "Alois Kareš," *Květy americké,* October 15, 1885.
[37] Vilímek, *Ze zešlých dob*, 14.
[38] Austrian authorities reported that 68 persons from Budějovice and Písek enlisted the agent's services to emigrate in November, 1858, and that 300 Czechs emigrated with Kareš's help in March the following year. Kutnar, *Počátky hromadného vystěhovalectví*, 49; 53-54.

Czech national endeavors. Skimming through Czech newspapers of the day, one finds beside advertisements for his agency numerous articles and inserts thanking the patriot from Bremen for his generous contributions. He generously supported the industrial museum then being set up by Vojta Náprstek, a close friend, and donated prodigiously to Prague's city parks, schools in Vamberk, and numerous charitable societies and voluntary associations.[39]

Kareš successfully combined patriotic credentials with lucrative commerce in emigration. The same peers who otherwise described that business as "trade in white meat" referred to the activities of their compatriot in Bremen as "self-sacrificing patriotic goodwill."[40] How did he do it? It is all the more remarkable considering the caustic polemics that lower-class mobility inspired among patriots. Consider the correspondent from the southern Bohemian village Bechyně to *Národní listy* in Prague.[41] The author had few kind words for emigration itself—"The contagion has spread to our people," he wrote of the phenomenon—and had nothing flattering to say of those who grew rich from the traffic. He warned especially of "foreign Jews" who had taken advantage of the swell; "they publish Czech circulars, even though they are Germans and with the help of their agents and collaborators they talk our poor people into letting them ship them to America." Once in the hands "of one of these Jewish agents," the peasant family was half lost. They would be passed on from one fiend to another and robbed every step of the way from Prague to the North Sea. Most dangerous of all, these nefarious agents operated disguised as Czechs, hanging signs before their offices and sending out brochures in the language, "although they do not understand a word of Czech and look only to how they can squeeze the last dollar from our impoverished Czech people."

In contrast to these false Czechs, the same author recommended the services of Alois Kareš: "This man is truly an honest Czech patriot dealing fairly with his countrymen who resort to him to secure a place on a ship. He has helped many from poverty and distress and has never oppressed anyone. He conscientiously sees to it himself that the emigrant is not cheated in the boarding house or when changing money […]. In the interest of my countrymen I advise those already set upon abandoning the homeland for America to stay clear of Jewish-German agents and make straight to Bremen to the offices of Mr. Kareš so as not to fall into the wrong hands already here in Europe." Here we begin to see the logic behind the stylization of Kareš as the Czech-loyal emigration agent. It was not merely the money invested into communities back home that mattered, but rather what he was—or more precisely, what he was not.

Capitalism was a tricky business, yet Kareš managed to establish a clean reputation among patriots. Despite being one of Central Europe's most successful facilitators of mass emigration, Kareš was recommended by contemporaries as an "honest Czech patriot"—he was, after all, the patriotic alternative to the "foreign Jew." Jan Neruda also emphasized his friend's credentials, insisting that "his name flourished from its very *Czechness.*"[42] Kareš presented

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[39] Kareš was often thanked in inserts in Czech-language newspapers for small and large donations, see : "Dar," *Národní listy*, March 7, 1868; "Výkaz příspěvku," *Národní listy*, August 21, 1869; "Matici divadelní," *Národní listy*, January 16, 1881; "Drobný zprávy," *Opavský týdenník*, January 18, 1879; "Matici školské," *Budivoj*, March 29, 1874. Regarding his habit of presenting exotic birds and other rare animals as gifts, see *Časopis Musea království českého* 44, no. 1: 1870; *Časopis Musea království českého* 45, no. 1;"Ze spolku drobných zvířat," *Pražský denník*, June 11, 1881; "Dary," *Národní listy*, May 23, 1880; "Dar obci pražské," *Národní listy*, September 27, 1883. Further evidence of Kareš's patriotic gifts can be found in correspondence with Vojta Náprstek: KNM ARXXXV, Ar1135/14.

[40] The latter description comes from Jan Neruda, "Alois Kareš," 53.

[41] "Vystěhovalectví—Vystěhovalečtí agenti," Zprávy z venkova, *Národní listy*, August 17, 1867.

[42] (Italics in original.) Neruda, "Alois Kareš," 53.

himself as a fair dealer who worked in the best interests of his countrymen. When he passed away in 1885, local newspapers remembered the Bremen agent as "an exemplary Czech, who even abroad did not cease to carry his nation and his homeland in his heart."[43] He did not just grow rich from human traffic, but gently guided the vulnerable Czech peasant through the perils of the global labor market.

As Vilímek indicated in his autobiography, Kareš established his emigration agency in Bremen not only to turn a profit from the growing traffic of emigrants, but also to protect Czech peasants from the avarice of less conscientious agents and foreign shipping companies; to do "battle against those vampires," another admirer remarked.[44] Kareš accordingly combined economic arguments with national-patriotic considerations when articulating his stance on the emigration question. In contrast to the condescending moralism displayed by many of his peers, the Bremen agent accepted and even appealed to the emigrant's desire for financial gain. And he could do so thanks to his credentials as a true Czech—in contrast to all the false Czechs, crypto-Germans, foreign Jews, and other "renegades." At least in this one case, the Czech-loyal emigration agent succeeded in resolving the liberal's dilemma between support for individual freedoms and the nationalist claim to guardianship, combining a profitable business with selfless commitment to the homeland.

In his memoir from 1906, the travel writer and former theater director Josef Štolba remarked that "there was no compatriot abroad who was more nationally aware or devoted" than his friend Alois Kareš.[45] Indeed, Kareš was concerned not primarily with his own reputation, but sought to be useful to his people. Even before becoming the prosperous agent and patron of things Czech, Kareš hoped to transform mass emigration into a national asset. In communications with national leaders and provincial officials, he emphasized his desire to connect domestic producers with overseas markets. In 1856, for example, Kareš wrote to representatives of various counties in Bohemia that, "my task and that of my colleagues is to be of service to our former homeland, more precisely to our patriots left back home, in economic affairs; that is, to discover overseas locations with which steady trade in manufactured goods from his lordship's commune and surroundings could be conducted, and in this way to provide industrialists and workers generally with needed employment and income."[46] Kareš apparently saw himself as something like a foreign consul for Bohemian, and ethnically Czech, interests. Rather than represent a loss to local coffers, emigration could, if well managed, further the interests of local producers.

This blend of ardent patriotism and business acumen led Kareš, along with a few close sympathizers, to attempt the establishment of a Czech colony in the United States. The plan dated back at least to 1856, when a series of letters exchanged between the Bremen agent and his associates were intercepted by Austrian police.[47] Records held at the Police Presidium in Prague

[43] "Úmrtí," *Plzeňské listy*, July 16, 1885. Prague's *Národní listy* commended the agent in similar terms, stating that Kareš "never forgot that he is a Czech, he participated in all collections for national aims and enriched many collections and museums in Bohemia with numerous valuable objects." "Úmrtí," *Národní listy*, July 14, 1885. Upon the fortieth anniversary of the firm Kareš and Stocký, the same paper wished that the firm "continue in the steps of its founder Kareš, always to the honor of the Czech name." "Jubileum české firmy za hranicemi," *Národní listy*, January 1, 1910.
[44] Štolba, *Z mých paměti,* 114.
[45] Štolba, *Z mých paměti,* 112.
[46] Quoted in Kutnar, *Počátky hromadného vystěhovalectví*, 50.
[47] Kutnar, *Počátky hromadného vystěhovalectví*, 50.

reveal that Kareš sent his colleague and old acquaintance, the trained dyer now employed as a copyist by Bödecker in Bremen, Josef Zábrodský, to Bohemia and Moravia sometime in the middle of 1856 and later again that year in order to contact potential agents and recruit passengers for the shipping line. Beyond these tasks, typical for the profession, Zábrodský was to convene with former schoolmates Josef Vilímek and the home tutor František Zelenka. Police suspicions arose when Zábrodský was reported to be in contact with the newspaper editor Jan Ohéral, like Kareš a participant in the Vienna uprisings of 1848.[48] When further letters confiscated sometime around September of 1856 revealed each of these men to be in contact with Kareš and Bödecker in Bremen, the police suspected a plot and conducted house searches of several participants.

Josef Vilímek was among the unfortunates to be paid a visit by the police in December that year, when a commissar appeared at the publisher's home with orders to search through private letters and other artifacts. "I was," Vilímek later explained, "suspected by Prague police—to be persuading people to emigrate to America and to be in correspondence about it with Kareš!"[49] The commissar departed after failing to turn up anything compromising, but returned hours later with a new order to confiscate all personal correspondence regardless of content and deliver Vilímek to the local police station for questioning. After hours of interrogation still proved fruitless, Vilímek was taken by the head commissar to the central headquarters, where he was held for a week without charge. Following eight days of imprisonment, the publisher was informed that he would be expelled from Prague for one year and compelled to remain during that time in his home county in eastern Bohemia. As a punishment for the suspected crime, the poor man was required to undertake the 144 kilometer journey from Prague to Vamberk on foot. A kind jailer lent the poor Vilímek two gulden and one hundred cigars for the trip.[50]

Although Vilímek was never charged with a crime, the transcript from his interrogation contains a few important details about the colonization project.[51] When leaving for Germany in 1855, Kareš did so with the intention of coordinating and concentrating Czech settlement in the United States. The founding of a Czech agency in Bremen was thus part of a larger plan to create a concentrated Czech settlement overseas. The first colonists, Vilímek revealed, were to be individuals hailing from the area around Vamberk, for the most part moderately wealthy peasants, grain merchants, and craftsmen. Together, these settlers would bargain with the American government in order to secure acres of land suitable for colonization. Kareš, appropriately enough, was to be responsible for organizing transportation and the actual purchase of land for settlement. After a time, further colonists were to join the settlement and a special fund was to be set up for those countrymen in Bohemia not able to afford the journey to America.

Authorities also searched the home of František Zelenka and found, among other things, a letter from Josef Zábrodský dated from August 1856. The letter confirmed Vilímek's involvement in the project and testified to the earnestness of the participants' aims. "Vilímek has

[48] Archival material from the police investigation into the activities of Jan Ohéral and others (ÚA v Praze, PM 4/1/1 č.j. 11986 *Akce vystěhovalecká*) is discussed in Miloslav Trapl, *Novinář Jan Ohéral: Nastin jeho života a díla* (Olomouc: Profil, 1969), 116-117.
[49] Vilímek, *Ze zašlých dob*, 15.
[50] Vilímek, *Ze zašlých dob*, 15.
[51] The transcript (SÚA, Prague, PP 1853-1857, A 11/11) is discussed in Kutnar, *Počátky hromadného vystěhovalectví*, 51.

doubtless informed you already about our current occupation," wrote Zábrodský, "about our purpose and our resolution that we intend to carry out and, God granting, we will carry out."[52] The letter's author continued on to explain that the organizers—the first-person plural referring presumably to Kareš, Vilímek, Ohéral, and Zábrodský himself—had not yet selected a definite site for Czech settlement in the United States. He cautioned that the American government should not be expected to grant any special concessions to the party, since immigrants were arriving to the country in large enough numbers already. Kareš had therefore taken up consultations with the Chilean consul in Hamburg, who reportedly offered the Czechs their pick of land, "together with many other advantages," between the 42nd and 43rd parallels—and that at no cost. Zábrodský spoke positively about Chile, noting that the climate there resembled that in Bohemia (!), although he warned that passage to the country would be lengthy and expensive.

Zábrodský had evidently discussed the matter with the director of the Central Association for German Emigration and Colonization Affairs (*Zentral-Verein für die deutsche Auswanderungs- und Kolonisations-Angelegenheiten*) in Berlin, a man named Heidefuss, who praised Chile as a destination for the Czechs; "however," Zábrodský noted, "he seems to have some concurrent interest in the matter, as he maligned to the point of untruth the United States for our purposes." Heidefuss appears to have considered the Czechs potential recruits for German colonization efforts already underway in the country. Should Chile not be to the Czechs' liking, the director offered Texas as another superb destination for Bohemian migrants, recommending the German settlement, Gillespie, with its seat in the county of Fredericksburg (Friedrichsburg). The letter reveals that Czechs not only looked to German colonization schemes as models for their own undertakings, but also shows that associations competed for souls among colonists of neighboring nationalities.

The budding conspiracy was the work of former political radicals. Kareš and Ohéral were veterans of 1848 and political refugees. Vilímek, Zábrodský, and Zelenka sympathized with the democratic aims of the revolution and saw their participation in the colonization scheme as a protest against the neoabsolutist regime. It was the veterans of 1848, a small but active minority among early Czech emigrants, who most fervently fostered the hope of establishing a "free Čechia" overseas. One such visionary was the newspaper editor Jan Bárta Letovský, who came to play a central role in Kareš's plan as well as in similar projects undertaken during in the 1860s (see Chapter Four). Bárta belonged to the first wave of mass emigration, though his motives appear to have been political as well as economic. (Of course, the one does not exclude the other.) He left his home in Moravia for the United States in 1854 and settled first in Wisconsin before moving on to Iowa-City. There, he joined the freethinking community, declared himself a Russophile, and edited the first Czech-language newspaper to be published in the United States, *Slowan amerikánský*.[53]

Kareš evidently contacted Bárta regarding the plan to found a Czech colony in America, and Bárta's reply was among the letters found by police during the search of Zábrodský's residence in December 1856. In this letter, dated October 8 of the same year, the American Czech expressed his support for the undertaking, stating that, "your intention […] is and has been my intention as well, and that of many other patriots here. Yet it is only to be realized through united efforts and iron perseverance. I know to value this cause and therefore, together with several others, I willingly join your endeavor, which is to be undertaking with such noble-

[52] Kutnar, *Počatky hromádného vystěhovalectví,* 50-51.
[53] "Vynikající Čechové američtí," *Světozor,* June 19, 1885.

mindedness and philanthropy."[54] The newspaper editor offered first-hand knowledge of conditions in the country and a sensitivity to tensions within the American Czech community itself. The editor remained optimistic that such barriers could be overcome.

Bárta pointed to the founding of Kossuth County, Iowa, in 1851 as evidence of the plan's feasibility. Considering that Hungarians had successfully petitioned the United States for a land grant, he did not think it not unreasonable to expect the government to set aside one of Iowa's "almost empty" counties for the Czechs. Bárta claimed there to be nine such counties suitable for Czech settlement, as well as alternative sites in neighboring Minnesota, Missouri, and Nebraska. The local climate, furthermore, was robust and "suited to Slavs, though sometimes the storms are wilder than in Bohemia and in Moravia."[55] Even more so than the physical climate, it was the prevailing atmosphere of personal freedom that Bárta claimed was good for his health and would surely benefit the Czech nation as well; "My lungs, infected by consumption since 1849, are again in good condition and breath the air of freedom unencumbered—the ten day sojourn on the sea healed them completely." Bárta demonstrated immense enthusiasm for the transformative effect of overseas crossing and probably exaggerated his influence among American compatriots. He promised the cooperation of four to six hundred Czech families in Iowa and claimed that Czechs from the rest of America would doubtless follow suit.

Needless to say, Bárta's optimism proved unfounded and the early scheme to found a new national homeland in North America was never realized. Mention of the scheme disappeared from Kareš's correspondence by 1857, and associates such as Vilímek and Ohéral seem to have quickly separated themselves from the project following the police scare. The causes of failure were several and obvious. The project's organizers lacked any real connections with the U.S. government, which could not be expected to support efforts to form a closed enclave separate from the rest of American society. Austrian police quickly repressed the effort to coordinate emigration from Bohemia and successfully intimidated the circle around Kareš. Above all, and most obviously, the project foundered on the indifference of emigrants themselves. Despite the inflated sense of mission—Bárta spoke of himself and his cohort as "patriots and friends of enlightenment and truth" in search of "a new Slavic homeland," and stressed "the essential need to educate the people"—news of their ambitions seems never to have penetrated public discussion. The only reason that evidence of the plan survives at all, in fact, is thanks to the enthusiasm of its few supporters and the paranoid overreaction of the Austrian police.

Why, then, devote any attention to the patriotic fantasies of a Bremen emigration agent and his Bohemian conspirators? In spite of the plan's marginal nature and its ultimate, even inevitable, failure, the attempt to found a Czech colony in Iowa represented an early attempt by national activists to square their liberal values with nationalist ideology. The vision of a organizing a new national homeland overseas was understandable given the stifling atmosphere of neoabsolutism and for men like Vilímek engagement in conspiracy offered a means, however feeble, to protest the Bach regime. For political exiles such as Bárta, the plan offered an opportunity to exercise leadership over a newly formed ethnic community in the United States. For emigrants and the agents who facilitated emigration, Alois Kareš above all, the rhetoric of colonization provided a way to speak positively about emigration without contradicting his

[54] Kutnar, "Dopisy českých vystěhovalců," 293-294.
[55] Kutnar, "Dopisy českých vystěhovalců," 294.

patriotic commitments. In this, the Iowa conspiracy represented a utopian vision, but also expressed the complexities of the emigration debate in Bohemia and abroad.

"Each Flocks to its Own."

Bohemian governor Mécsery, district prefect Thiemann, and other officials at the provincial level used the language of internal colonization to mask over their inability—or unwillingness—to engage in significant social reform. Kareš and his cohort sought to reconcile business interest in overseas migration with their patriotic convictions by working for the establishment of Czech colonies in the American West. Concentrated settlement of working-class Bohemians in Hungary or Czech compatriots in Iowa enabled these groups to accept the existence of mass emigration, even to promote it, without opposing state policy or offending the sentiment of Czech patriotic society.

A third and final vision of collective settlement pursued during the neoabsolutist era belonged to a physician and publicist from eastern Bohemian Hradec Králové. František Cyril Kampelík was unique among Czech patriots. He became active in national life, like so many, during his gymnasium days in the 1810s and 1820s.[56] Kampelík participated in all the major events affecting the national community up through the 1860s: he visited the literary salons of the 1830s, engaged in political debates in the 1840s and contributed to the revolution in 1848. During the 1860s he dedicated himself to debates about political economy and the strengthening of Czech capital. But Kampelík was never really accepted by the national leadership. More than anything else, he alienated patriotic contemporaries with his persistent, pedantic, and frankly annoying proposals for Czech language reform. Convinced that Czechs, Moravians, Silesians, and Slovaks could survive only by adopting a single literary language, Kampelík ensconced his ideas in prose at once so folksy and alien that publishers returned his manuscripts despite the often intelligent contribution of their contents. His insistence that "Czechoslavs" adopt a single literary form, which he maintained well beyond the time when such proposals could be seriously considered, underscored his vision of the role to be played by the Czechs in the Slavic world.

Kampelík was certainly not the first Czech to point out that his small nation belonged do a large Slavic family, which lent the Czech language a significance transcending its Central European enclave.[57] "Knowledge of Czechoslav orthography and grammar," wrote Kampelík in a preface to his book in 1842, *Czechoslav, or, the National Language in Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia and Slovakia*, "is not only to be endorsed for its indispensability and usefulness in Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, and Slovakia, but also for Austrian Slavs generally; indeed, it is even of importance for Europe." Czechoslavs—Czechs, Moravians, Silesians, and Slovaks—represented a single tribe of the vast Slavic nation "whose settlements and governance, spreading out in Europe, Asia, and America, occupy a ninth of the Earth's surface."[58] The geographic expansion of Slavdom provided a basis for future political and economic growth, and Kampelík

[56] Jan Novotný, *František Cyril Kampelík* (Prague: Melantrich, 1975).
[57] For context, see Riccardo Picchio and Harvey Goldblatt, eds., *Aspects of the Slavic Language Question*, 2 vols. (Columbus, Ohio: Slavica Publishers, 1984); Alexander M. Schenker and Edward Stankiewicz, eds., *The Slavic Literary Languages: Formation and Development* (Columbus, Ohio: Slavica Publishers, 1980).
[58] Kampelík, *Čechoslovan, čili, národní jazyk v Čechách, na Moravě, ve Slezku* [*sic*] *a Slovensku* (Prague: Nákladem Jan Host. Pospíšila, 1842), 4-5.

set for himself the task of instructing his countrymen about its potential. This required that everyday Czechs come to appreciate the advantages of eastward expansion into the Slavic *vlast*, "homeland."

Kampelík was probably the first Czech to link philological activism with economic expansion and labor migration. He gave a political and economic twist to the traditional revivalist apprehension about living in the shadow of a larger and more developed German neighbor. In the preface to his 1847 program for linguistic reform, *In Defense of the Czech Language against Opponents and Adversaries,* Kampelík, for the first time, presented the Czech emigrant as an agent of cultural and economic expansion.

> Our craftsmen, artists, peasants, day laborers will not find sustenance among the Germans. What would they do there when the Germans are better than them in so many things?—In the Slavic lands, e.g. in Poland, the Bukovina, in Illyria and elsewhere, there is still virgin soil and magnificent plains untouched by the plough. Mountains and valleys there await the power of intelligent minds and many diligent hands. There, industry, trade, and commerce will surely find their reward. And this is all the more certain since trade among Europe, Asia, and Africa on the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, where the coasts are inhabited by a remarkable number of Slavs."[59]

Introducing ideas that he and others would develop in the following decades, Kampelík foresaw the resettlement of labor migrants from Bohemia in eastern Europe. Rather than moving to the west, where they could not hope to compete against the culturally more advanced Germans, Czech laborers would do better to turn eastward, where their skills and education excelled that of locals. There, diligent hands would transform wilderness into farmland and secure foreign markets for Czech products. It was only a short hop from talk about labor migration to the language of colonization.

It is important to remember that the author introduced these ideas in a treatise about language reform. Although idiosyncratic, Kampelík's *In Defense of the Czech Language* cannot really be called anachronistic. The work belonged to a genre that had become obsolete by the 1840s, and its author repeated many of his peculiar suggestions for grammatical revision. But Kampelík ultimately rested his argumentation on pragmatic factors and timely concerns. His persistent but ultimately vain attempt to embrace the entire Czechoslovak family by incorporating "eastern" Moravian and Slovak dialects into a single literary language (an ambition already passé by the time of Jan Kollár) paralleled his effort to open up the East to Czech capital. As the biographer Jan Novotný points out, Kampelík adopted the viewpoint of the rising Czech bourgeoisie and attempted to express his ideas according to the interests of that social class.[60]

Kampelík sought to bring his nation into the modern world by redirecting migration from America to the primitive East. He developed this idea in a peculiar work titled *Propositions for Industry*. The complete (and, perhaps, somewhat elaborate) title provides a sense of the book's content.

> *Propositions for Industry: How Wealthy and Poor Citizens from Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia and Slovakia, Being Flawless Artisans and Sensible Farmers—Instead of*

[59] František Cyril Kampelík, *Obrana českého jazyka proti utrhačům a odpůrcům* (Prague, 1847), 11.
[60] Novotný, *František Cyril Kampelík*, 96.

> *Expensive and Dangerous Emigration to Far-Away America—Should Rather Found Exemplary, Industrial, Attractive Towns or New Settlements Famed for their Tillage in Scarcely Populated, Fertile Territories of the Austrian Empire Under the Protection of the Imperial and Royal Government So As to Be Protected from Threatening Impoverishment and Troubles and So That, With Passing Time, They and Their Descendents Should Fare Well.*[61]

Published at the author's own expense in the last year of the neoabsolutist decade, the book combined its author's program of language reform with his growing interest in political economy. Neoabsolutism represented a transitional period for Kampelík, in which he combined his interest in questions of language reform with the spirit of economic transformation under Bach. For Kampelík, both of these issues coalesced around the issue of mass emigration. *Propositions for Industry* was Kampelík's unique contribution to the emigration question, one in which the ambitious physician outlined a detailed plan as to how his countrymen could find economic and national renewal in the eastern territories of the Habsburg realm.

Průmysl, "industry," stood at the center of Kampelík's book. For the author, *průmysl* signified much more than just machines or factory production; the word held a tremendous promise. "Industry is the gift of God!" exclaimed Kampelík.

> Industry pushes all the trades forward, it has called much into life; on all ends of the Earth it has perfected the trades and production […]. Industry has saved us from hunger and plague; it has built railways for us and put steamships on the rivers and seas to carry the surplus of one nation's harvests and consumption to that of another nation requiring it. […] Yes, industry is spirit awakened by the knowledge of nature, it searches around itself to produce beautiful and useful objects by human hand and machine, delivering them obligingly by means of trade at the user's convenience so that human society everywhere increases in prosperity.[62]

Kampelík's conception of industry really encompassed the celebration of modern technology, capitalism, and free trade. In this it echoed the rhetoric of Bach's absolutism, which sought to modernize society and integrate Austria into the world market.[63]

Kampelík, who practiced as a physician in eastern Bohemia and had also treated workers in Prague's growing suburbs, knew the conditions in which the Czech working class lived. Alongside his paean to *průmysl,* Kampelík reflected on the less salubrious consequences of capitalism. Industry, he admitted, "being volatile and variable, at times provides a very unstable

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[61] František Cyril Kampelík, *Průmyslné návrhy, jakby zámožní a chudí občané z Čech, Moravy, Slezka i Slovenska, jsouce dokonalí řemeslníci a rozumní rolníci—místo útratného, nebezpečného stěhování se do daleké Ameriky—ráděj vzorná, průmyslná, pěkná, orbou pověstná města, nebo nové osady na řídko zalidněných úrodných končinách rakouské říše pod ochranou c.k. vlády zakládati měli, aby před hrozivým schudnutím a svízelem ještě v čas ubíhujecím, jakož i potomkům jejich dobře se vedlo"* (Hradec Králové: Nákladem spisovatelovym, 1859).

[62] Kampelík, *Průmyslné návrhy*, 37-38.

[63] Kampelík awkwardly balanced his Czech national convictions, immediately suspicious to Bach's authorities, with obsequious flattery of Austria's "organic absolutism". See, for example, his explanation of the word *Rakousia,* an unorthodox version of the standard form, *Rakousko* (Austria): "Because with the fatefull year 1848 our Austrian Empire entered the phase of its concentration, or centralization, transitioning to its rebirth, and has become more independent in Europe, more powerful, I have chosen here to use its short, significant, historical, and domestic name 'Rakousia'."

livelihood, especially in those places where there is no agriculture."[64] Kampelík spoke in particular about the northern and eastern Bohemian foothills of the Jizera and Krkonoše mountains and the eastern Sudety, places where mechanization had taken a particularly hard toll on local artisans and cottagers.

> It is precisely in those praiseworthy industrial regions, and in the cities and towns of artisans, that there arises another misfortune, one of which each humanitarian is painfully aware—and that is the growing
>
> *proletariat,*
>
> or landless poor, who increasingly loses control over its livelihood.[65]

These men and women lost their professions as a result of the industrialization that Kampelík endorsed. His time in Prague (where, among other things, he mediated between Czech liberals and the unemployed carton printers during 1848) introduced him to a new social class, one whose very existence posed an objection to capitalism itself. Kampelík knew the proletarian condition better than most of his liberal peers. The artisan who lost his livelihood or the farmer without land faced no prospects at home. Nor did he possess the means to improve his own condition. The tens of thousands of emigrants, Kampelík recognized, came from these ranks of downwardly mobile artisans and peasants. Patriotic admonitions alone would not keep these working-class Bohemians in the homeland.

In 1844, Bohemian society awoke to the existence of this new class when workers in Prague staged the first organized strike, destroyed new machinery that had put them out of work, and protested the devaluation of their learned skills. These workers demanded a limit to the use of machines and a say in how technology transformed their profession. While Kampelík's familiarity with Prague workers and other Czechs of the poorer classes made him sympathetic to the workers' plight, he had little patience for their criticisms of modern industry. "Many short-sighted windbags and artisans stuck in poverty complain constantly about factories and machines, saying: *'If factories and machines did not exist, they would not torment us with troubles and poverty, which is killing off the crafts in cities and towns'.*"[66] Such thinking would only make matters worse, insisted Kampelík, for in such a case Bohemian industry would fall behind that of the Americans, English, Belgians, French, and others who export their goods to Russia, Turkey, Egypt, Persia, and elsewhere. Competition was everything and working-class misery had to be met with increased discipline.

The progress of industry was inexorable, maintained Kampelík. "In the life of nations there is no standing still," he warned. "Whoever stands without moving forward is already falling behind. What will happen if we do not become more practical, nationally more self-interested? – Industrious foreigners will exploit our ignorance, overwhelm us, and we will go stupid from our own carelessness and raggedness. Dependency will make us poor, poverty will make us stupid."[67] At the heart of Kampelík's *Propositions for Industry* was ambivalence about the effect of capitalism on national development. As was the case with liberals throughout Central Europe,

[64] Kampelík, *Průmyslové návrhy*, 10.
[65] Italics in original. Kampelík, *Průmyslové návrhy*, 12.
[66] Italics in original. Kampelík, *Průmyslové návrhy*, 22.
[67] Kampelík, *Průmyslné návrhy*, 31.

he feared the social consequences of the economic liberation and technological change that he himself advocated.

After presenting his picture of industry and capitalist society Kampelík turned his attention to the question of whether or not the Czechs would be able to "catch up" with the West. For Kampelík, the matter boiled down to a question of national character. As a liberal and principled advocate of free trade, Kampelík could hardly argue that capitalism should be adjusted to fit the needs of workers. Czech workers, therefore, would have to be refashioned in the mold of liberal ideals. Here, he expected colonization to play a transformative role.

Would the Czechs make able colonists? Kampelík was skeptical, and he perceived colonization as part of the larger project to reshape national character.

> Our neighbors and other foreigners criticize us for our faults. It is true that we are rather incredulous and spendthrift, and we have a penchant for luxury. Neither do we cultivate our ancient nationality nor do we derive benefits from belonging to it. What others do not command us to do, we do not do ourselves, for that would require work. Many happily squander their property and income, failing to think about future difficulties and poor harvests. […] [Critics] deny our diligence, thrift, and prudence. It seems that they are correct.

Kampelík complained bitterly of his countrymen's poor work ethic and lack of economical virtues. The working class, especially, displayed a tremendous indifference to national identity, failed to work on its behalf, and through their immoderate lifestyle contributed to their own misery. He compared the passivity of his countrymen to the "diligence, perseverance, orderliness, thoroughness and thus remarkable wealth" of Bohemian Germans. In Czech villages he witnessed "much apathy, messiness, disorderliness, and destitution." Kampelík worried about how Germans and "other advanced nations" perceived his people—if they took notice of the Czechs at all. Of the Germans, "the opinion prevails in higher circles that they are remarkably well suited to the settlement or colonization of unpopulated territories, for the transform wastelands into paradise, shrewdly utilizing everything."[68]

And the Czechs?

Although they displayed some praiseworthy qualities—Kampelík attributed to them a certain brilliance, joviality, and gentleness as well as pragmatism—the Czechs were reprimanded by Kampelík for "their incredulity, carelessness, and profligacy." These negative characteristics were to be found in the devotion shown to all things western. Intellectuals consumed foreign literature and proudly spoke French, English, and German while neglecting their mother tongue. Lower-class Czechs abandoned the homeland to work in neighboring Germany or far-away America. This flight to things foreign, the elite to western culture and proletarians to western lands, could be halted by turning migration to the East. "The age of colonization approaches," he announced. "Do everything you can […] to be seen as capable colonists and do not allow your present character to get in the way."[69]

According to Kampelík, colonization could achieve two things. First, it would transform indifferent peasants, artisans, and workers into responsible members of the national community by providing them capital in the form of land. Second, it gave Czechs the opportunity to secure a

[68] Kampelík, *Průmyslné návrhy*, 61.
[69] Kampelík, *Průmyslné návrhy* 63.

place among Europe's "advanced nations." In regard to the second point, the Czechs faced competition from other colonizing powers, notably the Germans. "All across the German lands," wrote Kampelík, "the German press encourages patriots to occupy the fertile and unpopulated territory along the Danube with numerous settlements, to spread German culture, speech, and nationality out into the Orient. By this means they will seize the entire Danube waterway for themselves, that most important artery of Austria. This is a grand idea, one looking far into the future."[70] He cited an article published in Vienna's newspaper, *Die Presse,* whose author made the case for colonization as a way of opening Hungary to the world market and overcoming barriers to free trade.[71] Like Kampelík, the Viennese author pointed to the abundance of sparsely populated, fertile land in Hungary, Croatia, Transylvania, and Slavonia, juxtaposing against it the unemployment in Austria's western territories and the consequent mass emigration to America. For a "thoroughgoing reform of the trades" and a "rational economic policy in Hungary," it was necessary that modernizing forces be brought to the East. "Why should it be denied to intellectual workers from the German-Austrian provinces," the author asked, "to carry German culture, which they represent, as well as their skills and the progress of modern times to this region where all industrial branches are a century behind?" Kampelík worried that appeals such as these would preempt Slavic colonization of the East, and once again he warned his compatriots not to miss out on the opportunity.[72]

"And where might industrious, diligent Czechoslavs found new exemplary urban settlements to good advantage?" asked Kampelík. Previous parts of the treatise discussed the positive and less desirable effects of modern industry on Bohemian society, portrayed northwestern Europe as a model worthy of emulation, and dwelled on aspects of Czech character that would have to be overcome in order for the nation to compete with its western European neighbors, especially the Germans. Now the physician turned to the more practical aspects of colonization. How should the new settlements operate? Where might settlers procure the necessary capital? And what region offered the best chance of success?

Already in his 1847 defense of the Czech language, Kampelík described the futility of Czechs trying to compete with their German neighbors in the West, urging his working-class compatriots to turn eastward instead. Setting a precedent for contemporaries, he linked care for the mother tongue with expansion of Czech capital abroad. "Our industry," he now wrote, "will find its golden path in the broad East and South, and it is there where the spurned language of the Czechs, Moravians, and Slovaks can best contribute to it."[73] Although his book discussed a variety of options for Czechoslav colonization in the Austrian Empire's southern and eastern borderlands, it was the foothills of the Carpathians that for Kampelík held the greatest promise.

"Carpathia is what I call that great strip of land in our Empire that stretches along the Carpathian Mountains, branching out widely in the south extending as offshoots on both sides of its base, making a rich garland for Austria."[74] The Carpathians make up one of Europe's longest and most rugged mountain chains, spreading from Bohemia in the west through Upper Hungary,

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[70] Kampelík, *Průmyslné návrhy*, 93.
[71] "Colonisation und Gewerbefreiheit," *Die Presse*, December 6, 1856.
[72] "My dear ones," explained Kampelík, "from this it follows that the overpopulated West is gradually moving along the Danube and on railways to the Orient, leaving poverty behind." *Průmyslné návrhy*, 96.
[73] Kampelík, *Průmyslné návrhy*, 59.
[74] In Kampelík's Czech, *pokapartie* or *pokarpatsko.* In Czech, the standard term for the Carpathians is *Karpaty*. Kampelík attached following note; "Pokarpatie tak mluveno a psáno, jako Polabie, Zálabie, Potisie, Pomořie." Kampelík, *Průmyslné návrhy*, 97-98.

where they form the High Tatras of Slovakia, through Polish Silesia and Galicia into Bukovina and Transylvania, before arching back to Serbia in the south. Kampelík's Carpathia encompassed 4,000 square miles of Europe's most fertile landscape, abundant in raw materials: gentle hillsides suited to wine cultivation in Slovakia and Transylvania, veins of precious metals along its central stretches contained more gold than anywhere outside of the Urals, rich deposits of granite and salt, and old growth forests of beech and maple. On the fertile plains and grasslands of its foothills was "not a stone to be found along many miles," inviting easy cultivation. "Expansive," "comfortingly romantic," and "charming" were the adjectives chosen by Kampelík to describe this "blessed Canaan" in the East.

The physician Kampelík praised Carpathia for its healthy climate, clean water, and natural resources—but more than anything else it was the local population that made the country suitable for Czech colonization. Slavs inhabited the greater part of the region, wrote Kampelík, and many historians identified Carpathia as the cradle of that race.[75] Polish Gorals, Slovaks, and Rusyns inhabited the western reaches, Hutsuls (a Rusyn people) lived in the Bukovina, while Romanians ("a fifth of their language being Slavic"), Magyars, Székelys of Translylvania ("Magyarized people about whom it is not known for certain if they are not Magyarized Slavs […]."), and Transylvanian Saxons, Gypsies, Armenians, and Germans made up the rest. Kampelík devoted his interest primarily to what he considered the regions indigenous peoples, the Slavic Gorals, Slovaks, Rusyns, and Hutsuls. These he described as existing in a pristine state of nature, much like noble savages. "The inhabitants of Carpathia," he reported, "excepting the Germans […], very much preserve the purity of their poetic natural state and know nothing of the malice that […] follows behind civilization."[76] Cut off from the world in their mountain valley and unconcerned with discoveries and advancements made elsewhere, the Slavs of Carpathia were described as idyllic and good-natured, but also as held back by superstition. "They wander about amidst treasures and though they struggle with poverty, their intellect has led them no further than subsistence farming and pasturage." Endemic backwardness prohibited them from discovering the natural resources lying beneath their feet and "to open their treasures through diligence and hard work, from which the entire land would greatly profit."

The blissfully unaware mountain people formed an idyllic counterpart to what Kampelík depicted as the impoverished farmers and craftsmen of Bohemia. But like working-class Czechs in Bohemia, these pastoral proletarians proved incapable of making progress on their own. Poverty and lack of education held back the proletariat at home. "This destitute people," Kampelík wrote of this class, "lacking a rational outlook, having neither knowledge nor the means to take positive measures to improve their own pitiful fate, will not help themselves."[77] Poverty and geographical isolation retarded development of the Slavs in Carpathia. Kampelík hoped to raise both by bringing the two together under liberal guidance:

> The inhabitants of Carpathia, deluded by old habits and morals, depressed by inherited coarseness and ignorance, dimmed by superstition and prejudice, having no schools or resources, will not awaken to higher industrial activity on their own and will continue to linger in that state of idleness and stupor until a more awakened and more industrious element of their kin arrives among them to open up the gate of industry. And for that,

[75] Kampelík quickly added, "though this requires strong faith."
[76] Kampelík, *Průmyslné návrhy*, 105.
[77] Kampelík, *Průmyslné návrhy*, 13.

> industrious Czechoslavs, related to them in speech and religion, would be best suited, if they were to settle large, exemplary settlements on nearby foothills and abandon the thought [of emigrating to] the very foreign and, for its long sea crossing, dangerous America.[78]

Kampelík, who peppered his writings with folksy sayings, inserted below this thought the proverb, *svůj ku svému se hrne,* "each flocks to its own." National expansion, in this sense, really represented a homecoming. The mountain people of Carpathia were brothers—living ancestors, even—and this affinity assured that locals would eagerly assimilate whatever lessons the Czechs chose to impart. In this manner, by redirecting migration from America to the East, the downtrodden proletariat of Bohemia would become role models and valuable members of the nation.

Carpathia offered several advantages, and Kampelík listed his reasons why working-class Czechs should settle there instead of emigrating to America. First of all, the climate and topography resembled that of the homeland, and it was closer to Bohemia. The region offered plenty of good, arable land. There, Czech speakers would be among a related people and enjoy the protection of the Austrian government. These reasons were straightforward. More sophisticated was the historical role that colonization accorded to the Czechs as a people: "Czechoslavs would receive their noble mission to carry civilization [*vzdělanost*] and industry from western Europe to brotherly peoples in the East." The missionary aspect of national expansion transcended the interests of individual colonists. If Kampelík's concern was that his people lagged behind the West, then colonization would place the Czechs on the vanguard of western civilization's eastward march. Czech capital would also find its place in the world economy. "The new Czechoslav settlements would be supported by compatriots for another reason," claimed Kampelík:

> They would act as agents, storehouses, and subsidiaries of Bohemian and Moravian industry and trade, which would secure a route to the eastern and northern territories. Foreign industry would not catch up so easily, as soon as similar, inexpensive, and sought-after products of good quality were sent from there to markets. Such reciprocity between the fatherland and exemplary colonies along the lower Carpathians would also have a comforting effect on general moral well-being, since it would improve the conditions in impoverished and overcrowded regions.[79]

Colonization matched the economic self-interest that inspired emigrants to leave for America while at the same time offering a powerful narrative of cultural work, a civilizing mission to the East, assuring that Czechs would not fall behind the West—specifically, the Germans—in the process of economic modernization.

Průmyslné návrhy counts among the great utopian visions of its time. The manner in which Kampelík set out to reconcile the contradicting forces of modern life—agriculture and industry, labor and capital—can be seen in the detailed blueprint he provided for model settlements. A public square formed the center of each colony, with twelve straight boulevards projecting outwards "in such a way that they open up a beautiful view from the squares outward

[78] Kampelík, *Průmyslné návrhy*, 105-106.
[79] Kampelík, *Průmyslné návrhy*, 109.

into nature."[80] These wide thoroughfares, Kampelík explained, would rid the city of dangerous vapors and at the same time facilitate commerce. Workshops, warehouses, and artisan studios were to be situated around the square and beyond them a wide stretch of homesteads, housing blocks, and farmland. Factories would be erected on the colony's far end. Wide blocks, plentiful gardens, fresh air—above all systematic, planned settlement would work as a "medicine" against the deleterious effects of modern factory production on workers and youth, overcome the division between industry and agriculture, and ease class tensions. "Such towns are what I, as a doctor, recommend," he testified.

Kampelík foresaw signs inscribed with "good principles and slogans against slackers" placed along trails through the parks and forests beside his colonies.[81] A board of aesthetes elected by the colonists would regulate public ornament and city design as well as approve motivational banners for display in schools and churches: "Hang upon important and public buildings signs encouraging virtue, morality, work, thrift, moderation, reciprocity, and nationhood," the author advised. Kampelík foresaw streets named after Slavic saints and famous Czechs: St. Cyril Street, for example, or boulevards named Kollarovka, Jungmanka. Settlements themselves were to carry names inspiring a strong work ethic or optimism; colonists would inhabit towns called Prácov, Radostín, Blahotov, Dobrošany, or Bratrov.[82] Besides integrating nature and labor, Kampelík foresaw the encouragement of national character.

In order to succeed, said Kampelík, it was essential that the Austrian government provide some form of support to the new colonies. After all, not only would the Czech settlements develop hitherto dormant natural resources of the Empire, but the entire project would relieve social tension in one of the monarchy's most populated regions. Kampelík knew that previous efforts to establish colonies in the East had foundered on the refusal of the government to provide funds. His innovation consisted in foregoing financial support from the state, requesting only favorable conditions for settlement and legal protection for the colonists.[83] Settlements were to be given royal status, like Prague, enabling them to hold annual markets and enjoy other privileges. Colonists should be exempted from direct taxation for a period of fifteen to twenty years and freed from military service for twenty-five to thirty years. Settlers would be able to elect, pending government approval, their own teachers, clergy members, lower officials, and a mayor. Other liberal rights, such as trial by jury and freedom of assembly, would also be provided. In this way, Austria would prove that she, too, "could quickly grow beautiful industrial cities in its barren lands just like in that oversold, free America."[84] Kampelík took much encouragement from the colonization law decreed as he finished his manuscript, the text of which he reprinted in full.[85]

Kampelík's strategy consisted in appealing to the ambitions of the Austrian state, which under Schwarzenberg set out to become a major power. But his real concern had always been that of a middle class Czech worried about his people's chances of competing against larger, better equipped neighbors. He recognized that the threat of impoverishment driving tens of thousands abroad resulted from the uneven integration of Bohemia into the world market. Colonization provided a means of catching up with the West. Kampelík imagined the voice of a

[80] Kampelík, *Průmyslné návrhy*, 120.
[81] Kampelík, *Průmyslné návrhy,* 121.
[82] The names derive from the words *práce* (labor), *radost* (joy), *blaho* (bliss), *dobro* (good), *bratr* (brother).
[83] Kampelík, *Průmyslné návrhy*, 177-183.
[84] Kampelík, *Průmyslné návrhy,* 182.
[85] "Zákon kolonisace v naši rakouskej říši," *Průmyslné návrhy*, 184- 189.

sympathetic reader who, though convinced of the doctor's intentions, remained skeptical about the plan's feasibility. The imaginary reader's comments summarize Kampelík's argument and are worth quoting in full.

> Factories built by rich westerners take away from us the trades that at an earlier time served us well; almighty and merciless capital from the west and northwest builds enormous factories here, bringing us under its control and extracting profits from our muscles; well established shareholders and sophisticated industrialists receive instruction in national schools by a rich literature in chemistry, physics, mechanics, natural sciences, and business […] in order to turn our ignorance, timidity, and disunity to their advantage. We are approaching the faith of the English industrial spirit from which emerge two classes of people: *millionaires and the countless poor.* And if we do not consult with reason, much greater difficulties will overcome us, poverty will grow and destitution will increase because our livelihoods disappear.
>
> We all acknowledge that it is high time we become more artful, more enterprising, and more united; exemplary, industrial colonies in fertile and healthy lands would be very agreeable to us, but how to do it when we lack the capital and practical training?[86]

Kampelík wished his text to be read as a vision and a warning. Either Czechs show greater ambition and diligence than heretofore, or they face falling behind their western neighbors and becoming something like a colony themselves. But in doing so the Czechs confronted a familiar difficulty. How could a mostly peasant people acquire sufficient capital to compete with the better connected entrepreneurs of the West?

Kampelík outlined a number of ways to establish Czech settlements in the East, from state support to private investment. Magnates in Hungary might sell land to Bohemian capitalists, the latter wishing to rid themselves of an unruly proletariat by dividing and selling off eastern territory. According to Kampelík's preferred method, however, colonists themselves would join together in credit unions, together accumulating enough capital to purchase territory upon which to build their settlements. In this, he echoed the rhetoric of rural progressives and urban self-help movements, which we have seen made up the backbone of the Czech national movement during the 1850s. Colonization, as the collective endeavor of Czech worker-entrepreneurs, thus represented another solution the struggle of small Czechs capital against Viennese finance.

Together with their Central European neighbors, the Germans, Czechs shared a vision of liberal guardianship over peoples understood to be unready for independence. Whether they watched over backward Slavic cousins in Carpathia, working-class co-nationals at home, or compatriots abroad, liberals understood it to be their task to guide dependent peoples to a state of political and economic maturity. The German vocabulary best captures this version of liberal guardianship with its word *Bevormundung*, which literally means "to speak before," "in front of," or "in place of" those unable to speak for themselves. As elaborated upon earlier in the Brockhaus encyclopedia, emancipation through guardianship belonged to the logic of colonial rule, the cultivation of peoples as well as landscapes and markets. In their missions directed outward toward backward peoples as well as internally to the nationally indifferent, liberals

[86] Emphasis in original. Kampelík, *Průmyslné návrhy,* 155-156.

called upon the state to support their efforts. This fit the pattern in Central Europe of liberal opposition to absolutism, in which liberals hoped to use state power to push forward important reforms. Kampelík gave expression to what might at first appear a very illiberal brand of liberalism, with its emphasis on guardianship, planning, and calls for state support, but these were nonetheless strategies developed by liberals across Central Europe to overcome what many perceived as cultural, economic, and political backwardness.

* * *

"**To Colonize** (lat.), to plant, to make arable through planting, to found a colony. **Colonist**, he who makes his own or another's plot of land arable and inhabits it."

Kleineres Brockhaus'sches Conversations-Lexikon, s.v. "Colonisiren."

Why recount the history of unrealized and probably unrealizable projects of founding Czech colonies? This is a question to be asked throughout this dissertation. At the middle of the nineteenth century, the Czechs did not have a state of their own. Indeed, national leaders even feared that they lacked a people. How could anyone in such a situation seriously entertain the idea of establishing a branch of the nation in foreign lands? And yet there were those who looked across the horizon and sighted opportunities to bring prosperity to their people, to secure international trade and opportunities to invest capital, and to play the role of civilization carriers to uncultivated lands. What was the larger significance of imagined population transfers, overseas settlements, and the Czech mission to the East?

Colonialism always functions as a dream, the projection of aspirations or apprehensions abroad. Every colony is an out-of-body experience in which a people observe itself from the outside. Such a flight into fantasy can be very useful to those engaged in the nation-building project, as it enables the delineation of an imagined community from without. If "to colonize" means to make fallow land fertile, then a nation that claims the ability to found colonies demonstrates its own virility. For a small people caught somewhere between a culture of national revival and the politics of mass national agitation, this feeling of virility provided a much needed confirmation of its national project. Sketching the contours of ethnic identity abroad, much like drawing one's self-portrait, helped patriots identify various shades of Czechness and to contemplate their people in light and shadow. The liberals in Central Europe were too weak—not too liberal—to expropriate the large landholders in Bohemia or otherwise redistribute wealth. Yet they could, in rhetoric if not in reality, compete with other advanced nations in the contest of colonization and place bets as to the outcome. Above all, the language of colonization formed a narrative that the nation told about itself, about its present status, its past, and the way to the future.

And so it was with Czech colonies during the 1850s and after. During the neoabsolutist decade, Bach's ministry hoped that material prosperity would make political contest redundant. When that failed, Kempen and Sacher-Masoch stepped in. At a time of reactionary politics, which in fact meant the absence of politics, aspirations for social change could be projected outward. For provincial officials this meant addressing social problems in their home districts by reshuffling populations; an even spread of peoples across the empire would dilute social tension. The figure of the patriotic emigration agent, Alois Kareš, integrated support for overseas migration with visions of a new, free Čechia on American soil. František Kampelík, finally, the day dreaming physician from Hradec Králové, spun what was by far the most elaborate plan for a peaceful Czech conquest of the East. The proletariat, who like the emigrant reflected back onto

liberals ambivalence about capitalism and the spread of the world market, became in Kampelík's mind the Czech colonist; an agent of modernization among brotherly Gorals, Slovaks, Rusyns, and Hutsuls. *Hirngespinst*, "chimeras," one might say dismissively. But the language that colonization introduced to the history of Czech nation-building during this crucial period continued to shape national development through the nineteenth century and beyond.

Chapter Four

"For Our Slavonic Future": How Czechs Did Not Colonize the Amur

This chapter explores a tangled relationship between Asia and the Slavs, between Orientalist visions and liberal politics in Bohemia and abroad. It tells the story of Czechs who set out to pioneer Slavic expansion into the Orient by settling Russia's eastern frontier with American immigrants. It was a non-event; it never happened. Or, taken from another point of view, the idea itself *was* the event. During the first years of the 1860s, a time of uncertainty and anticipation after the collapse of neoabsolutism, a handful of Czech national leaders, immigrants in America, and Russian officials devised a plan to settle a little-known region along the Russian-Chinese border with western Slavs. It was an area of 231,660 square miles around the northern bank of the Amur River in Outer Manchuria that Russia acquired in the 1858 treaty of Aigun. The annexation briefly electrified Russian public opinion, and commentators across the globe discussed the geopolitical implications of Russia's acquisition. In the Bohemian lands, too, the annexation unleashed a series of debate in the Czech press fueled by desires, hopes, and anxieties associated with economic modernization and social change. This chapter outlines the history of that debate.

Whether writers foretold a brilliant Slavonic future in the Far East or derided the imprudence of peasant emigrants, they exercised a common style of thought and employed a shared vocabulary to describe the region. The polemics described here fall under the familiar heading of Orientalism. At its most rudimentary level, Orientalism refers to "a general patronizing Western attitude towards Middle Eastern, Asian and North African societies."[1] In the subtler and highly influential formulation of Edward Said, Orientalism refers to three things: a set of doctrines and theses about a physical place, i.e. the rather old-fashioned academic discipline; an ontological and epistemological distinction made between the West and its essentialized Other; and, most significantly, a "style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient."[2] The concept of Orientalism has equipped a generation or more of academics with analytic tools to understanding the relationship between colonial representations (discourse) and the legitimization of authority (hegemony).

Rather than engage theoretically with Said's text, this chapter extracts the elements of Orientalism helpful in understanding why a foreign empire's acquisition of a far-away territory exerted influence, brief but intense, over local politics in Bohemia, and how on both sides of the Atlantic the Amur river valley shaped Czech national self-understanding in a fundamental way. Several useful insights can be drawn from Said's text: Orientalism, wherever in operation, brings to bear a "whole network of interests" whenever any particular instance of the Orient comes into question; the Orient provided Europe "a sort of surrogate and even underground self," one that afforded a shared identity and a sense of power and, finally; Orientalism served to establish relations of authority both between cultures and within particular communities.[3] By creating a

[1] *Wikipedia,* s.v. "Orientalism," last modified April 10, 2013, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orientalism.
[2] Edward Said, *Orientalism,* 2-3.
[3] Said, *Orientalism,* 3.

contrasting identity through the employment of a European-wide colonial discourse, the debate about settlement of the Amur river valley afforded Czech elites in Bohemia and in America the opportunity to confirm their leadership status over compatriots.

One more note as preface: In its canonical use, *Orientalism* describes states with colonial interests in the Near (or Middle) East: British, French, and later American power over Arab Muslims. Said had little to say about Orientalism in Central Europe or its application to the lands of the Far East.[4] Practical limitations of space as well as the political situation in which the book was written, he explained, concentrated the scope of his enquiry. But there was a substantive historical reason as well. In the myriad governmental forms throughout the German lands before 1871 and the large multiethnic empires dominating the East until 1918, legitimacy rested upon tradition and monarchical authority rather than popular will. These governments represented, according to Said, not the interest of nations, but existed instead to preserve the status of estates. Nor did any of these non-national empires possess distant colonies of any significance. All of which led Said to maintain that "at no time […] could a close partnership have developed between Orientalists and a protracted, sustained *national interest* in the Orient."[5] If states did not claim to represent the nation even at home, they could not very well do so overseas.

And yet Orientalism did play a role in the Bohemian lands. In the case a small, stateless people in the center of Europe the force of Orientalist discourse was directed inward toward its own population as well as outward, but toward the West rather than East. The Czechs realized this process of self-Orientalization through the rhetoric of pan-Slavism.[6] Scholars steeped in the cultural and intellectual environment of Central Europe, linguistically German but not national in an ethnic sense, "awakened" at the turn of the nineteenth century to discover themselves Slavs. For this to happen it was necessary first to cease being German. One uncovered the Slav within, cultivated this new identity then put it on display. Oftentimes Orientalism played a direct role in the process, as when Josef Dobrovský claimed to have discovered a genetic relationship between the Slavic languages and Sanskrit, thereby providing Czech a classical lineage lacking in German.[7] As a rule, however, the *buditelé* (Awakeners) extracted themselves from their familiar German milieu through the careful study and reconstruction of what was in many ways an equally exotic Other—the Czech-speaking peasant of the countryside.[8] Ironically, the new Czech

[4] Said explains his reasons in the introduction; Said, *Orientalism*, 18-19. Suzanne Marchand makes the case for German Orientalism in *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010; Suzanne Marchand, "German Orientalism and the Decline of the West," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 145, no. 4 (December 2001): 465-473. See also Jenkins, "German Orientalisms. Introduction," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 24, no. 2 (2004): 97-100; Closer to the Czech scene, see Karel Černý, "Edward W. Said: Orientalismus. Západní koncepce Orientu," *Sociologické časopis,* no. 5 (2009): 1132-1136.

[5] Emphasis in the original. Said, *Orientalism*, 19.

[6] The term self-Orientalization (sebeorientalizace) is used by Tomáš Glanc in his insightful commentary to the Czech translation of Said's book, although he uses the term in quite a different sense. Tomáš Glanc, "Orientalismus a sebeorientalizace," *Česká literatura,* no. 6 (2009): 877-890. On the Czechs and pan-Slavism, see the still valuable essay by Hans Kohn, "The Impact of Pan-Slavism on Central Europe," *The Review of Politics* 23, no. 3 (July 1961): 323-333. Also Hans Kohn, *Pan-Slavism: Its History and Ideology* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1953).

[7] All the great *buditelé*, in fact, engaged with Orientalist texts and translations in their work, Kramerius, Jungmann, Kollár, and Hanka, to name the most obvious, included the production of Orientalist texts as a part of their revivalist program. Jan Filipský, *Kdo byl kdo: Čeští orientalisté, afrikanisté, a iberoamerikanisté.* Prague: Libri, 1999), 32-35.

[8] Macura, *Znamení zrodu*, 118ff.

world so meticulously cultivated by national society was as inscrutable to these "really existing" rural Czechs as it was to the high society of German-speaking Prague.[9]

Revivalist culture was thus an Orientalizing culture. The first generations of Czech patriots replaced German *Bildung* and *Kultur*, the very air they breathed, with a tantalizingly exotic *česká vzdělanost*. They turned the familiar strange, and from the contrast emerged a shared identity. The creative process of self-Orientalization differed from that described by Said, but it also shared many of its characteristics. Knowledge of the Other within, of the Slav in Bohemia (the *Čechoslovan*), produced common identities and established relationships of power within patriotic society.[10] The *buditelé* became icons, their followers a national elite. In this way a close partnership can be said to have developed between Czech Orientalists and a "protracted and sustained *national interest*" in the Oriental Other.

Geographical Visions

Although Czechs had long been fascinated with the Far East,[11] the idea for settling eastern Siberia with emigrants from Bohemia can be traced back to Russia—or, rather, to the Russian ethnographer and folklorist of German descent from Warsaw, the fervent Russophile Alexander Gil'ferding. Gil'ferding was employed in the Asiatic Department of the Russian Foreign Ministry when he visited Prague in 1859. It is not apparent whether the ethnographer came to Prague privately or on behalf of his government, but he clearly arrived in order to consult with leaders of the Czech national movement, to assess public opinion among the Czechs regarding recent events in Russia, and, finally, to report home to the Russian public about his findings.[12]

What were the recent events that so concerned Gil'ferding? And why did it matter what the Czechs thought about them? The 1850s represent a transformative decade in Russian history, marked not least by the death of Tsar Nicholas I in 1855. For many younger Russians, Nicholas stood for the ossification of their country under conservative rule.[13] A new generation of Russian nationalists combined liberal calls for reform—above all the abolition of serfdom and economic development—with demands for an aggressive and expansionist foreign policy. The disastrous outcome of the Crimean War, moreover, made the corruption of Nicholas's system all too apparent. Russia's relationship with the West came under fire from the reformers, who both decried the backwardness of their land and criticized Russian dependency on western powers. The West was no longer to provide a model for Russia's development, but instead the country

[9] Macura, *Znamení zrodu*, 39.
[10] About the word *Čechoslovan*, see Karel Havlíček Borovsky, "Čech a Slovan," in *Český liberalismus: Texty a osobnosti* edited by Milan Znoj, Jan Havránek, and Martin Sekera (Prague: Torst, 1995), 68-79, esp. 75.
[11] Most notably the Prague burgher and one-time emigrant Vojta Náprstek, who as a youth dreamed of founding an independent Czech state on the Korean peninsula. On Náprstek's Orientalism, see Julius Zeyer, *Vojta Náprstek: Přednáška Julia Zeyera k sedmdesátým jeho Narozeninám* (Prague: F. Šimáček, 1896); Čapek *Padesát let českého tisku v Americe*, 7-8. Stanislav Kodym, *Dum u Halánků* (Prague: Československý spisovatel, 1955), 30, 43; Zdeněk Šolle, *Vojta Náprstek a jeho doba* (Prague: Felis, 1994), 56, 58, 77, 98; Milena Secká, *Vojta Náprstek* (Prague: Národní Museum, 2011), 44, 55, 67, 110.
[12] Alexander Gil'ferding, "Mnenie zapadnykh slavian ob Amure i ego kolonizatsii," *Amur*, June 26, 1860.
[13] Riasanovsky, *Nicholas I and Official Nationality in Russia, 1825-1855* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969).

was to find its purpose by looking eastward, to its heartland in Siberia, to Asia, and through displays of leadership to the smaller Slavic peoples to the west.[14]

Gil'ferding's visit to Prague occurred amidst a surge of messianic conviction among the Russian intelligentsia, who claimed that Providence had assigned Russia the bold mission of leading her sister Slavic peoples to spread civilization and enlightenment across the Empire. Public opinion had most recently been preoccupied with news about the annexation of a little known chunk of Manchuria the year prior to Gil'ferding's journey. A "virtual *terra incognita*," the basin of the Amur and Usuri rivers along China's northern frontier came to exert a tremendous influence over Russian society between the mid-1840s and early 1860s. News in 1858 that China had been compelled to cede territory along the northern bank of the 1,800 mile long river convinced many that this was the moment for Russia to make good on the claims of Providence. In his essential history of the annexation, Mark Bassin shows how the ideological perceptions of the region—"geographical visions," he calls them—were shaped by questions of nationalism, social reform, and imperial expansion.[15] Due to the region's isolation from Europe and its potential for exoticization, the frontier between Siberia and Manchuria represented "the shell of a concept which could be loaded with those preoccupations that happened to be uppermost in the mind at the moment."[16] The word "Amur" came to be charged with beliefs, hopes, prejudices, and frustrations present in a rapidly changing Russia. "For one brief historical moment," Bassin explains, "an obscure region […] was able to attract the interest of the entire society, excite widespread enthusiasm, and even nourish the dreams of the country's most outstanding social and political visionaries."[17] Gil'ferding's visit to Prague was of this moment, and it was Czech enthusiasm of the Russian acquisition that he sought to measure.

It was a heady time in Austrian politics as well, one that provided much fodder for Gil'ferding's pen. A miserable showing by their military force in Italy in 1859 and ongoing economic troubles had brought the authoritarian Bach regime near collapse, and discontent among the previously docile middle classes was on the rise. Of course the author could not have foreseen the resignation of the Interior Minister and other high officials that would occur only months later, nor could he have foretold the consequences: a half-decade of constitutional experimentation, war with Prussia, and the eventual reorganization of the monarchy into Austrian and Hungarian halves. All concerned onlookers, however, recognized that one era neared its end and another, very different, order would take its place.

In this atmosphere of uncertainty and anticipation, Gil'ferding's arrival sparked the interest of Czech national leaders. It had been a little over ten years since Czech liberals hosted the Slav Congress in Prague, an event of little practical significance but with enduring symbolic resonance, and the Czechs welcomed their visitor with displays of Slavic reciprocity. The belief on the part of Czech liberals that social tensions could be resolved through a symbolic appeal to a shared Slavic identity survived the 1850s, even intensified during the decade of forced political quiescence.[18] Gil'ferding took particular interest in the question of mass emigration, for the Czechs alone among Slavic peoples were just then abandoning the homeland by the thousands. He knew also that the Czech national leadership struggled with the problem of mass emigration.

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[14] Riasanovsky, *Nicholas I and Official Nationality*, 137-138.
[15] Mark Bassin, *Imperial Visions: Nationalism and Geographical Imagination in the Russian Far East, 1840-1865* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).
[16] Bassin, *Imperial Visions*, 9.
[17] Bassin, *Imperial Visions*, 2.
[18] Stölzl, *Die Ära Bach in Böhmen*.

Was there not a way that this outflow of peasants and artisans, apparently unstoppable, could be turned to the advantage of Czechs and Russians alike?

In Bohemia, too, the Amur came to stand for the beliefs, hopes, prejudices, and frustrations of society. Not even in Russia, Gil'ferding claimed, did his country's expansion to the Pacific excite such enthusiasm. Amur euphoria, he reported, had spread to the Czechs, who "regard the annexation of the Amur not merely as a Russian but as a world event and an all-Slavic triumph. […] This acquisition, in their opinion, opens up the Pacific ocean—an ocean which previously was entirely in the hands of the Germanic tribe represented by the English and the North Americans—to the activities of the Slavs."[19] The extent to which Amur fever spread from Russia across the globe is remarkable, and for many outside of Russia news about the annexation of the river's north bank became infused with feelings of anxiety and excitement in the face of modernization, the spread of markets, questions of sovereignty and colonialism.[20] The Czechs were no exception, and they quickly tailored news of the annexation to fit local circumstances, investing the term "Amur" with the social and political tensions of the day—foremost among them the question of mass emigration.

Although we cannot listen to the conversations that Gil'ferding held with representatives of the Czech national movement, a brief glance at the period's journalism confirms that Russian expansion into the Orient made big news in the Bohemian lands. The German liberal *Nikolsburger Wochenschrift* in southern Moravia covered the story of Russia's annexation under the rubric *Weltschau*—"an overview, namely, of all those facts and events that let us recognize the movement and progress of world civilization."[21] Here the author, a certain Josef Schmidt, praised the opening of Chinese markets and spoke about the significance of a passageway connecting inner Siberia to the Pacific. Such a river, once made navigable, portended the ascent of the Russian Empire to a world power and promised a tremendous growth in world trade. Acquisition of the river valley furthermore opened the door to China's interior from the north, "the way travelled by all of China's conquerors." It was only a matter of time until a "Russian-Asiatic army" would march on Peking, at which point conflict with that other colonial power, the British, would become inevitable. Despite some ambivalence about what would be an "enormous world empire" (*ungeheueres Weltreich*), Russia appeared "called upon to become the civilizer of upper Asia." Russian national expansion was praised for its progressive character—furthering world trade, developing Siberia and China, spreading "European-Christian civilization"—yet the author insisted that Russia would only realize this mission only after undergoing a series of liberal reforms, above all the abolition of serfdom.

Each of these elements was to be found in the Czech-language coverage of Russian expansion into Asia as well, together with an added sense of shared Slavic mission. At the time of Gil'ferding's visit, Czech journals described Siberia as a slumbering giant, a forgotten territory populated by peoples without history. In an article from 1858, the *Časopis Musea království českého* (the Czech-language journal of the National Museum) likened Siberia to a "colossus up

[19] "Mnenie zapadnykh slavian," *Amur*. Cited with translation in Bassin, *Imperial Visions*, 179.
[20] Contemporary accounts include Perry McDonough Collins, *Siberian Journey down the Amur to the Pacific 1856-1857* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1962); S.S. Hill, *Travels in Siberia* Vol. 2 (London: Longman, 1854); Adolph Erman, *Travels in Siberia* Vol. 2, (Philadelphia: Lea and Blanchard, 1850); Georg Ernst Ravenstein, *The Russians on the Amur; It's Discovery, Conquest, and Colonization* (London: Trübner and Co., 1861), 113-160; 388-399.
[21] "Weltschau," *Nikolsburger Wochenschrift für landwirtschaftliche, gemeinnützige Interessen und Unterhaltung*, March 2, 1861.

till now lying in lethargy, whose pulse is weak and breathing heavy, but whose immense force of life is merely waiting to be awakened."[22] František Šimáček's weekly, *Posel z Prahy,* similarly claimed in 1860 that the "giant" (*velikán*), long preserved beneath ice and snow, was only now being discovered by Europe.[23] Russian Asia had been left to the listless and untamed peoples of the Steppes, the nomadic Kyrgyz, roving bands of Turkmen bandits, and shifty Mongolians. The Russian Cossack alone, reported the *Časopis,* represented civilization in these areas. *Posel z Prahy* had the dormant landscape populated with equally passive inhabitants; "The Mohammedan smoked leisurely, sipping at his coffee, the Turkoman chased across the wide steppes without a care […] the Chinaman serenely watched over his tea gardens." These observations of two leading Czech publications—one the oldest and most respected Czech-language scholarly journal and the other a central organ of the rural progressive movement—paint a generic picture of a lethargic and backward Orient; an East that is incapable of self improvement, one that contrasts with the initiative of western Slavs.

Asia represented Russia's natural frontier country, the journals explained, remaining in its original state of wilderness and untouched by culture. Described as *hnící* (in decay) under Manchurian rule, China could muster no opposition to Russian advancement.[24] Like other European powers, notably the British, Russia set out to transform her frontier into a national resource and to open Asia to world trade. It was an aim "no less praiseworthy than grand, and if Russia intends to be an apostle of progress in the Far East, every friend of mankind must wish him success in it."[25] Increased trade and the development of resources were not just admirable goals, they were imperatives; in the name of national interest Russia had been forced to void its 1689 treaty which had ceded the Amur river valley to the Manchu dynasty.[26] If Siberia is to become "that which it is determined by nature to be," insisted the article in *Posel*, "it needs a free Amur, it must be in Russian hands if those regions are really to have a better future, if a giant part of Siberia is to have any importance whatsoever!" That a region rich in resources and of such strategic importance to Russia should be left to nomadic tribes or that China should continue to close itself off to world trade simply ran against the principles of human progress. Gil'ferding's claim was not off the mark then; according to Czech public opinion, the annexation of the Amur represented a world event and all-Slavic triumph.

Let anyone think what they will about Russia's ambitions, concluded the *Časopis,* "these advancements of theirs in the East deserve in all truth the support of the civilized world; for they represent so many instances of civilization's victory over barbarism." The *Posel* warned, however, that this Slavic mission in the East would face certain opposition from other colonial powers in the region, leading Šimáček's paper to ask crossly if "it is perhaps to be left to the Romanic (sometimes Germanic?) Brits to play lordship throughout the world and to gather upon their island's limestone coast the treasures of all lands?" It was the British, that is, who "import opium, even with the force of bombardments," into the country so as to lord over the better half of *Kytaj* (the paper used the Russian word for China). To the Czech public, Russia was portrayed not only as a colonial power of European stature, one which like any other nation was obliged to pursue its national interest, but also as the Slavonic world power whose colonial interests were

[22] "Pokroky Rusů v Asii," *Časopis Musea království českého* 32, no. 2 (1858): 253-268. The article draws primarily from Thomas Witlam Atkinson's travelogue, *Seven Years in Western and Oriental Siberia* (London, 1857).
[23] "Rusové v Asii," *Posel z Prahy* 4, no. 1 (February 1860), 28-31.
[24] "Rusové v Asii," *Posel z Prahy*, 4, no. 1 (February 1860), 28.
[25] "Pokroky Rusů v Asii," *Časopis Musea království českého* 32, no. 2 (1858).
[26] "Pokroky Rusů v Asii," *Časopis Musea království českého* 32, no. 2 (1858), 266.

no less reputable (and likely much more so) than those of the Romano-Germanic imperialists. The Slavs, it was implied, deserve a place in the sun.

A Fate that Swallows Individuals, Families, Even Nations

The Bohemian press described a situation in which underdevelopment and closed markets blocked the progress of civilization. In this sense Russia's annexation of the Amur was praised from a liberal as well as pan-Slavic point of view. By connecting both liberalism and pan-Slavism to the issue of mass emigration, leading figures of the Czech national movement conceived a pioneering role for their own people on the expanding Russian frontier. According to Gil'ferding the bold idea came from the chairman of the Czech National Party himself, František Ladislav Rieger. At a meeting with the national leader, it was suggested that not Russians should settle the Amur, but rather Czechs! Rieger called attention to the perennial difficulty faced by Russia along its frontiers—the recruitment of qualified settlers. Russia lacked peasants with the capital and practical knowledge needed to develop a primitive country. To settle eastern Siberia with Russian subjects would mean to remove populations essential to other parts of the empire. Russia would therefore be forced to turn to the West for immigrant settlers. In the past it was German Central Europe that provided qualified workers to cultivate Russia's frontier lands. German-speaking islands dotted the landscape of western Volhynia, the Volga, and the foothills of the Caucasus. Although these settlements prospered, rarely did the skills and techniques they brought with them diffuse among the local population, and little wealth flowed into state coffers. Germans did not adopt local customs; they were a foreign people whose interests were distinct from Russia's.

If Moscow must turn to the West, the Czechs side argued, she should look instead toward the western Slavs. For almost a decade thousands of peasant and artisan families had been abandoning Bohemia and Moravia for distant lands—all of them qualified agriculturalists unable to make a living in their homeland. Why should the Russian government not work together with leaders of the Czech nation to redirect this emigration traffic from America to the underdeveloped parts of Russia? In contrast to Germans, these Czech farmers "look upon Russia as their native land and would travel to Russia more eagerly than anywhere else." "After one month," the Czechs were reported to have claimed, "the Czech, Moravian, Slovenian, and Slovak would be speaking Russian, and their children would be indistinguishable from the Russians."[27] It was an arrangement that would prove mutually beneficial; Russia could acquire settlers for its new territory and the Czech nation would be spared the loss of sons and daughters to a foreign people—the "Germanic tribe represented by the English and North Americans."

The proposal contained one important postscript: it was not Bohemia that was to provide the Czech settlers, but the United States. Men like Rieger, after all, could not be good patriots while at the same time supporting the emigration of Bohemian peasants. Yet their overseas countrymen, so Gil'ferding had the Czechs in Prague claim, "would eagerly leave the New World for the Amur and would bring with them their capital and their activity." Czechs abroad were lost among the "Yankee and Germanic mass" and worried about the assimilation of their children into a foreign culture. Clearly, Russia and the Amur would be chosen over America. The

[27] "Mnenie zapadnykh slavian," *Amur*.

experience of settling the American frontier, moreover, prepared these Czech settlers "for the struggle with wild, untouched Nature and with all the conditions of rudimentary colonization." No better candidate for the colonization of Asia could be found. All that was needed was to publicize the project in the Czech-American press, Gil'ferding suggesting papers in St. Louis, Racine, Chicago, and Cleveland.

The ostensible purpose of Gil'ferding's report was to describe the opinion of western Slavs about the Amur and its colonization (such was the title of his article), though he was in fact forwarding his own argument about what the region's future should look like. His wild exaggeration about the Czechs' love for Russia or the fantasy that settlers would gladly assimilate to Russian culture were intended to capture the attention of eastern Siberia's general-governor, Nikolai Nikolaevich Murav'ev.[28] If anyone could set Gil'ferding's proposal into action, it was the former war hero (the only Russian general to have won significant victories during the Crimean War), respected social reformer, and famous pan-Slav—"one of the most excellent men Russia has ever had," according to the *Časopis*.[29] It was Murav'ev who negotiated the Treaty of Aigun with China in 1858, after all, thereby winning new territory for his tsar and the title Count Amurskii for himself.

The plan to settle the Amur with western Slavs gained official support. As outlined by Murav'ev and approved by the new tsar, Alexander II, it foresaw the development of eastern Siberia at minimal cost to the state. The importation of western Slavs from North America and Central Europe figured centrally in the scheme. Newcomers were to be attracted by land grants, which would be assigned collectively to communities rather than to individuals, and it was expected that settlers would pay their own passage to Russia.[30] Each party of fifteen families would form a township and receive a land grant of one hundred desiatina (about 270 acres) in the form of homesteads that would belong to the township in perpetuity. Land taxes would be suspended for twenty years, settlers would be exempted from military service for the same period, and no one would ever be required to offer payment in kind to local landowners or the state. Land left uncultivated after five years would be returned to the government. A special agent was sent to America to agitate for the plan among Slavic immigrants there. It was a hopeful beginning for the project. Speaking before an imperial commission, the general-governor estimated that within two years some two hundred families would relocate from the United States to settle permanently in the Amur valley—and without any contribution from the Russian treasury.

As Gil'ferding had suggested, a dispatch was issued from St. Petersburg announcing the project to American readers. The "Proclamation of his Imperial Majesty the Autocrat of All Russians" was placed before the readers of Wisconsin's Czech-language weekly, the *Slowan Amerikánský* on the morning of May 23, 1861. It is difficult to say how working-class Czech immigrants in Wisconsin understood the Russian tsar's invitation to move to Outer Manchuria. Inserted into the newspaper as it was without any accompanying text or explanation, the proclamation left much to the imagination. When the paper merged later that year with its St. Louis rival, *Národní noviny*, to form the long-running daily *Slavie* based in Racine, articles

[28] Jaroslav Vaculík, *České menšiny v Evropě a ve světě* (Prague: Nakladatelství Libri, 2009), 188.
[29] "Pokroky Rusů v Asii," *Časopis Musea království českého* 32, no. 2 (1858), 265.
[30] Regarding the conditions of settlement and support offered by the Russian state, see "Kolonisaci Amurské a Usurijské krajiny," *Slowan Amerikánský*, May 23, 1861; "Americký časopis český," *Národní listy*, December 3, 1861; Vaculík, *České menšiny*, 188; Jaroslav Vaculík, *Češi v Cizině, 1850-1938* (Brno: Masarykova Univerzita, 2009), 106-107.

carrying the title "Colonization of the Amur and Usuri Governates" (*Kolonisace země Amurské i Usurské*) became a regular feature—and a public debate in the Czech press about the tsar's proposal ensued.

The editor of *Slavie*, an immigrant from Moravia named František Mráček, was impressed by the appeal to American Slavs and became colonization's most fervent advocate. Mráček was rumored to have served part of a twenty-year sentence for political agitation in Bohemia before emigrating in 1857, following his amnesty.[31] He organized a group of would-be ethnic leaders around the editorial board of *Slavie* in order to propagate settlement of the Amur. Among this coterie belonged Jan Bárta Letovský and Vojtěch Mašek. Bárta, familiar to us as a supporter of Alois Kareš's earlier scheme to concentrate Czech settlement in Iowa, was like Mráček a native of Moravia, a free-thinker, and Russophile. He belonged to the pioneer generation of Czech immigrants, having arrived with his family to the United States in 1854, and was an editor of *Slowan Amerikánský.* Vojtěch Mašek was born to a peasant family near Vodňany, in eastern Bohemia. After studying in Prague, Mašek became the Czech-language tutor of a visiting Russian prince named Malinovskij. Mašek's services were recommended to the prince, and in 1860 the tutor traveled with his patron to the United States in order to agitate for settlement of the Amur.[32] These three immigrants together with Malinovskij formed the backbone of American-Czech support for colonization.

"Why wouldn't we take up the offer," Mráček explained to his readers in an article about resettlement, "the plan is certainly beautiful and the idea to settle eastern Asia with Slavic people, so these might soon reach their hands to their western brothers and thereby give the Slavs a firm base in Asia, that idea is noble."[33] Support for the Amur project was motivated by a number of factors. As in Mráček's announcement here, most prominent among them was the rhetoric of pan-Slavism. This was the self-gratifying idea that American Czechs (as the westernmost of western Slavs) could become pioneers of Slavic expansion into Asia. In the world of print, which allowed for the temporary withdrawal from everyday cares into a world of fantasy, the author was able to imagine a place for his readers at the vanguard of world civilization.

Now and again the editor of *Slavie* returned to earth, as when he addressed readers' concerns about more practical matters. Who would pay travel expenses? What material support could new immigrants expect from the government? Would civil liberties be respected? The Russian agent, Malinovskij, provided no clear answer to these questions, but his evasiveness was overlooked in favor of the idea. Readers were assured that the tsar's government would supply newcomers with food and equipment. It was not a complete wilderness, any way; and even if resettlement in the backwoods of the Amur and Usuri required some hard work and sacrifice, all beginnings are difficult. Settlers would not be alone, estranged from each other as in America where individual ownership separated families, but settled collectively as was done in Russia, village style. From the village idyll the editor transitioned to the image of a frontier boomtown, goading his readers with visions of bustling seaports and busy cities that would arise from the virgin forest along the river. Mráček concluded with the encouraging slogan, "all for one and one for all!"

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[31] Thomas Čapek, *The Čechs (Bohemians) in America* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company,1969), 182-183; Tomáš Čapek, *Naše Amerika,* (Prague: Národní rada československá, 1926), 303.
[32] "Vynikající Čechové američtí," *Světozor*, June 19, 1885; "Vojtěch Mašek," *Květy Americké,* January 5, 1887.
[33] "Kolonisace země Amurské a Usurské," *Slavie*, November 13, 1861.

It was claimed that colonization had long been the wish "of many parties" in the American Slav community. It is true that some among the Czech immigrants, as was the case with many immigrant communities in the United States, sought to maintain group cohesion through social isolation. Like the Germans, Hungarians, Poles and others, those concerned about the loss of ethnic identity in the New World advocated concentrating settlement in some remote region of America.[34] The call to secondary migration, however, was unique both in scope and scale. Most visions of concentrated settlement had been limited to securing some territory or country in the American Union. Here the call was to transport an entire immigrant community across yet another sea; an ambitious vision of ethnic salvation on a global scale.

It was a daring project, Mráček conceded, but his people would not long survive in North America, for "we would definitely meet that fate which swallows up individuals, families, even nations and entire states, removes from them their customs, traditions and language and destroys the nation; such a surge of foreign elements in its midst cannot be resisted."[35] Enthusiasm for the civilizing mission was fueled by the fear of assimilation. It was an anxiety acutely felt by the editor an ethnic newspaper, whose physical and moral existence depended upon readers and subscribers who still felt more at home reading Czech. The medium itself, print, enabled the editor to tug at the heartstrings of distant, anonymous readers. With updates from sister Slavic communities in America or reports sent from the homeland, the writer could inspire a range of feelings from hope to homesickness. He won the gratitude of new arrivals with his practical advice and displayed his learning and social contacts. This all worked to established the newspaper editor's status an ethnic leader. Americanization of the younger generation threatened all of that.

Print also allowed both reader and writer momentarily to escape the daily cares of immigrant life and become players in the drama of social emancipation, national survival, and the march of progress. Without readers, the entire infrastructure upon which this dream-world rested would collapse. Mráček warned; "We see this estrangement from our nation—despite all efforts at home—already in our second, to say nothing of third generation, which is typically English."[36] Assimilation posed a threat to group cohesion and called into question the editor's claim to ethnic leadership. Greater insulation offered a remedy, although it seemed that even the rural environs of the American frontier proved insufficiently remote. Czechs in America needed to expand their horizon, Mráček argued, and seek refuge in the Russian Far East, for "who will spoil or deaden our mother tongue along the Usuri? Nobody, and that is why our national existence over there is assured."[37] Americanization represented an existential threat to the emerging ethnic community. The solution had to be just as far reaching. It was a role with which the political exiles were familiar, although in Bohemia it was Germanization against which they had directed their attacks. The battle against assimilation was for them an old-world struggle continued in a new setting.

Back in Prague, newspaper editors reacted to the tsar's appeal with greater ambivalence. Readers of *Národní listy* were informed early on about the Imperial proclamation, learning that

[34] Tomáš Čapek, *Naše Amerika,* 192-200.
[35]"Kolonisace země Amurské a Usurské," *Slavie*, November 13, 1861
[36] It is remarkable that the author referred to language, English, rather than national culture, American, as the threatening source of assimilation. Even in America—perhaps, especially in America—it seems that the Czechs remained a philological nation. "Kolonisace země Amurské a Usurské," *Slavie*, November 13, 1861.
[37]"Kolonisace země Amurské a Usurské," *Slavie*, November 13, 1861.

the 40,000 Czechs in America had been called upon to settle in eastern Siberia, that they would enjoy the right to self-rule there, be exempted from taxes and military services and all the rest.[38] It was with unease that Czech and German journalists in Bohemia noted rising numbers of emigrants bound for eastern Russia. Citing an article printed in the Catholic *Vaterland*, the *Národní listy* reported that a hundred families from southern Bohemia were preparing to depart for the Amur and warned of agents sent by foreign shipping companies prowling the region.[39] Another article let loose the usual tirade against these unscrupulous agents and gullible peasants, the former promising the latter everything under the sun only to get them to sell what little they owned and set out for the Amur. "Let anybody go anywhere among the lower class of the population," the author complained, "and he will hear nothing but talk of migration recounted with gusto. They would just love to be a part of that migration, if only they could find out with some certainty where that might actually be?"[40] It was a familiar tone adopted by liberals early on, one that rejected any notion of migration as a legitimate expression of social discontent and instead portrayed emigrants as the victims of foreign machinations and their own credulity.

The Czech liberal press distinguished between Bohemian Czech emigration to Russian Asia, which was condemned, and the secondary emigration of American compatriots, which they tolerated or even encouraged. This was the interpretation laid out in a front-page feature published in February 1862 titled, "On emigration from the homeland."[41] In the piece, which can be taken to stand for the Czech liberal viewpoint on the matter, the author tackled the conundrum of how, as a Slav, one could support colonization of the Amur while at the same opposing emigration as such. The issue was a pressing one, as more and more reports arrived of peasants abandoning the homeland for America or Russia. These sad developments, claimed the journalist, could be attributed to two primary factors: first, the very real poverty among rural people, their lack of sustenance, and a general dissatisfaction with "present conditions," and, secondly, the irresistible urge of the peasant to follow the example set by previous emigrants, tantalized all the more by the "enticing, all-promising and exaggerated" reports circulating through the countryside of easy wealth to be had in America.

Not only did emigration agents conduct their disreputable business in rural Bohemia, the Russians had sent an agent (Malinovskij) to the United States as well. Yet here the author adopted a different tone altogether. According to his estimate, there were then some seventy thousand Czechs living in the United States—and they were evidently not faring well. How else to explain the sudden popularity of this Amur business? Only a small fraction of immigrants in America are able to piece together a tolerable existence, he claimed, and the price of success is to sacrifice one's original heritage (*národnost*). Even the vast majority of the impoverished prove unable to preserve their language and national traditions in the long term. Choosing to express the idea as simile, the author likened the ethnic enclave to a small island in a sea of foreign peoples which cannot resist being swept into the American mainstream by the waves of assimilation. Practically every Czech who reaches the American shore, the author summarizes, "is lost for our nation."

Considering the inevitability of assimilation, so went the line of argument, it was appropriate to support the Russian plan to settle its new territory with American Czechs. After

[38]"Americký časopis český," *Národní listy*, December 3, 1861; "Rus," *Národní listy*, March 18, 1862.
[39]"Stěhování-se do Ruska," *Národní listy*, December 27, 1861.
[40]"Z Sudoměře u Mladé Boleslavi," *Národní listy*, April 14, 1862.
[41] "O vystěhování se z vlasti," *Národní listy*, February 15, 1862.

all, "having left their first homeland once already, they do not sin any more if they trade one foreign country for another." Not only was the secondary emigration of American Czechs forgivable, the colonization of the Amur was cause for celebration, since countless souls might thereby be rescued for the nation. The author saw a bright future awaiting the American Czechs in Russian Asia: "among nations less civilized and separated from them by an unpopulated expanse, the new community will preserve its original national character; it will remain a Czech settlement." Czech settlers would arrive with a higher civilization, become assimilators rather than be assimilated—and should they one day become Russians they would at least remain Slavs, which represented a step up from Americanization.[42]

Beyond these national advantages, the Amur governorate was said to offer a number of material benefits for the Czechs. Though still an undeveloped frontier left more or less in its natural state—"very few traces of civilization there" (*pramálo tam stop vzdělanosti*), says the author—the bountiful country could be subdued by "a diligent hand." Sounding much like a contemporary Chicago booster, or any American homesteader, the author in *Národní listy* pointed to the potential for shipping and trade; why, the settlement's natural setting alone practically guaranteed prosperity! To the south lay the vastness of China with untouched resources, the sea would connect the Czechs to the "intelligent and sophisticated" culture of the Japanese. "The experiences and knowledge acquired in intercourse with both of these nations would easily be shared with the learned world, thereby very well serving world enlightenment." Like the writers of the *Časopis* and *Posel*, the *Národní listy* also used the Amur's annexation to associate Czech national interests with world progress.

The calling to settle the Amur should be left to the American compatriot, who, the author noted, was uniquely suited to colonize Siberia. Having once made the long journey from Central Europe to North America, after all, the American Czech had already demonstrated his ability to master large expanses. Still more, he could draw from experiences gained in his original homeland as well as "in the dynamic school of American life."

Keeping with the national-liberal line described earlier, the author condemned emigration as such in no uncertain terms. Every Czech, "every head, every set of shoulders capable of work," who crossed the border of the Bohemian Kingdom with the intention never to return inflicted irreparable harm upon his nation. The strength of the nation, after all, lied in its numbers, and emigration reduced the collective body's capacity for work and decreased its prestige abroad. To be sure, the material situation of the Czech worker was found wanting. Taxes paid to Vienna rarely made their way back to Bohemia, the author complained, to the detriment of local infrastructure and schools. The worker seeking to improve his lot in life naturally looked for opportunity elsewhere and, if lacking patriotism, he might even try his luck abroad. The vast majority of emigrants, the writer however insisted, were not driven out of the homeland by poverty, but rather by a "miscellaneous, romantic desire for God knows what kind of brilliant future." The author made his case plain: "aside from the interest for personal gain there is also a duty to the nation from which they arose and to the land in which they were born. They should be aware that if not for an urgent and important cause, it is a sin permanently to abandon one's homeland and tear oneself from the midst of the nation to which they should be of service." This

[42] This line of thought was shared by Rieger, several years later, who when asked if he recommended North America or Russia as a destination for his countrymen replied, "Move to Russia. You will live in the midst of a Slavic nation and your children will not become estranged from the nation as would happen in America. If not Czechs, they will at least remain Slavs." Cited in S. Klíma, *Čechové a Slovaci za hranicemi* (Prague, 1925): 71.

line of thought revealed the deep distrust toward lower-class mobility in Czech patriotic society and, despite its talk of liberal values and individual freedoms, a claim to guardianship over working-class Czechs and Bohemian peasants.

Support for Czech settlement of the Amur was narrow. Only in a very qualified sense did Czech liberals in Bohemia support emigration to eastern Siberia: Czechs in America could do it, peasants and artisans in Bohemia were to stay put. Even if pan-Slavic calls to spread civilization to Asia consisted more of symbolism than substance, and despite the fact that support even among American Czechs did not reach far beyond the redaction of *Slavie,* the fantasy of Czech national expansion in Asia mattered. It mattered to the elite who sought to legitimize their claim to ethnic and national leadership by supporting the plan. Colonization of the Amur was advocated by scholars and reformers in Russia and the project enjoyed the support of the tsar himself, whose agent Malinovskij was in contact with representatives of the Czech national movement in Bohemia and the emerging elite of Czech ethnic society in America.[43] This was a network of pan-Slavs, liberals, emigrants, Orientalists, and ethno-cultural activists spread across the world, one that offered a bigger stage and a more dramatic backdrop for displays of leadership than local political compromise and everyday concerns. To take a position on the Amur meant to act in the global theater of colonial politics. Even if colonialism here never exceeded the level of rhetoric, it did provide the opportunity for emerging national elites in Bohemia as well as the budding ethnic leadership in America discursively to link their own convictions and personal ambitions to the national interest and the interest of civilization itself. When speaking about the Amur they positioned themselves as agents of progress acting in the name of the people.

Dream of the Amur

This is certainly how Mráček and Bárta conceived of their roles when they joined Malinovskij on his return journey to Russia. In the winter of 1861 the editors travelled from Racine to Prague, St. Petersburg, and further on to eastern Siberia to negotiate conditions for colonization and to see the future cradle of a new Czech homeland. In a series of farewell letters published in December that year addressed to the "esteemed," "beloved," and "dear" reading public, Mráček and Bárta explained to subscribers that they had accepted the invitation of "our zealous Slav" Malinovskij to act as ambassador of America's Czechs in St. Petersburg.[44] Because a "large part" of American Czechs supported the project, so Mráček claimed, he felt compelled to act in the interests of Slavic people and accept the offer. Bárta similarly spoke of his "national duty" (*národní povinnost*) to act "for our Slavonic future" (*pro naší slovanskou budoucnost*).[45] During their time away, editorship of the paper fell to their fellow enthusiast, Vojtěch Mašek.

[43] While visiting Prague in 1860 en route to America, Malinovskij is reported to have met with Náprstek and Rieger to discuss the plan. Secká, *Vojta Náprstek* (Prague: Národní Museum, 2011), 110. The assertion is corroborated by Mašek's biography in "Vynikající Čechové američtí," *Světozor*, June 19, 1885.
[44] "Mému váženému čtenářstvu," *Slavie*, December 4, 1861; "Milované čtenářstvo," *Slavie*, December 4, 1861; "Milé čtenářstvo," *Slavie*, December 11, 1861.
[45] "Milovani vlastenci, [*sic*]" *Slavie*, December 4, 1861.

Once in Russia, the two delegates claimed before a government commission that they represented one thousand American Czech families prepared to resettle permanently in the Russian Far East. The proposed secondary emigration was to occur in stages between 1864 and 1870. For the first three parties of settlers, the two delegates requested that the Russian government supply necessary provisions for a period of two years. Mráček and Bárta set further conditions on behalf of their countrymen regarding the size of allotments, funding for schools and churches, special exceptions to taxation and military service, the establishment of local militias for defense and degree of communal autonomy.[46] After hearing the Czech Americans' statements, the governor general in Irkutsk arranged for the establishment of a special panel to review the proposal. The reaction was positive, and it was recommended that a fund of 1,430,000 rubles be set aside for the project.[47]

At this point, the attitude of Czech-American ethnic leaders and representatives of the national movement in Bohemia began to part ways. To set out from Bohemia to the Amur would be "madness at the very least," declared the author in *Národní listy*.[48] This was also the view expressed in the pages of the popular weekly, *Humoristické listy* (The Humorous Pages), edited by Josef R. Vilímek, like Bárta an earlier associate of Alois Kareš. The take offered by the liberal political daily, *Národní listy,* was here repeated in tones of ridicule and satire.

The word "Amur" became associated in the pages of Vilímek's journal with the lamentable state of things in the homeland, as expressed in the formula—"things are bad, real bad; now's the time to pack up your things and head to the Amur."[49] The intention to emigrate was never presented as a well contemplated strategy to improve one's lot in life, but rather as another symptom of peasant imprudence. A mock classified advertisement provides a typical example of this patronizing distrust; "Someone born in Bohemia, now however set to emigrate to the Amur or Crimea, seeks an experienced companion—to talk him out of it."[50] Vilímek and his writers let loose their barbed witticisms and unflattering caricatures of the credulous Czech peasant.

Editors provided a remarkable amount of space to the Amur question in the February 1862 issue of the weekly. Opening the first page, one encountered the "Amur Melody," a parody of J.K. Tyl's hymn "Kde domov můj" (Where is my Homeland), at the time a sort of unofficial Czech national anthem.[51] The melody opened with the familiar refrain, posing the question *Kde domov můj?* before offering its reply, not with the expected description of Bohemia's rolling streams, whispering pine groves and flowering glades, but rather by stating,

> There's a farm in a quiet valley,
> once there, I get it for free,
> it's just for the taking
> and even a baked pheasant's awaiting;
> oh, that's the beautiful country,

[46] Vaculík, *České menšiny,* 189.
[47] Vaculík, *Češi v Cizině,* 107.
[48] "O vystěhování se z vlasti," *Národní listy*, February 12, 1861.
[49] In Czech, "*Už je zle, na cimprcampr zle; teď jen honem sebrat svých pět švestek a horem pádem na Amur*." "Politika u džbánku," *Humoristické listy*, IV, no. 20, 1862. See also "Bolestné rozjímání," *Humoristické listy*, July 26, 1862.
[50] *Humoristické listy*, June 28, 1862.
[51] "Melodie Amurské," *Humoristické listy* IV, no. 20, 1862.

in America, my homeland!

Tyl's song was often used as a vehicle for satire, sometimes caustic and sometimes merely humorous.[52] By inserting provocative or just plain silly lyrics into the canonical melody, the author signaled his critical stance to an issue of national significance. Even when explicitly ironic, as is here the case, the parody made its point: the emigrant shamelessly abandoned his homeland for false promises and with exaggerated expectations.

This familiar approach was repeated in the following stanza, this time in reference to a different would-be *domov*.

Where is my homeland?
In a land where things are cheap,
no work and enough cake to eat,
good tea, too, and caviar,
everything's for free, provided by the tsar;
oh, that's the beautiful country,
along the Amur, my homeland!

The tune continued on in the same spirit. Young men are discouraged from leaving for the Amur, for "the girls there aren't plump like at home, there one finds only a few old hags." Better to warm up with the grocer's daughter in the parlor at home than to freeze in the wilderness. The tsar's promises were recounted amidst talk of civilizing Asia and industrializing the Amur: rather than pay taxes, the settler will receive five servants; instead of potatoes, peasants may eat poppy seed cake. "Young men, don't go to the Amur," replied the author to such nonsense, "the patriots among us don't spurn the fatherland."

Turning the page, the reader found an illustration to accompany the tune. "The dream of an eager emigrant to the Amur," read the caption, below which was the drawing of a contented, chubby Czech peasant stretched out before a table decked with cured ham, beer, and caviar. A caricature Chinese man waits upon the blissful immigrant with a cup of tea, as a bearded Cossack kneels to light the man's pipe. Above the table is posted the tsar's proclamation, pledging; "no taxes, no surcharges, no levy, no premium, no billeting." (See figure 5.)

The liberal caricature would be incomplete without a portrayal of the emigrant's inevitable disillusionment. Directly below this happy depiction followed the sobering words, "and the reality." Here one encountered an altogether different picture; the same emigrant, now meager and malnourished, begs the Cossack for a bite to eat while the Chinaman thumbs his nose from across the river. The stingy Russian glares at the Czech as he points to a sign reading, "panhandling prohibited under penalty of banishment to Siberia." Of course, the peasant had already condemned himself to exile. The point of the joke was intended to be obvious: left to choose his own fate, the Czech emigrant proves incapable, being as foolhardy as he is ill-informed. Once again, the voice of Czech patriotic society admonished the Bohemian peasant: don't emigrate, but stay at home and earn an honest living!

In the end, liberal concerns about the mass emigration of Bohemian peasants to eastern Siberia proved unfounded. Despite efforts by some Czech-American ethnic leaders and the ink

[52] On *Kde domov můj* and its many interpretations see Šmejkal, *Píseň písní Národu Českého*; Součková, *Locus Amoenus—Místo Líbezné.*

spilled in the Bohemian Czech press, visions of a Czech colony prospering along the northern bank of the Amur River never materialized. In 1862, the Irkutsk panel approved the proposal handed over by the Czech-American "ambassadors" Bárta and Mráček and sent it on to a Siberian-wide commission for review.[53] The commission did not hurry its deliberations, however. Bárta returned to the United States while Mráček settled permanently in Odessa. Meanwhile the Civil War ran its course in the United States. One finds no evidence of popular support for secondary emigration among the Czechs in America (who could hardly be referred to as a coherent community at the time, anyway), and even those aspiring ethnic leaders most active in the plan became preoccupied with other matters. By 1865, the title of an article in Racine's *Slavie* reflected the lack of enthusiasm felt by many Czechs in America—"The Saga of the Russian Settlement: May He Who Wants to Be a Slave Go to Russian Amur."[54] Unconvinced of the tsar's altruistic motives, ethnic leaders shifted efforts to defending Czech-American interests in their new country and expanding the ethnic subculture.

Of more symbolic importance was the split that occurred between Czech national leaders and Russian intellectuals, and within the national movement itself, as a result of the January Uprising in Poland. The *Národní listy,* somewhat out of tune with the more conservative voices of Palacký and Rieger, strongly condemned Russian suppression of the revolt and came out in defense of Polish national interests. Officials in Russia feared that a Czech colony on the Amur might turn into another Poland.[55] Alexander Gil'ferding, whose article in the Irkutsk daily *Amur* had so forcefully argued for Czech settlement, published an open letter to the Czech National Party chairman, Rieger, in which he stated, "If the present voice of Czech journalism is truly the voice of the Czech public and the Czech nation, *then I would very much regret the participation* which I have accepted in this affair, *fearing for our state that a new Poland would arise on the Eastern Ocean.* Yet still I hope that you might provide me an answer refuting my fears."[56]

Gil'ferding never did receive a satisfactory reply from his colleague Rieger. Instead, editors printed his letter on the front page of *Národní listy* in six consecutive installments. The Polish uprising indicated more generally a crisis within Czech national leadership, which had once again to reconcile its pan-Slav rhetoric with principles of national self-determination and liberal freedoms. Replying on Rieger's behalf, the editors stated that "so far as the Czech colony in the Amur is concerned, we, too, are enthusiastic supporters of the idea," only a few sentences later to add that, given the possibility of the Czech Amur turning into a new Poland, where the rights of Czechs would be trampled just like those of Poles, "we would of course with all our might have to resist a Czech colony in the Amur."[57] With that last spurt of polemics, talk of the Amur plan disappeared from the Bohemian Czech press. In Russia, the commission of ministers who finally convened in May 1865 to discuss the Irkutsk panel's recommendations sidelined the project "for a more convenient time." A more convenient time, needless to say, never arrived.

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[53] Vaculík, *Češi v Cizině,* 106-107.

[54] "Báj o ruské osadě: Kdo chce být otrokem, ať jde na Ruský Amur," *Slavie,* August 11, 1865.

[55] Admiral Kozakevič, general-governor of the Primorskaya Governate, spoke out against the project, viewing American Czechs an inconvenience or even subversive element. Vaculík, *České menšiny,* 190.

[56] Emphasis in the original. "Psání Hilferdingovo k Dru Riegrovi o polsko-ruské otázce", *Národní listy,* 25 June 1863. The Russian text of Gil'ferding's letter in "Pis'mo k G. Rigeru o Russko-Pol'skikh delakh," in *Sobranie Sochinenii A. Gil'ferdinga* Vol. 2, 277-288 (St. Petersburg: V. Golovin, 1868).

[57] "Psaní Hilferdingovo k Dru Riegrovi o polsko-ruské otázce,", *Národní listy*, 25 June 1863.

And that was the end of the "bold, albeit delusional idea to move Czechs from the American prairie to Asian Russia."[58]

* * *

However bold and delusional, Czech politicians and ethnic leaders combined Orientalism, pan-Slavism, and liberal politics in such a way that reconciled patriotism with the question of mass emigration. Colonization remained an idea, a vision, and part of that dream-world characterizing the national movement as it emerged from a decade of neoabsolutism. Upon the threshold of the constitutional era in Austria, as Czech dreams of grandeur abroad were celebrated, mocked, and debated, the language of colonization would shape subsequent developments in fundamental ways.

First of all, the Amur plan represented a coordinated effort that was global in scale, linking together representatives of the Czech national movement in Bohemia with Russian government officials and a rising ethnic leadership of Czech immigrants in the United States. It thereby initiated the practice of fostering a specifically Czech "foreign policy" and a virtual national representation abroad, a tradition that would ultimately figure in the establishment of an independent Czechoslovakia in 1918. It was also an early attempt to use mass emigration and the image of Czechs abroad to score political points at home. On the one hand, the emigration question offered a means of criticizing Austrian neglect of Bohemian development, a line of critique that would inform the movement for increased provincial autonomy after 1867. On the other hand, debate about the Amur provided the national elite, in the United States as in Bohemia, an opportunity to exercise leadership. Orientalist discourse worked to legitimize authority in the process of group formation and establish relationships of representation. Finally, public debate about Czech colonization of the Amur enabled writers and readers to imagine their nation as a carrier of civilization to backward parts of the world. This served, in part, to compensate for a sense of smallness and powerlessness at home (whether in Austria or America), showing that Czechs were every bit as cultivated as their German or Anglo-American neighbors. Indeed, in many ways Czechs were portrayed as the *better* colonists. It also placed the Czechs—a small, landlocked people without a state—in the context of what was conceptualized as a shared European colonial project. This integration of the Czech national narrative into wider discourses about imperialism only began with the Amur question. Empire, as a practice and a style of thought, would continue to inform liberal debates about mass emigration and nation building up to, and beyond, the First World War.

[58] As Tomáš Čapek later characterized the project in *Padesát let českého tisku v Americe,* 7-8.

Chapter Five

California in the Caucasus: On the Czech Civilizing Mission

"There is no sadder sight on the streets of Prague than several wagonloads of Czech emigrants approaching the train station,"[1] reflected an author in the important Czech weekly, *Květy.* Writing in August 1867, the contributor to the illustrated journal expressed a sentiment increasingly common during those summer months. The world economic crisis ten years earlier had brought the first wave of mass emigration to an end. Civil war in the United States during the first half of the 1860s discouraged would-be emigrants from moving to the country. While in 1854, at the height of the first wave, well over six thousand people left Bohemia, between 1858 and 1864 the number of those officially reported to have emigrated never exceeded two thousand (see tables 1 and 2). Soon thereafter however numbers of Czech-speaking peasants and artisans abandoning their homeland once more began to rise. From just under two thousand emigrants in 1864, Austrian statistics recorded over three thousand two years later and a dramatic 7,430 in 1867 (see table 2). The gross underestimation of Austrian statistics has already been noted, but the trend was apparent to all: mass emigration had returned.[2]

Czech patriots took this increased mobility as "a dangerous sign," a symbol of the deeper disorder affecting the Habsburg Monarchy.[3] Reviving language from the previous decade, journalists in the spring of 1867 deplored the "downright mania" overtaking Bohemia's rural population. "In a word," said one, "this pathological desire to emigrate has ceased to be local and now penetrates every layer of the lower classes, especially the country folk, and as such it deserves the attention of patriotic journalism."[4] Again, newspapers reported that the better part of entire villages disappeared over night, blaming hunger and lack of faith in a better future for the exodus.[5] That traditional scapegoat, the unscrupulous agent of foreign shipping companies, once again received opprobrium for luring credulous Czech peasants across the ocean.[6]

To better illustrate this pessimistic vision, *Květy* published an engraving of "Emigrants to America," eighteen worn-looking souls camped out on the steps of Prague's central railway terminal (see figure 6). Barefoot children lounge, exhausted and hungry. A woman strains beneath her heavy load while another cared for the infant in her arms. A third female figure stares into the distance with an expression that might be interpreted as either resentment or

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[1] "Vystěhovalci do Ameriky," *Květy*, August 15, 1867.

[2] The disparity between the numbers recorded by Austrian officials and those reported by the port-cities of Bremen and Hamburg make this clear. Whereas Austrian numbers record fewer than 4,000 departures for 1866, port authorities recorded the passage of 8,154 emigrants from Austria-Hungary. Numbers from Bremen and Hamburg remained high in the following years: 17,852 for 1867, 8,108 for 1868, 8,528 for 1869, and 8,884 for 1870, 9,500 for 1871, 9,498 for 1872, and 11,228 for 1873. Emigration from the Hungarian half of the monarchy was still negligible, and some 70% of the emigrants hailed from Czech-speaking regions of Bohemia (see table 2). Buzek, "Das Auswanderungsproblem," 448-449.

[3] "Nebezpečné znamení," *Národní noviny*, May 12, 1867.

[4] "Nebezpečné znamení," *Nároní noviny.*

[5] "O přičinách stěhování se lidu českého do Ameriky," *Národní noviny*, May 15, 1867.

[6] "Stěhování se lidu českého do Ameriky," *Národní noviny*, May 23, 1867.

resolve. An elderly man enjoins his fatigued wife, the family's grandmother, to take what appears her last sip of water. Two male figures dominate the picture's center: one stands upright smoking his pipe leisurely (the emigration agent, to be sure), looking down upon the central, forlorn figure. This is the father, the party's "leader," and his posture expresses unambiguous despair. "On his face," explained *Květy*;

> you read the terrible resignation with which he has resolved to abandon his home, his livelihood, and to lead his family toward an unknown fate. On his face are answered all the questions put to him by his wife, relatives, and acquaintances who warned him not to take this step. But the family drama has been played out to its end on Bohemian soil; there is no return: the property has been sold, he has bid his hamlet farewell, and he has already become drunk from the deceiving sight of a distant new homeland.[7]

The tropes corresponded to those propagated in the Czech press a decade earlier; an impetuous rural Czech against all reason leads his family to ruin. Alongside this Barnabáš figure, of course, belonged a Voršila, his sensible wife who, though unconvinced by her husband's enthusiasm, eventually gave way to the man's persistence. "On the mother," the commentary described the figure,

> one sees the painful struggle prior to being overpowered by her husband's persuasion, and perhaps also by necessity, to deny everything tied to her heart, her soul, her life. Her household was humble, simple; but force of habit bound her to it and her heart and soul had set deep roots. Now those roots have been upturned and after them withers everything, everything that she once planted with care and hope. Terrible is that vastness into which she now journeys, terrible is the uncertainty to which she entrusts her fate.[8]

The language used to describe the emigrant party might have been pulled straight out of a paper from the previous decade: the patriot's conservative opposition to the hasty decisions of his lower-class compatriot who, despite the warnings of his peers, recklessly trades in a modest but solid living off the land for intangible visions of prosperity across the seas. *Domov*, "the homeland," stood for tradition, habits that bind, and deep roots. That contrasted with the terrible uncertainty and terrible vastness of the abroad, *cizina.*

The persistence of this conservative patriotic rhetoric signaled continuity between the two waves of mass emigration from the Bohemian lands. Social and geographical factors also remained constant: the majority of those leaving continued to settle in the United States, ethnically Czech regions still proved disproportionately susceptible to emigration, and emigrants hailed from the downwardly-mobile middle strata of Czech society.[9] The context in which the two waves occurred, however, differed dramatically. The ten years between 1857 and 1867 (the end of the first peak and the beginning of the second) witnessed a profound transformation in Austrian political culture. Neoabsolutism collapsed in 1859, succeeded by an era of constitutional experimentation after 1861. In December 1867 rule of law replaced autocracy and

[7] "Vystěhovalci do Ameriky," *Květy*, August 15, 1867.
[8] "Vystěhovalci do Ameriky," *Květy*.
[9] The literature on the second wave of mass emigration from Bohemia is sparse. For a general overview, refer to Polišenský, *Úvod do studia vystěhovalectví*; Kořalka and Kořalková, "Basic features of Mass Emigration from the Czech Lands," 502-525.

a liberal constitution secured basic civil rights for the population, including the right to emigrate. Austria's status as a great power in Central Europe diminished following its loss to Prussian armies in 1866. As a result of defeat, the Hungarian nobility forced the Austrian government to a compromise, resulting in the formation of a dual Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. These transformative events separated the emigration debate of the 1850s, which was literary in character, from the openly political engagement with mass emigration in the late 1860s and early 1870s. This chapter examines the emigration question in the age of mass national agitation, showing how calls for increased autonomy within the Empire, the so-called State Rights program, drew from a discourse about civilization. Mass emigration provided representatives of the Czech national movement with a vocabulary capable of justifying liberal hegemony.

The (Mass) Politics of Mass Emigration

Along with parliamentary life in the Habsburg Empire came political parties, polemics in the daily press, and the activities of public associations. A political landscape had already crystallized in the first years of the decade. The conservative majority of large landholders, enjoying the benefits of a curial system, favored regional autonomy, preservation of the hierarchical social order, and the most limited suffrage possible. Opposite the conservatives stood the liberals, who advocated representative institutions and a strong, centralist state capable of putting reforms into place. The Czech liberals occupied a position between these two camps. As the first issue of the Czech political daily *Národní listy* explained on January 1, 1861, the National Party took the reforms of the 1860s as its starting point. As liberals, the Czechs supported the rule of law and regarded the state as guarantor of civic freedoms (of assembly, religion, and speech). Free enterprise was their natural habitat. They favored universal education, popular enlightenment, and celebrated individual initiative over born privilege. What set the Czechs apart from the Austrian German liberals was their demand for equality among national groups, a vociferous loyalty to the Crown, and above all the vision of a federalized Austria based on the principle of historical state rights. Like the German liberals, the Czechs objected to exclusive election laws and advocated a moderately expanded franchise. In practice, however, they aligned themselves with the conservative landowners, who also pursued greater autonomy for the Bohemian Lands. Federalism belonged at the center of what was called the State Rights program, the centerpiece of Czech liberal politics that included a call for voting reform and parity for the Czech language in the Bohemian Lands.[10]

After a decade of neoabsolutism and forced political silence following the June uprisings, Czech patriots in the 1860s began to experiment with various popular modes of communicating the national idea to the broad masses. The period from the first moves to constitutional reform in 1861 to the finalization of the monarchy's constitutional basis in 1873 represented a time of experimentation, symbolism, and visceral politics. The patriotic gymnastics association Sokol, founded in 1862, signaled the first attempt to involve a wider audience in the national

[10] The classic expressions of Czech liberalism include Ladislav František Rieger's editorial in the first issue of *Národní listy* (1861) and František Palacký's essay, "Idea státu Rakouského," published in the journal *Národ* (1865). Both reprinted in *Český liberalismus: Texty a osobnosti*, edited by Milan Znoj, Jan Havránek, and Martin Sekera (Prague: Torst, 1995), 48-67; 162-169

franchise.[11] Unlike the literary atmosphere of the salon culture through which the national idea had earlier been formulated, the Sokol enabled a wider spectrum of Czech society to show its patriotism not in words, but in physical prowess. Sokol made its national philosophy comprehensible to the masses through a wealth of symbols, slogans, and rituals. Regular social activities and patriotic gatherings culminated in grand gymnastic performances during which hundreds, sometimes thousands, of uniformed members engaged in meticulously synchronized calisthenics before a mass of spectators. Recalling the memory of the Bohemian religious martyr burned at the stake in 1415, Jan Hus, and the infamous one-eyed leader of the fifteenth century peasant armies Jan Žižka, an early Sokol motto encouraged its members to "live like Žižka, die like Hus!" The patriotic greeting that quickly became ubiquitous and is still commonly used today, "*Na zdar!*" (to success), was made popular by Sokol members in their drive to raise funds for the construction of the National Theater during the 1860s. In less than ten years, the association boasted a membership of 10,500 able-bodied patriots organized into ninety-six local chapters across the Bohemian Lands. Consisting mostly of artisans, tradesmen, and students, the organization proved an effective means of enlisting popular support for the national project.

The Sokol was only the first of several moves in the 1860s to translate the arcane language of the early National Revival into an idiom of popularly intelligible signs. An equally dramatic means of spreading the national gospel were the so-called *tábory* (encampments), massive open-air gatherings organized by the more radical wing of the Czech national movement. The *meetingy*, as they were original called after the Irish model,[12] were first called together in protest of taxes that had been passed without the assent of the Bohemian Diet—"about us without us," was how the demonstrators characterized government action in Vienna. Participants demanded new elections to the Bohemian Diet under expanded franchise and a constitution for the Bohemian Kingdom.[13] The first of these demonstrations combined national mythology with political demands by selecting as its site the legendary mountain Říp. It was from there that the fabled Forefather Čech was said to have presented the new homeland to his wandering people. Beginning with the "hot summer" of 1868 and continuing to 1871, the tábor movement enabled large audiences to lend support to Czech national initiatives, above all the State Rights program. Just as the Sokol enabled members to express solidarity through physical movement rather than erudition, participants in the tábory signaled their commitment not in skillful argumentation (that was left to the professional politicians), but rather through the sheer numbers of those present.

A third and equally important development in the popularization of the national idea through simplification of the message was the spread of amateur theaters, singing societies and various cultural associations during the decade. The rise of the singing society Hlahol (meaning clamor, noise, or peal, and, going back to Old Church Slavonic, also word, matter, or voice), perhaps the most celebrated of all the societies to emerge in the 1860s, initiated what Peter Bugge called "a decade of song." The motto of this organization, "Through song to the heart and through the heart to the homeland," revealed a turn away from intellect toward emotion as a

[11] Bugge, "Czech Nation-Building," 120-129; Claire Nolte, *The Sokol in the Czech Lands to 1914: Training for the Nation* (New York: Palgrave, 2002).
[12] The meetings were later renaimed *tábory* at the suggestion of historian Jaroslav Goll, who referred to the meeting of Hussites on the mountain Tábor in southern Bohemia. Urban, *Die tschechische Gesellschaft*, 337. On the movement as a whole, see Jaroslav Purš, *Tábory v českých zemích 1868-1871* (Prague: ČSAV, 1958).
[13] Urban, *Die tschechische Gesellschaft*, 337.

channel of communication.[14] By this time the path to "the homeland" was marked not by grammar books, translation dictionaries, and multiple-volume histories as in the early Revival (the intellect), but by a freer language of sounds, symbols, and slogans (the heart). It was now possible for a member of any social class to express himself in the national mode not through words of his own, but through the melodies of patriotic songs that were composed and popularized during this period.

The rise of the Sokol, the singing societies, and increasingly popular associational life coincided with a taste for mass celebrations of national identity during the decade. By far the greatest of these spectacles was the ceremonial laying of the foundation stone for the Czech National Theater in May 1868. Historian František Palacký, the "father of the nation," acted as chairman at a meeting held in 1850 to discuss the idea of a national theater. Spanning forty-five years from the idea's conception to the final completion in 1885 of what Palacký called a "school of life and morals," the movement to build a national theater illustrates the evolution of Czech national ideology.[15] At the ceremony in which the foundation stone was formally laid, the coordinators of the event displayed a mastery of the emotive and spectacular tropes that distinguished the 1860s. The event synthesized the popular elements of song, spectacle, and discipline that distinguished the Hlahol, tábory, and Sokol. The ceremony culminated in the coronation procession of a medieval Czech king, and all was done to make the massive procession representative of the entire nation. The corner stone of the building was cut from the fabled mountain Říp and bore an inscription recalling the mythical Ur-father Čech:

> From Říp Čech took his home,
> on the White Mountain he expired,
> in Mother Prague he arose
> from the dead.

Additional stones were sent to Prague from historic places in Bohemia and Moravia (as well as one from Czech compatriots in Chicago), and Palacký officiated the laying of the stone, which was set in mortar prepared with water from a well associated with St. Cyril. Three thousand students, including guests from other Slavic nations, and fifteen hundred uniformed Sokol members took part and choral groups sang hymns to the homeland. An estimated sixty thousand people came from various reaches of Moravia and Silesia, rural Bohemia, and abroad to take in the sight.[16]

This was the sort of mass participation about which patriots a generation earlier could have only dreamed. The failed revolution of 1848 exposed the social isolation of Czech liberalism and the limited reach of their national message. During the politically silent 1850s, the national movement found a social base in the Czech-speaking petty bourgeoisie, who through campaigns of rural enlightenment and ethnic solidarity laid the basis for the national politics of

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[14] Bugge, "Czech Nation-Building," 120-129.

[15] Stanley Kimball, *Czech Nationalism: A Study of the National Theater Movement, 1845-1883* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1964).

[16] The main corner stone of the building was cut from the fabled mountain Říp and bore an inscription recalling the mythical Ur-father Čech; "From Říp Čech took his home,/ on the White Mountain he expired,/ in Mother Prague he arose/ from the dead." Additional corner stones were sent to Prague from historic places in Bohemia and Moravia (as well as from Czech compatriots in Chicago), and Palacký officiated the laying of the stone, which was set in mortar prepared with water from a well associated with St. Cyril.

the 1860s. Now, Czech leaders clearly demonstrated their ability to incorporate the broad masses into political spectacle. In the context of this new politics—spectacular, visceral, and accessible to the masses—emigration became a question.

A tábor meeting staged in Kyšice, a west Bohemian village near Pilsen, illustrates the point. There, in the summer of 1869, some twenty thousand patriots gathered to address the question, "why our people is migrating in such great numbers from Bohemia, and what can be done to stop it!"[17] This giant demonstration in support of the National Party and its program of state rights—one of the tábory that since the previous summer had mobilized hundreds of thousands—perfectly exemplified the new politics of the 1860s. The meeting was characterized by ceremony and celebration with parades, music, and maidens breaking bread. Among the most numerous contingents were members of the Sokol from nearby Rokycany and Pilsen (organizers were just as concerned to avoid fighting among competing bands as they were in promoting their anti-emigration message). To be sure, many at the event had come more for the drink and dance than tor the stump speeches and passing of resolutions. In the new politics of the 1860s, however, instruction and entertainment could no longer be separated.

Recognizable at the Kyšice rally were the elements of the emigration question inherited from the previous decade. Foreign agents were rebuked and peasants admonished to stay home. Speakers called for a more concentrated effort to enlighten the masses and spread patriotic feeling. "He who is full of genuine love for the fatherland will not leave it," commented the first speaker. "But it is different for he who has not come to know that noble patriotic feeling, to whom one country is the same as any other, who wanders about the world without, so to speak, mother homeland and," he continued, echoing the blacksmith Závora's words to Šimon.[18] What does it reveal that a country is so readily abandoned by its sons and daughters? "It says that in such a land there must be many who are discontented, many who have not been awakened, and many who have been seduced."[19] This was the stuff of the emigrant narrative.

New, on the other hand, was the open discussion of social tensions and a readiness to lay blame on policies of the Austrian state. Workers left the homeland for poor wages, scholars because of lack of remuneration for ideas, and peasants because of high taxes. "Everything that supports scarcity is a cause of emigration," explained another speaker, "as is every obstacle to the spirit of enterprise, to credit, everything that destroys capital and supports national indifference and obscurity."[20] The speaker, František Ladislav Chleborád, a founder of the Czech cooperative movement and early labor leader, expressed concerns about which local authorities had long grumbled. Only now they could be discussed openly. Inflation after the war of 1866 hurt local consumers and exacerbated already existing stresses of indebtedness and unemployment. Chleborád worked for the reconciliation of labor and capital within the national community. In his writings for the newspaper *Dělník* (The Worker) and as chair of the first consumers' cooperative, Oul (Beehive), Chleborád emphasized the importance of worker self-help, but stressed also the necessary guidance of national leadership. "Leave the work to achieve political power to those men whom the confidence of our nation has authorized to shape your fortunes as well," he wrote in a programmatic article early in 1868.

[17] "Tábor lidu," *Plzeňský noviny,* June 30, 1869.
[18] "Tábor lidu," *Národní listy*, June 28, 1869.
[19] "Tábor lidu," *Národní listy*, June 28, 1869.
[20] "Tábor lidu," *Národní listy*, June 29, 1869.

> Be without concern that they will forget you or could undertake something directed against your interests. Answer the question yourself, whether the men fighting for the interests of our nation do not at the same time act to your advantage as well? […]
> In the present situation, the fight to expand your political power would be an untimely battle. To want to storm the representatives of our people with your demands now would be like demanding an architect begin with the ceiling. So long as we have not yet contended successfully for the foundation of our nation's prosperity, you will have share the confidence that the entire nation has placed in the approved men, who in the highest degree deserve this confidence. You must leave the decision to them, when and by what means your situation is to be improved […]."[21]

Under Chleborád's leadership, working-class Czechs were incorporated into national rituals without being given a voice of their own. Czech labor was to support Czech capital, and the holders of the latter to guide the former into political maturity. Chleborád's star began to fade in the mid-1870s, as workers began to develop their own associations, organs, and an awareness of their place in society.[22]

Again and again, speakers at the tábor in Kyšice referred to the "duty of the state," which consisted in providing Bohemia with the power to address its own problems. This was taken as a pressing concern. One who truly loved the fatherland would not abandon it, and "would be even less likely to leave it when that fatherland—just like ours—finds itself amid the most critical struggle for its future."[23] The speaker alluded to the fight against Dualism. "Shall this country," he continued, referring to the Lands of the Bohemian Crown, "obtain what it so heartily demands, autonomy and self-rule (Excellent! Hurray!), shall we be capable of caring for ourselves, what shall we then become? (Happy people!)" The remedy for mass emigration was to be located not just in patriotic admonition, but also in *samospráva,* or autonomy within the Habsburg Empire "like that enjoyed by the Hungarians." State rights, another speaker argued, would provide Czechs the means to care for their own, secure livelihoods, to establish schools, and ensure that teachers received adequate remuneration.[24] Federalism, it was argued, would provide Czechs the tools to solve the social issues underlying mass emigration once and for all.

The emigrant narrative of the 1850s operated on a contrast between the "good Czech" (honest, hard-working, tied to the land) and the wandering foreigner, be it Gypsy, Jew, or American Indian. Now politicized, the categories of *my*, "us," (ethnic Czechs) and the vaguely

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[21] Cited by Cyril Horáček, *Počátky českého dělnického hnutí* (Prague: Nákl. České akademie věd a umění, 1933), 42. On Chleborád's views at the time, see his writings *Soustava národního hospodářství politického* (Prague, 1869) and *Hospodářství vlastenské* (Prague, 1869).

[22] Urban, *Die tschechische Gesellschaft,* 392-395.

[23] "Tábor lidu," *Národní listy,* June 28, 1869.

[24] The speaker explained, "So that teachers of the people are not paid worse than common laborers [*postuchové*] or stokers in the factories." ("Tábor lidu," *Národni listy,* June 29, 1869.) Back in 1851, the Prague police director Sacher-Masoch reported in a letter to the Interior Minister Bach that, "the village school teacher, in his struggle with hardship and distress, is almost everywhere in the Czech parts of the province hostile to the government since leaders of the oppositional party […] have always preached to the village teachers that they are victims of the greatest injustices and can only expect something from a change of government form." (Sacher-Masoch to Bach, September 5, 1851.) Stölzl comments that teachers, together with other state employees on fixed incomes, suffered from declining social status and wage inflation during the 1850s, which made them more susceptable to nationalist appeals (i.e. blaming Germans in Vienna for Czech troubles at home). One thinks here of Isidor's complaints in Tyl's play. Stölzl, *Die Ära Bach in Böhmen,* 112-119.

defined *cizinec*, "foreigner," took on a new valence. "Citizens," asked the speaker to the audience, "look at this beautiful Bohemian land, at your feet lie fertile fields, rich pastures, can America provide a man with more beauty, more wealth? (It cannot!)" But when a Czech abandons his homeland, "he leaves it to the foreigner. He is not a sincere patriot, but merely a tenant."[25] If only Czechs were afforded self-rule, the speaker insisted, Bohemia could become a new America. This was the essence of the State Rights program. But the politics rested upon a vision of the true Czech. What would happen if everyone thought like the emigrant and placed personal gain before the collective good? In such a case Bohemia would become "a nest of foreigners, who would be able to create America for themselves, to do something that the Czechs were unable to do in their own country." The exact identity of these foreigners was left unclear. The obvious reference would have been Bohemian Germans, a group with whom Czech activists came into conflict especially over the issue language reform. The word might also have referred to Viennese bureaucrats, the original targets of the tábor movement. Invisible market forces, German capital, and the Jew, each of which found expression in the figure of the unscrupulous emigration agent, also represented foreignness. Finally, one cannot ignore the "false Czech," the ludicrous Kapoun of Tyl's play, who was a foreigner in his own land—the nationally indifferent Czech of the 1860s.

Věrný (true, faithful) and *upřímný* (sincere) Czechs worked for the good of the fatherland at home by actively supporting the political agenda of the Czech liberal National Party. Participants confirmed this at the end of every tábor meeting with the collective adoption of resolutions. When concluding the gathering at Kyšice in June 1869, for example, the twenty-thousand-strong crowd officially declared mass emigration to be a "malady" that "destroys our strength and the wealth of the nation." They attributed emigration to "the lack of enlightenment and patriotic feeling" among the masses, as well as to a lack of reliable information about conditions overseas. They advocated "the spread of national consciousness and ardent patriotism," reliable information about conditions abroad, and called upon their countrymen to support the "patriotic endeavors of the Czechoslav nation."

Considering, finally, that "the experience of other countries has shown the only means of raising national prosperity to be civil self-government spread as much as possible to all the life of state, yes seeing in self-rule a magical power by means of which the Bohemian Kingdom […] could be transformed into a second America," the tábor resolved to organize associations of Czechs in America, to continue the fight for state rights, and to support "patriotic industry" in the Bohemian Lands.

In the rhetoric of the day's speeches and in the language of its resolution, the tábor in Kyšice demonstrated the place of the emigration question in the new politics after 1867. The emigrant narrative appeared during the non-political 1850s as a literary device that made lower-class mobility meaningful for the patriotic community. Back then, the failure of the Habsburg state to address the problem in an adequate way opened the door to Czech activists, who quickly turned emigration into a question of national rights. The exodus of tens of thousands of Czech-speaking peasants, farmers, and artisans at a time when patriots dedicated their efforts to a project of mass national agitation ensured that emigration would become a contentious issue.

The emigrant narrative became the emigration question once cultural tropes were inserted into the realm of mass politics. What remained was the conviction that Czechs were disproportionally affected by emigration; that the fight against emigration was the fight against

[25] "Tábor lidu," *Národní listy*, June 28, 1869.

national indifference, on the one hand, and government-led efforts at Germanization on the other. The emigrant narrative persisted, but its scope was expanded and the stakes were raised. No longer limited to a moralistic appeal to individual conscience, national activists identified the social causes of mass emigration and claimed that federalization of the Empire, or Czech home-rule, was the only solution.

A Pilgrimage to Moscow

Passive resistance began on a Monday in late May, shortly after 8pm—St. Petersburg time, that is. On that day, May 20, 1867, the leading members of the Czech National Party stepped out of a train and onto the railway platform in Russia's imperial capital. Rather than attend the opening debates of the Reichstag in Vienna, scheduled for that very day, Palacký, Rieger, Brauner and other prominent Czechs traveled to Russia to participate in a festive gathering in Moscow. They traveled together with several dozen other Slavic visitors from Europe. All men of influence, dignitaries, ministers, academics, priests, artists and the like, the pilgrims arrived in St. Petersburg en route to Moscow, where they were to be guests of honor at the All-Russian Ethnographic Exhibition and Slavic Congress. Both had been organized by burgher associations, national circles, and voluntary societies in Russia, tolerated by the state. For nationalistically-minded Russians, this was an opportunity to document, understand, and celebrate the many nations and tribes housed within the Empire's expanding borders. Bringing together Slavs from across Russia and Europe for what they called a congress—really a series of scholarly meetings and banquets—demonstrated to a new generation Russia's turn from imitation of the West to a leading role in the awakening of Slavic peoples and Slavic values.

The Czechs, together with the other Austrian Slavs, emphasized the purely cultural aspect of their journey. They had come not to forge a treasonous agreement with some foreign government, but to learn about their fellow Slavic tribes and to support on another in mutual endeavors. Yet their stubborn insistence on the apolitical nature of the visit made the affront all the more irritating to authorities and political competitors at home. In the register of culture, instead of politics, Czech publicists could get away with pronouncements and provocations that would otherwise have been cause for censure. Only weeks before departing for Russia, in March 1867, the organ of the National Party, *Národní listy*, had been banned for a series of supposedly inflammatory articles protesting Dualism. From the spring of 1867 to the end of the following year, its successor, *Národní noviny*, would engage in polemics of irony, sarcasm, and allusion in order to protest through implication matters about which one could not object outright.[26] This was the logic of passive resistance.

In the new political culture, public spectacle replaced parliamentary debate. Hours before their arrival, a mass of onlookers gathered at the railway station to greet the western visitors. "In a short time," reported a correspondent to *Národní noviny* (as *Národní listy* was renamed during a period of confiscation), "the hall of the station was overfilled with those waiting, and every free space around it was packed with people."[27] Spectators waited another five hours, as the train full of Czechs and some seventy Slavs from western lands (the Poles conspicuously absent) halted

[26] "Neračte se o nás starati," *Národní noviny*, May 24, 1867.
[27] "Pout hostí slovanských na výstavu národopisnou v Moskvě," *Národní noviny*, May 25, 1867. (*Národní listy* appeared under the heading *Národní noviny* during most of 1867.)

along the way to receive bread and salt from cheering locals, hear the music of regimental bands, and exchange greetings amidst the general din of crowds. In St. Petersburg all this was repeated on a grander, louder scale, with "that enthusiastic, booming Russian: Urá!" ringing in the visitors' ears. Austria's foreign minister Beust, informed about events from a carefully placed spy, mocked the carnivalesque atmosphere: "In the streets people run after their carriages in order to see 'the Slavs.' One would suppose that they had never seen any before, as though there had just been discovered a new archipelago in Polynesia."[28]

Some of the visitors donned colorful folk costume while others wore "common European dress." Crowds cheered as Serbs, Montenegrins, Bulgarians, Kashubians, and Lusatian Sorbs made their way along the platform to the carriages waiting before the station. Poles were conspicuously absent. Slavs of the Habsburg Empire made up the most numerous party; Slovaks, Austrian Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes all attended. It was the Czechs, however, who made up the largest and most impressive contingent. Palacký, Rieger, and Brauner, as mentioned, were present. Other luminaries of Czech political society came along as well: Jan Stanislav Skrejšovský, a businessman, politician, and influential publisher; Tomáš Černý, head of the Sokol movement; Emmanuel Vávra, publicist and member of *Národní listy'*s editorial board; and the venerable philologist, poet, historian, and folklorist, Karel Jaromír Erben. Julius Grégr, editor of the *Národní listy* and spokesman of the more progressive Young Czech faction, also participated in the trip, turning the journey to Russia into a manifestation of the entire political spectrum.[29]

From mid-May to early June, *Národní noviny* (it had been renamed) published a series of ten letters sent from a visitor to the ethnographic exhibition.[30] The exhibition consisted of three departments. The first exhibited "races [*plemena*] inhabiting the Russian Empire and neighboring Slavic lands" and dominated the paper's coverage of the event.[31] Other departments catered to more professional interests and documented the material culture of Slavs (ethnography) or featured collections of skulls, skeletons, and modern anatomical instruments (anthropology). More than anything else, the displays of Russia's diverse tribes and races captured visitors' attention and was reported to readers in Prague.

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[28] It is worth including the entire quote: "Ces messieurs sont pour le moment les lions de St. Pétersbourg. On les traîne de fête en fête, et dans les rues on court après leurs voitures pour voir 'les Slaves'. On a l'air de n'en avoir jamais vu, comme si on venaiit d'en faire la découverte dans quelque nouvel archipel de la Polynésie. Il est impossible que des esprits sérieux ne soient frappés du ridicule qui s'attache à cette farce nationale." Cited in Karel Kazbunda, *Pout Čechů do Moskvy 1867 a Rakouská diplomacie* (Prague: Orbis, 1924), 62.

[29] There were, by my count, twenty Czech delegates aboard the train to St. Petersburg. In addition to those mentioned above, these included: J. Vrťátko, philosopher and librarian of the Museum of the Museum of the Bohemian Kingdom; Dr. Mattuš, member of the Bohemian Diet and Russophile Czech lawyer; A. Patera, philologist and museum employee; J. Zvěřina, builder; T. Topinka, industrialist; J. Houra, *obecní tajemník*; Karel Jičínský, Old Czech lawyer; Josef Kolář, expert in Russian language; Baron Karel Dragutin Maria Villáni, author and noble landowner; Dr. Hamerník, professor of medicine and member of the Reichstag; Manes, the painter. "Pout hostí slovanských na výstavu národopisnou v Moskvě," *Národní noviny*, May 22, 1867. On the backgrounds of the Czech delegates, see Michael Boro Petrovich, *The Emergence of Russian Pan-Slavism 1856-1870* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1956), 205-206; Josef Jirásek, *Rusko a my: Dějiny vztahů československo-ruských od nejstarších dob až do roku 1914* Volume 3 (Prague: M. Stejskal, 1945), 10ff.

[30] "Listy o národopisné výstavě v Moskvě 1-3," *Národní noviny*, May 13, May 19, and June 1, 1867; "Listy z národopisné výstavě v Moskvě 4-10," *Národní noviny*, June 4, June 7, June 15, July 12, July 13, July 19, and July 20, 1867. Articles 2, 3, and 4 are signed with the initial "H." (Houra? Hamerník?), articles 1 and 5-10 are unsigned.

[31] "Listy o národopisné vystavě," *Národní noviny*, May 19, 1867.

Readers learned first about the so-called *plemena cizorodá* (heterogeneous races) of the Russian Empire.[32] The paper's Moscow correspondent informed his countrymen about Alaskan natives, indigenous tribes of Siberia and inhabitants of the cold Arctic north. Equally exotic for Czech readers must have been the tribes of Central Asia, the Caucasus, and the nomadic peoples of Russia's steppe; Uzbek, Turkmen, Kalmyk, Kirghiz, Bashkir, Mordvinian, Cheremis, Minusinsk and Kazan Tartars and Chuvash peoples formed "the most substantial and diverse part of the Ethnographic Exhibition in terms of content," according to the Russian press.[33] No matter that the label *cizorodá* designated people who were mostly indigenous to their regions; by contrasting Slavs with the non-Slavic races, organizers and the reporters to Prague's newspapers intended to convey a message about Slavic identity. The content of this message and its import for national politics in Austria become clear after considering the content and language of the reports themselves.

In the first section, the many people of Eurasia folded into a single imaginary environment, an idealized space inhabited by dozens of mannequins where distant cultures came into close proximity. "Let the dear reader imagine such a landscape," the author invited, "tall trees and undergrowth, gardens, meadows, walls of ice, fields, water, mountains, farms, cottages, the field tents of Asiatics. And interspersed throughout with people of different complexions, in different costumes, in different situations, in different occupations, wild game, plants, fruits etc."[34] Three hundred mannequins dressed in traditional costume, all artfully arranged in elaborate landscapes, populated the royal stables which formed the exhibition's main hall

The guide led readers first across cold Aleutian Islands to Alaska, then into northern Siberia. As the journalist described it, this was "an inhabited and beautiful landscape, true, but one completely foreign to us and sad." Here the visitor encountered Aleuts and Tlingit (Kolosh) of the northwest American coast dressed in thick furs, grasping oars, spears and arrows. Opposite stood some Chukchi of eastern Siberia, "stunted figures clothed in tightly fitting bird pelts; only by looking at the face can one tell the man apart from the woman. Were they to cover their faces, you would think them wild animals; a Siberian deer grazes beside them in the moss."[35] Beneath the same ice cliff dwelt a group of Yakut, natives of northeastern Siberia. The author's comments reflected the condescending attitude of western observers:

> Before the lower grouping stands the striking figure of a *Shaman* engaged in worship. The word Shaman means jongleur, sorcerer, and Tatar priest. In the figure we discern some sort of nonsensical tricks, jugglery probably undertaken under the guise of divine service. Draped in a laughable robe decorated (?) with metallic objects and little bells, he prepares some bizarre leaps; in his left hand he holds up a drum, in the right a mallet. […] Around him are arranged "Shaman" instruments.[36] [See figure 7.]

The patronizing attitude of European readers toward primitive, half-wild peoples, as they were described, should come as no surprise. Not so much exotic as simply alien, the sadly stunted native peoples of Siberia fit somewhere between man and animal on the scale of development.

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[32] The word *cizorodá* literally means "of foreign stock" or "of foreign kind."
[33] E. Dianova, ed., *European Slavs and the Peoples of Russia* (St. Petersburg: Slavia, 2008), 18-20.
[34]"Listy o národopisné výstavě," *Národní noviny*, May 19, 1867.
[35] "Listy o národopisné výstavě," *Národní noviny*, May 19, 1867.
[36]"Listy o národopisné výstavě," *Národní noviny*, May 19, 1867.

Inhabitants of northern Siberia occupied a frozen state. The Czech correspondent halted before the portrait of a Samoyed (Nentsi) man, a "melancholic image of a lonely figure in white fur up to his face, appearing as if he were speaking to the onlookers" (see figure 8). The photograph did not speak, of course, but that did not stop the journalist from interpreting the contours of the profile. "Some life!" he gasped. "In the face of the Samoyed you can read: the pallid blue color tells of the bitter frost, numerous wrinkles upon the forehead and face of a toilsome life; clear but empty eyes express the weak activity of the intellect."[37] Scandinavian natives, Sami and Mari people "with yellow-brown faces, tired looking," received similar treatment.[38] Moving southward to the inhabitants of the Baltic countries, however, Estonians and Latvians were described to Czech readers as an indo-European race (*plemeno*) bearing some resemblance to Slavs. Their dress and complexion reminded the author of peasants from Moravia or Bohemia, "their eyes speak of geniality, their hands of industriousness."[39] Evidently we have left the sad and foreign world of the north and crossed into Europe's hinterland.

In order to remain awhile among "heterogeneous" peoples, the author proceeded across the exhibition hall to Central Asia and the steppe country. Whereas the exhibit depicted small peoples of the north as frozen in time, characterized by their lack of development, the Tatars represented a radically different civilization from that of the Europeans. Here, emphasis fell on the exotic. The author's interest turned decidedly sartorial as physiognomy and superstition gave way to the analysis of Oriental dress and taste (or lack thereof). "We have arrived to the historic nation of the Tatars in the narrow sense," a family of Turkic cultures numbering a little over two million by the mid-century. The Crimean Tatars and Tatars of the northern Caucasus became subject to Russian colonization pressures in the late eighteenth century, were forced out of the region in continuing waves of emigration thereafter, and it became deliberate tsarist policy to annihilate Tatar existence near the Black Sea during the 1860s. The articles in *Národní noviny* devoted space to two subgroups of this diverse people. Readers were first treated to a detailed description of a Kazan princess in her "sumptuous Oriental attire,[40] […] the "sarafian" (a long female dress with sleeves) of pink silk and silver thread; a tasteful fox-glove from stitched gold and silver from neck to waist; a long bodice (sleeveless) abundantly and ornamentally garnished with golden lace work hangs over the dress. Upon the head a cap of expensive beaver fur with a surface of violet velvet strewn with tiny pearls, upon her feet saffian shoes sewn with pearls."[41] Because the Orient was a place of contrasts, the tour led immediately from the opulent princess to the inhabitants of Mordvinia, "represented by women all as ugly as possible," around "two disgusting women from the Chuvash tribe," and finally to an encampment of the Bashkir, a nomadic people of the Steppe and, according to the author, close relatives of the Hungarian

[37] The author continues on to describe a Samoyedic religious scene: "They are preparing to sacrifice to their gods in a pagan ritual. […] These idols are nothing but miserably carved pieces of wood upon which are fastened pieces of leather, fabric etc.; they are shabby children's puppets—and to these the wretches pray." "Listy z národopisné výstavy 3," *Národní noviny*.

[38] "Listy o národopisné výstavě," *Národní noviny*, June 1, 1867.

[39] "Listy o národopisné výstavě," *Národní noviny*, June 1, 1867.

[40] A gift to the exhibition from Empress Maria Alexandrovna. Dianova, *European Slavs and the Peoples of Russia*, 132, 137.

[41] A gift to the exhibition from Empress Maria Alexandrovna. (Dianova, *European Slavs and the Peoples of Russia*, 132, 137.) "Listy o národopisné výstavě," *Národní noviny*, June 1, 1867..

Magyars.[42] "Brightly contrasting colors of poor taste are the mark of their folk dress," the guide noted.[43]

The Kazakhs (Kyrgyz) outranked the Kazan in importance as a branch of the Tatars, for they numbered almost one and a half million. This Central Asian people wandered the Siberian steppe and dwelled in tents similar to those of the Magyar-Bashkir, but outfitted with greater taste. An elaborate description of a Kazakh woman's dress brought the reader from Asiatic vulgarity back to Oriental splendor.

> Her dress: a long caftan of lustrous violet satin colorfully flowered upon the chest and tied together at the waist with a red belt; over it a long coat stitched with shimmering gold leaves upon a background of dark red. Upon her head she has a remarkable sample of Asiatic feminine taste. It is a fur cap covered with a thick string of coral, pearls and shiny tags; this cap ends at one and a half feet with a circular tower, covered by crimson samite, silver trimmings and abundantly inset with Siberian jewels. From the lower end of the "cap" there flows, like combed hair, long strings of red corral in which are strung buttons of silver.[44] (See figure 9.)

The adjectives chosen to describe the Kazakh woman as well as the other peoples of Central Asia and the Steppe made clear the author's effort to portray distant civilizations as exotic but not completely alien. In its feuilletons describing the exhibit in Moscow, *Národní noviny* held before readers a picture of the Oriental "inclination to extravagance and luxury." Women draped in silk sarafians, satin caftans, pearl-studded saffian shoes, and towering velvety caps lined with silver exemplified the quality of *přepych*, translatable into English as *luxury* but with an emphasis on swollen pride (*pře-*, "over-" or "out-", and *pýcha*, "pride"). The Orient as portrayed in Moscow and communicated to readers in Prague stood for the exaggeration of desires familiar to westerners, not their negation. Somewhere between the extremes of splendor and vulgarity belonged the sensible Slavs.

The exhibition of non-Slavic peoples east of the Elbe concluded with a display that one might expect to have received fuller treatment in the pages of a Czech political daily. A single, rather longwinded sentence explained to the reader that "German-colonists, of which the Russian Empire hosts over 920,000, having no German government behind them, do not form a 'kulturelement,' [*sic*] but are quite content to endure a 'nationally oppressive' government, not longing for 'enlightened' and ethereal 'freedom' watched over by Prussian gendarmes and bayonets."[45] The comment, snide and sarcastic, brought Austrian politics into the discussion of Russia's "heterogeneous" peoples. A move ubiquitous in the coverage of their pilgrimage to Moscow, the publicist here contrasted Russian tolerance (!) with the oppressive nationality policies of Austro-Hungarian dualism.

Inquiring into the reasoning behind the exhibit, the author asked why such effort and expense had been dedicated to the display of non-Slavic peoples. He might as well have been asking about his own coverage, which devoted a disproportionate amount of space to the exotic. Indeed, the reader might ask the same about this dissertation: what linked ethnographic display

[42] "Listy o národopisné výstavě," *Národní noviny*, June 1, 1867.
[43] "Listy o národopisné výstavě," *Národní noviny*, June 1, 1867.
[44] "Listy z národopisné výstavy," *Národní noviny*, June 4, 1867.
[45] "Listy z národopisné výstavy," *Národní noviny*, June 4, 1867.

of Russia's native peoples to Czech emigration and the national movement in Bohemia? The author of the newspaper article appealed to the interests of science (a reply only hardly available to the present author). Ethnographers, he wrote, gathered together a collection of materials that would otherwise have remained inaccessible to the public, thereby contributing to scientific knowledge. But to what end?

A "pageantry of contrasts" separated Slavs from other races in Russia, the writer explained, which demonstrated "the rancor and ignorance of those who speak of Slavs as Mongols." And here is where ethnographic display in Moscow becomes relevant to Bohemian politics: *Národní noviny* directed its message to political opponents at home, the German and Hungarian press. When mocking Slavs as uncivilized, these Germans and Magyars in fact poured ridicule upon "their own well represented brothers—the Bashkir, Volga Tatars, etc."[46] Turning accusations of crudity back onto the German press, the Czech daily ridiculed Austria-Hungary's governing nations. "The Magyar gentlemen should rather consider it an honor that such a grand undertaking did not forget about their lost Tatar brothers who, after all, are of the same blood and practically speak the same language! Even Germans and Jews have their representatives. So what's the fuss about a "pan-Slavic exhibition?" Now gentlemen, come instead to visit your distant compatriots!" [47] The Czechs in Moscow intended to provoke. The Czech political leadership clearly expressed its opposition to the Austro-Hungarian Ausgleich settled upon in the previous year by journeying to Russia instead of opening the Reichstag in 1867. But they did more than display opposition, however, which was obvious already. The Czechs also situated their nation on a scale of civilization, as the *Národní noviny*'s coverage of the ethnographic exhibition made clear. The point was not to demonstrate the backwardness of Russia's non-Slavic peoples; of that readers in Bohemia were already convinced. Instead, by painting a picture of cultural stagnation in Siberia and Oriental excess, the liberal daily implied that Czechs, as Slavs, belonged to those privileged races capable of progress and self-government, and therefore justified in their claim to national autonomy.

Coverage of the "heterogeneous" peoples of Russia provided a negative image of Slavic civilization. A more positive assertion of identity came from the *všeslovanský oddíl,* the "all-Slavic" section. In five articles, *Národní noviny* described the national character of the eastern Slavs: Great Russians, White Russians, and Little Russians; people today referred to as ethnic Russians, Belarusians, and Ukrainians. Together, these people made up over fifty-two million of the Empire's inhabitants. A tremendous and lively *Jarmark* (trade fair) served as the centerpiece of this section. Almost a hundred mannequins dressed in a variety of folk costumes intermingled, bartered, labored, or loafed upon a crowded hillside. It was designed as a typical Russian landscape: a forest with peasant dwellings, a windmill, and pathway leading to an Orthodox church. Women peddled homespun linen or bargained with merchants, youngsters sold *kvass* and enjoyed Russian treats while a boy in a cart strummed his *balalaika*. It was a scene designed to evoke sympathy in the viewer. For example, in the foreground to the right sat the amiable figure of an elderly Russian woman selling apples. Passing time conversing with neighbors and darning a pair of old stockings, she recalled the "kindly smiling face of a country woman as imagined by readers of Božena Němcová's *Babička.*"[48]

[46]"Listy z národopisné výstavy," *Národní noviny,* June 4, 1867.
[47]"Listy z národopisné výstavy 4," *Národní noviny,* June 4, 1867.
[48] "Listy z národopisné výstavy," *Národní noviny,* July 12, 1867.

Sticking to his rubric of choice, the author appraised folk dress in order to discern national character. Simplicity and elegance distinguished Russian folk costume from its Oriental or barbaric equivalents. "High boots with wide trousers tucked into them, a coat girded with a belt, black felt hat or cap—that's the dress of a man of the people."[49] A woman's costume, "like her character," proved more difficult to describe and was "not always pleasing to our sense of beauty." At her best, however, the Russian country girl appeared "clean and tasteful" dressed in a white blouse with wide sleeves, perhaps with little red flowers stitched in—"the same cut worn by girls in Prague during summertime"—and a colorful dress with simple apron. The Russian commoner appeared modest in the "natural yet gentle style and elegant pattern of pure Russian folk costume," especially set beside the ornate dress of a Kazan or Kazakh princess.[50]

Foreign tastes and influences, however, threatened to undermine female modesty and Russian culture more generally. Here *Národní noviny* coverage transitioned from descriptions of difference to warnings about cultural assimilation. Governorates lying at the imperial frontier proved especially vulnerable: "in the western governorates Great Russian dress (female) tends toward the Lithuanian, in the northern toward the Finno-Ugric; in the southern it has taken on the Little Russian character, in the eastern it has neared Asiatic vulgarity." These examples of cultural assimilation at the edges of the Slavic world suggested vulnerability in the Russian national character. In Moscow and cosmopolitan St. Petersburg, too, women were ever ready to "ape foreign styles." Feminine weakness, so claimed the author, led to the "nesting" (*zahnízdění se*) and "spread" (*zmohútnění*) of French and English influences.[51] And yet the author managed to close this sad thought with a note of triumph: "The ethnographic exhibition has delivered a cruel blow to all that. Yes, that is precisely the reason why foreigners look unkindly, even with bitterness upon our genuinely popular [*čistě národní*] undertaking, carried out with no help from foreigners, which has for the first time after a long era freed Moscow from the thrall of alien influence [*cizáctvo*]. The exhibition has decided the battle between home-grown and foreign powers, and that to the benefit of Russians."[52] The purpose of the ethnographic exhibition as interpreted by the Czech newspaper consisted not so much in description as in cultural defense.

The contrast between *slovanstvo,* "Slavs," and *cizáctvo*, "things foreign," in these comments cannot be missed. Not only, or even primarily, did *Národní noviny* set Russians in opposition to the "heterogeneous" non-Slavs of the Empire. The journal also pitted Slavs against the English, French, and Germans of the West. Moreover, this was no static contrast but instead a dynamic give and take, a competition between cultures on the frontier as well as in the imperial center.[53] To build upon the author's metaphor of species invasion, *cizáctvo* encroached upon

[49]"Listy z národopisné výstavy," *Národní noviny*, June 7, 1867.
[50] "Listy z národopisné výstavy," *Národní noviny*, June 15, 1867.
[51] The author put it more forcefully in a later feuilleton: "In the future, Moscow ladies will not so soon look for the first steps toward enlightened civilization [osvícená civilisace] in the enslavement of their home language under a foreign tongue, in the expulsion of domestic habits and customs in favor of a dead formalism, the importation of French hairstyles and charlatans. It seems to me that the ethnographic exhibition has led to a complete turn-around in the national lives of very many families." "Listy z národopisné výstavy," *Národní listy*, July 19, 1867.
[52]"Listy z národopisné výstavy," *Národní noviny*, July 19, 1867.
[53] It might be worth calling attention to another comment about assimilation. Speaking about the familiarity of dress among Slavs of eastern Galicia, the Bukovina, and eastern Hungary, the author added, "but it is necessary to call attention to the fact that in Hungarian folk dress there is a strong resemblence between the folk dress of Slovaks and—the Magyars. From this two possibilities follow: either Magyars have received the folk dress of the oppressed Slavs and further elaborated it, or the Slavic clothes have assimilated themselves—to the western-Bashkirs." "Listy z národopisné výstavy," *Národní listy*, July 19, 1867.

slovanstvo, penetrated it, nested within it, and spread its corrosive influence throughout the Slavic world. The ethnographic fair in Moscow as represented by the most important Czech political daily resembled a battlefield upon which Slavs fought against enemies in a zero-sum struggle for cultural supremacy.

The adversary, *cizáctvo,* took on several forms. In the case of the Central Asian nomads and the small peoples of the North, this was a struggle between a higher Slavic civilization and barbarism. In a series of articles titled, "Reflections on the Journey to Moscow," another author considered the larger meaning of Russia's place in history and the political significance of the pilgrimage.[54] On the one hand, Russians had been assigned the difficult task "to obstruct the flow of barbarism of Asiatic nations rushing westward to the more civilized [*vzdělanějších*] European countries."[55] At some point every European people between Germany and Russia has claimed itself to be the outpost of western civilization. Such a move placed the small nation at the periphery of the West, true, but on the correct side of the line to claim the privilege associated with being European. What's more, location at the extreme periphery of Europe transformed the nation from provincial backwater to bastion of the West, providing that people with a heroic narrative and sense of mission—the noble, if underappreciated, task of defending civilization.

Czech liberals, however, placed Russians rather than themselves at Europe's periphery, implying that Czechs, the westernmost of Slavs, inhabited Europe's center. But to describe Russia as a barrier or bastion of western civilization against barbarian onslaught would be misleading, or at least incomplete. Russia functioned instead as an outpost or military-like encampment overlooking an expanding frontier. Russians faced the task of assimilating the Empire's native peoples, thereby extending the reach of civilization to backward parts of the world; "subduing, subjugating, and capturing for its own civilization [*své vzdělanosti*] countless tribes of coarse nomads, not only so that they cease to be a danger to European culture [*evropská osvěta*], but become even its promoters."[56] Foremost among coarse nomads to feel the full weight of Slavic culture over the centuries were Tatars, that diverse group so well represented at the ethnographic fair and made a centerpiece of *Národní noviny*'s reviews. "The most powerful nation standing for the longest time and with the greatest concentration in the way of [Russian] development, the Tatar people is now completely subjugated to Russia and has been brought under the rule of the Russian element forever."[57] The liberal daily celebrated the demise of a people, dismissing the two hundred thousand remaining Kazan Tatars who, though they preserved their customs and language, "have neither any importance nor a political future."[58] Is it not darkly ironic that Czech liberals, themselves engaged in a political battle against imperial authorities in the defense of language and national autonomy, would rejoice at the disappearance of another stateless nation? Assimilation was to be celebrated when the nation in question was non-European.

In contrast to the exhausted culture of Orientals, Slavs displayed what the liberal journal described as "political and cultural aggressiveness."[59] The Russian was distinguished by his

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[54] A series of articles published in seven parts and signed with the initial "—j—" (the Russophile lawyer Karel Jičínský?). "Úvahy o cestě do Moskvy, 1-7" *Národní noviny*, June 12, 13, 15, 18, 22, 23, and 26, 1867.
[55] "Úvahy o cestě do Moskvy," *Národní noviny*, June 12, 1867.
[56] "Úvahy o cestě do Moskvy," *Národní noviny*, June 12, 1867.
[57] "Úvahy o cestě do Moskvy," *Národní noviny*, June 12, 1867.
[58] "Úvahy o cestě do Moskvy," *Národní noviny*, June 12, 1867.
[59] In Czech, "*politická a kulturní výbojnost*." Although *výbojnost* is usually translated as belligerence or aggressiveness, the sense here draws from the word's root, *výboj*, which means (electrical) discharge, invasion, or

excellent physical and intellectual capacity, with a "powerful stature, tall and strong." "His complexion," the author continued, "reveals good intellectual gifts; the ridge of his face is gentle, purely Slav. The notorious Russian physiognomy about which one often hears in western Europe is only to be found in caricatures, mainly German. – The Russian is agile, adroit, and in that he excels all his other fellow Slavic kinsmen […]."[60] Compare this to the manner in which the paper interpreted the contours of the Samoyedic man's profile, discerning in his "clear but empty" eyes a dearth of intellect. The author reduced both to the effects a cold, northern climate. Whereas wintry conditions produced lethargy in the Arctic natives, the same cold wind invigorated the Slavic pioneer. Such an environment demanded from Russians "greater energy and determined effort; both, alongside intellectual agility, provide the foundation of [Russian] political power and strength."[61] The difference between Slavs and non-Slavs, or those capable of self-government and those incapable of it, was thus physiological and intrinsic. Tough conditions at the frontier of Empire produced apathy among non-Slavic peoples; for Russians, on the other hand, the same environment instilled qualities of leadership.

All this went unrecognized in the West, complained the correspondent. Neither the historical role played by Slavs in halting the advance of barbarism nor the Russian effort to spread civilization received adequate attention in Europe. Instead,

> it seems that the currency with which western Europe has repaid the Russian people for this great service was to cast upon Russians themselves the false and unscrupulous defamation of Barbarism, which the Russian element battled and subdued; the crudity of conquered Asiatic barbarians, which every now and then still bubbles up from below the surface of Slavic civilization [*slovanská vzdělanost*], is at once declared to be evidence of the Russian people's inhumanity. In a word: the shame of the vanquished given as reward to the victors.[62]

If the language employed by Czechs in their coverage of the pilgrimage to Moscow revealed anything, it was a concern to locate the culture of Slavs between the extremes of *surovost* and *přepych*—between barbarian vulgarity and the proud materialism of Orientals. The great injustice of the West toward Russia consisted in the image, fostered especially in the German press, of the Slav as a "crude half-wild with knout in hand,"[63] a picture fit to describe the primitive soldier just recruited from the Asiatic steppe, but not one capturing the "unusual temperance and humanity of the Russian people."[64]

Social attitudes and institutional arrangements reflected the progressive qualities of Russia. The peasant commune, or *mir*, provided Russia a foundation of consensus decision-making and concern for the general good which helped Russian society realize a degree of

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aggression as well as a pioneering act, breakthrough (to new territory), or (territorial) incursion. The quotation thus conveys a sense that Slavs, unlike non-Slavic native peoples, demonstrate virility and an ability to penetrate new territory politically and culturally.

[60] "Úvahy o cestě do Moskvy," *Národní noviny*.
[61] "Úvahy o cestě do Moskvy," *Národní noviny*.
[62] "Úvahy o cestě do Moskvy," *Národní noviny*.
[63] "Úvahy o cestě do Moskvy," *Národní noviny*.
[64] "Úvahy o cestě do Moskvy," *Národní noviny*.

tolerance and democracy about which western liberals only theorized.[65] That the author indulged here in unforgivable naivety—claiming, for instance, that privileged classed did not exist in Russia, or, since poverty and inequality were unknown there, that social revolution was impossible—is beside the point. Essential was that Russian, and therefore fundamentally Slavic qualities of tolerance and democracy contrasted with the "egoistic countenance" of the Germanic races: "What interesting entanglements and dead ends would result from the renowned humanistic culture of, say, the Germans if in German settlements they were to try and achieve consensus between two conflicting parties."[66] Germans had not carried *Kultur* to the East, but only "their own selfish violence."[67] Again the contrast was drawn between what liberal Czech delegates claimed to have experienced in Russia and the reality of post-Ausgleich Austria. Slavs existed together in a spirit of reciprocity, whereas society at home had been torn in two by the egoism of Germans and Magyars.

It can be seen that the one struggle between *slovanstvo* and *cizáctvo*, that between higher and lower cultures, really only stood proxy for the more central battle taking place between Slavs and their Central European neighbors. In this contest between higher cultures, where feuilletons recalled the nomadic origins of Germans and Magyars, the pilgrims to Moscow stood as defenders of Slavic civilization opposed to the barbarism and crypto-barbarism of foreigners to the east and west.

California in the Caucasus

The ethnographic exhibition in Moscow created a virtual environment of colorfully dressed mannequins and carefully arranged objects to document, using the latest scientific methods, differences between Slavs and Russia's "heterogeneous peoples." In its detailed review of the fair, *Národní noviny* reproduced this difference for readers in Bohemia. Unsurprisingly, ethnography confirmed that a great distance separated Czech readers from steppe nomads and Orientals. It was a distance in both a geographical and temporal sense. Not only were indigenous peoples far away and therefore seemed exotic, strange, and unfamiliar, they also figured as remnants of the past, peoples stuck in time. Symbolized by the Samoyed of the cold Arctic, these people inhabited frozen worlds and were incapable of autonomous development. History appointed the Slavs, by the hand of the Russian state, to bring these dependent peoples into the civilized world.

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[65] "Theories that modern progress and western civilization attempt to realize and for which civilian blood was spilled in the revolutionary years 1791, 1830, and 1848 are to be found in Russia long realized in visible and living organisms; for they have developed naturally and without violence from the character of the people itself, grown from its original, humane, and purely Slavic convictions." Elsewhere in the same article: "And behold! That Russian 'barbarian,' that 'uncivilized little man' [*nevzdělaný mužík*] in all his social relations has already long ago realized that which in enlightened Western Europe remains merely an incorporeal idea." "Úvahy o cestě do Moskvy," *Národní noviny*.

[66] "Úvahy o cestě do Moskvy," *Národní noviny*.

[67] In the following day's column, the author made the same point: "The 'great German nation' sent them to the Slavic north with the same cultural mission [*kulturní povolání*] with which they send their sons to California, Australia, Tasmania etc. There they pan for gold in the sand; in Russia they attain it from profitable services and offices as lackeys, court advisors, chamber police and other offices etc. etc." "Úvahy o cestě do Moskvy," *Národní noviny*.

When one spoke of barbarians, difference itself confirmed superiority. This was not the case with Germans or Magyars, the true objects of *Národní noviny*'s coverage. One could contrast the dove-like qualities of Slavs, *láska a lidskost,* "love and humanity," with Germanic egoism or Magyar crypto-barbarism. But when competing with other recognized high cultures, difference alone did not guarantee dominance. In order to prove oneself on the field of civilization, one had to become an agent of civilization. In the language of the day, one engaged in *slovanská osvěta.* This meant bringing the "knowledge of man and, above all, of the circumstances that pertain to him" to ever broader sections of the population, according to according to *Riegrův slovník naučný* in 1866; it entailed propagating modern science and all its practical applications among less developed peoples.[68] "There can be no ***osvěta*** without science," an author explained in the article.

> Science is like a seed of grain, and ***osvěta*** is like flour; if we wanted to have flour, then we would take the seeds of grain and make them into flour. The more that truths known scientifically and in the form of apodictic judgments penetrate all the layers of society, the greater the ***osvěta*** of individual nations. How nonsensical and merely tendentious is therefore the assertion, known especially well to us, that science is its own goal (*wissenschaft ist selbstzweck*). Contained within the assertion is the denial that science is obligated to spread ***osvěta***, that ***osvěta*** is not life's task, for, as stated above, ***osvěta*** only comes from science.

Osvěta stood for the penetration of science into everyday life and the diffusion of knowledge from its source to ever wider circles. Moving from ethnographic descriptions of difference to acts of cultural diffusion, emigration again entered the story. It was on the back of emigrants that Czechs were to prove themselves carriers of culture to backward parts of the world.

Czechs claimed to have played a special role in the development of the Slavic idea, portraying themselves as early pioneers of *Slovanská osvěta*. It was pointed out that Jan Kollár and Pavel Šafařík had preached unity among Slavs already in the 1820s and 1830s, generations before pan-Slavism surfaced in Russia. This early pan-Slavism itself was an expression of the Czechs' unique geographical position. The "weakest branch of the great Slavic stem," a people "in the bosom of the oppressed western tribes," Czechs first articulated the principles of Slavic reciprocity as a defensive action. From their "small hovel" in a region dominated by German language and culture, the Czechs had spread the idea of reciprocity eastward "like Christ's religion of humanity," to take over entire lands and "govern from the most magnificent of palaces" in Moscow. Such was *Národní noviny*'s account of the journey of pan-Slavism from west to east.[69]

The Russian state, however, had always figured as the agent of physical Slavic expansion. By the 1860s Russian intellectuals had lent new relevance to the idea of reciprocity, turning the Czech philological discovery into a program of active mutual support.[70] Yet even here, by virtue of their position in the West, the Czechs would continue to play a vanguard role.

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[68] *Riegrův slovník naučný,* s.v. "Osvěta."
[69] "Úvahy o cestě do Moskvy," *Národní noviny,* June 23, 1867. See also Kohn, "The Impact of Pan-Slavism on Central Europe," 323-333; J.F.N. Bradley, "Czech Pan-Slavism before the First World War," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 40, no. 94 (December 1961): 184-205.
[70] "Úvahy o cestě do Moskvy," *Národní noviny,* June 22, 1867; "Úvahy o cestě do Moskvy," *Národní noviny,* June 23, 1867.

It has already been remarked that the 1860s witnessed the rise of a new political generation in Russia, nationalistic liberals who advocated political reform while rejecting the "official nationality" of Nicholas I. Instead of catching up with the West, this young generation sought Russian identity in expansion to the East and South; internal colonization would lead to a greater Russian future.[71] Although Russian officials in 1867 did not necessarily share these views, the men who organized the ethnographic exhibition and Slavic congress in Moscow certainly did.

Among them was the Russian mining engineer and major general, Alexandr Borisovič Ivanickij, described as a democrat with long experience in the Caucasus.[72] On the occasion of the Slavic guests' departure from St. Petersburg, Ivanickij stood to deliver a speech that surely pleased its Czech listeners. Over the course of a thousand-year struggle with "enemies and detractors," the Russians emerged as the strongest among the Slavic peoples and the only ones to have preserved true political sovereignty. Still, until recently they relied on "their enemy, the German," for "domestic questions of culture [*osvěta*] and progress." It was here that the Russian general saw a place for the western Slavs, Czechs in particular. "Germans," he said,

> […] have ingratiated themselves with us and have spoiled and mutilated our Russian speech under the pretext of culture [*osvěta*]. They did not serve us but rather acted against us at the expense of our national spirit. But we no longer believe them, *we do not believe in German science! (Sláva! Urá! Živio!) You Czechs have men who are learned and famous, you are an enlightened nation, you must assume the position here that till now has been taken up by Germans!*[73]

He continued by asserting that the Czechs understood Russian interests; they were not a foreign element but of Slavic stock and yet, like Germans, they would bring western knowledge to the imperial frontier. The task of carrying civilization to Russia's undeveloped territories, it was reported to readers in Bohemia, had been transferred from the Germans to the Czechs.

The passing of the torch happened together with a shift in public sentiment about the settlement of Russia's southern borders. The policy of settling the frontier with foreign colonists, a favorite strategy since the time of Catherine, had made New Russia a place of extraordinary linguistic and cultural diversity.[74] Roaming bands of Nogay, Kalmyk, Bashkir, and Circassian tribesmen gradually succumbed to sedentarizing campaigns or ethnic cleansing, leading to the eclipse of nomadic lifestyles by mid-century. In their midst appeared German-speaking settlers, the Mennonites being the state's most favored colonizers, followed by Bulgarians and Armenians as well as Greeks, Moldavians, and Walachians. Cossack regiments kept guard over the population.

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[71] Mark Bassin, *Imperial Visions*; Alexander Etkind, *Internal Colonization: Russia's Imperial Experience* (Cambridge, U.K.: Polity, 2011); Yuri Slezkine, *Arctic Mirrors: Russia and the Small Peoples of the North* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press); Willard Sunderland, *Taming the Wild Field: Colonization and Empire on the Russian Steppe* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004).

[72] *Russian Biographical Index*, s.v. "Ivanickij, Alexandr Borisovič." Eduard Valečka described him as "general Ivanický z Petrohradu, chvalně známého i u nás v Čechách." "Pouť hostí slovanských na výstavu národopisnou v Moskvě," *Národní noviny*, June 4, 1867; Eduard Valečka, *Černomořský okruh Kavkazu* (Prague, 1871), 41.

[73] Emphasis in original. "Pouť hostí slovanských na výstavu národopisnou v Moskvě," *Národní noviny*, June 4, 1867.

[74] Sunderland, *Taming the Wild Field*.

Not everyone was impressed by the kaleidoscope of peoples and tongues in Russia, however. Especially during the reform era beginning in the 1840s, a time when the common people came to play a central role in understandings of Russian nationhood, nationally-minded publicists, academics, and intellectuals looked wearily upon the multitude mix of peoples inhabiting the empire's borderlands. By the early 1860s, elites and the general public displayed a preoccupation with the details of everyday life and the preservation of Russian character—a fact demonstrated by the Ethnographic Exhibition in Moscow. Frontier settlement now came to be understood as a struggle between the ethnically Russian "element" and groups of foreigners who threatened to undermine it: nomads and Asiatics as well as settlers of foreign stock, foremost among them the Germans.

In this atmosphere of nationalist expansion during the 1860s, scholars gathered in St. Petersburg to discuss the prospects for Caucasus settlement. In February 1868, just six months after the Slavic Congress, Ivanickij again praised the Czechs for their civilizing potential, describing the western Slavs as uniquely able to develop Russia's new territories in the South. The major general made reference to earlier suggestions that part of the Black Sea District be handed over to settles from Bohemia and Moravia, Bulgaria, and Serbia. Every year, he continued, these Slavs emigrate by the thousands to North America where they inevitably became lost "in the midst of nations foreign to them." Transport to the Caucasus would save these emigrants for Slavdom, but also provide a great service to their new Russian neighbors. "These people," he explained, "especially the Czechs carry with them a higher culture, but one related to ours, they will mix easily with their related Slavic Russian family and will not do onto the map of Europe those stains that blemish the river Volga at home and the steppe of New Russia."[75] His suggestion met with general approval, reported *Národní listy* in a summary of the event. While keeping to the spirit of tutelary colonization as outlined by tsarist authorities, the St. Petersburg scheme also met nationalists' growing concern about foreign influence. By virtue of their "higher culture" (the paper's editors proudly reprinted such words, to be sure), Czechs would positively influence surrounding communities without, thanks to their familiar culture, introducing foreign elements into the Empire.

Czech national leaders shared Ivanickij's conviction that their compatriots were well suited to play the role of colonizers. On June 12, 1867, members of the Slavic delegation attended a meeting of the Geographical Society in St. Petersburg. This was the last event of the Slavic Congress, as days later the western delegates departed Russia for their respective homelands. The hosts in St. Petersburg wanted to provide the Slavic guests one last overview of the Russian Empire and its holdings, including lands annexed only a few years previously. An intervention by a Czech delegate, Ladislav Rieger, carried the conversation from geography and statistics over to address mutual interests in Russia's newest territories.

> Rieger asked: to what degree would it be possible to turn Czech migration from America—to southern Russia. The question, interesting many, led to a concentrated discussion. […] Many agreed that the Samara province and the land at the Caucasus foothills would best suit such settlement. Rieger, who as a political economist is very interested in Bohemian trade relations with Russia, asked if it would not be better for the

[75]"Strana stěhování se na Kavkaz," *Národní listy*, March 7, 1868.

> Bohemian market to acquire its supply of linseed not in the Baltic countries, as has been the case up to now, but rather in southern Russia.[76]

One must admire the perseverance of the National Party's chairman. Back in 1859, after all, he had suggested to Gil'ferding in Prague that Russia use American Czechs to settle its far eastern province, Amur. At that time, Rieger and others pointed to the difficulty faced by the Russian state in populating its frontier regions. Native settlers were in short supply, and Russia lacked qualified laborers to develop its backward areas. Rather than turning to the West in search of Germans, as had been the practice since Catherine the Great, tsarist officials would do well to consider Czechs for the job. To this argument Rieger now added a new element—mutually beneficial economic relations.

The project for settling Czechs in the Caucasus enjoyed the support of several individuals and groups. František Ladislav Rieger and the journalists of *Národní listy* might have been the most highly placed, but certainly not the most active. That title belonged to the agronomist Bedřich Heyduk, an eager promoter of settlement among his Bohemian countrymen. Heyduk grew up in from Rychmburk, not far from Chrudim in eastern Bohemia, a region particularly affected by rural emigration.[77] As a young man, Heyduk studied agriculture and forestry at Prague's technical school before taking a position as a clerk at the land registry for the Kinský estates in Hungary. He served as secretary in Prague's regional agricultural association during the 1850s and later edited, with Josef Kučera, the influential rural progressive journal *Pokrok hospodářský.* In a number of scholarly publications that appeared in the early 1860s (including titles such as *Agricultural Accounts for Czech Farmers, How a Set Up a Dung Heap, On Manure,* and the widely used *Agricultural Catechism*), Heyduk promoted scientific cultivation in a Czech patriotic spirit.[78] With his journalistic activities, scholarship, and prestigious appointments, Heyduk shaped the practices and attitudes of Bohemia's Czech-speaking farmers during the 1850s and 1860s.[79]

Heyduk's attention turned to Russia in the early 1860s, when a nobleman who was spending time in Prague invited the Czech expert to manage his estate in the southwestern Kherson Governorate near the Black Sea. Though disappointed with his initial appointment, Heyduk used the opportunity to study Russian agricultural practices and published a number of articles that caught the attention of state officials. Among the officials impressed by the Czech agronomist was Chief of the Black Sea District D.V. Pilenko. In 1867, Pilenko offered Heyduk the opportunity to manage a number of estates along the northwestern foothills in the Caucasus.[80] Heyduk also received a wide tract of land near the Black Sea coast where he could put into practice his theories about plant cultivation, animal husbandry, and national community.

Heyduk oversaw the planting of hundreds of fruit tree orchards and sent pupils up and down the coast to spread his agricultural methods among the locals. The Czech planted the first

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[76] "Pouť hostí slovanských na výstavu národopisnou v Moskvě," *Národní noviny*, June 19, 1867.

[77] Bedřich Heyduk was the brother of the famous Czech poet, Adolf Heyduk. On his background, see *Ottův slovník naučný*, s.v. "Heyduk, Bedřich."; Pavel Havránek, "Češi na Kavkaze: Stručná historie osídlované oblasti," *Národopisná revue* 18, no. 1 (2008): 11-12.

[78] *Hospodářské účty pro rolníky české* (1862, Prague), *Jak má být zařizeno hnojiště* (ND), *O mrvě* (Prague, 1863), *Katechismus hospodářský* (ND).

[79] For an example, see the positive review of Heyduk's work in "Hospodářské účty pro rolníky české," *Poutník od Otavy*, October 4, 1862.

[80] Auerhan, "České osady na Kavkaze," *Agrární revue* 1, nos. 8-9 (1914), 376.

vineyard in the Caucasus, marking the rise of the region's famous wine industry.[81] "The northern coast of the Black Sea represents one of the most favorable parts of the world for the cultivation of wine grapes," Heyduk reported, filled with optimism. "Before long, the production of these grapes may boldly compete with the wines of France or Italy. In the hands of an enterprising people and with the support of the responsible authorities, the northwestern slopes of the Caucasus will soon become a second California."[82] His award-winning wines were soon displayed at World's Fairs, the tobacco leaves growing on plantations founded by Czechs competed successfully against product from Turkey and Bulgaria. Heyduk also pioneered methods of Champaign production, transplanting wine varieties imported from France to Russian soil. By the turn of the century, the land cultivated by Heyduk and his followers turned out 200,000 to 400,000 bottles of top quality wine annually.[83]

Heyduk continued to write and publish, he worked closely with the editors of *The Caucasus* (Кавказ), and, in 1888, he earned the title of State Advisor for Agriculture for all of eastern Siberia. It was a steady rise for the star agriculturalist; alas, the State Advisor fell ill while at work in Sakhalin, died during the return journey to the Caucasus, and was laid to rest in Vladivostok.

Of greater significance than Heyduk's life story, at least for the present study, was his pledge to create a California in the Caucasus. Heyduk suggested to Pilenko that Czech migrants be invited to settle some of his territories.[84] The official lent the project his approval, and Czech settlers soon arrived in significant numbers.[85] *Otto's Encyclopedia* later painted a rosy picture of Heyduk's settlements: "In the valley Heyduk founded three large Czech villages: Glebovka, Kyrilovka, and Metodějovka, now flourishing colonies. He founded schools for them and libraries, and also planted thousands of fruit trees, thousands of grapevines, and also cultivated tobacco with excellent results. Poor immigrants became prosperous citizens."[86] From 1868 to the end of 1870, some 360 Czech families resettled in the Black Sea province.[87] These poor, though not pauperized, peasant farmers hailed from southern and eastern Bohemia: Budějovice, Tábor,

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[81] One might compare Heyduk with the Korbel brothers of California. Josef, Anton, and František Korbel emigrated from western Bohemia in the 1850s (check this) and by the 1870s worked a plot of land in the Russian River Valley. In 1882 the brothers founded their first vineyard. Like Heyduk, they experimented with Champaign grapes (introducing the Pinot Noir variety to California) and founded a legacy that continues to the present.

[82] "Severový pobřeží Černého moře představuje jednu z nejvhodnějších částí na světě pro pěstování vína. Produkce tohoto vína bude v nedaleké budoucnosti směle konkurovat vínům z Francie či Itálie. V rukou podnikavého lidu a s podporou odpovědných orgánů se severozápadní svahy Kavkazu vbrzku stanou druhou Kalifornií." Quoted in: P. Havránek, *Češi na Kavkaze,* 12.

[83] Auerhan, "České osady na Kavkaze," 382n4.

[84] Auerhan, "České osady na Kavkaze," 376.

[85] Concerning the background of Czech migration to the Caucasus, see Vaculík, *České menšiny,* 184-187, 190-194; Vaculík, *Češi v cizině,* 102-105; Jan Auerhand, *České osady na Volyni, na Krymu a na Kavkaze* (Praha: A. Hajn, 1920); E.V. Domašek, *Historie českých osad černomořského pobřeží severního kavkazu* (Krasnodar, 2007); Pavel Havránek, "Češi na Kavkaze," 10-21; Vladimir Pukiš, *Čechi Severnego Kavkaza: Gody i suďby: 1868-2010* (Media-Polis: Rostov na Donu, 2010); Vladimir Pukiš and I. Tretyakova, *Česká komunita na ruském severním Kavkazu* (2006); N.T. Turčin, *Češi v Novorossijsku* (Novorossijsk: NGOO, 2006); Helena Dluhošová, "Vystěhovalectví na Ukrajinu," *Češi v cizině* 9 (1996): 48-66.

[86] "There in the valley Heyduk established three large Czech villages: Glebovku, Kyrilovku a Metodějovku, now blossoming settlements. He founded schools and libraries for them and had thousands of fruit trees planted, thousands of grape vines and even cultivated with great results tobacco. Poor immigrants became prosperous citizens." *Ottův slovník naučný*, s.v. "Heyduk, Bedřich."

[87] During these years some 8,000 immigrants from Bohemia settled in Russia as a whole, especially in the Crimean and Volhynia regions. Vaculík, *České menšiny*, 193; Pukiš and Tretyakova, *Česká komunita*, 1.

and Písek in the south; Hradec Králové, Chrudim, Vysoké mýto, and Čáslav in the east. The majority of Czechs settled on the northwestern foothills of the Caucasus.[88] As the encyclopedia entry makes clear, Heyduk was celebrated for his cultivation of intellect as well as land.

These Czech settlements on the Black Sea, however, did not much resemble prosperous seaside hamlets on America's Pacific Coast. As described by the ethnographer and statistician Jan Auerhan during his visit to the region years later, the settlements instead looked like the "poorer Bohemian mountain villages" of the homeland.[89] Czechs neighbored ethnic Russians and Ukrainians as well as Greeks, Armenians, Moldavians and Germans. (They were said to have gotten along well with the Circassian population, or what remained of it following expulsion.)[90] Since earlier arrivals had claimed the best land, Czechs made do with what was left. Improvised housing was made from salvaged tiles, wooden slates and sheet metal, or simply patched together from reeds, earth, and mud. Auerhan said that Czechs fared better than local Russians and Greeks, though their prosperity did not exceed that of their German neighbors.[91] Russian officials could nevertheless report that the western Slavs had fulfilled their civilizing mission; it was from Heyduk's Czechs that locals learned modern fertilization techniques and to cultivate potatoes.[92]

Bedřich Heyduk, the most prominent Czech representative in the Black Sea District, did much to organize the migration of their countrymen to the Black Sea region. Acting as liaison between Russian colonial societies, important Russian officials, and working-class Czech emigrants, Heyduk probably did more than anyone else to resettle hundreds of Czech families in the Caucasus during the 1860s and 1870s.[93] The most vocal proponents of Czech colonization during this period, however, belonged to a group of professionals centered in Hradec Králové. Using the pages of the Prague journal *Občan* (later renamed *Posel z Prahy*) as its mouthpiece, this consortium of solid patriotic burghers communicated to the reading public a vision of Czech expansion on the periphery of the Russian Empire.

At first, the paper's coverage of the Caucasus did not differ from that of other journals. An article in early January 1869 reported on the Czech-American deputation to the Russian ambassador in Washington D.C., repeating the same information published a few days earlier in *Národní listy*.[94] This changed over the following months when the editor published a series of letters sent from expatriates living in Russia.[95] A certain Čeněk Biedermann, for example, worked as a railway engineer in Tbilisi and offered his take on the recent discussions of resettlement in the Caucasus. He shared advice based on his experience in the region, reporting the climate to be comfortable and healthy, the natural resources abundant, and Russian authorities more than willing to accommodate incoming colonists.

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[88] Close to the Black Sea coastline in the Kuban and Black Sea governorates (concentrated for the most part in the Novorossiysk uyezd, the Anapskaya uyezd, and the Taupse uyezd).
[89] Auerhan, "České osady na Kavkaze," *Agrární revue* 1, no. 1 (1914), 379.
[90] Auerhan, "České osady na Kavkaze," 382n2.
[91] Auerhan, "České osady na Kavkaze," 378.
[92] Auerhan, "České osady na Kavkaze," 382; Vaculík, *České menšiny*, 185-186.
[93] According to the Russian census of 1872, some 1,000 Czechs resided permanently in the Black Sea province. Kyrilovka was home to 181 Czechs, Metodějovka to 91, Vladimirovka 108, Glebovka 132, Borisova 216 (counting Czechs and Russians together), Pavlovka 94, and Varvarovka 165. P. Havránek, *Češi na Kavkaze,* 14.
[94] "Čeští vystěhovalci v Americe," *Občan*, January 7, 1869; "'Kavkaz' o přesídlení amerických Čechů do Ruska," Politické zprávy zahraničné, *Naše listy,* December 31, 1868.
[95] In particular: "Stran stěhování na Kavkaz," *Občan,* February 16, 1869*;* "Poměry Kavkazské," Denní kronika, *Občan,* March 13, 1869; "Poměry Kavkazské (Dokončení.)," *Občan,* March 16, 1869.

Like any patriotic Czech, Biedermann opposed emigration on principle: those able to earn a living at home should not leave Bohemia, he said. Still, others might prosper abroad. "I am thinking of those thousands who leave overseas for America, taking with them much wealth from property sold, I am thinking of those unable to bring it to anything at home, who lack the energy [*ráznost*] to stand the struggle with adverse conditions here, I am thinking particularly about that working people who trek to Vienna, Saxony, Bavaria and elsewhere to earn a living: All those, led by enterprising and prudent men, would be well suited to the Caucasus, without injuring the homeland."[96] The engineer's comments focused on the excess population of the Bohemian lands, migrant workers and landless peasants who would otherwise emigrate to the West or even North America. These proletarians, he explained, could not contribute to the national cause at home, the "struggle with adverse conditions," because they lacked the means or initiative to do so. Dependent upon economic conditions, pushed from one region to another in search of a livelihood, these compatriots would benefit from the guardianship of responsible men abroad. Men, one presumes, not unlike Biedermann himself.

Biedermann presented colonization as a solution to the social question in Bohemia. By settling the Caucasus, Czech proletarians would themselves become "enterprising and prudent men," and thus valid members of the nation. A front-page article published in March echoed this line of thought. "[N]ot in my life would I encourage emigration," wrote an anonymous contributor, X.Y.Z. "Nevertheless, those unable to be of any use in the homeland would do well abroad." X.Y.Z. encouraged readers to imagines "New Prague" in the Caucasus;

> Were it possible to achieve such a thing in the Caucasus, what would be the result? That many people, perhaps several thousands, who otherwise would be lost for the Czech nation in America or elsewhere, would form a Czech settlement in which they would live in the Czech way, in which they would gather wealth in order, perhaps, one day to return home. […] That way, those who would be a beggar, day laborer, drifter, etc. etc., though they show some ability and good will, those of very little or no value to the nation here, even a burden—many such people could become useful in more favorable conditions and after a short time even very important members of the nation in a new Czech settlement.[97]

"New Prague" stood for an ideology of social integration and a path toward upward social mobility for the lower classes. Through colonization, liberals would enfranchise the working class without upsetting social hierarchy within Czech society. It was, as colonization often is, a vision of social transformation without politics. In the Caucasus migrants would be made into colonists, little capitalists far away from the homeland, "so that in time they might also become property owners."

The paper reprinted Biedermann's plan for a Czech settlement near Tbilisi: an area encompassing 47 square versts (about 53 km²) between two rivers near a forest, a colony of six hundred Czech families. This territory would be granted by the Russian government, he assured the reader, and more land could be purchased later. After setting up agricultural colonies, the Czechs could turn to trade and industry. Biedermann encouraged compatriots to envision Czech ironworks or glass factories in the area: "Were we to throw ourselves into industry, we could have the trade between Russia and Persia in our hands. Let all just consider that everything lying

[96] "Stran stěhování na Kavkaz," *Občan,* February 16, 1869.
[97] "Stran stěhování na Kavkaz," *Občan*, March 20, 1869.

on the Earth's surface or thriving better than anything elsewhere is brought over here. Sugar is brought over from England, 2000 verst of Russian iron also going to Persia, and the most beautiful ore and the best soil is here. If we were to set our enterprising minds to the task, Czech commerce would prosper here."[98] Other letters published in *Občan* echoed Biedermann's optimism. One Russian Czech praised the region's significance for world trade and emphasized the possibility of economic development. "With even a small amount of capital one can get a hold on industry in the Caucasus, which will one day be of tremendous importance."[99] To submit the application for a land grant, Biedermann would need signatures from interested authorizing him to act on their behalf. Or better, three or four representatives should be sent from the homeland to start the project, together with about forty workmen ("carpenters, blacksmiths, locksmiths, farm workers etc."). Together with local day laborers, Biedermann envisioned the colony being built in six weeks.

Biedermann's proposal spurred a year-long series of reports and updates in the paper about the prospect of founding a Czech colony in the Caucasus. In following issues, the editor commented on the number of letters arriving to his office asking for further information about settlement opportunities in the Caucasus—"such a quantity of correspondence," he wrote, "that not only is it absolutely impossible to reply to them, but one cannot even read them or look them over."[100] So in January 1869 a small party of men left Hradec Králové to confirm the reports. Václav Petříček, reported to be a Czech doctor and delegate to the provincial parliament, left together with two or more others for the Caucasus in early January 1869.[101] Petříček became the primary source of information about settlement in the Caucasus. From March through June 1869, Petříček's letters were published in *Občan*, providing a great amount of detail about conditions in the Caucasus, the lives of Czech immigrants there, and the ambitions of a certain class of Czech patriotic society to refashion the lower classes in its own image.

The editor warned readers to await Petříček's reports before deciding to emigrate.[102] Promised for late March, then put off until April, the "Letter from Tbilisi" finally arrived in early May. For the next two months, Dr. Petříček regularly contributed travel reports from the southern and northwestern Caucasus, informing readers in Bohemia about the region's population, climate, and natural resources.[103] Although the journey from Hradec Králové to Tbilisi had taken him more than three months (bad weather in Belgrade held him up), he assured readers that under better conditions the trip would not last more than fourteen days. Once there,

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[98] "Stran stěhování na Kavkaz," *Občan,* February 16, 1869.
[99] "Poměry Kavkazské," *Občan*, March 13, 1869.
[100] "Stran stěhování na Kavkaz," Denní kronika, *Občan* February 23, 1869; "Stran článků o Kavkazu," Denní kronika, *Občan*, March 9, 1869.
[101] A newspaper from Odessa reported Petříček to be a "Czech doctor and assembly delegate." The article was reprinted as "O českých osadních na Kavkaze," *Občan,* May 13, 1869.
[102] "Stran článků o Kavkazu," *Občan*, February 23, 1867; "Stran stěhování se na Kavkaz," *Občan*, April 13, 1869; "Stran Kavkazu," *Občan,* May 11, 1869.
[103] These are contained in the following articles: "Dopis z Tiflisu," *Občan,* May 8, 1869; "Zakonné podmínky[…]," *Občan*, May 20, 1869; "Kdos uchystán do Ameriky, obrať se na Kavkaz," *Občan*, June 15, 1869; "Kdos uchystán do Ameriky, obrať se na Kavkaz," *Posel z Prahy*, June 17, 1869; "Kdos uchystán do Ameriky, obrať se na Kavkaz," *Posel z Prahy*, June 19, 1869; "Kdos uchystán do Ameriky, obrať se na Kavkaz," *Posel z Prahy*, June 22, 1869; "Kdos uchystán do Ameriky, obrať se na Kavkaz," *Posel z Prahy*, June 25, 1869; "Kdos uchystán do Ameriky, obrať se na Kavkaz," *Posel z Prahy*, July 24 1869; "Psaní p. Karla Petříčka z Kavkazu," *Občan,* August 10, 1869; "Psaní p. Karla Petříčka (Pokračovaní.)" *Posel z Prahy*, August 17, 1869; "Dr. Petříčka psaní z Kavkazu," *Posel z Prahy*, September 7, 1869.

he marveled at the number of people arriving in the Caucasus; "Settlers from all countries are rushing here. Besides Russians from the empire, 150 Swiss families have arrived and more of them are expected; several thousand families are expected from Baden, more than 700 Greek families are here and beyond that, different settlers from all possible nations and countries." A few Czech families had settled near Tbilisi, but he recommended the country "between the Caucasus and land of the Kuban Cossacks" (that is, the northern Caucasus), "they say that country is the most healthy of all." Newcomers need not concern themselves about the "wild tribes" recently vanquished, he said, "for there are none: the Lezgins are as far as the Caspian Sea, but completely subjugated and quiet. The Tatars are farther than the Lezgins. Besides, they would rather be the ones to fear us, if we were to properly, systematically, autonomously, *with order, fraternity, and industry* set up an exemplary community here."[104]

Safe for settlement, immigrants arrived from across the world to enjoy the benefits laid out by the Tsar. These included tax exemption for fifteen years, initial support in the form of financial grants and loans, a land grant for each family of 30 desiatina and the right to elect representatives and a communal judge as well as freedom of religious practice and language use.[105] Petříček claimed that western Slavic settlers were sought after by landholders for their expertise and passed along rumors about two prosperous Czech settlements, one called New Prague and the other Pilenkov. Nevertheless, the project faced opposition; "secret adversaries," "*kulturtägrové*," he wrote, alluding to German immigrants, "who do not wish our people any piece of fertile earth."[106] Czech numbers would push through, however. Even those proletarians without any means would soon receive free passage, just as soon as the "first Czechoslav model industrial colony in the Cacuasus" was established. To that end, Petříček had been negotiating for the settlement of eight thousand families in New Russia, reported a journal in Odessa, and in the Tbilisi paper *The Caucasus*, he published a memorandum handed over to Grand Duke Michael Nikolaevich, Governor General of Caucasia, at a personal audience.[107]

Others followed Petříček to scout out territory in southern Russia for potential settlement. He traveled together with a master brewer from Chrudim named Sv. Hercink and later that year his father, Karel Petříček, a "burgher and livestock dealer," joined him in the company of a certain Moric Lhotský, both from Hradec Králové.[108] Kampelík vouched for the group in *Posel z Prahy* (as *Občan* was renamed in June 1869), calling V. Petříček resolute, dauntless and an "ardent, honest patriot." Lhotský, a lawyer, he praised as being cautious and circumspect.[109]

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[104] Italics in the original. Kampelík, "Kdos uchystán do Ameriky, obrať se na Kavkaz," *Občan*, June 15, 1869.
[105] "Zakonné podmínky, pod kterými se dovoluje přesidlení z Čech na Kavkaz," Denní kronika, *Občan*, May 20, 1869.
[106] Karel Petříček, "Psaní p. Karla Petříčka," *Posel z Prahy*, August 10, 1869.
[107] "O českých osadnících na Kavkaze," *Občan,* May 13, 1869; "Kdos uchystán do Ameriky, obrať se na Kavkaz," *Posel z Prahy*, June 19, 1869.
[108] It was probably at this group of enthusiasts from Hradec Králové that Eduard Valečka directed his criticism in 1871. Noting that the valleys of the Black Sea District are narrow and suitable for villages of no more than 50 families, Valečka remarked: "Ludicrous, though forgivable, is the suggestion of one writer in a certain Czech journal that 120 families be settled in a single location. This writer never saw the Black Sea District and in each article he provided inaccurate information about it. He drew [the information] from the letters of friends, who also never traveled to the District's interior and yet wanted to write something about it. One of them never went beyond Novorossiysk, although he spent a few weeks there. It is true that the writer had good intentions, but he was poorly informed." The writer he mentions is probably Kampelík and the "friends" Biedermann, Petříček and company. Valečka traveled to Caucasus in June and July, 1869. Petříček was there from March through June the same year. Valečka, *Černomořský Okruh Kavkazu,* 49.
[109] Kampelík, "Kdo uchystán do Ameriky, obrať se na Kavkaz," *Posel z Prahy*, June 25, 1869.

Other adjectives used to describe these self-appointed spokesmen for the nation's migrants included *educated*, *experienced*, *solid*, and *respected*, and the information they provided to be *truthful* and *reliable*.[110] Historians will not recognize the names Petříček, Hercink, or Lhotský, for none of them played any significant role in the politics of the day. But together this ambitious group from Hradec Králové, by means of articles published in *Občan,* provided the main channel through which news about settlement in the Caucasus reached the Czech public in Bohemia. These were the "enterprising and prudent men" of whom Biedermann spoke, burghers expected to guide their lower-class countrymen into membership in the nation through colonizing activity abroad.

As a patriotic newspaper, *Občan* had to give some explanation of its decision to report so extensively and with such enthusiasm about the travels of Petříček and his associates. A footnote appended to an early letter from Russia, "You readers know our views on emigration from the homeland and so it is not necessary that we repeat them here," did not suffice to quell everybody's concerns.[111] One writer, for example, objected to the paper's coverage, arguing that all emigration must be opposed because it weakens the nation. He demanded that the working-class Czech remain at home to "act with all the means of his spirit to raise the condition of himself and his family in order to defend the nation's soil, yes even to expand it."[112] The reader's opposition to emigration and emphasis on the battle over national territory in Bohemia echoed other rhetoric heard during the late 1860s. One thinks particularly of the speeches given at the tábor in Kyšice. There, the paper's editor warned that every emigrant who left the homeland abandoned territory to "foreigners."[113] In this zero-sum game between Czechs and a motley assortment of outsiders, be they Germans, Jews, big capitalists, false Czechs or others, every homestead represented a piece of national property that had to be defended.[114] Also familiar was the reader's call that would-be emigrants stay home to improve their social condition—the word used, *povznešení*, usually refers to moral or spiritual uplift, exaltation, ennoblement, or edification, which gave a virtuous ring to socio-economic ascent.

This combined approach to national and social questions was typical of the late 1860s: liberals defined the nation in contrast to a negative Other while remaking working-class compatriots into models of bourgeois virtue. Language of moral edification and liberal guardianship shaped the emergence of the labor movement in Bohemia, which did not emancipate itself from the custody of liberal activists until the mid-1870s. Chleborád, the popular labor organizer and opponent of mass emigration, spoke in Kyšice about the need to transform landless peasants and proletarians into entrepreneurs through the establishment consumer cooperatives and credit unions. Men such as Chleborád and František Šimáček urged

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[110] In Czech: *rázný*, *vzdělaný*, *zkušený*, *řádný*, *vážený*, *spolehlivý*, *pravdivý*. The character of the delegation members discussed in "Stran článků o Kavkazu," *Občan*, February 23, 1869; "Krajanům, kteří chtějí za hranice!" *Občan,* March 23, 1869; "Důležité vyslětlivky o Kavkaze III," *Občan,* June 1, 1869*;* "Kdos uchýstán do Ameriky, obrať se na Kavkaz," *Posel z Prahy*, June 17, 1869*;* "Kdos uchystán do Ameriky, obrať se na Kavkaz," *Posel z Prahy*, June 25, 1869.

[111] "Poměry Kavkazské," *Občan,* March 13, 1869.

[112] "Stran stěhování," *Občan,* May 15, 1869.

[113] "*tisíce našich krajanů odciznují se vlasti své.*" Translated literally, "thousands of our countrymen alienate themselves from their homeland." *Odciznovat se*, "to alienate oneself," and *cizinci, "*foreigners," both share the root *cizí,* of "foreign." By emigrating, the Czech made himself foreign to the homeland and the homeland foreign to those Czechs who remained behind. "Tábor lidu," *Národní listy.*

[114] The writer to *Občan* pointed specifically to Jewish and German "immigrants" in Bohemia, stating that they managed to make a home for themselves in the province, so "if they can do it, why not us?"

Czech workers to cooperate with Czech employers in the struggle against foreign capital and opposed independent activities of the working-class in politics, preferring to preserve for themselves the right to speak in the name of the entire nation. The group in Hradec Králové shared this liberal perspective and presented colonization as an investment that could be made by working-class Czechs in their nation's future.

The paper's editor referred to the detractor as "a friend" and claimed to share his convictions. He, too, encouraged working-class compatriots to adopt liberal qualities such as "a firm will," "the appropriate portions of tenacity and perseverance," and "tireless diligence." Rather than emigration, he offered the rise from poverty to prosperity through hard work at home. Yet this advice, he added, only applied to those with the requisite knowledge, experience, and force of will. Many co-nationals lacked these qualities, and as a result waged a vain battle to preserve their social status at home; "if they are propertied today, they will sink into the ranks of workers and thereby expand the swarm of people who even without that we have more than enough." As capitalism made its course in the nineteenth century, a specter haunted liberals across Central Europe: dispossessed proletarians incapable of an independent existence, men who relied on the capital of others for existence and whose opinions could be easily influenced. Itinerant workers and migrants wandered chaotically, so it appeared to liberals, from one country to the next, without a plan and without reason. Lower-class mobility required guidance, and it fell to liberals to instruct their countrymen, to foster in them diligence and a strong will.

At bottom, therefore, mass emigration was a question of character. If lower-class compatriots could not survive the rigors of capitalism at home, perhaps they might succeed "in a less advanced country," a place "where conditions are easier and gentler." "Perhaps," wrote *Občan*, "prosperous men could be made out of them there, perhaps they could lay there the foundation for better endeavors, maybe after some time they might return from there as supporters of the National cause and domestic politics, as the pride of the nation!" In the Czech liberal imagination, colonies represented places transformation. "It does not seem to us a misfortune," the editor of *Občan* could thus declare,

> if, say, 20,000 people were to emigrate who here lean upon a beggar's cane, who have nothing to lose but much to gain. If they were to emigrate they would not be giving way to anyone else, they would not weaken us for they were not and could not be a source of strength. However, they could strengthen us were they to found an established and well-governed community where they could work for the glory of the Czech name and Czech culture [*osvěta*]. If they succeed, for example, in founding such a town in the Caucasus, let it be called "New Prague" or something else, what would be the result? . . . . That we will be 20,000 souls the stronger and more numerous, that our limb would connect us to the great fraternal tribe of Russians, that Czech culture [*osvěta*] and Czech customs would spread in those lands, that from over there will come fruits of Czech literature, that our book trade and industry and trade in general would find purchasers. And since will not lose even a pinch of soil at home, what is there to fear? . . . . Only our own timidity, it seems to us![115]

Proletarians would become entrepreneurs and share liberal values. Not only would national consensus replace nascent class conflict, but the experience of reproducing the homeland

[115]"Stran stěhování," *Občan*, May 15, 1869.

abroad—establishing a "New Prague" on the Caucasus foothills—would make nationally indifferent peasants and downwardly mobile artisans feel themselves to be part of the nation, a status denied to them at home for lack of property and deficiency of character.

One senses here the transition of the term colony, *kolonie* or *osada*, from a weak to a strong sense: from a mere description of settlement to a collective project of national rejuvenation through civilizing activities abroad. František Cyril Kampelík, the physician and utopian social planner from Hradec Králové, did the most to promote colonization in the latter sense. Like other nationally-minded Czechs of his social class, Kampelík looked ambivalently upon emigration. "I am opposed to moving from the homeland," he proclaimed in one article. Yet for those about to emigrate anyway, the publicist advocated settlement of Russia's frontier, a sentiment he expressed in the title of a series he published that spring in *Občan*— "Whoever is Prepared to Leave for America, Turn to the Caucasus."[116]

But more than his contemporaries, Kampelík drew insight from his study of political economy.[117] A physician who had worked in rural Bohemia and treated workers in Prague's growing suburbs, Kampelík knew the conditions in which his countrymen lived. He understood that the growth of industry in Bohemia signaled a crisis for handicrafts, and that Czech farmers struggled to compete with producers in a global market. At the same time, he recognized that industrialization brought progress to the Bohemian lands, freed the country from provincialism, and could introduce a new level of prosperity. But for those left unemployed or unable to hold their own, emigration was sometimes the only remedy. Against a crisis of overpopulation, Kampelík recognized, patriotic admonitions were useless. A land with a growing population inevitably exported its surplus labor power. In this way, emigration represented a facet of modern economics that might be controlled, but not suppressed. These were ideas he had developed a decade earlier in his tract, *Propositions for Industry*.

As an economic liberal, Kampelík celebrated progress and the growth of industry. He encouraged his countrymen to take initiative and better their fortune. As a Czech patriot, however, the physician worried about the weakened state of his nation due to overseas labor migration. The 'strong sense' of colonization came to the fore when Kampelík attempted to resolve this dilemma by offering organized settlement abroad as a remedy for the economic malady of which mass emigration was the symptom. "We wean our children to strengthen foreign lands," he complained, "while we on the other hand lose national nutrients." It behooved contemporaries to stop the hemorrhage, a loss of population occurring "without inventory or harmonization." In America, immigrants spread out and assimilated—"an absolute loss for our nationality, our industry, and trade," claimed Kampelík, adding immediately, "as long as we do not better organize after the example of the English, Germans, and others."[118]

Other peoples—Kampelík mentioned the Dutch as well as English and Germans—profitably invested their surplus populations abroad. Unlike Czechs, who had "forgotten to organize," western neighbors did not "leave their surplus […] to chance." "We Czechoslavs have

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[116] "Kdos uchystán do Ameriky, obrať se na Kavkaz," *Občan*, June 15, 1869; "Kdos uchystán do Ameriky, obrať se na Kavkaz," *Posel z Prahy*, June 17, 19, 22, 25, and July 24, 1869.

[117] Kampelík's works about political economy include *Průmyslné návrhy* (Hradec Králové: F.C. Kampelík, 1859); *Spořitelny po farských kollaturách orbě, řemeslu ze svízelu pomohou* (Hradec Králové: F.C. Kampelík, 1861); and *Z nedostatku peněz orba, obchod, průmysl, řemesla v nynější době klesají!: Jak si teda k penězům pomůžeme, aby obživy a blahobytu přibylo? Finančné návrhy Josefa Kadečky: jež prostonárodně vzdělal a upravil Frant. Cyrill Kampelík* (Hradec Králové, 1866).

[118] "Důležity vysvětlivky o Kavkaze," *Občan*, May 30, 1869.

not yet proven ourselves to be masters of colonization like the Germans," Kampelík further explained. "History shows that Germans stick together, that they support each other, settle collectively, calculate well for the future, and progress toward their goal with iron perseverance. And where do we have outstanding colonies? Our educated men here have never thought about how the children of Czechoslavs, pursued by an evil fate, would have a refuge in other parts of the world where they might fare better than at home."[119] Kampelík brought his ideas about political economy to bear on the question of mass emigration and demanded that emigrants be incorporated into the wider project of national expansion. "Colonization," he added later, "is a very important article in our national program; I respectfully direct the attention of all intelligent patriots to it! – Chance shall not be permitted reign any longer."[120]

This was a clear transition from the weak sense of *kolonisace* to the strong meaning of the word. Kampelík justified organized colonization on economic grounds and portrayed it as part of the national program. Moreover, colonization meant the spread of civilization from a higher people to less developed races. Speaking about Czech tutelage of indigenous tribes in the Caucasus, Kampelík exclaimed, "You will see how those nations unite with our people, how they will receive civilization [*vzdělanost*] and how their capital will turn to us as soon as we earn their trust, for those poor souls have till now been pushed aside by everyone else."[121] Russians peasants, too, had much to learn from the most western of Slavs. An excerpt taken from an 1872 article in *Posel z Prahy* titled "On the Colonization of Russia," which the editor assured to have been written by a Russian, makes the point even without commentary:

> The willingness with which the Russian plowman began to introduce into his agricultural activities farm equipment improved by Czechs, Czech crop rotation and manner of husbandry etc. has attracted the attention of the Russian public. […] [The Czech] does not care that the Russian ploughman finds himself on a lower rung of civilization than he, but acts so as to impart upon him his knowledge and to share with him his civilization. It is clear what fruits will result from such sewing. The Russian peasant has taken to love the Czech, he believes him, he adopts his culture and adopts it quickly.[122]

One can view such language as the expression of identity crisis; from their position as the vanguard of pan-Slavism, Czechs would emancipate themselves from German culture and prove their own (often doubted) Slavic identity.

Russia now offered Czechs a final chance to take charge of their fate, to better coordinate emigration for the benefit of the nation. It was, according to Kampelík, Petříček, and others at *Občan,* an opportunity not to be missed. "An idler, nitwit, drunkard, or rascal will get soaked

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[119] "Důležity vysvětlivky o Kavkaze," *Občan*, May 30, 1869.
[120] "Důležité vysvětlivky o Kavkaze," *Občan,* June 8, 1869
[121] "Poměry Kavkazské," *Občan*, March 16, 1869.
[122] Compare with the following excerpts taken from the same series of articles: "The Czech will improve his own livelihood, the Russians will learn, and he [the Czech] will bring to Russia a beautiful element, the fruit of many centuries, an element that has taken to itself the best of western-European civilization and adapted it to fit the Slavic character. From these teachers we can, yes, we must absorb that science which did not take, did not lay roots in the company of our old teachers—the German colonists […]." "Can anything have a better effect on the Russian peasant than a living example from the side of Czech settlers? A Czech colony will be a school of life for the Russians; they will win their trust by showing them how western Europe advanced. Colonies with a Slavic element, looked upon by the Russian peasant with fondness—they are a good seed […]." "O kolonísování na Rusi," *Posel z Prahy*, November 3 and 5, 1872.

under his own roof," wrote Kampelík in his idiosyncratic fashion, "poverty, want, and disease will fly in through his door and windows. But an agile mind and beautiful values supported by useful knowledge will secure on that same plot of land a happy livelihood."[123]

Ultimately, colonization was not about native peoples or Russians at all, but about reshaping the Czech character. More important that the yarn about a New Prague on the Black Sea was the vision of what colonization entailed for the social question at home. Colonization was part of the larger effort by Czech liberals to reshape society in their petty bourgeois image, to make proletarians into small capitalists. If Czech liberals could guide Russian peasant, Tatar, Lezgin, or Circassian into the modern world, so the logic went, surely they could do the same for the Czech artisan, peasant, or worker.

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Kampelík's enthusiasm did not survive the winter. The following spring, articles appeared in *Posel z Prahy* (as *Občan* was renamed) warning readers against moving to Russia. In April 1870, Kampelík cautioned his countrymen "not to hurry" and to "look for something at home."[124] The Black Sea climate was unsuited to Czechs, said the physician, supplies there were expensive, Russian support insufficient, and newcomers suffered from malaria. Even Vácslav Petříček was said to have returned home ill. Why, then, had Petříček written so eagerly about the Caucasus and all the advantages it promised? Kampelík offered the following lame excuse: "He was charmed by the natural exuberance of spring."

Nevertheless, hundreds of Czech families did move to the Caucasus after 1868. Auerhan counted 3,360 compatriots there in 1897.[125] Locals constructed churches and schools, where, until 1930, instructors arrived from Bohemia to teach the Czech language.[126] But emigration to southern Russia never became part of a national program. Working-class immigrants never became Czech colonists. But that did not matter. Of greater importance were patterns of thought that persisted long after the newspaper polemics of 1867 and 1869. These included assumptions about Czech cultural advancement—expressed, for example, by the flexible term *vzdělanost*, which signified education and refinement, but was also used to describe land cultivation and social development. The Czech public continued to think of their nation a carrier of culture to underdeveloped societies and an agent of modernity. Whether it entailed introducing modern methods of crop rotation or land fertilization to Russian peasants or leading inhabitants of the Caucasus to a higher stage of civilization, the Czechs were portrayed as bringing *slovanská osvěta* to Russia's imperial frontiers.

[123] "Důležité vysvětlivky o Kavkaze," *Občan,* June 8, 1869.
[124] "Zpráva o Kavkaze," Denní kronika, *Posel z Prahy,* April 26, 1870.
[125] Auerhan, "České osady na Kavkaze," 376.
[126] "Češi v okolí Novorossijska žijí už téměř půl druhého století," Milena Štráfeldová, *Český rozhlas 7*, accessed April 14, 2013, http://www.radio.cz/cz/rubrika/krajane/cesi-v-okoli-novorossijska-ziji-uz-temer-pul-druheho-stoleti.

Conclusion

On the morning of October 28, 1918, red and white banners unfurled above Prague as signs with the double-headed Austrian eagle sank beneath the waves of the Vltava. Crowds assembled in the city squares and filled the public spaces, creating an atmosphere of restlessness and anticipation in the streets. Austria had been defeated. Events proceeded at a rapid pace over the course of the day. Members of the National Committee in Prague ordered the occupation of key economic centers and quickly took command of the public and military administration. That evening, coup completed, the National Council released its first official communication to the public: "To the Czechoslovak people! Your age-old dream has become reality. This day the Czechoslovak state has taken its place among the independent, free, civilized states of the world."[1]

The emergence of independent nation-states after World War One marked a turning point in the history of East Central Europe. From the defeated German Reich to revolutionary Russia, between the Baltic to the Black Sea, a beltway of small states arose in the former borderlands of four ruined empires. Everywhere the advent of statehood transformed the relationship of the region's inhabitants to their homelands. In Czechoslovakia, Germans and Hungarians became national minorities while Czechs and Slovaks, now wedded together as Czechoslovaks, were made into a "state bearing" people. Almost three centuries after the defeat at White Mountain, Czechs could now celebrate the existence of a state capable of defending their interests as a nation.

And yet even at this moment of political independence, Czech liberals continued to defend the nation's capacity for self-rule, to present it as a carrier of civilization. The proclamation of the National Council continued:

> You will not disappoint the expectations of the entire civilized [*kulturní*] world, which with praise on its lips recalls your glorious history, culminating in the immortal achievements of the Czechoslovak Legions on western battlefields and in Siberia. The entire world follows your footsteps into this new life. Your entrance to the Promised Land. Keep your name pure as it was kept by your national army: the Czechoslovak Legions. Remain constantly aware that you are a citizen of the Czech state not only with all the rights that it entails, but also with the responsibilities.[2]

The image of a Promised Land, familiar from the book of Exodus and used centuries earlier to describe forefather Čech's arrival to Bohemia, was now employed by national leaders to depict the event of statehood as the fulfillment of a sacred oath, as the arrival at a long desired goal. Of course, the words had also been used by thousands of emigrants in their hopeful descriptions of another destination, America. In all of these instances, the Promised Land marked the endpoint of an arduous journey. In October 1918, Czechs seemed to commemorate the end of an anabasis

[1] The adjectives used were *samostatný* (independent), *svobodný* (free), and *kulturní* (civilized). "Provolání Národního výboru o samostatnosti československého státu," in *Dokumenty našeho osvobození* edited by Cyrill Merhout (Prague: Nakladatel Bedřich Kočí, 1919), 150.

[2] The original text indeed refers to a Czech, rather than Czechoslovak, state. "Provolání Národního výboru," 150.

that had led during the war—and, in another sense, throughout the nation's modern history—from the Bohemian homeland to battlefronts in the West and East. The story line is by now familiar to the reader of this dissertation: After much hardship abroad, the wanderer returns. Again it was a story of anagnorisis. The migrant Czech came back from time spent abroad, from the *cizina,* with a newfound appreciation of the homeland, *domov,* and a reinvigorated sense of ethnic belonging, acknowledging all the rights and responsibilities that go along with membership in the nation.

On the surface bold and full of confidence, the proclamation of October 28, 1918, might also be interpreted as a sign of uncertainty. Why the insistence that the Czechs "will not disappoint?" Patriots once more utilized the image of Czechs abroad to confirm their status as modern, civilized, and (most recently) as contributors to the allied effort in a war against German barbarism. The Czechoslovak Legions, composed of soldiers who had deserted the Austrian army and expatriates living abroad, represented the National Council's greatest bargaining chip during the last months of the First World War. Especially in Russia their activities had contributed to the war's outcome and transformed the Czechs from belligerents into a victorious ally. The Legions won the Czechs a degree of recognition abroad and provided leverage at postwar negotiations; but whether "the entire civilized world" recalled their glorious history? Did the global public, "with praise on its lips," truly follow the nation's every step? In such moments of overstatement one detects the concealment of some underlying doubt.

That the West should take notice of Czech deeds in foreign lands; that sort of desire was nothing new. It represented the aspiration of Czech liberals since the middle of the nineteenth century. On the morning of independence, national leaders once again projected the wish for national sovereignty in terms of this familiar demand. "Our liberators Masaryk and Wilson," the National Council continued, "must not be disappointed in their conviction that freedom has been attained by a people capable of governing itself." Again the authors used the word, *disappointed*. The call to preserve public order betrayed the persistence of worries that the nation would not after all be recognized by western powers as capable of self-governance and autonomous development, of leading an independent existence in the community of civilized states.[3]

In its combination of optimism and ambivalence, the proclamation of October 1918 echoed the longstanding debates about lower-class mobility examined in this dissertation. Those debates in turn had represented a complex blend of emotions inherited by Czech liberals from the experience of 1848. In the decade that followed the would-be revolution, the Czechs' was a national movement in search of a social base. At the dawn of the constitutional era between 1861

[3] An illustration: Returning from negotiations with members of the foreign resistance in Geneva held between October 28 and 31 in Geneva, the publicist, leading prewar politician, and first Czechoslovak Prime Minister Karel Kramář confidently reported that "the Allies will lay before us a clean sheet of paper upon which we may write our demands, they will all be fulfilled." To a Prague crowd on November 5, 1918, he stated; "I can tell you that thanks to our Legions, to their boundless sacrifice, thanks to the work of our dear one who are abroad, thanks to Masaryk, Beneš, and all those who are with us, we enjoy such a status in the entire civilized world [*v celém civilisovaném světě*] the likes of which we never could have dreamed." Following postwar peace negotiations in Paris in January and February 1919, where the Czechoslovaks were categorized as a "small nation with limited interests," Kramář dramatically changed his tune. "After the war we had nothing left to offer," he complained, "[…] and so we ceased to be a problem, we were no longer interesting." Optimism gave way to the sobering realization of their position as a small country landlocked in the middle of Europe dependent on the recognition of larger, foreign powers. In the end, Kramář sighed, "we were handed no blank paper upon which to write our demands." Vladimír Sís, *Karel Kramář: Život a dílo* (Prague: Pokorný, 1930), 288-289; Karel Kramář, *Pět Přednášek o zahraniční politice* (Pražská akciová tiskarna, 1922), 88.

and 1867, Czech patriotic society emerged from neoabsolutism as a movement that idealized the rural *lid* but stood for the interests of moderately prosperous artisans and peasant farmers from Bohemia's small towns and villages.[4] Yet even as these ethnopolitical entrepreneurs celebrated the "completion" of their national society, entrepreneurs of another sort began to abandon the country in large numbers.[5] Between 1851 and 1873, some sixty thousand Czech-speaking peasants and artisans invested whatever capital they possessed into resettlement abroad. Mass emigration in this way opened up a fissure in Czech society, a wound that would not close even after 1918. On the one hand, it symbolized the penetration of international markets into the Bohemian countryside, a phenomenon that the petty bourgeois milieu observed with mixed emotions. On the other hand, the exodus of compatriots from the very social class from which Czech activists sought to recruit supporters for their nation-building efforts could not but have had a disheartening effect. As self-proclaimed liberals they voiced support for the free movement of labor. But as Czech patriots they worried over souls lost to the nation.

Ambivalence thus lay at the core of the emigration question; a discourse that developed from an appeal to the emigrant's sense of patriotism to a systematic critique of the Habsburg state and the call for State Rights. This dissertation has examined the first decades of mass labor migration from Bohemia and the emergence of the Czech national movement between 1848 and 1873. During that time, a period when the Czech nation came into being as a political entity, the presence of working-class compatriots abroad provided national leaders an opportunity to present their ethnic polity as an agent of global progress. Especially during the era of constitutional experimentation, stretching from the October Diploma of 1860 to the April Constitution of 1873, "Czechs abroad" served as the framework for justifying claims to increased autonomy within the Habsburg Empire by appealing to the cultural work purportedly accomplished by compatriots in foreign lands. Visions of concentrated settlement in the American West or upon the borderlands of imperial Russia depicted Czechs as a civilized and civilizing force in backward parts of the world. In the culture of passive resistance that followed the *Ausgleich* of 1866, when symbolic gesture replaced parliamentary debate as the mode of political protest, stories (real or imagined) about the cultivation of wild or fallow lands and Czech patronage over primitive peoples placed the small nation on par with the monarchy's two ruling nations, the Hungarians and Germans. The appeal to a civilizing mission, voiced above all in the Czech liberal press, also helped achieve a second goal: to legitimize the liberals' claim to a

[4] Hroch astutely observes that the petty bourgeoisie, emerging from the top layers of craftsmen and small producers, played a fundamental role in almost all national movements among small peoples (defined by Hroch as "oppressed nationalities," see the footnote below). Although crucial, the petty bourgeoisie did not play a leading (in the sense of most visible) role in these movements. Instead, for Hroch the petty-bourgeoisie figures as a necessary precondition for successful national movements because they functioned as a "social bridgehead" from which a national ruling class could later emerge (Phase C). As the social layer most receptive to the nationalist message, small urban and rural craft producers and farmers formed the basis for a national petty bourgeoisie from which a "native" ruling class was drawn. Hroch summarizes it thus: "The petty bourgeois milieu contained the hidden potential for the future of the oppressed nationalities," Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe*, 134-135.

[5] The reference here is to Rogers Brubaker, who has used the term "ethnopolitical entrepreneur" (alternatively, "identitarian entrepreneur," "political and cultural entrepreneur" or simply "ethnic entrepreneur") to designate "those specialists in ethnicity […] who, unlike nonspecialists, may live 'off' as well as 'for' ethnicity […]," that is to say, activists whose nationalizing discourse calls into being those very groups in whose name they claim to speak. Miroslav Hroch defined the small nation as a "non-dominant ethnic group" characterized by three "deficiencies": lack of "its own" nobility or ruling classes, lack of a national state, and an "incomplete or interrupted literary tradition." as "incomplete societies." The two scholars might take issue with each other's vocabulary. Brubaker, *Ethnicity without Groups*, 10, 12, 54, 67, 107; Hroch, *Social Preconditions*, xii.

leadership role in the national community. This vocabulary of civilizing mission and ethnic leadership would have been impossible outside the context of overseas migration; the same unease that lower-class mobility evoked in patriotic society also gave rise to a discursive Czech colonialism.

"The bourgeois triumph was brief and impermanent," Eric Hobsbawm observed in *The Age of Capital*. "At the very moment when it seemed complete, it proved to be not monolithic but full of fissures. In the early 1870s economic expansion and liberalism seemed irresistible. By the end of the decade they were so no longer."[6] In his book, Hobsbawm elaborated on a subject of incomparably greater breadth than what has been attempted in the present work. Still, the development of Czech national society between 1848 and 1873—the latter year marking the onset of prolonged economic stagnation across the world and, consequently, the end of the first phase of mass labor migration from Central Europe—falls squarely into Hobsbawm's global narrative. The period between the Springtime of Nations and the Great "Victorian" Depression was one of optimism and social ascent for Czech patriots in the Bohemian lands, yet gaps and fractures easily broke through the surface. Even during the period of national ascent, important contributors to the movement betrayed moments of self-doubt and reserve. One recalls Jakub Malý's worry that lower-class stomachs had been spoiled "through writings too strongly spiced," or František Šimáček's characterization of foreign credit as "a raven […] more relentless than death." František Kampelík praised capitalist industry as the gift of God while in the same breath expressing unease about the growing proletariat.[7] Even those most active in the national movement feared the shadow side of capitalism and democracy.

"The era of the triumphant bourgeois"—Hobsbawm's formulation that we might modify here to fit the Czech context as "the era of the triumphant petty bourgeois"—was therefore mired in doubt. This dissertation has interpreted the emigration debate as a symptom of liberal uncertainty, the unsure status of Czech liberals in their nation and of that nation in the wider world. Neither mass emigration nor the emigration question disappeared after the 1870s; the presence of Czechs overseas continued to inform debates about national identity up to the First World War and well beyond. But that belongs to another chapter.[8] The movement of working-class Czechs across borders shaped the discourse about nationhood as it developed during the crucial decades after 1848. In the transition from an age of capital to one of empire, and even into the age of extremes, Czech national leaders continued anxiously to follow the footsteps of emigrants.

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[6] Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital, 1848-1875* (New York: Vintage, 1975), 5.

[7] Jakub Malý, "Přehled literární činnosti Čechů od roku 1848 až do nynější doby," *Časopis českého museum* 26, no. 4 (1852), 27; "Záložní či výpomocné kasy," *Posel z Prahy* 4, no. 7 (August 1858), 149; František Kampelík, *Průmyslové návrhy* (Hradec Králové: Nákladem spisovatelovym, 1859), 12.

[8] Stanislav Brouček and Ivo Vasiljev, "K charakteristice československé vystěhovalecké politiky mezi dvěma světovými válkami," *Český lid* 72, no. 2 (1985), 71-79; Stanislav Brouček and Ivo Vasiljev, "K charakteristice československé vystěhovalecké politiky mezi dvěma světovými válkami," *Český lid* 72, no. 3 (1985), 139-148; Ivo Vasiljev, "K pokusům československé buržoazie o usměrňování vystěhovalectví do mimoevropských zemí," *Slováci v zahraničí* 11 (1985), 85-108; Ivo Vasiljev, "Pokusy o směrování vystěhovalectví do kolonií v meziválečné ČSR," Ivo Vasiljev, "K snahám české buržoazie o získání kolonií v době vuržoazní ČSR," *Češi v cizině* 3 (1988), 139-192; Stanislav Brouček and Tomáš Grulich, *Domáci postoje k zahraničním Čechům v novodobých dějinách 1918-2008* (Prague: Public History , s.r.o. and Etnologický Ústav AV ČR, 2009).

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Slavie, Racine, WI
Slowan Amerikánský, Racine, WI
Světozor, Prague

Appendices

Tables

Table 1. Emigration from Austrian Monarchy and Bohemia, 1850-1859

Year	From Austria[1]	From Bohemia (including Moravia)[2]	Bohemia as percentage of total (including Moravia)[3]
1850	508	166 (179)	33% (35%)
1851	864	341 (352)	40% (41%)
1852	1,179	427 (464)	36% (39%)
1853	4,684	3,419 (3,691)	73% (79%)
1854	7,141	6,182 (6,426)	86% (90%)
1855	4,005	3,021 (3,523)	75% (88%)
1856	2,779	2,088 (2,273)	75% (81%)
1857	2,836	2,126 (2,218)	75% (78%)
1858	2,126	1,341 (1,416)	63% (67%)
1859	1,431	842 (907)	59% (64%)
1850-1859	27,553	19,899 (21,449)	72% (78%)
Average for 1850-1859	2,755	1,990 (2,145)	72% (78%)
Average for 1853-1857	4,289	3,356 (3,626)	78% (85%)

SOURCE: *Mitteilung aus dem Gebiete der Statistik* 17, no. 3 (1870): 79-100; Buzek, "Das Auswanderungsproblem und die Regelung des Auswanderungswesens in Oesterreich," *Zeitschrift für Volkswirtschaft, Sozialpolitik und Verwaltung* 10 (1901): 445-446; Mastný, "Statistika vystěhovalectví," 208-209; T. Čapek, *Naše Amerika*, 162.)

[1]Official statistics reflecting number of emigration passports issued in Cisleithanian half of monarchy. Figures do not reflect illegal and semi-legal emigration. Emigration from Transleithania was negligible until the 1870s. See Mastný, "Statistika vystěhovalectví," 209n2; László Katus, "Die Magyaren," in *Die Habsburgermonarchie 1848-1918*, vol. 3, *Die Völker des Reiches*, ed. Adam Wandruszka and Peter Urbanitsch (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1980), 426-431.

[2] Does not include illegal and semi-legal emigration.

[3] Does not include illegal and semi-legal emigration.

Table 2. Emigration from Austria (Cisleithania) and Bohemia, 1860-1873

Year[1]	From Austria[2]	From Bohemia[3]	Bohemia As Percentage of total[4]
1860	2,032	1,302	64%
1861	2,513	1,927	77%
1862	1,582	1,246	79%
1863	1,515	1,124	74%
1864	2,322	1,950	84%
1865	2,954	2,417	82%
1866	3,807	3,089	81%
1867	9,299	7,430	80%
1868	4,149	3,220	78%
1869	5,559	4,507	81%
1870	5,920	4,519	76%
1871	9,500	7,273	77%
1872	9,498	5,921	62%
1873	11,228	5,789	52%
1860-1873	58,960	41,748	71%
Average for 1860-1873	4,211	2,982	71%
Average for 1867-1873	7,897	5,523	70%

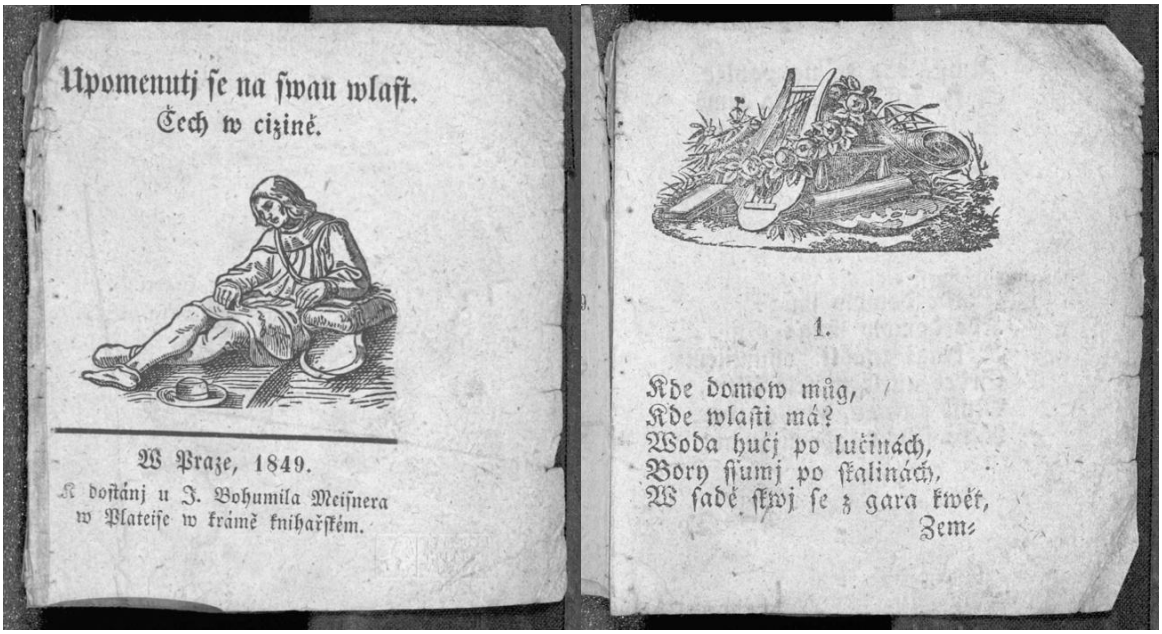
SOURCE: *Mitteilung aus dem Gebiete der Statistik* 17, no. 3 (1870): 79-100. See also Buzek, "Das Auswanderungsproblem und die Regelung des Auswanderungswesens in Oesterreich," *Zeitschrift für Volkswirtschaft, Sozialpolitik und Verwaltung* 10 (1901): 445-446; Čapek, *Naše Amerika*, 159; Mastný, "Statistika vystěhovalectví," 208-209.)

[1] Years 1869 and 1870 compiled from *Mitheilung aus dem Gebiete der Statistic* 19, no. 2 (1872): 126ff.
[2] 1860-1870 reflects number of applications for emigrant passports from Austria-Hungary. The numbers for years 1871-1873 combiled from Bremen and Hamburg port statistics. Emigration from Hungary so small as to be negligable. Virtually all emigrants traveled to the United States.
[3] Years 1871-1873 include emigration from Moravia. Moravia represented only a small fraction (i.e. one to several hundred) of total emigration from Bohemian lands.
[4] 1871-1873 Bohemia and Moravia as percentage of whole. Moravia represented only a small fraction (i.e. one to several hundred) of total emigration from Bohemian lands.

Figures

Figure 1. "Upomenutj se na swau wlast. Čech w cizině."[1]

The text of J.K. Tyl's *Kde domov můj* as distributed in a popular broadsheet in 1849. The text reads, "Reminiscing about his homeland. A Czech in Foreign Lands." The second page contains the first words of Tyl's famous hymn.



[1] "Upomenutj se na swau wlast. Čech w cizině." (Jindřichův Hradec: Tiskem Aloisa Josefa Landfrasa, 1849): Památník národního písemnictví, fond Kramářské tisky, sign. T 024 12.

Figure 2. The blacksmith attempts to rescue the unsuspecting schoolteacher from the influence of an unscrupulous agent. (From a 1950's performance of *Lesní panna* at the Disk theater.)[1]

[1] Antonín Grund, *Spisy Josefa Kajetána Tyla* 19 (Prague: Státní nakladatelství krásné literatury, hudby a umění, 1953), plate 34.

Figure 3. Seduced by an emigrant letter. (From a 1950's performance of *Lesní panna* at the MOD theater in Mladá Boleslav.)[1]

[1] Grund, *Spisy Josefa Kajetána Tyla* 19, plate 39.

Figure 4. “Portrait of the Blacksmith Jech,” by Karel Purkyně (1860)

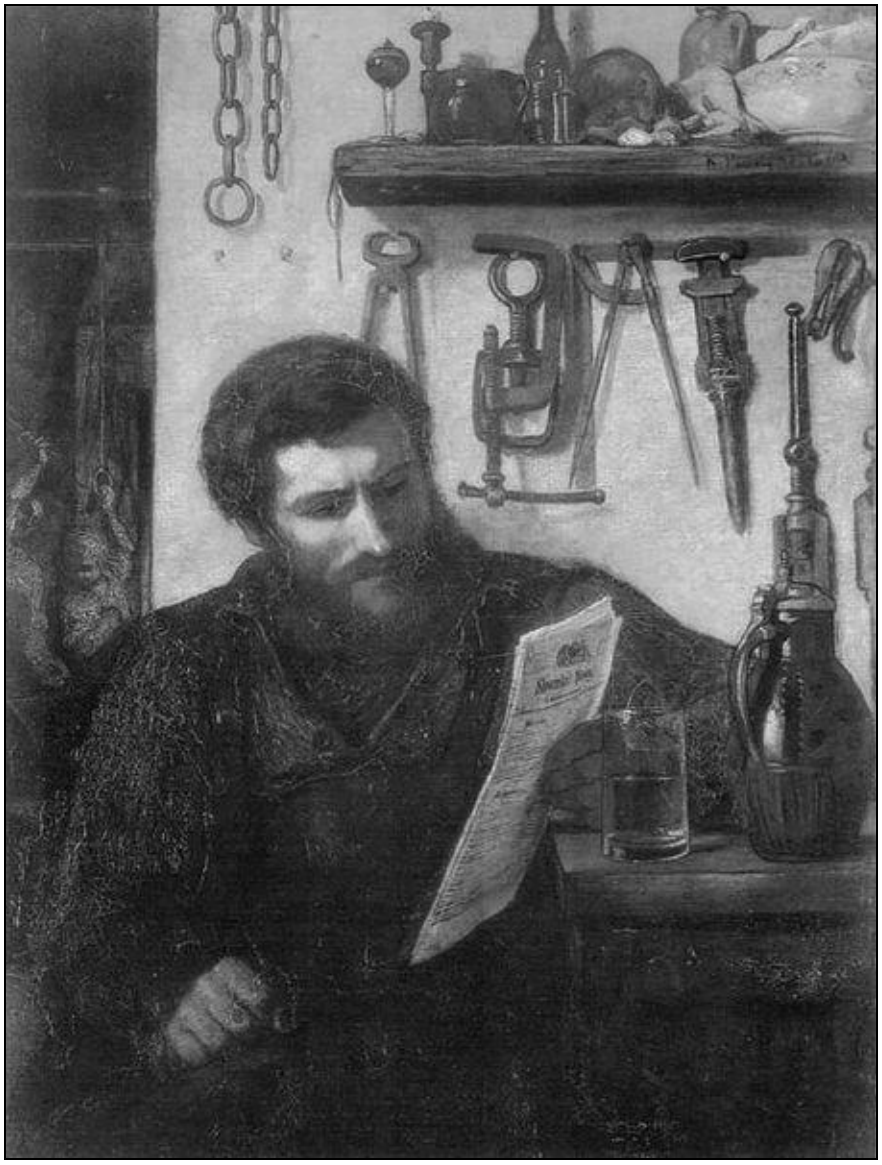
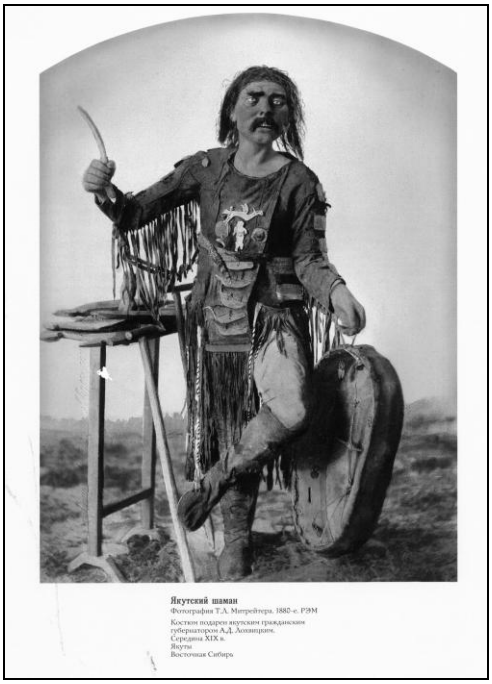
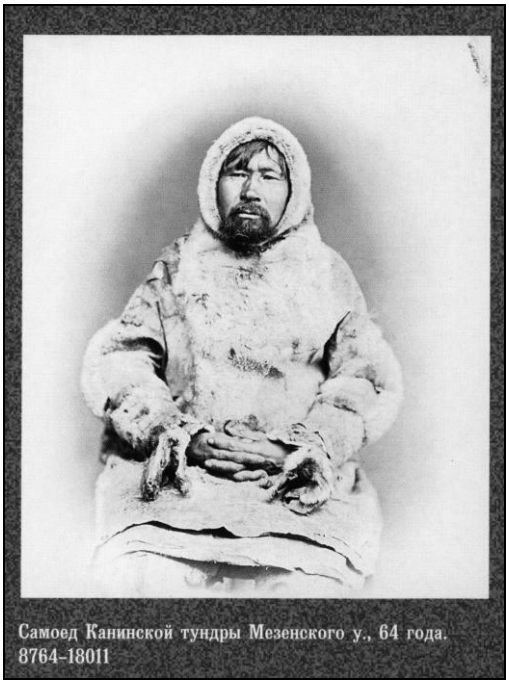


Figure 5. "The Dream of an impatient emigrant to the Amur … and the reality." (*Humoristické listy* 4, no. 20, 1862.)

Figure 6. "Emigrants to America: A Scene from the Prague Train Station." (*Květy,* August 15, 1867.)

Figures 7 and 8. A Yakut shaman from eastern Siberia and a Kanin Tundra Samoyed from Mezen' *uyezd*. Both objects were displayed at the Moscow Ethnographic Exhibition in 1867.[1]





[1] *The European Slavs and the Peoples of Russia*. (St. Petersburg: Russian Museum of Ethnography, 2008), 53, 150.

Figure 9. "Kazakh girl and a woman in rich clothes." Objects displayed at the Moscow Ethnographic Exhibition in 1867.[1]

[1] *The European Slavs and the Peoples of Russia,* 197.