

Central European Studies
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Staging the Past

*The Politics of Commemoration
in Habsburg Central Europe,
1848 to the Present*

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The Nationalization of East Central Europe

Ethnicism, Ethnicity, and Beyond

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In one sense, scholars have explained successfully the transformation of East Central Europe over the past two centuries from a non-national into a national region. Study after study has charted the development of national movements within the Habsburg Monarchy during the nineteenth century; the founding of national successor states after the First World War; and the reconfiguration of boundaries, the near extermination of Jews, and the expulsion of Germans during the 1940s. A solid scholarly corpus already exists on the breakup of Czechoslovakia after 1989 into the Czech Republic and Slovakia, as well as on the far bloodier breakup, replete with "ethnic cleansing," of Yugoslavia. Taken together, those literatures contribute significantly to explaining how it came to be that Austria, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, and Slovenia today fit the nation-state ideal more closely than has perhaps any other cluster of countries in the world, ever.¹ The Hungarian minority of southern Slovakia is now much more the exception in East Central Europe than the rule.

Yet in another sense, the nationalization of the region remains poorly understood. When did the several million people expelled as Germans between 1945 and 1947 become Germans in the first place? In which senses, and to what extent? Only 150 years ago, most inhabitants of East Central Europe had little or no national consciousness. Many peasants, if asked about their nationality, could be expected to respond with a question of their own: "What on earth is that?"² How, then, did nationhood come to seem a permanent, defining feature of all individuals in the region during the twenti-

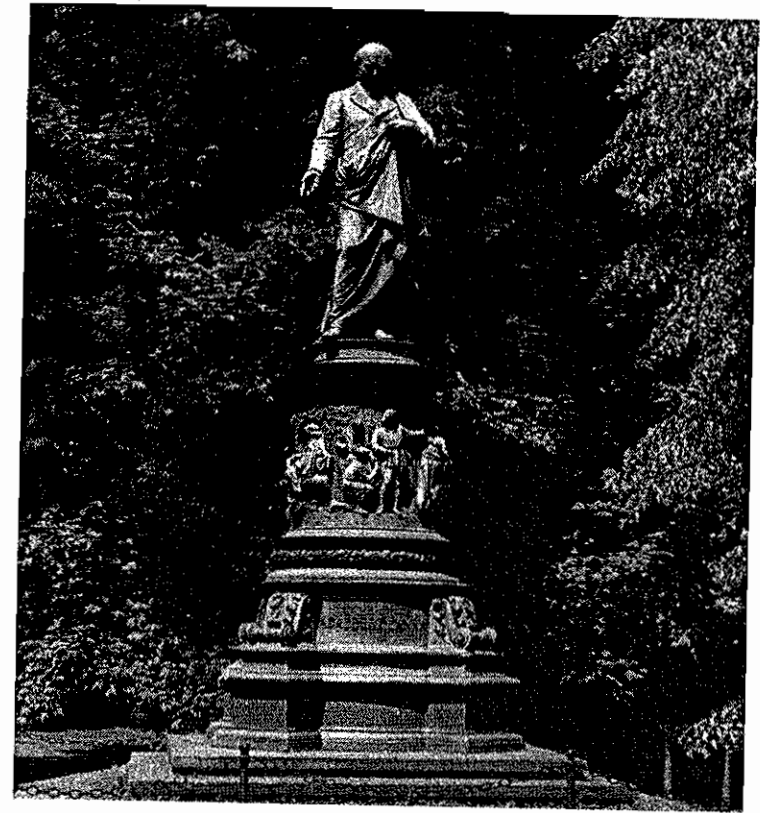


Figure 1. Statue of imperial royal Shipmaster Adalbert/Vojtěch Lanna in Budějovice (Photograph by Nancy M. Wingfield).

eth century? Although historians and other social scientists concerned with East Central Europe have shed much light on the nationalization of its political structures, they have explained the development of national consciousness—the nationalization of individuals—in systematically flawed fashion.

Few serious scholars of East Central Europe adhere today to the primordialist school, which assumes national consciousness instead of analyzing it. But almost all scholars who do study the nationalisms of the region employ an approach that I call *ethnicism*. Distinct from (but based on) approaches to national questions through ethnicity (understood in the broadest and most indeterminate possible sense), ethnicism seems a rejection of the primordialist position and an improvement on its static treatment of national questions, its anachronism, and its blocking of central

actors and dynamics from view. In fact, however, ethnicism amounts to a more subtle elaboration of primordialist errors.

In the first two sections of this essay, I use a historical narrative, first about a statue and then about the man it commemorated, in order to present the nonethnic parts to a new framework for understanding the nationalization of individuals in East Central Europe. In the next three sections, I turn from statuary and from commemoration to a critique of ethnicism. My goal is to separate specific ethnicist arguments from fuzzy ethnic "facts" within that rival framework, and then to incorporate each in different fashion into my own—which is based in considerable measure on the recent work of Rogers Brubaker, a sociologist. In my conclusion, I address the implications of my findings for historians of East Central Europe, as well as for scholars in the broader field of nationalism studies.

A Statue: Czech or German?

As a lens through which to begin examining the nationalization of individuals in East Central Europe, I offer a statue. Like many statues, a person's likeness in bronze, this one has spent a number of decades in a public place and has served a number of times as the focus of controversy. Should the statue stay? Should it go? And whether it stayed, went, or returned (all three have happened), for what did and does the statue stand? Statuary serves here as a useful proxy for politics, as a microcosm of the clash of worldviews.

The statue in question was unveiled, in 1879, in a town called Budějovice. Located approximately 100 miles south of Prague, within the historic kingdom of Bohemia, the town lay at the time (before the expulsions of the 1940s) on the linguistic cusp between solidly Slavic and solidly Germanic parts of that Habsburg territory. Some residents spoke a version of what today counts as Czech, some spoke a version of what today counts as German, and many spoke both—or a *mélange* of the two. Budějovice, the Czech-language name of the town, thus had a German-language equivalent: Budweis. In German, beer brewed there was *Budweiser Bier*. Budějovice/Budweis, in fact, counts as the home of the original Budweiser, from which the American variety, Anheuser-Busch's "King of Beers," takes its name.³

Represented by the statue was a man known as imperial royal Shipmaster Lanna. Born in town in the year 1805 into a wealthy family with a shipbuilding yard on the banks of the Vltava/Moldau River, Lanna had taken

over the business as a young man. Branching out into river regulation, railroad building, and iron manufacture, he had proved fabulously successful, coming to rank by the time of his death early in 1866 as one of the foremost industrialists and philanthropists in all the Habsburg Monarchy. Within days of the funeral, prominent burghers of Budějovice/Budweis, grateful for Lanna's many charitable contributions, had launched a campaign to raise funds for a statue. And thirteen years later, thanks to donations not only from individuals but from the municipality as well, the statue was raised.⁴

Present at the unveiling in May 1879 were leaders of the Czech and the German national movements in town. Both the Czech male choir, called the *Beseda*, and the German male choir, called the *Liedertafel*, sang—although relations between the clubs had been poor since the founding of the *Beseda* in 1862. Back then, as the repressive, neoabsolutist Habsburg regime erected in the wake of the failed revolutions of the "Springtime of Nations" in 1848–1849 had buckled, the slightly older *Liedertafel* had amended its statutes to make membership in one choir rule out membership in the other. Not once thereafter had the *Beseda* and the *Liedertafel* performed at the same event. But now they joined, exceptionally, in paying homage to the same man.⁵ The Czech and the German movements competed, by participating in the 1879 ceremony, to claim the dead and mute Lanna. Would the Czech movement, which called him by the Christian name of Vojtěch, or the German movement, which knew him as Adalbert, prevail?

Between the 1870s and the First World War, the outcome remained undecided. More residents seem to have become nationally conscious during that period in a Czech sense than in a German one. But the German movement dominated important public institutions. Town Hall, for example, over which German leaders had first gained control through elections during the mid-1860s, remained theirs until 1918—decades after Czechs had begun claiming that they outnumbered Germans in Budějovice/Budweis. Here the Bohemian municipal electoral order helped; it, like all suffrage systems of the Habsburg Monarchy, strongly favored wealthy men over poor ones. And Germans in town (for reasons that I will address later⁶) ranked on average as wealthier than Czechs. German electoral fraud also played a growing role. Given the remarkable autonomy accorded municipalities in late imperial Austria, control of Town Hall translated into considerable power.⁷ German aldermen could and did mold public space, naming streets after German cultural heroes such as Friedrich von Schiller

but refusing to honor Czech ones. Germans in Town Hall also denied municipal funding for a statue of a Czech local hero after his death in 1883: Bishop Jan Valerian Jirsík, who had contributed to the pomp and circumstance surrounding the unveiling of the Lanna statue in 1879 by holding a high Mass in the cathedral. Through such methods and through related ones involving municipal contracts, jobs, business licenses, and more, German leaders in Budějovice/Budweis emphasized German dimensions to Lanna, to the town, and to the population as a whole.⁸

As the Great War lurched to a close late in 1918, however, the Czech movement seized power in Budějovice/Budweis. Backed by a huge crowd, Czech leaders ousted German ones from Town Hall and from other public strongholds. Resentment-filled Czechs also ousted many German statues from their privileged places in town, smashing some on the spot and tossing others into the river. The most dramatic cases of such violence against symbols seen as German occurred, symbolically enough, on October 28, the day a new Czechoslovak Republic was proclaimed in Prague. Street names and much, much more followed suit before long. During the 1920s, a statue of Bishop Jirsík at last took up a position just off Budějovice/Budweis's main square—formerly named after Emperor-King Francis Joseph, then after freedom (*Czech freedom, that is*), and from 1924 after first Czechoslovak president Tomáš G. Masaryk.⁹

The statue of Lanna, oddly enough, survived the storm of 1918 undamaged. Indeed, Lanna—or at least his “Vojtěch” dimension—thrived. In the mid-1930s, as tensions heated up between Czechoslovakia and Germany, as well as between Czechs and Germans in Budějovice/Budweis, a lavishly illustrated biography of Lanna appeared, in the Czech language.¹⁰ The book, commissioned by the Lanna Company (by now a huge conglomerate based in Prague), contributed in its own small way to reversing prewar successes at Germanizing the Lanna statue and residents of Budějovice/Budweis—and to Czechifying them instead.

This undertaking by a new national state enjoyed partial success, and then was rudely interrupted. In March 1939, that world-historical figure born and raised only a few dozen miles south of Budějovice/Budweis in the Habsburg territory of Upper Austria, Adolf Hitler, completed the destruction of Czechoslovakia that he had begun the year before at the Munich Conference. Many Germans of Budějovice/Budweis, welcoming Nazis and Nazi Germany's military when they marched into town, recounted

to the new power holders the many injustices done in town since 1918. And Nazis, in the name of Germans, did unto Czechs as Czechs had supposedly done unto Germans—with much greater speed and violence. The Jirsík statue vanished, as did others. Street names changed, some reverting to what they had been before 1918 and others heralding a Nazi present and future. Masaryk Square became Adolf-Hitler-Platz.¹¹

The Lanna statue, once again, survived and thrived. Almost alone among symbols embraced by Czechs in Budějovice/Budweis during the interwar period, Lanna was adopted (indeed, readopted) by Germans during the Second World War. In May 1944, on the sixty-fifth anniversary of the original unveiling, Nazi officials even staged a celebration of the Lanna statue, thereby placing it front and center in their campaign to assert that “Budweis was and remains German.”¹²

The next reversal in the Czech-German relationship followed a different playbook. As Allied armies finished crushing the Third Reich early in May 1945, someone (probably a Czech) attacked the Lanna statue, damaging it. That summer, as reestablished Czechoslovak authorities supervised not only the restoration of order but the expulsion of everyone seen as German, officials ordered the Lanna statue carted away—not repaired.¹³ In 1948, the Communist Party seized power in Czechoslovakia. Soon thereafter, in another sign of a historic rupture and of an end to the flip-flopping of the German and the Czech movements in their decades-long struggle, a new monument appeared in Budějovice/Budweis: a statue of Karl Marx.

Marx, although a sometime German nationalist, was not presented in that capacity to Budějovice/Budweis's residents, now German only in rare cases. To the contrary, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia derived considerable popular support and thus legitimacy during the postwar years from its emphatically anti-German, pro-expulsion stance.¹⁴ The Communist authorities intended Marx to appear in his role as prophet of the proletariat, as founding contributor to a worldview centered less on national than on class conflict. The Czech and the German movements, in a centrifugal dynamic, had driven themselves to opposite ends of the national ideological spectrum—and beyond. Thus may be explained, in part, the turn by many Germans in Budějovice/Budweis to rightist, racist Nazism and the turn by many Czechs, even before the Communist coup d'état of 1948, to leftist, classist Marxism. In this context, Lanna perhaps counted as doubly damned. Tainted with Germanness like Marx, Lanna

and his statue carried additionally the stain of being bourgeois. (Marx, to be sure, could also count as bourgeois. But he had managed in some sense to work himself down by a class. Lanna, in contrast, had become ever richer—and in the year before his death had gained elevation to the Habsburg hereditary nobility.) Jirsík, meanwhile, did not offend Czech Communists on national grounds, but he did on both class and religious ones. Neither the statue of him (removed by the Nazi authorities) nor that of Lanna graced a public space under the new regime.

In 1989, residents of Budějovice/Budweis experienced their fourth and last revolution in the twentieth century: the collapse of Communism. Since then, the statue of Marx has come down. And the statues of Lanna and of Jirsík, almost miraculously, have been relocated, repaired, and reinstalled on their original sites near the center of town. Does this turn of events signal a Czech rehabilitation of the bourgeoisie? Perhaps, even probably. Certain is that the rededication of the Lanna statue signals the rehabilitation of Lanna as a Czech. And his rehabilitation, in turn, signals to a considerable degree the burying of the Czech-German hatchet. Czechs do not and need not fear that expelled Germans someday will return to reclaim Lanna, Budějovice/Budweis, and Bohemia. Long a potent factor in West German politics, those people ironically are today almost a spent force, now that the end to the Cold War would allow for a discussion of *Heimkehr*, or a return home, without raising the specter of nuclear conflict. Retired or dead, the expellees have little interest in returning, and their offspring even less. Lanna, like Budějovice and the whole of Bohemia, can now be safely Czech. The next several shifts in power within Bohemia, unlike the four during the twentieth century, will probably involve only a change in balance within a political system, and not the realignment of entire systems vis-à-vis one another.

The Man: Non-National Loyalty and Legitimacy

Why Lanna? Why has the Lanna statue proved more nimble at switching national sides than perhaps any other political symbol in Budějovice/Budweis? For answers, I turn from the Lanna statue to Lanna himself.

Lanna, the historical record indicates, did not define himself strongly as a German or as a Czech. Nor did he define himself strongly as a combination of the two. The German and Czech movements, to generalize from

the earlier discussion of the *Liedertafel* and *Beseda*, succeeded in making themselves mutually exclusive in Budějovice/Budweis only during the last years of Lanna's life. Both before and after that national bipolarity set in, he supported German and Czech clubs alike in town.¹⁵ Here lies the beginning of an explanation for how both movements could claim Lanna after his death. But I underscore that, even if he did consider himself as much a German as a Czech, he does not seem to have assigned those categories much importance. Lanna, like Austrian novelist Joseph Roth's fictional character Count Morstin (in "The Bust of the Emperor"¹⁶), appears to have thought and acted primarily in non-national terms. What, precisely, were those terms?

Lanna, even as he accumulated title after title over the course of his life, consistently favored one over all others: "imperial royal Shipmaster." At first glance, his choice seems paradoxical, even perverse. An industrialist whose construction of railroads dealt a huge blow to river traffic in Southern Bohemia, Lanna nonetheless stuck with "i.r. Shipmaster" as it shined in importance. Before Lanna, in an unbroken line, his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather had held the title in Budějovice/Budweis.¹⁷ A further motive perhaps complemented Lanna's nostalgia or respect for tradition. Until the year before his death (when, as has already been mentioned, he was elevated to the nobility—as a knight, third class, of the Order of the Iron Crown), "i.r. Shipmaster" served as Lanna's sole title linking him directly to the Habsburg Monarchy as a whole. Not so much the "Shipmaster" mattered, then, as the accompanying "imperial royal," a deeply resonant adjective peculiar to the army and to additional pan-monarchical institutions. (An aside: "i.r." finds expression in German as "k.k.," pronounced "kaka"—thus Robert Musil's scatological satire of the Monarchy as "Kakania" in his epic novel *The Man without Qualities*.¹⁸) Lanna, as founding president of the Music Association in town, as first president of the district Chamber of Commerce and Trade, as charter subscriber to the Prague Burghers' Club, and so on, did much for a few small pieces of his country. In his capacity as i.r. Shipmaster, in contrast, he did small things for the country *in toto*. Lanna's preference for one of his titles points to his patriotism, his loyalty to the state in which he lived.

Another term often used in connection with Lanna during his lifetime was "Budweiser." Taken literally in the original German, the word means "someone or something from Budweis"—beer, for example. But the word meant more in its full nineteenth-century cultural context, which included

not only the German language but the Czech as well. (Czech speakers pronounced "Budweiser" much the same way that German speakers did but spelled and declined it differently: *Budwajzr*, nominative plural *Budwajzři*.) First, "Budweiser" meant a person with close ties to Budějovice/Budweis, wherever he or she might be. Lanna, for example, after moving to Prague in 1857, actually increased his donations to charitable causes in his hometown. Forced by law to surrender his title as burgher of Budějovice/Budweis (*měšťan budějovický/Budweiser Bürger*) in order to become a burgher of Prague, he acquired the rare title of honorary burgher as a substitute. Second, over the latter half of the nineteenth century, "Budweiser" increasingly came to mean a person more loyal to Budějovice/Budweis than to the Czech or German movement. "In Southern Bohemia," went a nineteenth-century saying that was still circulating in town as late as the 1930s, "there are three nations, namely Germans, Czechs, and Budweisers."¹⁹ In fact, to call Budweisers a nation is problematic, for reasons that will become clear soon. Nonetheless, the saying captures the concept of a loyalty other than Czechness or Germanness. To be a Budweiser was to feel a local patriotism that reinforced loyalty to the Habsburg Monarchy by lending it emotional depth and internal structure.

"Vojtěch Lanna," a Czech newspaper in Budějovice/Budweis announced on the front page of its January 18, 1866, issue, "i.r. Shipmaster, honorary burgher of Budějovice, knight of the Order of the Iron Crown, honorary captain of the Budějovice Pr. [Privileged] Burghers' Corps of Sharpshooters, burgher of Prague, etc. etc. died in Prague on Monday, the fifteenth day of this month at one o'clock in the night, being 61 years of age. Glory to the memory of a noble-minded man!"²⁰ Several of Lanna's titles still dangle invitingly, keys to conceptual treasure chests. My point, however, is already clear enough. Lanna's politics centered on the Habsburg Monarchy and Budějovice/Budweis, as well as on Bohemia, the Habsburg dynasty, the Catholic Church, and a host of interrelated institutions—including even the Czech and the German national movements. In what I call his "Habsburg" world, mostly non-national but beginning to become multinational by the time of his death, different institutions made different claims of him, in different proportions than they did of other individuals. The situation determined which loyalties and which titles came to the fore.

Lanna was no freak. The unusual nimbleness of the Lanna statue at switching national sides as the nationalization of Bohemia and of its

population unfolded has roots not in some distinction between him and all others but in the small number of people and in the even smaller number of Budweisers commemorated with statues, as well as in the specifics of history. Bishop Jirsík, for example, came from the same mold as Lanna. Also bilingual (and figuring in German as Johann Valerian Jirsik), the bishop insisted from his first year in town, in 1851, that novices at the seminary in Budějovice/Budweis learn to practice their calling in both local languages; monolingual speakers of Czech had to master German, just as monolingual speakers of German had to master Czech. Non-national, Jirsík/Jirsik was puzzled, even troubled by the reaction of Czech leaders in town to his policy. They criticized the German language requirement for speakers only of Czech, but also applauded and adopted Jirsík/Jirsik, seeing in his mirror requirement the efforts of a Czech at ending the longstanding social inferiority (related to the social stratification mentioned earlier) of the Czech language. Deeply loyal to his faith, to the Monarchy, and to the Habsburgs, Jirsík/Jirsik pressed onward, founding in 1868 the first Czech-language classical secondary school, or gymnasium, in Budějovice/Budweis. This renewed attempt to ensure that the bishopric would have priests capable of tending to all its flocks with linguistic transparency provoked both Czech cheers and German jeers. During the 1870s, in an undertaking with an undercurrent of wit that seems to have escaped national contemporaries, Jirsík/Jirsik founded another school, this one for children who "spoke" neither Czech nor German: deaf-mutes. Yet even before Jirsík/Jirsik died, the Czech movement had succeeded in claiming him as its man.²¹ Perhaps also because of the anticlerical direction that much of German politics took in late imperial Austria, the German movement never bothered to try reversing that outcome. Lanna, on the other hand, roughly as prestigious a figure as Jirsík/Jirsik but weakly national in nationally more impartial ways, was a prize that both national movements considered worth fighting for—once Lanna himself had fallen safely silent.

Budweiser, Catholic, and additional Habsburg categories count within my framework as important predecessors to the categories of Czech and German in Budějovice/Budweis. New Czechs and new Germans in town, for almost the whole of the nineteenth century, tended to be made from already existing Budweisers, through a triangular Czech-Habsburg-German dynamic. By extension, I identify equivalents to Budweisers, together with Catholics and with additional categories and communities, as the ancestors

of members of national movements throughout the Habsburg Monarchy. Few conventions existed for naming those equivalents collectively; one reads, rather, of Praguers, Bohemians, Styrians, Viennese, and so on *ad infinitum*. The lack of a single term, and indeed the lack back then of any perceived need for one, may help to explain why Lanna fastened on something so rare as "i.r. Shipmaster," and why historians generally have failed to see the pivotally important sum of all those parts. "Habsburg loyalists" serves as my label for them.

Having opened up a more-than-national perspective, I can now reformulate my original questions, as well as outline part of my answer. Why did Budweisers and other Habsburg loyalists fade away? Why, more broadly, did a contest for the Habsburg succession develop in the course of the nineteenth century? Who, besides national movements, were the contestants, and why did national movements end up the victors?

The Habsburg Monarchy, I argue, could not keep pace with its peers, the states of Central and Western Europe, because its core legitimacy, feudal and dynastic, clashed with the devastatingly productive modern doctrine of popular sovereignty. Who, though, were "the people" of popular sovereignty, if they were not the historical kaleidoscope of Habsburg loyalists? Czechs, Germans, Slovaks, Hungarians, and so on, as national activists argued? The toiling masses, as Marxists did? Aryans or Christians, as protofascists and political Catholics (above all Christian Socials, led at the turn of the century by Karl Lueger, the mayor of Vienna) argued in turn? In this clash among non-Habsburg, populist principles of political legitimacy, the principle of nationhood had the advantage of arriving first on the scene. Marxism, fascism, and political Catholicism never caught up, for multiple reasons—many of them valid around the globe. Nationhood, for example, features a structure sometimes complementary to statehood (discussed later), as well as a definitional vagueness that yields a coalition-building potential superior to that of ideologies centered on class, race, or religion. National movements often profit from the demonstration effect of resounding national victories elsewhere. Indeed, even locally and even when understood as mutually exclusive, national movements prove mutually reinforcing. Each national movement tends to conceive of its opponents in national terms. The collective result, no matter which movement carries the day in individual battles, is to bolster nationhood as a whole. Non-national populist movements in East Central Europe fell behind and

became nationalized themselves, in part because none ever succeeded in agreeing with any significant opponent on a definition of the people. Thus the binational and triangular nature to the contest for the Habsburg succession before 1918 in Bohemia and in much of the region.

Yet even as Habsburg loyalists lost that contest, they shaped its outcome. They affected, for example, who ended up joining which national movement, as well as the content of each nationhood. By about 1910, nationhood had triumphed in East Central Europe, generically if not specifically. For a time thereafter, some individuals still could choose among options, but those options were almost all national—thus the flip-flopping between German and Czech of the statue of Lanna, himself a Habsburg loyalist. During, between, and immediately after the two World Wars, national leaders grappled with one another, advancing rival claims to individuals, to territories, and to entire states. Alliances with countries just outside East Central Europe yielded powerful national-fascist and national-Communist hybrids; genocide, mass expulsions, and retribution for Nazi-era collaboration and for national side-switching, followed by the imposition of the Iron Curtain and of national-Communist autarkies, eliminated almost all choice for individuals. The genuine states risen since 1989 from the Soviet imperial and Yugoslav rubble have inherited citizenries now specifically and uniformly national for more than two generations (again, except in the case of Slovakia—and of Croatia, "cleansed" of its Serbs only in 1995). Thus, radically compressed and shorn of proof, reads the first part to my answer.²² I turn now from *i.r. Shipmaster Lanna* and from *Budějovice/Budweis* to taking issue with ethnicism, and then to salvaging pieces from that alternative answer to incorporate into my own.

Ethnicism

Ethnicism is a vague, largely implicit framework that holds the nations of East Central Europe to have sprung primarily from a specific set of mass, mutually exclusive ethnic groups defined by inherited cultural and linguistic patterns. National Germans, for example, developed out of ethnic Germans, and national Czechs out of ethnic Czechs. Every national Czech is necessarily an ethnic Czech too, the argument continues, but the reverse does not hold true; to qualify as a national Czech, the ethnic Czech must add a strong dose of political consciousness to his or her cultural and linguistic

characteristics. The Americans and the French, in contrast, supposedly resulted from a more "civic" process and developed out of various groups united through participation in politics. States forged national cultures—as opposed to the more "ethnic" cases of Central and Eastern Europe, where cultures supposedly gave birth to nations.²³ Ethnicism does not address directly *why*, *how*, or *when* nationalization occurs and is compatible with more than one set of answers to those questions. Above all, the ethnicist framework amounts to a genealogy, an attempt to explain *who* joined which national movement. When an individual became national in a German sense, that was because he or she belonged to the German ethnic group.

Over the past several decades, ethnicist scholars of East Central Europe have folded considerable nuance into their approach, addressing some of its more obvious shortcomings and making some of its assumptions more explicit. Thus political and socioeconomic factors figured from the start in many ethnicist accounts as triggers for nationalization—but as triggers that affected above all its timing, with little effect on individual outcomes. A set of German-speaking town dwellers might have become nationally conscious Germans as the result of certain events, but the ethnicist historian used to assume that for such people, becoming German was almost the only possible national outcome. But wires can get crossed. Since the 1980s, ethnicists have tended to pay more attention to cases in which political and socioeconomic factors induced and allowed an ethnic German, for example, to become a national (and ethnic) Czech. Here lies one explanation for the different social profiles of Czechs and of Germans in the nineteenth century.²⁴ Ethnicists have also revised upward their earlier estimates of how long the original nationalization of East Central Europe's population lasted, perhaps in an echo of Eugen Weber's 1976 demonstration that the French state did not succeed in turning "peasants into Frenchmen" until decades after nationalizing the bourgeoisie.²⁵

Ethnicist language has changed as well. In 1998, widely cited Czech historian Miroslav Hroch disavowed his 1968 adoption from nineteenth-century Czech national activists of "national revival" to designate the nationalization process, claiming that he had meant the term only in a "metaphorical" sense.²⁶ After all, "revival" implies that nationhood had already existed once before. Yet antiprimordialists, or "constructivists," such as Ernest Gellner and Benedict Anderson have argued convincingly over the past several decades that nationhood is quintessentially modern.²⁷ If

some cases do date back farther than about the end of the eighteenth century, then they do so only in a nominal sense; social constructs called nations by contemporaries changed so fundamentally around the time of Napoleon—from a well-defined status group to "the people," for example—as to constitute new phenomena. By making modifications such as those listed here, ethnicist historians of East Central Europe have aligned themselves with constructivism and have given the impression of rejecting primordialism.

Ethnicism has long been the dominant scholarly approach to the nationalization of individuals in all East Central Europe,²⁸ including Bohemia.²⁹ Indeed, to the extent that one can distinguish between ethnicism and primordialism, almost every study of the region that has not belonged to the one school has belonged to the other.³⁰ (Many a constructivist is an ethnicist at the same time, and all ethnicists, as I will show, are closet primordialists.) Over the past decade, nonethnicist or at least less-ethnicist works have begun to multiply within the field.³¹ And within the historiography of Hungary, ethnicism has featured nuance for quite some time—perhaps because there is simply no escaping the nineteenth-century transformation of many thousands of ethnic Slovaks, Germans, and Jews into national and ethnic Hungarians.³² But ethnicism shows no sign of following its cousin primordialism into scholarly oblivion. A typical ethnicist passage, taken from a historical study published in 1996 by Zdeněk Kárník, serves both to conclude this introduction to ethnicism and to prepare the ground for my critique, which centers on the "Bohemian lands" of Bohemia, Moravia, and Austrian Silesia:

In varying intensity, the Bohemian lands were the settlement area for at least seven centuries of three ethnic groups: the dominant Czech one, a strong German minority, and a less numerous but nonetheless influential Jewish minority. ... Only the nineteenth and twentieth centuries elevated these relations—with variations in timing and in intensity—to a relationship among modern nations.³³

My first criticism is that the "ethnic groups" of the ethnicist framework comprise a poor category of analysis. To divide up the whole of the nineteenth-century population of the Bohemian lands into Czech, German, and Jewish ethnic groups and to understand them as the groups out of which nations emerged is to commit two basic errors: to approach history backward,

(*"groupism"*)
(*"nationalism"*)

teleologically, and to misunderstand nationhood. Those errors render ethnicism less than useful, and indeed even counterproductive, in the pursuit of insight.

By forcing all residents of the Bohemian lands except Jews into the categories of ethnic Czech and ethnic German, ethnicists impose the present on the past. Never do ethnicists address why Czech and German nationhoods developed from Czech and German ethnicities, instead of other nationhoods developing from the infinite variety of other, now lost or subordinated ethnicities. Indeed, the genealogical core to ethnicism prevents its practitioners from even seeing the question. They celebrate the current victors in history and view people who were not nationally conscious as not yet nationally conscious. This point is perhaps best made clear through a discussion of specifics.

The Czech and German ethnic groups, despite their "thick" sociological status today in Central Europe, figure as very "thin" in the early nineteenth century. Evidence for consciousness by all Czech speakers that they belonged to a single group does not and cannot exist. To be sure, smaller sets of individuals can be shown to have displayed such consciousness. But even if we put questions of demographic extent to one side for the moment, was that consciousness ethnic or national? Almost by definition within the ethnicist framework, to become conscious of one's ethnicity is to become national. The ethnicist's ethnic group and the nation threaten to collapse into one. And even if we put questions of consciousness to one side as well, a better case can be made for the historical existence of certain smaller linguistic communities than for the large Czech- or German-speaking blocs seen by ethnicists. Examples include speakers of this or that Slavic Moravian dialect, or of both Czech and German (such as Budweisers). Indeed, anyone who steps outside the ethnicist framework and understands ethnicity in an open-minded, nondeterminist sense can find grounds for slicing and dicing the population into multiple sets of often overlapping and loose linguistic and cultural groups: Bohemians as opposed to Moravians (or "Hanáks," etc.) or Silesians; Catholics, Protestants, and Jews; peasants, burghers, and nobles; and so on.³⁴

Although some of those sets existed in stronger sociological terms than did ethnic Czechs and ethnic Germans, the ethnicist framework for the Bohemian lands tends to accommodate an additional category only twice. Even then, the intent seems to be to confirm the central ethnicist categories of

Czech and German. First, there are the "crossed wires." They count for the ethnicist above all in a negative sense, as cases lumped together less for any genuine shared feature than for their incompatibility with the ethnicist framework. Why must that framework yield in these particular cases to a different, usually socioeconomic one? Answers to this central question amount mostly to implying that "crossed wires" are abnormally shifty or exposed individuals.

Jews, the second category accommodated by Bohemian ethnicists, did comprise a group at one point. Indeed, Jews—making up less than 2 percent of the population of the Bohemian lands—figured as a tightly bounded set of individuals sharing specific social characteristics for a long time. Nationalization, though, spelled not new unity for this supposed ethnic group but fragmentation. Under Francis Joseph and in the First Czechoslovak Republic, some Jews became Germans, and some Czechs; some of both also became Christians. Others became nationally Jewish, in the sense of Zionists. What if the Nazi regime had not denied the descendants of Jews their Germanness or Czechness, and then united them as a "people" through genocide in the 1940s? Among the three ethnic groups that ethnicists see in the Bohemian lands, the one for whose historical existence the best sociological case can be made would fit the ethnicist framework worst.

The telos of the ethnicist teleology is nationhood. And ethnicists, much like nationals, understand it without critical, analytical distance. To the ethnicist, nationhood consists at root of groups of people called nations—understood as mutually exclusive, and often, taken together, as demographically exhaustive. Everyone belongs only to one nation, and eventually no one to none. Or to rephrase the matter, ethnicists understand nationhood in terms of a demographically exhaustive set of mutually exclusive peoples, each divided internally into nationals and into ethnics who have not yet achieved national consciousness.

Rogers Brubaker counts as one of the few scholars to have expanded significantly on Max Weber's classic definition of the modern state as an organization successfully asserting a "monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory." States count not only as territorial organizations, Brubaker argued in his 1992 book *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany*, but as membership organizations too, as groups of people. Known as citizenries, those groups figure in an ideal-typical sense as mutually exclusive; as internally undifferentiated; and, taken together, as

those who don't fit me a category

Jews nationalized = fragmented not unity

the others?

thine or animal?

marks ups?

exceptions

demographically exhaustive. (Brubaker's formulation: "internally inclusive and externally exclusive."³⁵) Citizenship in a particular state figures not as a privilege of some, but as an involuntary, ascribed status of all living there—except anyone and everyone belonging to a different state.

Nationhood is not statehood. Yet if students of statehood failed until the 1990s to recognize the central importance to it of a certain kind of groupness, then many students of nationhood, and especially ethnicists, still fail today to recognize the peripheral importance to it of the same thing. Nationhood is not about membership organizations. Nor is it usually about demographically exhaustive groups, or necessarily about groups at all.³⁶ Rather, nationhood boils down to a set of mutually exclusive and mutually reinforcing variants on the populist principle of political legitimacy, to a form of loyalty, to a modern discourse structurally capable of blanketing the political field. Nationhood relates to statehood not through membership, but through legitimacy.³⁷

To be sure, nationals and ethnicists claim otherwise. Rarely, they are right. During times of total war, for example, nationhood can crystallize for a time into nations that include almost everyone. But to understand stable groups of any size as a defining characteristic of nationhood is to commit the error of what Brubaker, in more recent writings, calls groupism.³⁸ Scholars intent on analytical precision use the word "nation" sparingly and write more often of nationhood, of national movements and leaders, and of nationalism. Again, a discussion of specifics can serve to clarify the point.

Ethnicist after ethnicist considers linguistic data gathered by the Habsburg census authorities between 1880 and 1910 a reliable indicator of the ethnic and national composition of the population. In the Bohemian lands, for example, ethnicists consider individuals recorded as speaking German to be ethnic (and sometimes national) Germans, and individuals recorded as speaking "Bohemian-Moravian-Slovakian" to be ethnic (and sometimes national) Czechs. Often ethnicists concede a certain margin of error, in connection with "crossed wires," with Jews, with the impossibility of choosing more than one language from an officially determined list in the imperial Austrian census, and so on. But the partitioning of the whole of the population into mutually exclusive groups nonetheless stands. Thus one ethnicist interpretation of the 1880 data for Bohemia finds 3,470,252 Czechs, 2,054,174 Germans, and 2,837 "others"; spread across those groups were 94,449 Jews. Ethnic and national Czechs, in other words, made up 62.78

percent of the population, and ethnic and national Germans 37.17 percent; from those figures, one must subtract the 1.7 percent who were Jews.³⁹

Such a reading rests neither at its ethnic nor at its national end on solid social facts. Both ethnicity and nationhood, properly understood, are protean and constantly shifting; unlike citizenship, they elude quantification. To count individuals fated to become members of this or that nation (for that is part of what ethnic groups are about) amounts to the oxymoronic act of ascribing consciousness, to the reification of a worldview into personal "identities." As imperial Austrian demographic experts realized already in the 1860s, "nationality is *not* a phenomenon allowing of individual communication, ... may not be derived from the individual or sought of him, and as a consequence may not be determined by the mechanical means of the census. ..." Nor, as those experts realized at about the same time, is (or may) ethnicity.⁴⁰ Far from constituting distinct and robust categories of historical analysis, the ethnic group and the nation stand in a relationship of mutual and constitutive dependence. Ethnicists claim that the nation emerges from the ethnic group. In fact, one bootstraps the other into existence within the confines of the ethnicist framework.

Although ethnicism, or the creation of ethnic groups in a false image of nationhood, is compatible with more than one answer to why, how, or when nationalization occurs, it is not compatible with all. The ethnicist, Herderian imagination of mutually exclusive ethnic groups, together exhausting the population, blocks from view the Habsburg state and Habsburg loyalists such as i.r. Shipmaster Lanna. As one ethnicist once noted, without following through on the insight, the conference on "The Nationality Problem in the Habsburg Monarchy in the Nineteenth Century" held at Indiana University in 1966 featured "a dozen or so papers on the Slavic nationalities alone but none at all explaining the government's position."⁴¹ The non-national agents that do appear in ethnicist narratives are generally anonymous and vague: industrialization, for example, or ideas imported from abroad. Before twentieth-century national politics, Bohemian ethnicists see not so much non-national politics as ethnic nonpolitics, not so much a dynamic triad as the constitution of Czech and German nationhood simply through struggles between Czechs and Germans.

Why, despite these fatal flaws, is ethnicism so pervasive among historians of East Central Europe? The largely implicit quality of ethnicism, and of argumentation by historians, offers a partial answer here. Ethnicism,

statehood

it's a way of
seeing the
world, not a
king.

those who
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pervasive

furthermore, rests on fuzzy and multiform ethnicity, whose importance to nationalization is undeniable. Until the expulsions of the 1940s, the emergent and then consolidated contours of the national geography of Bohemia always closely followed the linguistic, Slavic-Germanic borders inherited from the eighteenth century.⁴² Ethnicist distortions of this vastly complicated fact—through a confusion of territory with the population inhabiting it, and of the structure of language, ethnicity, and nationhood with the structure of citizenship, for example—seem small by comparison (although they are not) and escape notice.

These explanations amount to variations on a single theme: on the history of the discipline of History itself. Its leading practitioners in nineteenth-century East Central Europe were all nationals, and often national leaders. Historians today do not see the flaws of ethnicism because they fail to gain historical, critical distance from their own discipline and from the national spirit of their times. Indeed, not only today within academe but far more broadly, ethnicism figures as a powerful category of practice⁴³—as a national argument, as a central rhetoric through which the nationalization of East Central Europe actually took (and still takes) place. Over several generations, politically active ethnicists remade the region to fit their model. This Procrustean role of ethnicism is the focus of the next section.

Ethnicism as a Category of Practice

To illustrate the role of ethnicism as a socially transformative category of practice, I begin with a historian, longtime Prague resident, and Czech: František Palacký (1798–1876). Far and away the most prominent historian in the Bohemian lands at the middle of the nineteenth century, Palacký also counted as one of the two or three most important Czech politicians. The best known of his writings, perhaps, are a letter and a multivolume book. The letter, dated April 11, 1848, and widely published in the weeks thereafter, explained Palacký's reasons for declining to join the German Parliament at Frankfurt as a representative of Bohemia. As for the book, he began publishing it in the German language as *History of Bohemia* during the 1830s, but switched early in 1848 to Czech, and to the title of *History of the Czech Nation in Bohemia and Moravia*. In 1860, he made the same switch from German to Czech within his family. Palacký, then, like i.r. Shipmaster Lanna, was bilingual. And thus Palacký, like Lanna (whom Palacký probably knew,

because both men were members of at least one association in Prague from the 1840s), fit poorly into the ethnicist framework. Nationals nationalized the statue of Lanna less through ethnicism than through the application of state force, and Palacký became Czech less on the basis of the language he spoke than of a personal choice. "I am not a German," he wrote in his letter to Frankfurt, "—at least I do not feel myself to be one."⁴⁴ Yet Palacký, like the whole of the Czech movement from its earliest days, embraced ethnicism and used it to considerable nationalizing effect.

One example of Palacký's ethnicism dates from 1849. In an important newspaper article, he conceded that the "idea of nationality" had "not yet penetrated the thought and consciousness of all persons, all individuals of this our state and age. We do not deny, to many people it is even detestable." But Palacký continued with a bold prediction. "Those territories and persons, especially in Austria, which to this day are indifferent or apathetic in national regard will not be that in ten, in twenty, or in thirty years."⁴⁵ The Bohemian lands would experience a national rebirth, with every person awakening to consciousness in accordance with the language that he or she spoke. Gone from this discussion of the entire population is the question of choice that surfaced when Palacký discussed his own case.

In several ways, ethnicism suited Palacký's political needs. First, it transformed him from the leader of a small national movement into the leader of a group numbering in the millions. A Czech "Declaration" of August 1868, in whose composition Palacký and his handpicked political successor and son-in-law, František Ladislav Rieger, played a leading role, spoke explicitly of "five million members of the Czechoslavonic nation" in the Bohemian lands. The same claim lurks everywhere in Palacký's contemporary political commentary. Second, the ethnicist framework afforded Czech speakers a certain kind of equality with German speakers: as Anderson has pointed out, "whatever the political realities outside, within the covers of the Czech-German/German-Czech dictionary the paired languages had a common status."⁴⁶ Perhaps more important still, given the ever more populist or demotic spirit of modern times: in the Bohemian lands, those Czech speakers outnumbered German speakers by two to one.

Ethnicism, finally, helped Palacký to inspire his many readers to Czech consciousness, and to do so in a way that undermined the authority of the Habsburg state even while avoiding dangerous, head-on conflict with it. In his *History*, Palacký saw interaction between Czechs and Germans as

choice
disproportion

dictionary
=

central to almost everything in the Bohemian medieval past—even to the murder of Budějovice/Budweis's Protestant mayor in 1467 by Catholics.⁴⁷ In bewitching prose, Palacký conjured up a glorious national world in the mist-shrouded past, and by implication, in the future as well. The ethnicist framework rendered the present and the recent past, with their non-national characters such as i.r. Shipmaster Lanna, a nationally impure moment wedged into an otherwise firmly national expanse of time. Readers, once convinced of their ethnic Czechness, stood a small step from "awakening" to national consciousness.

no Habsburg state!
The Habsburg state, on the other hand, figured nowhere in Palacký's *History*. Despite the wishes of the Bohemian Diet, which had originally commissioned the work, he refused to continue it past the year 1526—when the Habsburg dynasty had gained possession of the Bohemian lands. The implications and effects of this omission perhaps are easier to explore through reference to the public performance of a related text. History books, after all, are read in private and affect their readers in ways seldom recorded for posterity. Indeed, this privacy helps to explain the importance of the printed word to the early Czech movement. Readers could imagine themselves part of a Czech public, and thus contributed to lifting it into existence. Had Palacký switched to Czech before 1848, his *History* might have suffered from embarrassingly low sales.⁴⁸

Bedřich Smetana's opera *Libuše*, completed in 1872, rests on a libretto written by Josef Wenzig—who knew Palacký and based the libretto on Palacký's *History*. Nine years later, the premiere of *Libuše* counted also as the premiere of the new Czech National Theater, a Prague institution in whose creation Palacký had played a central role. Although dead by 1881, he was still represented in some sense at the gala event by his son-in-law, Rieger.⁴⁹ The audience watched in the final scene as Libuše, the mythical Czech princess and founder of the native Bohemian dynasty of the Přemyslids (extinguished in 1306), prophesied a brilliant future for her nation. After cataloging the major pre-Habsburg and anti-German achievements to come, she brought down the curtain with the following stanza:

What more? Here mists veil my eye
And hide much from my fading vision,
Horrible secrets—curses!—
But whatever may happen,

This I feel to the depths of my bosom:
My dear Czech nation shall not perish,
And shall overcome all hell's horrors!⁵⁰

In context, on the night of June 11, 1881, two implications were clear. First, Princess Libuše's prophecy constituted a swipe at the Habsburgs. Perhaps it is mere coincidence that, in Czech, the letters in "hell's horrors" (*pekla hrůzy*) can be rearranged to spell *Hapzurky*, just short of "the Habsburgs" (acc.: *Habsburky*). But as I will show in a moment, it is no coincidence at all that Libuše, like Palacký, skipped over more than three centuries of Habsburg rule. Second, the Habsburgs figured as Germans, Germans who had defeated the Czech nation at the Battle of the White Mountain in 1620 and who had then reduced that people to a mass of politically somnolent peasants. But now, according to Czech ethnicists, that mass was awakening and was preparing to reclaim its rights. Either by attacking the Habsburgs openly or by not Germanizing them, Palacký, Smetana, and Wenzig probably would only have harmed the Czech cause. The censor and even the police would have intervened, thereby exposing the weakness of the Czech movement. The undenied and undeniable presence of a non-national contestant would have disrupted the mutual reinforcement dynamic, the life-giving struggle of Czech against German.

*W.H. H. nationalist
German or Catholic*
By 1881, many "ethnic Czechs" were "awakening." Most, however, probably remained more Budweisers, burghers, peasants, and other kinds of Habsburg loyalists than Czechs. (Not that Czechness and loyalty to the Habsburgs were necessarily incompatible; that became the case only after 1918.) By waving the wand of ethnicism, Czech activists transformed those loyalists into a homogeneous, politically unconscious (or at most falsely conscious) ethnic group—and then both spoke in its name and recruited new activists from it. Such magic, because of its cultural, putatively apolitical quality, usually did not provoke crackdowns by the Habsburg authorities. Instead, those authorities only attempted, for example, to turn the premiere of *Libuše* into a Habsburg event—by proposing that Emperor Francis Joseph's son Rudolph attend, and that he be honored through incorporation into the opera as Princess Libuše's final prophecy.

Rieger and other members of the Committee to Build the National Theater avoided refusing this proposal outright and insisted politely that the homage to Rudolph would be more appropriate at the start of the

evening. Rudolph could have withdrawn his patronage at this point but did not. Rather, he made a gracious appearance and spoke briefly to Smetana after the first act (whether in Czech or in German is unclear, and almost irrelevant: Rudolph spoke both languages, while Smetana was completely deaf). The Crown Prince then quietly withdrew himself, during the second act—before the Princess guided the public, to the accompaniment of crashing chords, in turning blind eyes to the role of his family and of its state in the Czech future. A comparison of ethnicism with the stances of non-national populist movements toward the Habsburg system, and with the Habsburg responses that those stances provoked, is instructive. Without going into detail: Social Democrats, more openly confrontational, had far less success at realizing their rival, class-based worldview and received far less tolerant treatment from the authorities.

Together, Palacký, Smetana, Wenzig, and all Czech ethnicists contributed to erasing non-national categories and communities from the past, to downplaying their presence in the present, and thus to blighting their future. At the same time, such people helped to make the Czech nation (and necessarily the German nation as well) seem an ancient and great people, destined soon for even greater greatness. They also tended to define those peoples as Christian. As that vision of the future came true, and as Palacký's present became a past studied by others, new generations of historians increasingly lacked living memories of Habsburg loyalists such as i.r. Shipmaster Lanna. Not only stances centered on the Habsburg Atlantis, but ones centered on sunken ethnicities lost currency and even comprehensibility among historians. Slavs in Moravia, for example, a territory that Palacký included in the title of his *History* only when he dropped German in 1848, have been misunderstood until very recently as unproblematically Czech.⁵¹

In addition to absorbing a vanquished Slavic Moravian ethnicity, a victorious Czech ethnicism has largely blocked a nonethnic aspect to Czech nationhood from view. The "state rights" (*státní právo/Staatsrecht*) program, launched in 1861 by none other than Palacký and Rieger (and an important component to Czech politics for decades thereafter), claimed all inhabitants of the Bohemian lands for the Czech nation. The clash with ethnicism is clear, as is how that clash found resolution: through the murder or through the expulsion from those territories during the 1940s of all inhabitants who failed to qualify as ethnic Czechs. But to state an outcome

is not to explain a decades-long dynamic. The state rights understanding of Czechs as a "political-historical Bohemian/Czech nation" (the Czech language makes no distinction between "Bohemian" and "Czech") may have helped to lull Habsburg officials and German-speaking Habsburg loyalists into a fateful complacency in their early responses to a political opponent. And the territorial, state rights understanding may have complemented the dominant Czech ethnicist one, by emboldening nineteenth-century Czech leaders (incapable of imagining mass murder and expulsion) to set the sights of their small and weak movement on what later came to be known as the Sudetenland.

A Bohemian, bilingual nation, Peter Bugge argues convincingly in a recent doctoral dissertation, had no real chance of becoming reality, not only because of the dominance of an ethnicist understanding of Czechness and Germanness but because the territories in question did not comprise a state during the nineteenth century. But some political figures seem to have fallen into the error of thinking otherwise. Palacký and Rieger, at least with their state rights program, fit into a rich tradition that arguably began with Bernard Bolzano in the 1810s, faded with Emanuel Rádl in the 1920s, and saw its postexpulsion, counterfactual, and nostalgic coda with dissidents such as Jan Patočka and Petr Pithart in the 1970s.⁵² State rights (akin in its ambitions to attempts by the Hungarian movement, especially after 1867, at absorbing "ethnic minorities" in Hungary) contributed vitally to shaping the boundaries of today's Czech Republic. That nonethnicist strand to Czech politics also had an effect, as yet barely examined, on the mostly ethnicist content of Czech nationhood.

Within the German movement of the Bohemian lands (as opposed to its Czech one, or to German movements in some other places), ethnicism became the central nationalizing rhetoric or tactic only during the 1880s. Pieter Judson, a Habsburg historian, demonstrated recently that before then, German leaders in the Bohemian lands and elsewhere in Austria defined German nationhood primarily through a liberal language of "quality"—superficially egalitarian but deeply hierarchical, and populist only in a very old-fashioned, politics-of-the-notables way. Ethnicism, when it surged to the forefront in a context of repeated German political humiliations at the hands of the Habsburg state and of the Czech movement, did not replace quality altogether. Rather, the two fused to form a Germanness characterized by a racist embrace of the principle of national

raising
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Bohemian

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popular sovereignty, by a hysterical rejection of that principle whenever it worked to the disadvantage of the supposedly superior German people. The Austrian taproot to German fascism that Judson thus exposes runs deeper than roots laid bare by Carl Schorske and by others.⁵³

Indeed, Judson's politics of quality differs so much both from politics in the American or French revolutionary tradition and from ethnicism as to call into question the heuristic value of the civic-ethnic framework used in one way or another by almost all students of nationalism. Judson's work also complements the narrowly Czech focus to this section of this essay. Ethnicism has occupied important and evolving, if asymmetrical, positions within both the Czech and the German nationalization repertoires in the Bohemian lands.

Ethnicism, Ethnicity, and Beyond

"Forgetting," Ernest Renan wrote in 1882, "and, I would say, historical error are an essential factor in the creation of a nation." Renan's contemporary, Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, made much the same point by contrasting what he called "monumental" with "critical" history writing.⁵⁴ Historians of the late twentieth century who have developed more subtle, constructivist ethnicisms seem to have done so in an attempt to shift from a monumental, national mode to a critical one, above the political fray. But their well-intentioned efforts have focused too narrowly. Disavowing both crude primordialism and the revivalist vocabulary of ethnicism creates the appearance of killing off ahistorical, essentialist forms of thought. To create the reality, however, one must do more than overlay national assumptions with talk about ethnic groups.⁵⁵ Too many books exist about anachronistically imagined national territories and early national populations, and not enough about individual towns or about non-national communities such as Budweisers.⁵⁶ Too many scholars, instead of stretching to reach a more-than-national perspective, satisfy themselves with a multiply, impartially national one; the effect is to impose a two-dimensional "multiculturalism" on the past, and to prevent real insights. "Add successively as many mail coaches as you please," Joseph Schumpeter once wrote, "you will never get a railroad thereby."⁵⁷

The ethnicist historian today, like Palacký but with less zeal and with a far smaller audience, assists readers in forgetting even as he or she claims

to preserve memory, and perpetuates nationhood even as he or she claims to explain its origins. The piling of nuance upon nuance obscures the fact that even as one foot reaches toward the critical, the other remains planted in the monumental. "[T]he German national consciousness that burgeoned in the German states during the wars of liberation [against Napoleon]," writes Jörg Hoensch in his 1987 *History of Bohemia*, "gripped only a few Germans in Bohemia."⁵⁸ The preceding pages should have made more visible the profoundly circular reasoning embedded in this statement, in dozens like it, and in the whole of ethnicism.

Ethnicity fits into my interpretive framework as a web of vague and multivalent relationships, as a seemingly permanent but actually plastic set of social attributes, and as a populist and thus modern mode of political cognition. Ethnicity also fits as an essentialized, specific set of discrete, linguistically defined groups whose nation-producing role obscures their nature as complex historical products. Once subordinated in that way to ethnicism, ethnicity counts as a useful tool for populist political movements bent on defining "the people" anew—especially for national movements, with their mutually exclusive, mutually reinforcing dynamic. As Gellner and Anderson (and before them, Karl Deutsch) have argued, when vernaculars become written and standardized, they do so in a complex give-and-take with the growing anonymity, bureaucratism, populism, and social mobility of modern life. In the Habsburg Monarchy and in other decentralized, polyglot states, meanwhile, everyone knows at least one language—even deaf-mutes. And given the educational demands of standardized languages, more and more people know one language better than the rest in their repertoire. The set of modern languages, despite its overlaps, has the potential to serve nationals as a "new grammar of representation" (to use Anderson's words), as a mechanism for allocating every person to a national movement (to bend Brubaker's words to new uses).⁵⁹

In the Bohemian lands, in an evolutionary, bootstrapping process touched off late in the eighteenth century both by new combinations within the perennial struggle that is politics and by state-sponsored language standardization, ethnic Czechs and Germans created national ones, and vice versa. Eventually, they became more numerous and more "real" than Budweisers, than Bohemians, and than all other Habsburg loyalists, with world-historical effects. Ethnicity, in sum, figures in East Central Europe as a fuzzy but significant aspect to nationalization on the one hand

and as a key building block in powerful, specifically national arguments, or ethnicisms, on the other—all within the larger context of a contest for the Habsburg succession. That context and that contest explain much about who i.r. Shipmaster Vojtěch/Adalbert Lanna was, about what national activists made the statue of him become, and about the nationalization of individuals in East Central Europe.

"No modern nation possesses a given 'ethnic' basis," writes Etienne Balibar. "The fundamental problem is therefore to produce the people." "[A]s social formations are nationalized," the social philosopher continues,

the populations included within them, divided up among them or dominated by them are ethnicized—that is, represented in the past or in the future as if they formed a natural community, possessing of itself an identity of origins, culture and interests which transcends individuals and social conditions.

Fictive ethnicity [or what is called ethnicism in this essay] is not purely and simply identical with the *ideal nation* which is the object of patriotism, but it is indispensable to it, for, without it, the nation would appear precisely only as an idea or an arbitrary abstraction; patriotism's appeal would be addressed to no one.⁶⁰

I am not the first, then, to understand ethnicism as a flimsy category of analysis and as a powerful, national category of practice. Nor does the East Central European variety of ethnicism stand alone in the world. Balibar and others who have explored the construction of ethnic groups—Yuri Slezkine, for example, as well as Leroy Vail and Sharon Hutchinson⁶¹—make little mention of East Central Europe in their work. Instead, they focus on the Soviet Union, on southern Africa, and so on.

Nor am I the first East Central Europeanist to make the putatively analytical framework of ethnicism itself the object of study. Yet my predecessors in the field tend to belong to other disciplines; Katherine Verdery and Andrew Lass are anthropologists, and Vladimír Macura was a semi-otician.⁶² Historians, perhaps understandably given their strong ethnicist tradition and their role for decades as high priests to national movements, have not led the way. Yet lead the way historians should, not only because they make up the majority of scholars researching the nationalization of East Central Europe, but also because of the nature both of History as a discipline and of ethnicism.

Historians stand out for their command of detail as well as for their work in bringing new details to the attention of the larger scholarly community. And for ethnicism, the devil is in the details. Anthony Smith, a sociologist, and John Armstrong and Walker Connor, political scientists, have written widely cited studies of nationalism: *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, *Nations before Nationalism*, and *Ethnonationalism*.⁶³ Studies in their school, although often more nuanced even than the newest, less well known East Central European ethnicist literature, count at root as ethnicist too. (Smith, however, has hedged his argument so thoroughly as to reduce it to little more than a plea for the importance of amorphous ethnicity—a case that others have made better than he.) The success in the academic marketplace of that school, I suggest, derives in part from its less historical nature and from the national spirit of the times. Both Armstrong and Smith, as well as Paul Brass, refer more than once to the East Central European past. Their sketchy evidence, however, comes not from archives but from ethnicist secondary sources. Ethnicist analysis perhaps is most convincing when made at arm's length. More fact and new fact of the sort presented in this essay can knock out the empirical underpinnings of such works. History, the discipline through which ethnicism seems best naively expressed, may also be the one with the help of which ethnicism can best be critically apprehended.

How and why have East Central European states promoted ethnicism? The Habsburg authorities, even as they suppressed national movements vigorously during the 1820s and '30s, embraced ethnicism.⁶⁴ Was it primarily the new science of the census, with its demographic exhaustiveness and with its mutually exclusive, constitutive categories, which figured here as the Trojan horse, as the vehicle through which ethnicism gained entry to a non-national fortress? What were the results later, when the Habsburg state came to accept national movements, or at least to repress them less, finding their leaders preferable to the less bourgeois leaders of the other populist movements? Certainly one thing is clear: one need not be national to be ethnicist, to be nationalizing. As for the period since 1918, to what extent have interwar Czechoslovakia, the Third Reich, Communist Czechoslovakia, the new Czech Republic, and all the other national successor states of the region employed ethnicism?

Did ethnicism prove more effective among some Habsburg loyalists than among others, as distinguished along class, occupational, religious, gender, party political, and additional lines? Given the generic importance

Why nation needs ethnicity

Role of History (both sides)

of ethnicity in the nationalization of East Central Europe, how can one explain the victory of a Czech ethnicism over Bohemian, Slavic Moravian, and Czechoslovak ones, among others? When and why did a window of opportunity for ethnicisms first open, and when and why did it close?⁶⁵

How does ethnicism fit into the full East Central European repertoire of national recruitment and retention tactics? Territorial, civic/state, and "quality" rhetorics were discussed in the previous section. The two sections concerning Lanna included examples of socioeconomic appeals, of a crude primordialism, and of brute force. And something going beyond national mutual exclusivity—what Macura has called a "negative and analogue tie" for Czechs—has surfaced throughout this essay, most strikingly in the case of Palacký's letter to the Frankfurt Parliament: until after the expulsions of the 1940s, some people became Czech in part so as not to become German.⁶⁶ To what extent and to what effect have different national movements and states dipped differently into this broad repertoire? Nationhood must be constantly produced if it is not to evanesce, but the conditions of production vary over space and time. How, then, did levels of industrial development, literacy, and political freedom shape the Czechness of the 1880s, as opposed to the Slovakness of the same era, or to the increasingly civic Czechness of the era since 1989? Can scholars jettison dated, essentializing discussions about differences in national character, and turn instead to examining differences in the character of nationalization? Historians stand well positioned to address all these questions and to demystify the genesis, workings, and context of ethnicism, as well as to make better sense of the nationalization of individuals in East Central Europe more generally.

Conclusion

Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper recently cowrote an essay in which they argue that "identity," today a powerful category of practice in multiple contexts, serves scholars badly as a category of analysis. Brubaker, in his 1996 book *Nationalism Reframed*, has also elaborated a triadic framework—comprised of national minorities, the newly nationalizing states in which they lived, and the external national "homelands" to which they could be construed, ethnically, as belonging—for understanding nationhood in Central and Eastern Europe between the two World Wars.⁶⁷ This

essay might be understood as a historian's response to that sociology. The uses and abuses of "ethnicity" in East Central Europe over the past two centuries resemble those of "identity" in North America and in Europe over the past several decades. What I call ethnicism is not only an understanding, dominant in the historiography of East Central Europe today, that nations developed out of previously existing ethnic groups understood unproblematically as Czech, German, Hungarian, and so on. That understanding, rather, derives from nineteenth-century national practices. Their central result was a set of triangular dynamics: in the case of the Bohemian lands, Czech-Habsburg-German. After 1918, Brubaker's reframed triads followed.

Through ethnicism, early Czech activists could struggle against the non-national Habsburg state and phrase that struggle as one against Germans—thus both avoiding direct conflict with a superior force and contributing to the development of a third factor in the politics of the Bohemian lands. That third factor, a German national movement, was condemned by the practices of "quality" and of ethnicism through which it was constituted to a minority status. In an era whose doctrinal hallmark has been popular sovereignty, that status triggered efforts at redefining territorial boundaries, at forging a majority by joining with Germans elsewhere. The state, meanwhile, gradually became multinational, in considerable part through attempts by officials at mediating between Czechs and Germans. It remained only for that state to collapse in 1918, and for the once small and weak national movements of the Bohemian lands—having exterminated or subordinated all other principal forms of legitimacy—to commence one of several endgames to the contest for the Habsburg succession. Brubaker's framework, consisting at heart of a synchronic, relational dynamic among national movements and nationalizing states, is compatible with a historical, constitutive, and more-than-national dynamic as well. Extended in that fashion, the framework offers theoretical purchase not only on the maintenance and spread of nationhood, but on its genesis and perhaps even on its decline as well.

Between ethnicity as an amorphous collection of cultural attributes and as an essentialized component to the national argument of ethnicism lies ethnicity as a large and shifting set of overlapping cultural-linguistic boundaries. Scholars such as Anderson and Gellner, as I have already noted, focus on ethnicity in this sense. But their explanations attempt to be globe

spanning and all encompassing; they shed much light on many places, yet necessarily leave shadows everywhere. To reject such explanations would probably be a mistake. But to rely on them and on a specifically linguistic ethnicity too much, such as to reduce politics, socioeconomic factors, and all else to planets orbiting an ethnic sun, would be a mistake as well. That way lies ethnicism. "Lumpers" can go only so far in making sense of the world. As Brubaker has argued recently, "The search for 'a' or 'the' theory of nationalism . . . is misguided; for the theoretical problems associated with nationhood and nationalism, like the practical political problems, are multi-form and varied, and not susceptible of resolution through a single theoretical (or practical) approach."⁶⁸

If historians, "splitters" by nature, come to figure more prominently in the relatively new field of nationalism studies, it may well have better chances of continuing its rapid rate of innovation. That innovation will then prove of the sort that undermines broad consensus and shatters global models—as well as gets closer to "how it really was." Climbing on the current bandwagon of constructivism will yield less. After all, some constructivists qualify as such less through what they do than through the phrases they mouth. And within the logic of constructivism there lurks the danger of overemphasizing free will, such that social constructions begin to seem only loosely constrained by causal chains.⁶⁹ Historians, by developing rigorously the critical tradition in their discipline, will serve themselves and other social scientists well. And such work, for historians of East Central Europe, begins with facing that their efforts in recent decades have tended to yield unconsciously, generically, and bloodlessly national results, weakly monumental and weakly critical. Whom and what did the statue of i.r. Shipmaster Vojtěch/Adalbert Lanna commemorate? The many answers to this question go beyond Czech and German, ethnicity and ethnicism—and shed new light, I hope, on nationalization, especially in East Central Europe.

Notes

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1. I define East Central Europe as those territories that formed a part of the Habsburg Monarchy for at least three centuries, including the nineteenth.
2. See G. L. Weisel, cited in *Die Juden in Böhmen und Mähren: Ein historisches Lesebuch*, ed. Wilma Iggers (Munich, 1986), 138; as well as István Deák, *Beyond Nationalism: A Social and Political History of the Habsburg Officer Corps, 1848–1918* (New York, 1990), 14; and Joshua Fishman, *Language and Nationalism: Two Integrative Essays* (Rowley, 1972), 6, 42. For similar evidence, concerning not peasants but workers, see Jiří Kofalka, *Tschechen im Habsburgerreich und in Europa 1815–1914* (Munich, 1991), 218.
3. See Josef Deimel and Karl Adalbert Sedlmeyer, "Das 'Budweiser Bier' in den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika," in *Budweis: Budweiser und Stritschitzer Sprachinsel*, ed. Karl Adalbert Sedlmeyer (Miesbach, 1979), 300.
4. "Lanna, Adalbert," in Constant von Wurzbach, ed., *Biographisches Lexikon des Kaiserthums Oesterreich*, vol. 14 (Vienna: 1865), 130–34; "Lanna," in *Ottův slovník naučný* (Otto's encyclopedia), vol. 15 (Prague, 1900), 637–38; "Lanna," in *Masarykův slovník naučný* (Masaryk's encyclopedia), vol. 4 (Prague, 1929), 324; Karl Adalbert Sedlmeyer, "Adalbert von Lanna," in *Lebensbilder zur Geschichte der böhmischen Länder*, vol. 4, ed. Ferdinand Seibt (Munich, 1981), 165–90, especially 174–75, 182–86; and Theodor Žákavec, *Lanna* (Prague, 1936), 57.
5. *Budivoj*, Oct. 13, 1864, 3; *Budweiser Kreisblatt*, May 24, 1879, 1–2; and May 28, 1879, 3; *Budivoj*, May 25, 1879, 2, 3; and May 28, 1879, 3; *Festschrift der Deutschen Liedertafel in Budweis anlässlich ihrer 50 jähr. Bestandsfeier* (Budweis, 1906), 10; and *Heimatbuch der Berg- und Kreisstadt Böhmisches-Budweis mit einer Sammlung von alten und neueren Sagen*, ed. Karl Kratochwil and Alois Meerwald (Böhmisches-Budweis, 1930), 430.
6. For an excellent discussion of socioeconomic differences between Czechs and Germans in nineteenth-century Prague, see Gary Cohen, *The Politics of Ethnic Survival: Germans in Prague, 1861–1914* (Princeton, 1981), 19–59.
7. See Friedrich Tezner, *Handbuch des österreichischen Administrativverfahrens* (Vienna: 1896), 389; and Josef Redlich, *Das Wesen der österreichischen Kommunal-Verfassung* (Leipzig, 1910), especially 61–62, 67.
8. See *Budweiser Kreisblatt*, July 9, 1884, 3; *Budweiser Bote*, July 7, 1886, 4; *Budweiser Zeitung*, Jan. 14, 1898, 2; and Jan. 18, 1898, 5–6; Leopold Schweighofer, *Die allgemeinen Verhältnisse im Bürgerlichen Bräuhaus in Budweis (Rede)* (Budweis, 1900), 37–38; *Budivoj*, July 22, 1902, 2; and Oct. 28, 1902, 1–3; and Leopold Zeithammer, *České Budějovice a okolí* (České Budějovice and surroundings) (Č. Budějovice, 1904), 132, 144.

9. *Jihočeské listy* (Southern Bohemian Correspondent), Oct. 31, 1918, 1; Nov. 13, 1918, 2; and Nov. 20, 1918, 2; *Budweiser Zeitung*, Oct. 29, 1918, 3; Nov. 8, 1918, 5; and Nov. 12, 1918, 5; František Smitka, *Státní převrat v Čes. Budějovicích a jihočeské sokolstvo* (The revolution in Čes. Budějovice and the Southern Bohemian Sokols) (Č. Budějovice, 1928), 37–45; František Rada, *Když se psalo T.G.M. České Budějovice v prvním desetiletí republiky* (In T.G.M.'s time: České Budějovice in the first decade of the Republic) (České Budějovice, 1970), 52ff., 90–97; Sedlmeyer, *Budweis*, 484; and Zdeněk Hojda and Jiří Pokorný, *Pomníky a zapomínky* (Monuments and dismemory) (Prague, 1996), 235, 237. In 1920, the name of Budějovice/Budweis itself changed as well, officially becoming České Budějovice/Böhmisch Budweis. "Böhmisch" means "Bohemian," while "České" means both "Bohemian" and "Czech." See the announcement made by the Czechoslovak Ministry of the Interior on Jan. 12, 1921, as well as the government decree interpreting Law #266 ("Concerning the Names of Towns, Communes, Settlements, and Streets ...") of Apr. 14, 1920 and dated Aug. 25, 1921, printed in Czechoslovakia, *Sbírka zákonů a nařízení* (Collection of laws and decrees) (Prague, 1921), 33 and 1310–12.
10. Žákavec, *Lanna*.
11. *Budweiser Zeitung*, Mar. 18, 1939, 5; Apr. 5, 1939, 8; Apr. 29, 1939, 7; May 17, 1939, 6; June 10, 1939, 8; July 15, 1939, 7; July 22, 1939, 9; Aug. 19, 1939, 8; and Sept. 2, 1939, 10; *Hlas lidu*, Oct. 10, 1945, 1; and Rada, 96–97.
12. *Budweiser Zeitung*, June 7, 1939, 1–2; July 5, 1939, 1; and May 26, 1944, 8.
13. *Jihočeská pravda* (Southern Bohemian truth), Apr. 3, 1947, 5; *Hlas lidu* (Voice of the people), Aug. 1, 1945, 3; Rada, 96–97; and Hojda and Pokorný, 234, 237.
14. For a summary of Marx's opinions regarding Germans, Czechs, and additional nations, see Roman Szporluk, *Communism and Nationalism: Karl Marx vs. Friedrich List* (New York, 1988), 172–74. Regarding the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and its stance toward Germans, see *Hlas lidu*, Aug. 8, 1945, 2; *Jihočech* (Southern Czech), June 15, 1945, 1–2; Václav Černý, *Pláč koruny české* (The Czech crown weeps) (London, 1985), 193–96; and Walter Ullmann, *The United States in Prague, 1945–1948* (Boulder, 1978), 64–72.
15. Žákavec, *Lanna*, 56; and *Budivoj*, Jan. 21, 1866, 2–3.
16. Joseph Roth, "The Bust of the Emperor," in *Hotel Savoy* (London, 1986).
17. See Žákavec, *Lanna*, 10, 17, 40, 57, 59, 65, 343, and especially 92; Gottfried Uhlich von Uhlenau, *Biographische Skizzen aus Budweis's Vergangenheit* (Budweis: 1871), 37–38; and Ernst Franz Richter, *Südböhmische Sagen und Geschichten: Mit einer kurzgefassten Geschichte der k.k. Berg-Kreisstadt Böhmisch-Budweis* (Korneuburg: 1881), 302, 310.
18. Robert Musil, *The Man without Qualities* (New York, 1995).
19. See Kratochwil and Meerwald, *Heimatbuch*, 429–30; Bohumír Janoušek, *Město na soutoku. Vyprávění o historii Českých Budějovic* (Town at the confluence: A narrative about the history of České Budějovice) (Č. Budějovice, 1964–1966), 223; *Budweiser Zeitung*, Aug. 13, 1938, 10; and *Jihočeské listy*,

- Sept. 17, 1938, 3; and Sept. 21, 1938, 2. For evidence of parallel self-definitions elsewhere in Bohemia, involving not "Budweisers" but "Bohemians" around the middle of the nineteenth century and "brewery shareholders" (*Brauberechtigte*) at the beginning of the twentieth (the latter in the town of Plzeň/Pilsen), see Kořalka, *Tschechen im Habsburgerreich*, 54, 63; and Robert Scheu, *Wanderungen durch Böhmen am Vorabend der Revolution* (Vienna, 1919), 94.
20. *Budivoj*, Jan. 18, 1866, 1.
21. *Budivoj*, Sept. 25, 1865, 1; and Nov. 9, 1871, 1; *Budweiser Kreisblatt*, Oct. 4, 1871, 2; Jan Macháček, *Paměti 25 let. trvání c.k. č. gymnasia v Budějovicích (1868–1893) a seznam abiturientů, jejich nynější stav a bydliště* (Memories of 25 years of the i.r. Gymnasium in Budějovice [1868–1893] and a list of its graduates, their current status and residence) (České Budějovice: 1894); Vojtěch Jar. Pucherna, *Paměti Besedy česko-budějovické 1862–1902* (Memories of the Beseda in České Budějovice, 1862–1902) (Č. Budějovice, 1903), 22ff; Zeithammer, 132; Josef Holeček, *Pero* (The pen), vol. 1 (Prague, 1922), 318–22, 331–34; *Matice školská v Čes. Budějovicích. Její vzor a její pokračovatelé* (The School Foundation in České Budějovice: Its model and its followers) (Č. Budějovice, 1925), 4–7; Rudolf Strnad, *Dr. A. Zátka* (Č. Budějovice, 1927), 15; Ferdinand Böhm, ed., *České Budějovice* (Č. Budějovice, 1928), 18–21; and Kratochwil and Meerwald, 432.
22. For a substantiated and more detailed but earlier version of my answer, see Jeremy King, "Loyalty and Polity, Nation and State: A Town in Habsburg Central Europe, 1848–1948" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1998).
23. For an early statement of this still very powerful civic-ethnic, West-East interpretation, see Hans Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism* (New York, 1944). And for recent, subtle, ideal-type applications of the framework: Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* (Cambridge, Mass., 1992); and Jiří Kořalka, "Hans Kohns Dichotomie und die neuzeitliche Nationsbildung der Tschechen," in *Formen des nationalen Bewusstseins im Lichte zeitgenössischer Nationalismustheorien*, ed. Eva Schmidt-Hartmann (Munich, 1994), 263–75.
24. The key historical monograph here is Gary Cohen's *Politics of Ethnic Survival*, cited previously.
25. Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870–1914* (Stanford, 1976).
26. Miroslav Hroch, "Real and Constructed: The Nature of the Nation," in *The State of the Nation: Ernest Gellner and the Theory of Nationalism*, ed. John Hall (Cambridge, 1998), 91–106, especially 94. See also Hroch, *Die Vorkämpfer der nationalen Bewegung bei den kleinen Völkern Europas* (Prague, 1968) (translated into English, 1985); and Hroch, *V národním zájmu* (In the national interest) (Prague, 1999)—whose first chapter bears the title "From Ethnic Group to National Movement."
27. See Ernest Gellner, *Thought and Change* (London, 1964); *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca, 1983); and *Nationalism* (New York, 1997); Benedict Anderson,

- Imagined Communities* (London, 1983); and *The Spectre of Comparisons: Nationalism, Southeast Asia, and the World* (New York, 1998).
28. Examples: Oszkár Jászi, *The Dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy* (Chicago, 1929); Robert A. Kann, *The Multinational Empire: Nationalism and National Reform in the Habsburg Monarchy 1848–1918*, 2 vols. (New York, 1950, 1964); Hans Mommsen, *Die Sozialdemokratie und die Nationalitätenfrage im habsburgischen Vielvölkerstaat* (Vienna, 1963); *Austrian History Yearbook*, 3 (1967); Hroch, *Die Vorkämpfer*; Peter Sugar and Ivo Lederer, eds., *Nationalism in Eastern Europe* (Seattle, 1969); Hugh Seton-Watson, *Nations and States: An Enquiry into the Origins of Nations and the Politics of Nationalism* (London, 1977); Adam Wandruszka and Peter Urbanitsch, eds., *Die Habsburgermonarchie 1848–1918*, vol. 3: *Die Völker des Reiches* (Vienna, 1980); most of the contributions to Peter Sugar, ed., *Ethnic Diversity and Conflict in Eastern Europe* (Santa Barbara, 1980); Joseph Roth-schild, *Ethnopolitics: A Conceptual Framework* (New York, 1981); Emil Brix, *Die Umgangssprache in Altösterreich zwischen Agitation und Assimilation* (Vienna, 1982); Alan Sked, *The Decline and Fall of the Habsburg Empire, 1815–1918* (New York, 1989); and most of the East Central European contributions to the eight-volume series published between 1991 and 1993 by New York University Press under the title “Comparative Studies on Governments and Non-dominant Ethnic Groups in Europe, 1850–1940.” See also notes 29, 32, 33, and 62.
 29. Examples: Stanley Kimball, *Czech Nationalism: A Study of the National Theater Movement, 1845–83* (Urbana, 1964); František Graus, ed., *Naše živá i mrtvá minulost* (Our living and dead past) (Prague, 1968); Stanley Pech, *The Czech Revolution of 1848* (Chapel Hill, 1969); Peter Brock and H. Gordon Skilling, eds., *The Czech Renaissance of the Nineteenth Century* (Toronto, 1970); Christoph Stölzl, *Die Ära Bach in Böhmen* (Munich, 1971); Bruce Garver, *The Young Czech Party 1874–1901 and the Emergence of a Multi-Party System* (New Haven, 1978); Josef Kočí, *České národní obrození* (The Czech national renaissance) (Prague, 1978); Arnošt Klíma, *Na prahu nové společnosti, 1781–1848* (On the threshold of a new society) (Prague, 1979); Cohen, *Politics of Ethnic Survival*; Otto Urban, *Česká společnost 1848–1918* (Czech society, 1848–1918) (Prague, 1982) (German translation published in 1994); John F.N. Bradley, *Czech Nationalism in the Nineteenth Century* (Boulder, 1984); Jörg Hoensch, *Geschichte Böhmens* (Munich, 1987); Friedrich Prinz, *Geschichte Böhmens 1848–1948* (Gütersloh, 1988); Jan Křen, *Konfliktní společnost* (Century of conflict) (Toronto, 1989) (German translation published in 1996); Hugh L. Agnew, *Origins of the Czech National Renaissance* (Pittsburgh, 1993); Mark Cornwall, “The Struggle on the Czech-German Language Border, 1880–1940,” in *English History Review* 109 (Sept. 1994): 914–51; Peter Demetz, *Prague in Black and Gold: Scenes from the Life of a European City* (New York, 1997); Derek Sayer, *The Coasts of Bohemia: A Czech History* (Princeton, 1998); Marcela Efmertová, *České země v letech 1848–1918* (The Bohemian lands, 1848–1918) (Prague, 1998); Karl Bahm, “Beyond the Bourgeoisie: Rethinking Nation, Culture, and Modernity in Nineteenth-Century

- Central Europe,” in *Austrian History Yearbook* 29, part 1 (1998): 19–36; and Miloslav Hroch, *Na prahu národní existence* (On the threshold of a national existence) (Prague, 1999).
30. More openly primordialist works concerning East Central Europe as a whole: Karl Gottfried Hugelmann, ed., *Das Nationalitätenrecht des alten Österreich* (Vienna-Leipzig, 1934); Arthur May, *The Hapsburg Monarchy, 1867–1914* (Cambridge, 1951); Oskar Halecki, *Borderlands of Western Civilization: A History of East Central Europe* (New York, 1952); Francis Dvornik, *The Slavs in European History and Civilization* (New Brunswick, 1962); and Eugen Lemberg, *Nationalismus* (Reinbek bei Hamburg, 1964). Primordialist works concerning Bohemia tend to be written by or about Germans rather than Czechs, for reasons explored later in this essay: see, for example, Karl Türk, *Böhmen, Mähren und Schlesien* (Munich: 1898); Johannes Zemmrich, *Sprachgrenze und Deutschtum in Böhmen* (Braunschweig, 1902); Heinrich Rauchberg, *Der nationale Besitzstand in Böhmen* (Leipzig, 1905); Eduard Winter, *Tausend Jahre Geisteskampf im Sudetenraum: Das religiöse Ringen zweier Völker* (Salzburg, 1938); Hermann Münch, *Böhmische Tragödie* (Braunschweig, 1949); and Helmut Preidel, ed., *Die Deutschen in Böhmen und Mähren* (Gräfelfing bei München, 1950).
 31. See my conclusion to this essay.
 32. Among the historians of Hungary who have exercised greater caution than historians of other parts of East Central Europe in projecting or in reconstructing a person’s nationalization path on the basis of his or her language and culture are Oszkár Jászi, *A nemzeti államok kialakulása és a nemzetiségi kérdés* (The formation of national states and the nationalities question) (Budapest, 1912); Béla Pukánszky, *Német polgárság magyar földön* (German burghers on Hungarian soil) (Budapest, 1940); István Bibó, “A kelet-európai kisállamok nyomorúsága” (The misery of the small East European states), in *Válogatott tanulmányok* (Selected studies), vol. 2 (1946; reprint, Budapest, 1986), 185–265; Péter Hanák, “Polgárosodás és asszimiláció Magyarországon a XIX. században” (Embourgeoisement and assimilation in Hungary during the nineteenth century), in *Történelmi szemle* (Historical review), 1974, no. 4, 513–36; Ferenc Glatz, “Bürgerliche Entwicklung, Assimilation und Nationalismus in Ungarn im 19. Jahrhundert,” in *Acta Historica*, vol. 21 (1975), 153–69; Béla Bellér, *A magyarországi németek rövid története* (A short history of Hungary’s Germans) (Budapest, 1981); Andrew C. János, *The Politics of Backwardness in Hungary 1825–1945* (Princeton, 1982); Zoltán Ács, *Nemzetiségek a régi Magyarországon* (Nationalities in Old Hungary) (Budapest, 1984); and István Deák, *The Lawful Revolution and Beyond Nationalism*. For all that greater caution, however, most of these works remain ethnicist.
 33. Zdeněk Kárník, ed., *Sborník k problematice multiethnicity. České země jako multiethnická společnost: Češi, Němci a Židé ve společenském životě českých zemí 1848–1918* (Essays concerning multiethnicity: The Bohemian lands as a

- multiethnic society: Czechs, Germans, and Jews in the social life of the Bohemian lands, 1848–1918) (Prague, 1996), 6. For another example, see Jan Křen, *Historické proměny češství* (The historical transformations of Czechness) (Prague, 1992), especially 20–21.
34. For a valiant effort at defining, within an ethnicist framework, the differences between ethnic group and nation, see Hroch, *V národním zájmu*, 8–19. Kárník, typically enough, notes parenthetically after the passage cited previously that “There will be no discussion of interethnic groups or of Slovaks here, for reasons that will emerge from the following lines.” But the following lines and pages do not make any of the reasons for the exclusion clear.
 35. Max Weber, “Politics as Vocation,” in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, ed. H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (New York, 1946), 78; and Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood*, 21–31, 72. See also Gianfranco Poggi, *The State: Its Nature, Development and Prospects* (Stanford, 1990), 3–33, especially 25: “[A]lthough one often speaks of ‘the modern state’ ... strictly speaking the adjective ‘modern’ is pleonastic. For the set of features listed above is not found in any large-scale political entities other than those which began to develop in the early-modern phase of European history.”
 36. “Every Czech a Sokol” rang the slogan of the Sokol, an important Czech gymnastics organization founded early in the 1860s. By 1897, the Sokol could boast of 466 chapters, spread across Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, and Lower Austria. That those chapters counted only 43,870 members would seem to intersect with the slogan in troubling fashion—but ethnicism washes such problems away. See Jiří Kořalka, “The Czechs, 1840–1900,” in *The Formation of National Elites*, ed. Andreas Kappeler, vol. 6 of *Comparative Studies on Governments and Non-dominant Ethnic Groups in Europe, 1850–1940* (New York, 1992), 77–104, especially 89; and Peter Bugge, “Czech Nation-Building, National Self-Perception and Politics 1780–1914” (Ph.D. diss., University of Aarhus, Denmark, 1994), 123–25.
 37. For definitions compatible with my own of nationhood, see the works cited here by Anderson, Brubaker, and Gellner as well as Craig Calhoun, *Nationalism* (Minneapolis, 1997).
 38. See Rogers Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed* (Cambridge, 1996), especially chapter 1; and Brubaker and Frederick Cooper, “Beyond ‘Identity,’” in *Theory and Society* 29 (Feb. 2000): 1–47.
 39. I take these specific figures from the otherwise quite subtle and not very ethnicist volume by Kořalka, *Tschechen im Habsburgerreich*, 128. Almost all the works listed in notes 28, 29, 32, and 33 contain similar readings of Habsburg census data.
 40. Adolf Ficker, *Vorträge über die Vornahme der Volkszählung in Österreich* (Vienna: 1870), 87 and 89–90. The same statements appear in Ficker, *Die Völkerstämme der österreichisch-ungarischen Monarchie, ihre Gebiete, Gränzen und Inseln: Historisch, geographisch, statistisch dargestellt* (Vienna, 1869), 30–34.
- See also Karl Freiherr von Czoernig, *Ethnographie der österreichischen Monarchie*, 3 vols. (Vienna: 1855–57); and Brix, 79, who cites from an 1866 publication by German nationalist and statistician Richard Boeckh. He, too, argued that polling people directly about their nationality would be a mistake: “[I]n response to such a question we would receive only a combination of the true, the half true, the misunderstood, the mendacious, and the completely thoughtless.” But Boeckh went on, in classic ethnicist fashion, to advocate using a language question in the census as a proxy for nationality—about which many people, he argued, were not yet conscious. See additionally Charles Tilly, “A Bridge Halfway: Responding to Brubaker,” in *Contention* 4, no. 1 (Fall 1994): 15–19, especially 16: “In our individualistic world, people repeatedly attribute to persons, groups, or categories of persons characteristics that actually belong to the relations between those social units and other persons, groups, or categories. Ordinary social practice individualizes, turning the contingent and relational into the essential and cognitive ... slavery looks like a condition of persons but turns out to identify a variable set of connections with other persons: slave holders, free men, state officials, and other slaves.”
41. Arthur Haas, “Metternich and the Slavs,” in *Austrian History Yearbook* 4–5 (1968–69): 120–49, especially 121. The proceedings of the 1966 conference were published in the *Austrian History Yearbook* 3 (1967), cited previously.
 42. Rauchberg, *Der nationale Besitzstand in Böhmen*, 41–42, 94, 662–71.
 43. I take the terms “category of practice” and “category of analysis” from Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed* (see especially 15); and from Brubaker and Cooper, “Beyond ‘Identity.’” They acknowledge in turn their debt to Pierre Bourdieu.
 44. See Cohen, *Politics of Ethnic Survival*, 36; and Palacký’s letter, published in English translation in Charles Jelavich and Barbara Jelavich, eds., *The Habsburg Monarchy: Toward a Multinational Empire or National States?* (New York, 1959), 18–19. Regarding Palacký more generally, see Richard Plaschka, *Von Palacký bis Pekař: Geschichtswissenschaft und Nationalbewußtsein bei den Tschechen* (Graz, 1955); Joseph Zacek, *Palacký: The Historian as Scholar and Nationalist* (The Hague, 1970); and Dennis Deletant and Harry Hanak, eds., *Historians as Nation-Builders: Central and South-East Europe* (London, 1988); and Jiří Kořalka, *František Palacký* (Prague, 1998).
 45. Reprinted in František Palacký, *Idea státu rakouského* (The idea of the Austrian state) (Prague, 1865), 77–78. The authorized German translation is *Oesterreichs Staatsidee* (Prague, 1866), 88–89.
 46. See Bugge, “Czech Nation-Building,” 116; and Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, rev. ed., 71.
 47. František Palacký, *Dějiny národu českého v Čechách a v Moravě dle původních pramenův* (History of the Czech nation in Bohemia and Moravia according to original sources), vol. 4, 4th ed. (Prague, 1895), 175, 494–95. See also Johann Trajer, *Historisch-statistische Beschreibung der Diöcese Budweis* (Budweis, 1862),

- 4; Richter, *Südböhmische Sagen und Geschichten* (1881), 256–57; and Václav Ambrož, *Z minulosti Českých Budějovic. Příručka k vlastivědě o Č. Budějovicích* (From České Budějovice's past: Civics handbook concerning Č. Budějovice) (Č. Budějovice, 1933), 40ff.
48. On the subjects of print language and the early Czech movement, see Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, rev. ed., especially 25–36; Bugge, "Czech Nation-Building," especially 26ff, 307ff; and Vladimír Macura, *Znamení zrodu: České národní obrození jako kulturní typ* (In the sign of birth: The Czech national renaissance as a cultural type), 2d ed. (Prague, 1995), especially 50ff, 192ff.
49. See Mirko Očadlík, "Origin of Smetana's Opera," in *Libuše* (Supraphone booklet accompanying CD recording of a Prague performance of the opera, Nov. 18, 1983), 4–8; Kimball, *Czech Nationalism*, 130–32; and Marta Ottlová and Milan Pospíšil, *Bedřich Smetana a jeho doba* (Bedřich Smetana and his time) (Prague, 1997), especially 80–95, 137–38.
50. Bedřich Smetana and Josef Wenzig, *Libuše* (libretto) (New York City, 1986), final page. (My translation from the original Czech.)
51. Regarding what might be termed the failed ethnic group of Slavic Moravians, see Robert Luft, "Politische Kultur und Regionalismus in einer Zentral-landschaft zweiten Grades: Das Beispiel Mähren im späten 19. Jahrhundert," in *Politische Kultur in Ostmittel- und Südosteuropa*, ed. Werner Bramke and Thomas Adam (Leipzig, 1999), 125–60.
52. "Political-historical Bohemian/Czech nation" comes from the Czech "Declaration" of August 22, 1868—whose ethnicist dimensions were discussed briefly earlier. Quoted in Bugge, "Czech Nation-Building," 117. See also Bugge, 132–34 and 309–16; Kořalka, *Tschechen im Habsburgerreich*, 59–60; and Kořalka, "Hans Kohns Dichotomie," 268–70; Petr Pithart, "Pokus o vlast: Bolzano, Rádl, Patočka a my v roce 1979" (Attempt at a fatherland: Bolzano, Rádl, Patočka, and Us in 1979), in *Svědectví* (Testimony) 14, no. 59 (1979): 445–64; Bernard Bolzano, *Über das Verhältnis der beiden Volksstämme in Böhmen* (Vienna: 1849); and Emanuel Rádl, *Válka Čechů s Němci* (The war of Czechs with Germans) (Prague, 1928). Part of my point is that this tradition was shot through with, and undermined by, ethnicist assumptions—reflected in, among other things, the title of the book by Bolzano.
53. See not only Pieter Judson, *Exclusive Revolutionaries: Liberal Politics, Social Experience, and National Identity in the Austrian Empire, 1848–1914* (Ann Arbor, 1996); but also Judson, "Frontiers, Islands, Forests, Stones: Mapping the Geography of a German Identity in the Habsburg Monarchy, 1848–1900," in *The Geography of Identity*, ed. Patricia Yaeger (Ann Arbor, 1996), 382–406. For a similar argument, made fifteen years before the appearance of Judson's work; but in the more ethnicist language that then prevailed, see Cohen, *Politics of Ethnic Survival*. My reference to the work of Carl Schorske is to his *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture* (New York, 1981). See additionally Andrew Whiteside, *Austrian National Socialism before 1918* (The Hague, 1962). The early

- phases of German self-definition in the Bohemian lands have received next to no scholarly attention since the Second World War, perhaps because those phases fit so poorly into the ethnicist framework. There exist only dated studies such as Josef Pfitzner, *Das Erwachen der Sudetendeutschen im Spiegel ihres Schrifttums bis zum Jahre 1848* (Augsburg, 1926); and Eugen Lemberg, *Grundlagen des nationalen Erwachens in Böhmen, geistesgeschichtliche Studie am Lebensgang Josef Georg Meinerts (1773–1844)* (Reichenberg, 1932).
54. Ernest Renan, "What Is a Nation?," in *Nationalism in Europe, 1815 to the Present: A Reader*, ed. Stuart Woolf (New York, 1996), 48–60, especially 50; and Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, *The Use and Abuse of History* (New York, 1957), especially 12ff.
55. Relevant here is Brubaker and Cooper's warning against trusting essentialist models made more subtle through the addition of constructivist gestures.
56. A scholarly literature does exist on "provincial patriotism" in the Habsburg Monarchy. But that literature emphasizes the absence of a pan-Monarchical patriotism and thereby slights the importance of the patriotisms that did exist, as well as denies any significant connection between them and the nationalization process. See Robert Kann, *Dynasty, Politics and Culture: Selected Essays* (Boulder, Colo., 1991). For a more recent and more subtle discussion: Hroch, *V národním zájmu*, 23ff.
57. Joseph Schumpeter, *The Theory of Economic Development* (Cambridge, 1934), 64.
58. Hoensch, *Geschichte Böhmens*, 322. Walker Connor, a political scientist, complements Hoensch well with the following generalist statement of the ethnicist position: "[A] nation is a self-aware ethnic group. An ethnic group may be readily discerned by an anthropologist or other outside observer, but until the members are themselves aware of the group's uniqueness, it is merely an ethnic group and not a nation." See Walker Connor, "A Nation Is a Nation, Is a State, Is an Ethnic Group, Is a . . .," in *Nationalism*, ed. John Hutchinson and Anthony Smith (New York, 1994), 36–46, especially 45. Connor is correct in claiming that he shares this understanding with Max Weber—relevant passages from whose essay "The Nation" are reprinted in the same volume, 21–25.
59. See Deutsch, *Nationalism and Social Communication*, especially 25ff, 60ff; Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, especially 32–50; Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, rev. ed., especially 24–46, 67–82; Anderson, *Spectre of Comparisons*, especially 34; and Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood*, especially 31.
60. Etienne Balibar, "The Nation Form: History and Ideology," in *Becoming National: A Reader*, ed. Geoff Eley and Ronald Suny (New York, 1996), 138, 140. See also 149, note 10.
61. Yuri Slezkine, "The USSR as a Communal Apartment, or How a Socialist State Promoted Ethnic Particularism," in *Slavic Review* 13, no. 2 (summer 1994): 414–52; Leroy Vail, ed., *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa* (Berkeley, 1989); and Sharon Hutchinson, *Nuer Dilemmas* (Berkeley, 1995). See also Jean-Loup Amselle and Elikia M'Bokolo, eds., *Au cœur de l'ethnie: Ethnies,*

- tribalisme et état en Afrique* (Paris, 1985); Brackette Williams, "A Class Act: Anthropology and the Race to Nation across Ethnic Terrain," in *Annual Review of Anthropology* 18 (1989): 401–44; Francine Hirsch, "Empire of Nations: Colonial Technologies and the Making of the Soviet Union, 1917–1939" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1998); and Eley and Suny's introduction to *Becoming National*, 9, 11. See also the suggestive remarks concerning ethnicity in Anderson, *Spectre of Comparisons*, 43.
62. Katherine Verdery, *Transylvanian Villagers* (Berkeley, 1983); Verdery, *National Ideology under Socialism: Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceausescu's Romania* (Berkeley, 1991); Andrew Lass, "Romantic Documents and Political Monuments: The Meaning-Fulfillment of History in 19th-Century Czech Nationalism," in *American Ethnologist* 15, no. 3 (Aug. 1988): 456–471; Lass, "What Keeps the Czech Folk 'Alive'?", in *Dialectical Anthropology* 14 (1989): 7–19; Macura, *Znamení zrodu*; and Macura, *Český sen* (The Czech dream) (Prague, 1998). Dušan Třeštík's essayistic *Myslití dějiny* (Thinking History) (Prague, 1999) also deserves mention here, as do the following remarkably subtle but still in some ways ethnicist histories: Kořalka, *Tschechen im Habsburgerreich*; Moritsch, *Vom Ethnos zur Nationalität*; Jiří Rak, *Bývali Čechové: české historické mýty a stereotypy* (Once upon a Time There Were Czechs: Czech Historical Myths and Stereotypes) (Jinočany, 1994); Bugge, "Czech Nation-Building"; Judson, *Exclusive Revolutionaries*; and Jitka Lhencičková, *České země-v době předbřeznové 1792–1848* (The Bohemian Lands in the Pre-March Period, 1792–1948) (Prague, 1999).
63. Anthony Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Oxford, 1986); John Armstrong, *Nations before Nationalism* (Chapel Hill, 1982); and Walker Connor, *Ethnonationalism: The Quest for Understanding* (Princeton, 1994). See also Paul Brass, *Ethnicity and Nationalism* (London, 1991), for an ethnicist account perhaps even more ornamented with constructivist gestures than is Smith's.
64. See, for example, Haas, "Metternich and the Slavs."
65. See Hans Lemberg, "Der Versuch der Herstellung synthetischer Nationen im östlichen Europa im Lichte des Theorems vom Nation-Building," in Schmidt-Hartmann, *Formen des nationalen Bewusstseins*, 145–61.
66. Macura, *Znamení zrodu*, 36–37.
67. See Brubaker and Cooper, "Beyond 'Identity'"; and Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, including 4–5. Brubaker underscores that "[n]ational minority,' like 'external national homeland' or 'nationalizing state,' designates a political stance, not an ethnodemographic fact."
68. Rogers Brubaker, "Myths and Misconceptions in the Study of Nationalism," in *The State of the Nation: Ernest Gellner and the Theory of Nationalism*, ed. John Hall (Cambridge, 1998), 272–305, especially 301.
69. See Ernst Cassirer, *An Essay on Man* (New Haven, 1944), 193: "Freedom and causality are not to be considered as different or opposed metaphysical forces; they are simply different modes of judgment."

Rural Myth and the Modern Nation

Peasant Commemorations of Polish National Holidays, 1879–1910

Keely Stauter-Halsted

It has become commonplace for scholars of nation forming to treat the modern nation as a social construct. Elements of invention, creation, imagination, fantasy, and myth figure prominently in most accounts of the genesis of patriotic ideas.¹ Yet at the same time that historians and others have turned their attention to the subjective elements shaping national identity, specialists also increasingly emphasize the modernity of the nation itself as an institution. Arising out of industrial society's need for population mobility, the advent of mass media, or government efforts to control the masses, nations are commonly characterized as coalescing at particular historical moments from a combination of uniquely "modern" forces.² Given this parallel understanding of nations as both modern and at least partially "constructed," how should we interpret the distinctly premodern elements found in many national messages? Specifically, how can we assess nationalist content that is rooted in rural myth or in distortions of historical reality that privilege peasant contributions above those of their gentry compatriots, often legacies of "traditional" patterns of thought? The coexistence of modern national institutions with premodern tropes, while common to all national movements, is uniquely revealed in the ways Polish peasants participated in the formulation of national messages—and especially in the manner villagers chose to mark the commemoration of national holidays.