

Seven

Czech and Slovak identity redefined

What should man love the most – the fatherland or the nation? (...) The fatherland is dead land (...); the nation and language is our blood, life, spirit, ourselves.

Eudovít Šuhajda, 1834¹

During a nation-forming process, the nation-forming elite more or less consciously formulates what it means to be a nation, by defining those features that the nation-to-be shares. In the preceding chapter, the focus was on the phases of the national revival, the process through which modern Czech and Slovak national identities were formed. Now I will turn to their contents. What did it mean to be Czech or Slovak? What were the features that united people into one nation, setting "us" apart from "the others"?

Pre-national identities will often undergo a major transformation in the course of a national revival, as the image of what it means to be a nation gradually crystallizes. But the contents of national identities may also change considerably after the nation is fully formed, depending on the circumstances. The original image may thus be modified several times over. In this chapter I will concentrate on the changes in how nationhood was conceived during the Czech and Slovak revivals, from the late 18th through the 19th centuries.

The discussion will be organized around some features commonly held to unite nations: language, history (including religion and territory) and national character. The latter is a notion that largely went out of fashion after the Second World War, yet it was still common in the inter-war period. Finally, the Slav connection in the revivals (including Czecho-Slovak ideas) will be given separate treatment, because this is so important for understanding the inter-war debate on these questions.

The changing conceptions of "Czech-ness" and "Slovak-ness" were closely intertwined with a change in how "nation" was conceived. The Herderian idea that nations are bound together by language was especially influential in Eastern Europe. In the Czech and Slovak case, this worked in conjunction with a new conception of the relation between nation and class inherited from post-Revolutionary France: The nation was no longer the "noble nation", but also included the common people – the whole people. In a situation where the nobility was linguistically foreign, these new ideas necessarily affected national self-understanding deeply.

¹ (Co má člověk více milovat – vlast nebo národ? [...] Vlast je mrtvá země, [...]; národ a řeč je naše krev, život, duch, my sami). Quoted in *Československá vlastivěda*, Díl II, Dějiny, Svazek 2 (1969:119).

Czech and Slovak conceptions of nation

Unlike most Western languages, Czech and Slovak lack a word for "nation" directly derived from the Latin *nasci-* (to be born). The Latin root is found in words like *nacionalista* (a nationalist), *nacionalistický* (nationalist), *nacionalizmus* (nationalism), *nacionální/nacionální* (national), but they are today used sparingly and mostly in a negative sense, although this was not the case in the inter-war period. The word for nation is *národ* (from *narodit se* = to be born – in other words, a translation loan, parallel to the Latin word), while words like *národní/národní* (national), *vlastenec* (patriot – of vlast; homeland), *vlastenectví/vlastenectvo* (patriotism) are used to describe positive love of the nation. Yet, even if the word is native, the ambiguity of the modern nation concept is almost the same in Czech as in English.²

The meaning of "Czech" (*český*) is historically more ambiguous than the meaning of "Slovak" (*slovenský*). English and German use *Bohemian* (*böhmisch*) when referring to territorial identity, and *Czech* (*tschechisch*) when referring to cultural and linguistic identity. The Czechs have one word for both. Originally, *český* had at least three meanings: *Geographically* it referred to Bohemia (Čechy) as opposed to Moravia, *politically* to the lands of the Czech crown (Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia – sometimes also Lusatia), and *culturally* to the Czech nation. After the Second World War the two latter meanings have become less contradictory, as the Czech lands are now probably more culturally homogeneous than ever. Note that Bohemia and Moravia are still referred to as *the Czech lands* or the lands of the Czech crown. Even today, a term covering both regions is wanting, which is reflected in the name of the new state – *Česká republika* (the Czech Republic).³

Slovak (*slovenský*) historically referred to culture or origin ("race"), rather than to territory. Slovaks were never thought of as the people living on the territory of Slovakia. Quite the reverse – Slovakia was defined as the territory inhabited by Slovaks. According to Stanislav J. Kirschbaum, Slovakia (*Slovensko*) was used publicly for the first time in 1849 in a petition to the Habsburg emperor,⁴ at a point when the linguistic nation-concept was well established.

Slovak identity did not have a particularly precise content: Before the revival, the Slovaks often referred to themselves as *Slovaks*, *Slavs* or *Slavs of Hungary*. *Slovak* was sometimes even used about Slavs in general. Linguistically, the difference is not very great between *Slovák* and *Slovan* (Slav), *slovenský* (Slovak) and *slovanský* (Slavonic). The fact that "Slovak" was not a territorial term is also reflected in the term "Slavs of Hungary", making Hungary the relevant territory. The ambiguity of the term "Czech" thus had no historical parallel in "Slovak." Today that is a different story: "Slovak" can now refer to both territory and nation.

² *Slovník spisovné češtiny* (Czech Dictionary, 1994) gives three definitions of *národ*: 1) a community of people united by common speech, laws, territory, economy, psychological features and culture, 2) a [primitive] tribe, 3) the broad layers of the population, the people.

³ The logical name would be Česko, a parallel to Slovensko (Slovakia), Norsko (Norway) or Dánsko (Denmark). As of yet, Česko is only a slang form.

⁴ Stanislav J. Kirschbaum: *A history of Slovakia* (1994:9).

Czech pre-national identity

Scholars seem to agree that an awareness of being Czech existed early in the Middle Ages – albeit undoubtedly confined to the upper strata of society. The influx of German miners and craftsmen to Bohemian towns probably contributed to this, because of the privileges and power they attained. Since language was the chief marker distinguishing the two groups, Czech sentiment tended to show itself in defense of the Czech language, for instance through demands that all dignitaries should know Czech. Language was thus early perceived as an important part of being Czech, and Czech identity was from the outset conceived in opposition to German. At the same time, however, a process of mutual assimilation was at work.

A second important period in the crystallization of Czech identity is the Hussite era. According to František Šmahel, language (*lingua*), kinship (*sanguis*) and faith (*fides*) were the main features of Czech identity at the time.⁵ Certain Czech strata already saw themselves as different from the Germans in language, now religion was added, and with it, the idea of being a chosen people. In Zacek's words: "Catholic Europe's characterization of the Czechs as 'a nation of heretics' provoked a feeling of defensive solidarity permeated with a national religious messianism, a mystical conviction that the Czech nation was the most Christian of all and had been elected by God to revive the fallen church."⁶ At the same time, Czech sentiment spread to new classes, including townspeople as well as clergy and nobility.

The territorial conception of Czech identity that was expressed through a Bohemian *Landespatriotismus* at the start of the national revival probably preceded the cultural conception. Bohemia had been ruled by Czech princes for centuries at the time of Kosmas' death (1125), and it is likely that the existence of a Czech state, covering roughly the same core area for several hundred years, helped create a sense of (territorial) identity. Jan Křen argues that for long periods of time, "the ethnic and territorial, respectively, political conceptions of nation blended into each other, and are in the course of history only rarely possible to distinguish from each other."⁷

The foundations of a more popular conception of Czech identity were laid after the Battle of the White Mountain. The foreign nobility that replaced the fleeing Czech nobility after 1627 was predominantly German, and with the ruling house tipping the balance in favor of German as the political language of the Czech lands, the remaining Czech noble families were also gradually Germanized. The cultural and linguistic division between Czechs and Germans thus also increasingly became a class division, while Czech was reduced to a language of heretics and plebs. This was resented even by Catholic patriots like Balbín.

⁵ František Šmahel: *Idea národa v husitských Čechách* (1971:41).

⁶ J. Zacek: Nationalism in Czechoslovakia, in Sugar & Lederer: *Nationalism in Eastern Europe*(1994:173). The role of war in the crystallizing of pre-national and national identity is well documented. See e.g. A.D. Smith: *The ethnic origins of nations* (1986).

⁷ (Byla celá dlouhá období, kdy se etnické a teritoriální, resp. politické pojetí národa prolínalo a v dějinách se jen zřídka dá úplně oddělit). Jan Křen: *Historické proměny češství* (1992:19).

Slovak pre-national identity

It is not altogether clear when a Slovak consciousness first formed. A quite common view has been that a Slovak identity is a fairly recent phenomenon, dating back a few hundred years at the most. The fact that the Slovaks themselves did not seem to have any clear idea of being Slovaks prior to the 19th century (cf. the confusion between "Slav" and "Slovak"), points in this direction. Thus Anthony D. Smith uses the Slovaks as an example of an *ethnic category* rather than an *ethnie*, stating that "to an observer, they possessed many of the [objective] ethnic elements we have outlined, but little or no sense of community and solidarity."⁸

Stanislav J. Kirschbaum, on the other hand, argues that a Slovak consciousness existed in towns and cities already in the Middle Ages, along with an awareness of belonging to the Hungarian state.⁹ While it is possible that a sense of other-ness had developed in the towns in the Middle Ages, this Slovak awareness cannot have been very strong or widespread, since the group did not even have a proper name.

Yet, the fact that they distinguished between themselves and other groups within the territory of Hungary shows that they thought of themselves as culturally different. A middle position more along these lines is taken by Peter Brock in his essay on the Slovak national awakening, where he states that "the Slovaks had [in the 1780s] long possessed at least a vague feeling that they were different from their neighbors. [But] at the same time close ties existed, tending to unite the Slovaks with these neighbouring peoples and to obscure that sense of other-ness."¹⁰ These ties were political in the case of the Magyars (a common state from the 11th century) and linguistic and cultural in case of the Czechs (a common, Czech literary language). As we will recall, the latter is valid only for the Slovak Protestants. In practical terms, this "obscured other-ness" implied that, at the inception of the national revival, what it meant to be Slovak was yet to be defined. Two contrasting questions could be asked: Why was Slovak identity so weak? And why did a separate Slovak identity developed at all?

The first question has already been partly answered. One crucial identity-forming factor was missing in the Slovak case: a territorial focus. Although the part of Slovak territory that had been under Great Moravian rule was seen as an indivisible principality until the 12th century, Slovakia was never a united administrative or political whole before 1928,¹¹ and there were no state traditions whatsoever. Prior to the revival (and some time afterwards), the relevant political unit was Hungary. This meant that Slovak political history was not Slovak, but Hungarian, as was the territory. It also meant that the small Slovak elite that existed had a Hungarian identity – linked to the idea of a *Natio Hungarica*, formed in the late Middle Ages.

⁸ A. D. Smith (1986:30).

⁹ See Kirschbaum (1994:59).

¹⁰ Peter Brock: *The Slovak national awakening* (1976:3).

¹¹ It was admittedly in practice treated as one unit with the establishment of the Ministry of Slovakia in 1918.

Second, while the Reformation did not contribute to the formation of a Slovak literary language, because Czech was available, the Counter-Reformation did, through the evolution of "Jesuit Slovak." The role of Protestantism and Catholicism in terms of vernacularization was thus the opposite of other cases, although Jesuit Slovak lacked a firm grammatical and orthographic structure. Ironically, by allowing the Slovaks to remain split in terms of religion, the comparative freedom of religion in Hungary was a disadvantage from a national point of view. Church organization also weakened Slovak unity: The organization of the Slovak Protestants followed ethnic lines, but Czech was used for preaching the gospel; the Slovak Catholics developed a language of their own, but were organizationally united with the Magyars.

How then, did a sense of other-ness develop at all? It seems reasonable that a sense of Slovak identity first developed in the towns, possibly in opposition to German privileges and later also as a result of the Magyar influx to Slovak-inhabited areas after the Battle of Mohács. The continuous wars with the Ottoman Turks¹² and the educational efforts linked to the religious struggle (including the evolution of Jesuit Slovak), undoubtedly contributed to the crystallization of identity. The lack of historical and territorial ties (apart from the notorious Great Moravia) served to set the Slovaks apart from the Czechs, despite the cultural affinities.

Changing ideas of "nation" in the Czech and Slovak revivals

At the threshold of the national revivals, the conception of nationhood in East Central Europe was that of the *noble* nation, meaning that the politically privileged strata alone made up the nation. To qualify for nationhood, state traditions and a historical nobility were needed. In the Czech case, both requirements were met, except that the nobility (also the few families of Czech origin that were left) was becoming increasingly Germanized. The Bohemian noble nation was thus becoming more German than Czech. Within this framework there was no such thing as a Slovak nation: The Slovaks who enjoyed noble rank belonged by definition to the Hungarian (political) nation, the *Natio Hungarica*, and the rest were *plebs*.¹³

At that time, the conception of Czech identity was still open to interpretation.¹⁴ On the one hand, the Bohemian nobility (Czech and German) who opposed the centralizing efforts of Vienna articulated a *political* idea of nation that restricted the nation to groups with political rights (the Estates). This *Landespatriotismus* of the nobility was based on historical and territorial rights linked to the lands of the Czech crown. According to this nation concept, it was possible to be German-speaking and Czech (or rather Bohemian) at the same time. A scholar could thus be regarded as a good patriot and still write in German or Latin. Some the early Czech awakeners actually had German origins – among them Dobner and Pelcl.

¹² The Ottoman Wars probably also had another effect, that of shaping the Slovak self-image as the defenders of civilization, later echoed in Štúr's writings.

¹³ See Brock (1976:7).

¹⁴ See Anna Drabek: *The concept of 'nation' in Bohemia and Moravia at the turn of the 19th century* (1992:305–11).

On the other hand, the early Czech awakeners articulated a nation concept that was *culturally* and linguistically based. According to Anna Drabek, František Martin Pelcl nearly always meant the Czech-speaking inhabitants of the country when he wrote of the "Bohemian nation" in his 1774 "Short History of Bohemia." Josef Dobrovský used the term exclusively to refer to the Czechs, yet he probably did not include the dependent illiterate masses, the *plebs*. This would make his pessimism on behalf of the Czech language more understandable. At that time, Czech was losing its foothold not only among the nobility, but also in the towns.¹⁵

The distinction between these nation concepts was not always clear. In a handbook for the education of sons of the aristocracy (published in German in 1773) the nobleman Franz Josef Kinský described *Czech* as the national language of the Bohemians, yet also regarded *German* as a second native language in the Kingdom of Bohemia.¹⁶ The idea of the noble nation also explains the efforts of the early awakeners to win over the nobility to the national cause.

After 1815, the linguistically-based nation concept gained the upper hand under the influence of Romanticism. Mastery of the Czech language became essential in order to be considered a part of the Czech nation, which left out the German-speakers in general and the upper classes in particular. "The people are Czech; let the masters speak French among themselves [...] that way they expose themselves – as foreigners", wrote Jungmann in *O jazyku českém* (On the Czech language, 1806).¹⁷ However, the final break between Czechs and Germans did not occur until in 1848. This is also reflected in the change of language and focus of the third and following volumes of Palacký's monumental work about Czech history, published after 1848. Palacký wrote the first two volumes in German, under the title "History of Bohemia." This work now became "The History of the *Czech Nation* in Bohemia and Moravia."

At the same time, with the foreign ruling class "expelled", the Czechs emerged as even more politically oppressed. Political demands on behalf of the nation-to-be were presented simultaneously with the final victory of a popular, culturally-based nation concept. Consequently, in the Czech (and Slovak) case, national and democratic demands went hand in hand, while in the Magyar case, the national project was divorced from democratic ideas.

The cultural nation concept actually gained ground earlier among the Slovaks than among the Czechs. Otherwise, there was a clear parallelism in the identity changes in the Czech lands and Hungary. In the former case Czech identity was monopolized by the Czechs after the break-through of the linguistic nation concept, in the latter case Hungarian identity was monopolized by the Magyars. The chief difference was that while the Bohemian and Moravian Germans already had an alternative in the Great German identity, the Slovaks had to create an identity of their own.

¹⁵ Josef Kočí: *České národní obrození* (1978:91).

¹⁶ See Drabek (1992:307).

¹⁷ (Lid český jest; panstvo, nechť sobě hovoří francouzsky [...] zač sebe vydávají za cizozemce). Jungmann, quoted in: *Československá vlastivěda*, Díl II, svazek 2 (1969:77).

The concept of a *Natio Hungarica* was originally linked to the nobility, but under the influence of the Enlightenment, it became transformed into a citizen-oriented, political nation concept. As long as the Hungarian nation was conceived in political terms, it was possible to be linguistically Slovak and a member of the *Natio Hungarica* at the same time. As it came to be understood more and more in cultural terms, the Slovaks found themselves faced with a choice between assimilation into the Magyar nation and national opposition.

As a new conception of nationhood was gradually evolving after the French Revolution, emphasizing popular and linguistic elements, the small Slovak elite split into three factions: A noble faction adhering to the old idea of a Hungarian political (and eventually cultural) nation; a Protestant faction who believed in Czecho-Slovak unity based on a common literary language and common cultural traditions; and a Catholic faction who believed in a separate Slovak nation (or actually a Slovak tribe within a Slav nation). Initially, however, both Protestants and Catholics thought of Slovaks as being culturally distinct, according to Eva Kowalská.¹⁸

The linguistic conception of nationhood is important in order to understand why the language split became a problem. If the language is the soul of the nation, it follows logically that there must be one nation for each language, and one language for each nation. And "language" in this context was not the vernacular dialects of the masses, but the elevated, literary style of the educated classes. Thus, adherence to a Slovak literary language implied that a Slovak nation existed in its own right, while adherence to a Czech literary language implied that the Slovaks were a part of a larger Czechoslovak nation. What the two currents had in common was the idea that the Slovak, respectively Czechoslovak, "tribe" belonged to a larger Slav nation.

Language and identity

Language and identity questions became closely intertwined in both national revivals. This is also a point where the Czech and the Slovak revivals spill over into each other, because of the use of Czech as a literary language in Slovakia before, and in the Protestant case, also after the revival started. The Slovak Protestants regarded the Czech language of the Kralice Bible as their literary language, and thus wanted a part in its further development. Likewise, since Czech (and some Slovak) awakeners considered Slovak dialects to be a part of the Czech language, they resented any attempt at codifying Slovak, which they perceived as a split.

Czech had been a literary language since the 14th century, but had fallen into oblivion following the Battle of the White Mountain, after losing its position as the language of power. By the 18th century it was used mainly to publish official declarations, religious pamphlets and literature aimed at popular enlightenment. The former was grammatically conservative, but full of Germanisms and neologisms; the latter was heavily influenced by dialect forms.¹⁹

¹⁸ See Eva Kowalská: Historische Tradition, Sprache und Ausbildung: Zu einigen Faktoren des Werdegangs der Slowaken zur Nation, in Heiner Timmermann (ed): *Die Entstehung der Nationalbewegung in Europa 1750–1849* (1993).

¹⁹ Hugh LeCaine Agnew: *Origins of the Czech national revival* (1993:70).

Two basic strategies were open to the Czech awakeners. One obvious option was to use the contemporary vernacular language as a point of departure. The other option was to base modern Czech on the literary language that already existed, and then preferably in an archaic form, since the sorry state of contemporary literary Czech was widely acknowledged.

The choice of 16th century Czech and especially the Kralice Bible as a point of departure made literary Czech harder to master for the common people, since the language of the Kralice Bible had been conservative even compared to the spoken language of its own time.²⁰ This clearly shows that utility was not the primary concern. Instead the re-codification of Czech started as a desire to save the Czech historical heritage from total annihilation. The function of the language as a source of identity, of pride in what is "unique and ours", was seen as more important than the communicative function. It was no accident that Humanist Czech was chosen; the period from 1520 to the Battle of the White Mountain was described as "the beautiful or Golden Age" in Josef Dobrovský's classification of the development of Czech.²¹

The choice of strategy was probably also related to the status of the Czech (spoken) language at the end of the 18th century: It was regarded as a language of peasants and plebs and was held in low esteem. At this point, the old noble nation concept had not yet been replaced, the Czech awakeners had not given up trying to win the nobility over to their cause, and many of them needed (and received) the support of nobles for their scholarly activities. The elevated literary language of the 16th century was simply better suited for their purpose than the (in the awakeners' own eyes) degenerate peasant jargon of the 18th century. Once the old literary language was chosen as a point of departure, Czech grammar was more or less established. The old spelling and the vocabulary were of course modernized, especially after the turn of the century. The latter was a virtue of necessity, as Czech lacked the terms for a wide range of modern and scientific phenomena. During the Romantic period in the 19th century, more popular forms entered the literary language, through collection of folk songs and fairytales, and through the translation work of Jungmann and others.

The Slovaks did not have any literary heritage in their own language to preserve, or a codified literary language for that matter. The motivation for codifying the language could thus not be a desire to preserve a historical heritage. Instead the Slav connection was used as legitimization. In an unpublished part of the introduction to *Slowár slowenský* (Slovak Dictionary, written in 1796) Anton Bernolák, after praising the Slav language for its age-old existence, its wide extension, its sublimity and beauty, concluded thus: "Yet, most praise belongs to that tongue, which in relation to the others is their mother, or is decisively closest to their mother. This original tongue is simply the Slovak [Hungaro-Slav] tongue."²²

²⁰ According to *Vývoj českého jazyka a dialektologie* (1971:114) it was archaic grammatically as well as in vocabulary.

²¹ See Agnew (1993:112) for the complete classification.

²² (ale tu najviac chvály patrí tomu nárečiu, ktoré vzhľadom na ostatné je priamo ich matkou alebo ke matke sa rozhodne najviac približuje. Takýmto irečitým nárečím je jedine slovenské [uhorsko-slovanské] nárečie). Quoted in *Slovanství v národním životě Čechů a Slováků* (1968:104).

Bernolák argued that Slovak was easier to understand for other Slav peoples than any other Slavic tongue, and that it was purer because it was less influenced by foreign words. And yet, the motive behind the effort to codify Slovak as a separate literary language was the conviction that the Slovaks were a separate tribe of the Slav nation and needed their own literary language.

The Slovak dilemma was of a different kind than the Czech: They had to choose which spoken form to use as a foundation. Bernolák opted for Cultured West Slovak, although he mixed in some Central Slovak, which was a natural choice under the circumstances. First, Bernolák was familiar with West Slovak through his studies in Trnava and Bratislava. More important, Trnava had had a strong position as a Slovak cultural center since the 16th century, with its own university until 1777. It should be noted that what Bernolák chose as his point of departure was a West Slovak *elite* idiom, not the language of illiterate peasants – which is understandable, since the noble nation was still dominant. Instead of using the spelling rules of other Slav languages as a foundation, Bernolák based his codification on phonetic principles.

By choosing West Slovak Bernolák based his codification on the Slovak idioms that most closely resembled Czech. This, and the fact that Bernolák used Czech as a pattern, suggests that the object of codifying Slovak was not primarily to differentiate the Slovaks from the Czechs. In the eyes of Catholic Slovaks, the Czech *Bibličtina* was tainted by its association with Hussism and the Reformation. It was thus unacceptable from a religious, rather than from a national point of view. After the Patent of Tolerance was introduced in 1781, the front between Catholics and Protestants gradually softened. And while Bernoláčtina was not able to unite the two camps, Czech was increasingly stigmatized by the Magyar propaganda.

The second attempt at codifying a Slovak literary language was accomplished by a group of Protestant awakeners with Ľudovít Štúr at the helm. The phonetic orthography was kept, but Štúr switched to the idiom of the intelligentsia and townspeople of Central Slovakia, linking it to former "Cultured Central Slovak." The reason why this was chosen was, according to Kirschbaum, that it "already enjoyed a great deal of prestige as the main vehicle of popular oral culture, something that Kollár's and Šafařík's folk song collections confirmed. It was also understandable to those speaking Eastern as well as Western Slovak dialects."²³

In addition to these practical arguments, however, the choice of Central Slovak also seems to have been motivated by its purity: These were the dialects that were least affected by foreign influences. According to Thomas Čapek, already Matej Bel (1684-1749) stated that the richest and purest Slovak dialect was the one spoken about an equal distance from the seats of the Bohemians, Moravians, Poles and Magyars, and according to location called Central Slovak.²⁴ In a way, Štúr took the consequence of the ideas of Bernolák and Bel. In vocabulary, however, he was conservative, preferring to keep the continuity with Czech.

²³ Kirschbaum (1995:101).

²⁴ Referred in Thomas Čapek: *The Slovaks of Hungary* (1906:117).

Given the linguistic conception of nationhood, Štúr's codification implied that the Protestants now definitely saw the Slovaks as a separate "tribe." Štúr had from the outset been a proponent of Kollár's concept of one Czecho-Slovak "tribe" and used the Czech *Bibličtina* as late as in 1841. Gradually, however, he came to the conclusion that the Slovaks should be conceived as a separate tribe with their own language. This was interconnected in Štúr's way of thinking. In 1843 he wrote "language is, then, the surest sign of the essence and individuality of every nation. Just like an individual human being, the nation reveals its deeper inner self through language [...] the spirit of the nation develops in and with the language in the form most appropriate to it: they are interdependent, and so one cannot exist without the other."²⁵

The Czech awakeners tended to see the Slovaks as a part of the Czech nation and were thus opposed to a separate Slovak literary language. Already in a letter to Juraj Ribay in 1794 Dobrovský had expressed his opposition to Bernoláčtina. He went against it publicly in 1809, and in a letter to Kopitar in 1810 he argued that "Slovaks (as well as Moravians) are not called Czechs, but according to language they belong to the Czech tribe all the same." According to Novotný, it was Ribay who inspired Dobrovský to think that the Czechs and Slovaks were one nation.²⁶ Likewise, the Czech awakeners opposed Štúr's codification of Slovak. On Kollár's initiative, a pamphlet entitled *Hlasové o potřebě jednoty spisovného jazyka pro Čechy, Moravany a Slováky* (Voices about the Need for a United Literary Language of the Czechs, Moravians and Slovaks) was published with the support of the *Matica česká* in 1846. Here the Štúr circle was accused of betraying Czecho-Slovak unity and reciprocity.²⁷

On the other hand, Slovak Protestant awakeners tried to interfere with Czech linguistic development. A disagreement arose between Juraj Palkovič and Josef Jungmann over the direction of the Czech language. Palkovič was the more conservative of the two and wanted to keep the old forms of the *Bibličtina*, while Jungmann regarded the language as an organism in constant development. Both believed that language was the most important marker of nationhood. Palkovič saw Czech as a more developed and cultivated form of Slovak, and he thus believed in the existence of a Czecho-Slovak nation.²⁸

Realizing that modern Czech was more difficult to understand for the Slovaks than the old *Bibličtina*, Jan Kollár wanted to introduce more Slovak features in order to make literary Czech easier to understand. His poems as well as other writings are characterized by Slovakisms in grammar and in vocabulary. Appointed special councilor for Slovak questions by the Austrian government after the defeat of the Magyar liberals in 1849, Kollár was able to introduce "Old Slovak", a Slovakized Czech, in the school system of Slovakia.

²⁵ Quoted in Robert Pynsent: *Questions of identity. Czech and Slovak ideas of nationality and personality* (1994:186).

²⁶ (Slováci (ba i Moravané) se nenazývají Čechy, ale podle řeči patří přece k českému kmeni). *Slovanství...* (1968:105). See also Jan Novotný: *Češi a Slováci za národního obrození a do vzniku československého státu* (1968:42, 43, 45).

²⁷ See David Short: The use and abuse of the language argument in mid-nineteenth-century 'Czechoslovakism': An appraisal of a propaganda milestone, in: Robert B. Pynsent: *The literature of nationalism* (1996:44–54).

²⁸ See Novotný (1968:55).

Yet, the development of a truly Czechoslovak literary language was opposed by leading Czech patriots, like Jungmann and Palacký. They warned Kollár against linguistic experiments, which they regarded as harmful to Czech literature.²⁹

History and identity

The interpretation of history is often an important part of the nation-forming process. Again, the starting point was very different in the Czech and the Slovak cases. The Czechs had a long tradition of "national" history writing, in the form of chronicles like Kosmas', the so-called Dalimil chronicle, the chronicle of Václav Hájek of Libočany and others. In the Slovak case, the first truly national history was written in the beginning of the revival by Juraj Papánek, although works where the Slovaks were treated as a separate group started to appear in the 17th (Révay, Jakobeus) and 18th centuries (e.g. Matej Bel).

During the Counter-Reformation, Czech history was naturally interpreted from a strictly Catholic point of view. At most, the reign of Karel IV was acknowledged, while Hussism was associated with heresy and condemned. It was thus perceived as a period of disgrace, an ebb in Czech history. The Battle at the White Mountain was brought upon the Czechs by themselves, as a punishment for their heresy, and the Counter-Reformation saved them from their heretic predilections. Czech, being the language of the Hussite heretics, was also more than slightly suspect. Old legends that suited the historiography of the *temno* were adopted – like those associated with the cult of St. Václav. In addition, new legends were built around the new Catholic saint Jan Nepomucký, who was intended to replace Jan Hus.³⁰

It was the new critical methods in Czech historiography, starting with Dobner's comments to Hájek's *Kronyka česká*, that paved the way for a gradual re-evaluation of the historical heritage. Through a critical scrutiny of the sources, the more fantastic and mythical parts of the heritage were repudiated. This also affected the newly inaugurated cult of Jan Nepomucký. Simultaneously, a re-evaluation of crucial events in Czech history (chiefly Hussism and the Battle of the White Mountain) started. The Patent of Tolerance (1781) indirectly helped in rehabilitating Hussism by allowing other religions than Catholicism. In the beginning of the revival, the Hussites and the Brethren were still seen as heretics, but they began to get credit for their linguistic efforts. Hussism thus became a literary Golden Age before it became a Golden Age in general. In František M. Pelcl's *Kurzgefasste Geschichte der Böhmen* (A Brief History of Bohemia – 1774), the Hussites were still evaluated more negatively than positively, although Pelcl praised Žižka and Prokop the Bald for their heroism.³¹

²⁹ According to a quotation in Novotný (1968:64), they described that kind of experiments as inconsistent with and a disaster for our literature ("neštěstí a neshody naší literatury").

³⁰ The historical figure Jan z Pomuku and the Jan Nepomucký of legend show little resemblance. See for instance Robert B. Pynsent: *Questions of identity* (1994:201).

³¹ Kočí (1978:98).

It was the Protestant František Palacký who took the final steps in the reinterpretation of the Hussite period. Palacký reversed the old picture totally, making the Hussite period a time of glory and the Counter-Reformation a disgrace, while the Battle at the White Mountain became an externally imposed cause of the national decline. His point of departure was a philosophy of history where Czech history was seen as one of ceaseless contact and struggle between the Slav and the German element, and as a struggle between the ideas of authoritarian power (the church of the Middle Ages) and freedom of the spirit (Czech Hussism).

For Palacký, the great periods of Czech history were the reign of Karel IV, the Hussite period, and the reign of the "Hussite king," Jiří of Poděbrady. It is probably no coincidence that these were the periods of Czech independence. Parallel to this, Hussism also started to become the object of literary works, as in *Jan Hus* (1848) by Josef Kajetán Tyl, and later in works by Alois Jirásek and others.

Hussism was now interpreted as a national and popular movement, fighting for freedom against the German-Catholic principles of authority and feudalism. Anti-German attitudes and anti-clericalism thus went hand in hand in the Czech national movement – which is rather paradoxical, considering that an overwhelming majority of the people remained Catholic even after the Patent of Tolerance was instituted. According to Kočí, a total of only some 50,000 people in Bohemia and Moravia converted to the tolerated churches.³²

A fairly continuous feature of Czech historiography from Kosmas via Dalimil, Balbín and Stránský to Palacký was its anti-German bias. If anything, the anti-German tinge of the Czech national movement became stronger in the course of the national revival. Palacký was the first to define the struggle against the Germans as the meaning of Czech history, yet he was much more nuanced than many of the patriots of his day. He reproved the Czechs for their love of things foreign and their religious quarrelsomeness, and he blamed the Czech estates for the Germanization of the Czech lands prior to the Austrian accession to the Bohemian throne. In the course of the Czech revival, the Germans were increasingly portrayed as the arch-enemy, responsible for every evil that had ever befallen the Czechs. In the popular conception of history even Czech kings who invited German colonists to the land were condemned.

A corollary of the anti-German attitude was an anti-noble attitude, especially after 1848. The Czech (Catholic) nobility was blamed for the outcome at the White Mountain, seen as traitors to the national cause at Lipany, and charged with sacrificing the interests of the nation for the sake of their own material gain. Old legends were put to new use. The story about the judgment of Libuše (originally written down by Kosmas)³³ elaborated on in the false medieval manuscripts fitted the image of the popular and democratic character of the Czechs and underlined the humble origin of the former Czech ruling house, the Přemyslids (see Appendix A). The false medieval manuscripts were also used as proof of the early Czech civilization.

³² Kočí (1978:131).

³³ See Vladimír Karbusický: *Báje, mýty, dějiny* (1995) for an analysis of the old Czech legends of Kosmas.

Tomáš G. Masaryk's series of books on the national question, written in the 1890s,³⁴ brought a new reinterpretation of Czech history that was based on Palacký's, but differed on central points. Masaryk agreed with Palacký's positive evaluation of Hussism and went even further in presenting it as *the most* glorious period in Czech history. On the other hand, he disagreed with Palacký's interpretation of Czech history as a history of struggle against the Germans, and his positive evaluation of the reign of Jiří of Poděbrady.

Masaryk re-emphasized the religious contents of the Hussite struggles, and argued that the Hussite struggles had been directed only against those Germans that supported Rome; if the struggle had been a nationalistic one, it would have taken on a political rather than religious guise. At the same time he turned the Hussite struggles into a struggle for the ideal of humanity, which in his view was the *leitmotif* of Czech history. A central point, for which Masaryk was severely criticized, was the idea of continuity between the Czech reformation (Hussism) and the national revival. His philosophy of Czech history may be summarized thus:

1. The meaning of Czech history was religious, not national. The meaning of Czech history was not to fight the Germans, but the *ideal of humanity* as revealed through the Czech reformation and the national revival, achieving its finest expression in the Bohemian Brethren.
2. The decline associated with the Battle of the White Mountain was first and foremost a moral decline: the Czechs lost their independence and were unable to regain it because they had betrayed the ideals of the Czech reformation. In this scheme, the Battle of the White Mountain only completed the Czech fall that had begun with the Battle of Lipany in 1434. In turn, the national revival was caused by a new sense of faith in the Hussite ideals.
3. The only cure was to return to the ideal of humanity. Masaryk's answer was that the Czechs must learn from history, and determine how they best could bring about spiritual rebirth – by overcoming "the Rome within ourselves."³⁵
4. The means must be in line with the goal – humanistic. Masaryk thus advocated hard work and criticism, as opposed to the Romanticism of violent revolution on the one hand and the passive cult of martyrs on the other. To work for the nation rather than just talk, to live for the nation instead of fantasizing about dying for it – that was the credo of Masaryk.

Masaryk's major opponents in the debate on the meaning of Czech history were Josef Pekař and Kamil Krofta – who had been on the same side as Masaryk in the struggle over the false manuscripts. While giving him credit for this, they argued that he fell prey to a new error, by establishing a new, equally false and equally romantic ideology instead.³⁶

³⁴ T.G. Masaryk, Tomáš G. *Česká otázka. O naší nynější krizi. Jan Hus – Naše obrození a naše reformace* (1924a). See also George J. Kovtun (ed.): *The spirit of Thomas G. Masaryk* (1990:90), a collection of Masaryk texts translated into English.

³⁵ (Emphasis in original.) See Kovtun (1990:95).

³⁶ See Jiří Jareš: *Jest otázka česká otázkou náboženskou?* (1922:14). Josef Pekař: *O smysl českých dějin* (1990), Miloš Havelka (ed.): *Spor o smysl českých dějin* (1995). Martin Kučera: *Pekař proti Masarykovi* (1995).

For the Slovaks, the national revival was not so much a question of reinterpreting a history that was already written: Slovak history needed to be written anew in a way that could support the equality of the Slovaks in the *Natio Hungarica* and later the existence of a Slovak or Czecho-Slovak tribe of the Slav nation. It is interesting how the Slovak awakeners tried to compensate for the lack of Slovak statehood, partly by inventing a line of kings that did not exist, partly by interpreting Great Moravia as a Slovak state, and partly by portraying the Slovaks as the most original of the Slav tribes. The latter is maybe the most striking feature.

Great Moravia and the Cyrillo-Methodian tradition, which were regarded as closely related, were emphasized as expressions of an independent, pre-Magyar Slovak existence. A special position was awarded Rastislav, who had invited Cyril and Methodius to bring the gospel to his people, and Svätopluk, under whose reign the empire reached its widest extension. In addition, the importance of Hussism and Jan Jiskra was underlined (by the Protestants) and certain Hungarian noblemen, like Matúš Čák, were presented as champions of Slovak interests. His position is illustrated by Čapek's comparison of Štúr with him: "Štúr was [...] the most remarkable champion of Slovak rights since Matúš Čák's days."³⁷

The views of the continuity/break between Great Moravia and the tradition of St. István changed during the revival. Initially, Papánek emphasized the successful integration of Slovak nobility into the ruling elite of the new Hungarian state, i.e. the continuity with Great Moravia. The aim was apparently to substantiate that a culturally Slovak gentry (to which he belonged) had equal rights in the *Natio Hungarica*. In this scheme, the Hungarian state became the heir to the civilization of Great Moravia, originating through a contract between Magyar tribes and the Slovaks.³⁸ The implication was also that the nomadic Magyars had inherited basic agricultural skills, Christianity and the Moravian state tradition from the Slovaks, who had acted as the civilizers of the "barbarians." The Slovaks should thus be regarded as equal partners in the Hungarian state. Also Papánek's invention of a line of false kings can be interpreted as an attempt at establishing Slovak historical rights.

According to Papánek, the cradle of the Slav nation was the area around the Danube. The Slovaks were the most direct descendants of the original Slavs, geographically and culturally, and because of the close ancestry, Slovak was closer to the original Slav mother tongue than any other Slav language. The close ancestry was also reflected by the fact that the Slovaks were the only tribe to keep the old name. These were views Bernolák shared. However, he disagreed with Papánek in one main respect: He viewed the demise of Great Moravia and emergence of the Hungarian state as a national disaster.³⁹ The Protestant priest Ján Hrdlička voiced similar thoughts in *Slovenský národ* (The Slovak Nation, 1785). He placed the "cradle" of the Slav nation in the Nitra, Bystrica and Košice areas.

³⁷ Čapek (1906:134).

³⁸ See Kowalská (1993:244).

³⁹ See R.A. Kann & Z.V. David: *The peoples of the Eastern Habsburg lands 1526–1918* (1984:246).

Even the clearly Czechoslovak oriented Pavel Josef Šafařík endorsed the idea of the Slovaks as the most genuine or original of Slavs. In *Slovanské starožitnosti*, devoted to the oldest Slav history, he established the age-old presence of the Slavs and their correspondingly large role in European history and culture. He argued that Proto-Slavonic survived longer in Slovakia than elsewhere for geographical reasons: The Slavs who settled there remained isolated from other peoples longer than other Slavs. In his view, the Czech language was the daughter of Slovak, and to recreate a Slovak language would thus be like going from the *Iliad* to the ABC (!).⁴⁰

As Magyarization pressure increased, the idea of a contract faded away: The blame for the historical subjugation of the Slovaks was now increasingly placed on the Magyars and the Germans. Yet the idea of the Slovaks as civilizers lingered on, in the idea of the Slovaks as defenders of civilization in the Ottoman wars. This focus is also visible in the literature of the national revival; the Ottoman wars were a favorite topic, along with real and more mythical heroes. A favorite in Slovak romantic poetry was Juraj Jánošík, the Slovak Robin Hood.

Compared to the rather marked anti-German bias of the Czech movement, the Slovak analog is less obvious. Slovak identity was partly defined in contrast to the barbarians or the infidels (the Turks and the Magyars), but the Germans were also regarded as an enemy. This may be a reaction to Habsburg rule, or also an effect of the traditionally privileged position of the Germans in the towns of Slovakia – or even a spill-over from the Czech revival. An illustrative example is how Štúr wrote of Cyril and Methodius in 1841: "And going about, they taught and the people listened to their words about great matters and God's miracles, and the people tore down all idols and bowed down before the Lord. And the Lord took great pleasure in this people, for He multiplied them and extended the frontiers of their country. But the Satan of the Germans drove the God-loving king [Rastislav] to destruction and ensured that he was dogged by treachery and that he fell into the hands of his enemies."⁴¹

Conceptions of national character

At least seen from the outside, Czech character had, prior to the revival, been associated with heresy.⁴² An image of the Czechs as great warriors was probably also fairly common. In Balbín's narrative, the Lion in the Czech coat of arms symbolized courage. He portrayed the Slavs (Czechs) as the "most aggressive" of all nations in war.⁴³ To fight wars was not originally the task of commoners, but of the nobility. This image of national character thus concerned the upper class, whereas the conception of the Czechs as heretics also included the masses – but was evaluated negatively.

⁴⁰ Referred in Pynsent (1994:63).

⁴¹ Quoted in Pynsent (1994:161).

⁴² According to Václav Chaloupecký: *Československé dějiny*(1922:22), Hungarian sources spoke of the Czech Hussites as heretics (Bohemi-haeretici). See also John Hale: The Renaissance idea of Europe, in: Soledad García (ed.): *European identity and the search for legitimacy* (1993:54).

⁴³ ("nejválečnější národ"). Referred in Kočí (1978:14).

In contrast, the rather diffuse Slovak identity meant that, prior to the revival, specific notions of the Slovak character were not very widespread. However, Ján Hrdlička (1785) gave a picture of Slovak character that was clearly popular: Slovaks were described as *hard working, modest, hospitable* and *merry*. This conception was strengthened in the course of the revival.

When nationhood was extended to the masses and the linguistic nation concept replaced the "noble nation" the commoners (or the peasants) became the core of the nation. At the same time, national character became associated with allegedly popular features. Despite their different historical points of departure, the Czech and Slovak self-understanding was strikingly similar: Both emphasized the democratic character of their nation, their popular foundation, and their mild and peaceable character. First, this may be linked to their position as non-dominant nations: After the "foreign nobility" was excluded, the Czech nation was confined to a Czech-speaking intelligentsia, townspeople and peasants, while the popular character of the Slovak nation-to-be was even more marked because of the tiny intelligentsia.

Second, Jan Kollár represented a shared influence. In *Dobré vlastnosti národu slovanského* (The Good Qualities of the Slav Nation – Pest 1822), he distilled Herder's picture of the Slavs as quiet, mild, peaceful, hard-working farming people who loved their land, were hospitable to strangers and led a merry musical life. This characteristic mildness helped explain how the Czechs and Slovaks could be subjugated. According to Kollár, the Slav virtues were five: *piety, diligence, innocent joy, love of their language and tolerance towards other nations*. He portrayed the Slavs as a gentle, innocent, "dove-like nation", arguing that the Slavs never went to war other than to defend themselves, but they fought bravely. They never subjugated others, settled only in lands that were empty or already abandoned by others, and everywhere they "tamed other, savage nations with their quiet, peaceable presence."⁴⁴ Kollár also added the myth of the democratic, freedom-loving Slavs: The reason why they did not subjugate other nations was that they loved the freedom of their enemies as much as their own.

All this boils down to the Herderian myth of the Slavs as farmers. The reason why most Slavs were peasants was that it was their natural vocation, the very foundation of life. In Šafařík's words: "The Slavs' invincible predilection for farming is the work of Nature herself, [...] the natural pleasantness of their character and manners and their predilection for a free life could find satisfaction only in farming."⁴⁵ Kollár's picture of the Germans stands in stark contrast to the picture of the mild Slavs. He portrayed them as the opposite of the Slav in almost every respect, and everything bad was their fault. So feudalism was German, of course, since the Slavs were natural-born democrats. Both Kollár and Šafařík regarded the Germans or Germanic tribes as enemies of the Slavs from time immemorial (in Kollár's version 23 German emperors from Charlemagne to Henry IV had worked to de-naturalize the Slavs!). And they disliked the Magyars, whom they described as "Asiatic hordes."⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Pynsent (1994:75, 80–86).

⁴⁵ Quoted in Pynsent (1994:83).

⁴⁶ Pynsent (1994:93).

Palacký shared the view of the Slavs as peace-loving creatures, and praised them for their simplicity, piety and sensitivity. He also saw the Czechs as inherently democratic in their ways and Bohemia as a bridge between east and west, between the Slavs and the Germanic people. The belief in Slav mildness dwindled after 1830, but the notion of the Czechs (and Slovaks) as democratic and peace-loving was retained.

Štúr's point of departure in his description of Slovak character was also that of the Slav. The Slavs were regarded as peaceable farmers, and as the guardians of Christian western civilization against "Eastern barbarism." The Slovaks were seen as civilizers – in Štúr's scheme of things they saved the Magyars from their "barbarian self" – by converting them to Christianity and by teaching them how to plow and build houses. The Slovaks, in other words, turned the Magyars away from their nomadic life style of plundering and pillage. He emphasized the Slav democracy, wisdom, courage and piety. But piety was in his eyes not a feature that had come with Christianity: it had always been a part of the Slav, and hence the Slovak, character.

Masaryk's national philosophy was a break also with the die-hard conception of the Germans as the arch-enemy of the Czechs. In Masaryk's view, the Germans were closest to the Slavs in character; hence, the German influences did not stir the Czech character to the extent that was often thought. He also constantly portrayed the Germans as educators of the Czechs. In this he differed from Kollár and Palacký. His main criticism of Kollár was indeed the latter's negative evaluation of the Germans, more this than the exaggeration of the fine Slav qualities. On the other hand, Masaryk's feelings towards the Germans were ambivalent. The positive task of the national awakens was in his view to form and to spread an independent Czech culture and to improve the language through a variety of literary activities; the negative task was to withstand the domination of German language and culture, and German influences generally.⁴⁷

Masaryk argued both against the revivalist myth of the mild and passive Slav and the earlier accounts of Slavs as brutal and ruthless. He declared that the picture of the mild and passive Slav was arrived at in Slavonic studies by an a priori construction, not on the basis of critical research, and that the old Slavs had indeed been aggressive, adventurous and brutal. The refinement of Slav manners and morals, Masaryk argued, started with the arrival of Christianity. Still, he maintained that the Slavs were by nature less aggressive than the Germans: "Our predecessors were rough, brutal, cruel and so on, but they were not as aggressive, in their whole nature as aggressive and eager to rule as the Germanic. [...] Herder in most respects correctly passed on what older and newer sources before him had shown."⁴⁸

⁴⁷ (Úkol, jež si postavili naši buditelé před sto lety, máme my, jejich potomkové, po stu letech a budou ho mít i potomkové naši – je to starý náš úkol národní a kulturní). T.G. Masaryk *Česká otázka* (1990a:14).

⁴⁸ (Naši předkové byli hrubí, suroví, ukrutní a tak dále, ale nebyli tak bojovní, celou svou náturou bojovní a pánoviti jako Germáni. [...] Herder v hlavní věci správně podával o Slovanech, co staří a novější prameny před ním dávaly). Masaryk (1990a:69).

The Slav idea in the Czech and Slovak national revival

The idea of a Slav nation (Slavism, Slav reciprocity) and a Czechoslovak tribe of that nation played different roles in the Czech and Slovak national revivals. From the beginning of the *Czech* revival, Slavism served the interests of the Czech nation-to-be, and was conditional on a Czech national consciousness, rather than serving as the foundation for it.⁴⁹ It was from the outset neither very explicit nor very elaborated. In both currents of the *Slovak* national revival, the idea of a Slav nation was a premise, a starting point for revival efforts. Until the turn of the century, the Slovaks were referred to as "Slavs of Hungary" just as often as "Slovaks."

We may note an increasing awareness of the difference between Slav and Slovak (respectively Czech) going from the first to the second generation of awakeners. At the same time, Slavism was to a much larger extent an integrated (and conscious) part of the ideological profile of the *Czech and Slovak* national movement after the turn of the century. The younger generation saw Russia as a champion of freedom against the aggression of Napoleonic France. Then, after autocratic Russia crushed the Polish rebellion in 1830, the sentiment became more pro-Polish.

The Slav idea had strongest effect on the Czech and Slovak national revivals through the work of Jan Kollár and Pavel Josef Šafařík. As early as in 1821 Kollár had formulated the idea of one Slav nation with four branches or tribes: Russian, Czechoslovak, Polish and "Illyrian" (South Slav), corresponding to four Slavic tongues.⁵⁰ He wanted a gradual rapprochement and in the end a merger between the four branches of the Slav nation. In a hostile world, belonging to large nation would protect the tribes better than being a self-contained entity, Kollár felt.

His idea of a Czechoslovak tribe within a larger Slav nation was reciprocity in miniature: Czechoslovak unity also had the advantage of making the Slovaks a part of a nation that did have a history of its own, and a tradition of a literary language. In view of the equation of language with nation inherent in the Herderian cultural nation concept, Kollár's life-long opposition to a separate Slovak literary language makes eminent sense. He saw a single Czechoslovak language as a means of protecting the Slovaks against the Magyars, and Slav unity as protecting the Czechs and Slovaks against German domination. However, Kollár's scheme never went beyond cultural reciprocity.

Šafařík was, despite his Slav visions, more of a realist than Kollár. He did not believe it was possible to create a common Slav literary language, and he rejected the non-organic mixture of all Slav tongues as artificial.⁵¹ As a scholar, he acknowledged the existence of all Slav tongues. In *Geschichte der slawischen Sprache und Literatur nach alle Mundarten* (1826), he even acknowledged Slovak as a separate tongue, but in *Slovanské starožitnosti* (1836-37) it was counted as Czechoslovak.

⁴⁹ *Slovanství...* (1968:95).

⁵⁰ See Thomas G. Pešek: The "Czechoslovak" question on the eve of the 1848 revolution, in Brock & Skilling: *The Czech renaissance of the nineteenth century* (1970:132), and Pynsent (1994:52 pp.)

⁵¹ *Slovanství...* (1968:117, 148).

Among the Czech nationally minded elite, the broad ideas of Slav reciprocity gradually started to change towards a narrower concept of Austro-Slav reciprocity towards the middle of the 19th century. At the same time, the emphasis changed from cultural reciprocity to political cooperation. In addition to the reactionary absolutism of Czar Russia, clashes between Slav peoples (the Russians and the Poles, the Poles and the Ukrainians) weakened the picture of the dove-like Slav character and led to a new awareness of contradictions between Slav nations.

Karel Havlíček was the first to enter openly into conflict with Kollár's all-Slav orientation. His stay in Russia (1842–44) had cured him of his originally pro-Russian feelings. Where Šafařík was critical to the Russian autocratic government, Havlíček extended his skepticism to the *people* as well. For him the Russian nation was absolutist, and he saw Russian Pan-Slavism in this light: "Russian Pan-Slavists assume that we would like to be under their government, and they are strongly convinced that one time all Slav lands will be in their power. They are starting to say and write Slav instead of Russian, so they also can say Russian instead of Slav."⁵²

Havlíček regarded Kollár's ideas as harmful, and in *Slovan a Čech* (Slav and Czech, 1846), he rejected them altogether: The Slavs were not one nation with four tribes, but four nations, as different from each other as any other group of European nations. They did not answer for each other's virtues or vices. Because of the circumstances, however, a greater sympathy was possible between the Czechs and the South Slavs, who could be of mutual benefit to each other politically, according to Havlíček. There is no Romantic Slav reciprocity in this – rather a calculation of what best served the interests of the Czech nation. The punch line of the article has become famous: "with national pride I say 'I am Czech', but never 'I am a Slav'." ⁵³

The early Czech Austro-Slavism, represented by Lev Thun (1811–88) was of a cultural nature. In 1842 Thun tried to convince the Habsburgs that the Czech national movement was there to stay, that Germanization was futile, and that the Slavs of the empire would not be a threat to Austria, if she treated them well. Yet, the Austro-Slav position is better known as the political doctrine of Czech liberalism after 1848; equal rights for all nations within the empire and political autonomy in a federalized Austria. Arguments varied from the natural rights of the 1848-49 revolution, to the historical rights Czech politicians reverted to afterwards.

Czech Austro-Slavism was closely related to the Czech self-image as a small nation in a hostile world. This is abundantly clear in the letter Palacký sent to the Frankfurt Parliament in 1848, where he argued that when the Czech lands were a part of the Holy Roman Empire, this was a union between rulers only. Stating that "we are Czechs, not Germans", and refusing to take part in the forming of a German nation-state, he argued that the Czechs needed protection against a united Germany *and* Russia, something only (a federalized) Austria could provide.

⁵² (Ruští pan-slavisté [...] se domnívají, že bychom rádi pod jejich vládou stáli ... a pevně jsou přesvědčení, že jednou všechny slovanské země v moci své míti budou ... Tito pánové počínají všude místo ruský říkati a psáti slovanský, aby pak místo slovanský zas také ruský říci mohli). Quoted in *Slovanství...* (1968:151).

⁵³ (s hrdostí národní řeknu: 'Já jsem Čech', ale nikdy 'já jsem Slovan'). Quoted in *Slovanství...* (1968:152).

In his famous phrase: "Surely, if the Austrian state did not already long exist, we would have to see to it at once that it was created in the interest of Europe, yes of humanity."⁵⁴ After the Ausgleich of 1867, Palacký's Austro-Slavism turned sour, and his new slogan was: "We were here before Austria, and we will be here after."⁵⁵ In the wake of the Ausgleich a Russophile current temporarily dominated the Czech national movement, and this had a renaissance after 1905. A parallel development took place among the Slovaks around 1838, when the emphasis shifted from cultural to political reciprocity between the Slavs. Like Havlíček, Ludovít Štúr rejected Kollár's idea of a Slav nation with four tribes. Yet, he did not reject the notion of a Slav nation, only the division into only four tribes – and in particular the notion of a Czechoslovak and an Illyrian (Yugoslav) tribe, which he regarded as constructed. In Štúr's conception, Slavdom was a bond of affinity between ten individual and equal Slav tribes, of which the Czechs and the Slovaks were separate and equal partners.

Slav unity was no longer seen as a matter of cultural rapprochement, including elements like a common language, but as a matter of spiritual unity going beyond differences of language and literature.⁵⁶ At the same time, national identity and national concerns became the primary, Slav reciprocity secondary. In line with this new spiritual conception of Slav reciprocity, increased contact and cooperation with other Slav tribes was envisaged, especially within the Habsburg empire. In the event, political cooperation after 1895 also involved non-Slav peoples of Hungary (the Rumanians). Like in the Czech case, a Russophile current followed in the wake of the Austro-Hungarian Ausgleich; and a part of the Slovak national movement remained strongly pro-Russian right up to the First World War. However, political Pan-Slavism, foreseeing a political union of all Slavs in one state, was never seriously advocated.

As for Czechoslovak reciprocity, this assumed varying forms among the Czech and Slovak awakeners from the beginning. The Czechs tended to see the Slovaks as a part of the Czech nation and the Slovak tongue as a group of Czech dialects. They generally viewed the Slovaks as poor relatives, and this attitude did not change much during the national revival. After the political Austro-Slav position was adopted, the Czech state rights program became an obstacle to Czecho-Slovak political cooperation, since the Slovaks were not a historical nation. The Slovaks regarded themselves as a part of the *Czechoslovak* tribe of the Slav nation, not as Czechs, and most of them had some notion of Slovak individuality. Juraj Ribay, for example, stated that "our Church and literary language is Czech",⁵⁷ yet saw Slovak as a separate Slav tongue. Kollár considered Czech and Slovak to be one tongue, but wanted to introduce some Slovak elements into Czech to make it easier for the Slovaks to understand.

⁵⁴ (Zajisté, kdyby státu rakouského nebylo již od dávna, musili bychom v interesu Evropy, ba humanity samé přičiniti se co nejdříve, aby se utvořil). Jiří Morava: *Palacký* (1994:141), or *Kdo byl kdo v našich dějinách do roku 1918* (1993:228).

⁵⁵ (Byli jsme před Rakouskem, budeme i po něm). This sentence is quoted almost everywhere Palacký is mentioned. See e.g. J. Bartoš, S. Kovářová, M. Trapl: *Osobnosti českých dějin*, (1995:267), *Kdo byl kdo...* (1993:228)

⁵⁶ *Slovanství...* (1968:162–3).

⁵⁷ (náš jazyk církevní a literární je čeština). Ribay in a letter to Durych in 1789, quoted in *Slovanství...* (1968:105).

After the second codification of Slovak, the Czechoslovak idea became secondary and no longer implied linguistic unity, yet the idea of cultural kinship was not abandoned. Czechoslovakism in this diluted form had a renaissance in the Czech and Slovak elite in the years prior to the First World War. The focus was on aiding the Slovaks in cultural and economic matters, not on political cooperation. This found expression among the Czechs through the Czechoslav Unity (*Československá jednota*, 1895).⁵⁸ Among the Slovaks, the student association *Detvan* and the circle around the journal *Hlas* (Voice, 1898), the so-called Hlasists, and *Prúdy* (streams, 1909) were the chief advocates of Czecho-Slovak reciprocity.

Masaryk played an important part in this renaissance through his close contacts with the Hlasists, who saw him as their teacher and leader. In *Česká otázka* (1895) he expressed the idea that the Slovaks were Czechs, when he marveled that "the first among Czech awakeners [Kollár] is a Czech, but born in Hungary." He praised the Slovaks for welcoming Czech exiles in times of trouble, and for contributing to the Czech revival.⁵⁹

In *Problém malého národa* (Problem of a Small Nation, 1905) Masaryk explicitly defined the Slovaks as a part of the Czech nation: "Just consider, how Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia and lastly Slovakia are separated in our minds. There are two million Czechs in the Hungarian kingdom! [...] We cannot just give up a third of our nation. Even losing one soul is not in order. And here we are speaking of two million souls that have become foreign to us. Our national sentiment has not yet been *brought to completion*. We must even more than before *join the individual tribes and forces*."⁶⁰ The program of Masaryk's Progressive Party of 1912 stated, "We consider the Hungarian Slovaks as a part of the Czech nation."⁶¹

Summary and conclusion

To simplify, we may say that at the inception of the national revival, Czech identity was defined more by a common history than by language – and by virtue of this history, a common territory. This territory was the historical lands of the Czech crown, not the territory that was inhabited by Czech-speaking people. The nation was confined to the political classes (the Estates) or at the most included free men. From the outset, the emphasis of the "awakeners" was on the history of the Czech crown. Their interest in the Czech language was mainly of an antiquarian character; the desire to save a historical heritage from annihilation. Here it was not always easy to distinguish between national awareness and *Landespatriotismus*.

⁵⁸ Expressions of this Czechoslovakism may be found in Karel Kálal: *Slovensko a Slováci* (1905), and *Vývoj federalismu v Rakousku od r. 1848*, published by Revue Naše Slovensko, the organ of Československá jednota between 1907 and 1910.

⁵⁹ (Prvním naším buditelem je Čech, ale narozený v Uhrách). Masaryk (1990a:55, 56).

⁶⁰ (Jen považme, jak v našem vědomí jsou rozdělení Čechy, Morava, i Slezsko a dokonce i Slovensko. Dva miliony Čechů je v uherském království! [...] nevzdáme se přeče jedné třetiny svého národa. Pokud se nám může ztratit jedna duše, není to v pořádku. A tu běží o dva miliony duší, které jsou nám cizí. Naše citění národnostní není ještě *dovršeno*. Musíme ještě více *sloučit jednotlivé kmeny a síly* než doposud.) T.G. Masaryk: *Ideály humanitní. Problém malého národa. Demokratism v politice* (1990b:87). (Emphasis in original.)

⁶¹ Quoted in H. Gordon Skilling: *T.G. Masaryk: Against the current, 1882–1914* (1994:70).

Slovak identity was far more diffuse, but also more popularly oriented from the start because of the lack of a separate political or "noble" nation. The feeling of "other-ness" was linked to culture and origin rather than to history, which the Slovaks shared with the other peoples of Hungary. The cultivation of the St. István tradition and the invention of Slovak kings in the early days of the revival may be interpreted as an attempt at establishing Slovak historical rights. The Slav idea was far more central than in the Czech case, as it was used to legitimize the codification of Slovak and served as a bridge between the two currents.

The picture of Czech and Slovak national character painted during the first part of both national awakenings was generally a positive one, based on the stereotype of the mild Slavs: They were merry, mild and agreeable, pious, industrious, peaceful and dove-like, born democrats. All this had been perverted by the Germans, who were aggressive and undemocratic – every bit what the Slavs were not. In the Czech case, the Germans commanded the stage alone in the role as enemy of the nation or "the important other"; in the Slovak case, they shared it with the Magyars and the Ottoman Turks. In the latter half of the 19th century, the old virtues of the Czech character were questioned, with an emphasis on negative features. Havlíček started this trend, and Masaryk and other "realists" at the Czech university followed suit.

When nationhood was extended to the masses and the language-based concept of nation replaced the former "noble nation", the understanding of Czech identity changed, through a shift in emphasis from history and territory to culture and language. At the same time, the Czech nation moved from being a noble to a plebeian nation, excluding in phase B most of those who populated the political nation at the inception of phase A. The German-speaking nobility became demonized and excluded, the Czech-speaking masses were praised and included in the new picture. History and national character were reinterpreted to fit this revised conception of nationhood.

The idea of the peasant as the core of the nation partly followed from the existing social structure. The great majority of the people were peasants at the time when the linguistic and popular conception of nationhood was gaining ground, and their subjugated position was parallel to the political subjugation of the subject nations in the Austro-Hungarian empire. During this period, the idea of the Czech peasant as the bearer of national identity through the period of darkness (*temno*) became common. In the words of J.V. Polišenský: "While the renegades within the class of the nobility were rapidly losing contact with the nation [...], *the people remained unbroken* by misery and terror. At that time [during the *temno*] the character of the Czech nation as it is today was being formed. A united whole, popular and democratic in expression, anti-dynastic and rebellious in spirit" (my emphasis).⁶² However, the Czech and Slovak need to present themselves as "civilized" compared to the most important "others" suggests that the image of the popular, small nation was not unambiguous. Moreover, when the Czechs monopolized Bohemian/Czech identity after 1848, they also monopolized the historical right to the territory of the Czech crown, regardless of its national composition.

⁶² J.V. Polišenský: *History of Czechoslovakia in outline* (1991:68). The book was originally published in 1947.

In the Slovak case, the effect of the linguistic nation concept was, at least initially, to deepen the split within Slovak patriotic intelligentsia. A Slovak-Catholic current adhering to a Slovak literary language opposed a Czechoslovak-Protestant current adhering to a Czech literary language – and, by implication, a Czechoslovak tribe of the Slav nation. A side effect was to associate Slovak with Catholic, at a time when anti-clericalism (in the sense of anti-Catholicism) was beginning to become a part of Czech self-understanding.

A Slovak national identity associated with language and people became firmly established only after the second codification of Slovak in the 1840s. This is also when the idea of a Slav nation was relegated as secondary to national interests. The religious connection survived, in the notion of the pious character of the Slovak, and Kollár's image of the mild, kind, peaceful, pure Slav character of the Slovaks was retained. In the Slovak case, the phase of agitation started before national identity had been clearly defined, in a situation where two national ideologies coexisted, and it succeeded only after the two currents merged. Had it been successful before 1840, the Slovak Protestants might have come to define themselves as Czechs.

Our discussion has also shown that the idea of the Czechs and Slovaks as one nation had historical roots in the national revivals of the Czechs and Slovaks. Until the second codification of Slovak, Czechoslovak reciprocity had implied cultural as well as linguistic unity. After the turn of the century, it survived only in a diluted form (divorced from the notion of one literary language), but it could nevertheless be used as a point of departure for the formulation of a Czechoslovakist national ideology during and after the First World War. The Czechoslovak strand in the Czech and Slovak revivals was thus, on the one hand, a resource, because it provided Official Czechoslovakism with a historical basis.

On the other hand, it also posed a few problems. For one thing, there was an inherent duplicity in this historical heritage, in the sense that Czech and Slovak conceptions of Czechoslovak reciprocity differed from the very beginning. The Czech awakeners tended to regard the Slovaks as a part of the Czech nation, and Slovak as a Czech dialect. The Slovak conception was more that of a Czechoslovak tribe of a larger Slav nation, where the Czechs and Slovaks were more equal. Second, although the notion of Czechoslovak reciprocity no longer implied a shared literary language, it was still based on a cultural nation concept. This at least potentially restricted the range of features that could be employed to define Czechoslovak nationhood.

Finally, when efforts to advance a Czechoslovak nation project started, the contents of Czech and Slovak identity had already been formulated. An important question is to what extent this proposed Czechoslovak identity ran counter to the existing Czech and Slovak identities. I will return to this in Chapter Ten.