Defining the Nation: Framing a Debate on the Origins and Nature of Nations in Interwar Czechoslovakia

by

Ian Graham

Submitted to

Central European University

Nationalism Studies Program

In partial fulfillments of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

Advisor: Anton Pelinka

Budapest, Hungary

2014

Abstract

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This thesis explores a debate over the nature and origins of nations in interwar Czechoslovakia which has largely been neglected by the literature on the history of nationalism studies. As a way of providing a point of entry to a larger interwar debate, the text focuses on the political engagement and nationalism theory of a philosopher and public intellectual named Emanuel Rádl and a Sudeten German historian named Eugen Lemberg. Encompassing a time period from the twilight of the Habsburg Empire to the late 1930's, this thesis explains how a debate emerged from the inconsistencies of Tomáš Masaryk's national ideology, its turn towards Western European values, and the often less idealistic political practices inside the First Czechoslovak Republic. The debate which ensued saw Rádl and Lemberg contribute to discussions over the subjective or objective nature of nations and the validity of a western political vs. eastern organic national typology.

Key words   History, Czechoslovakia, History of Nationalism Studies, Interwar, National Minorities, Tomáš Masaryk

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Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Anton Pelinka for his guidance and encouragement throughout the thesis-writing process. Additionally, this thesis has benefited greatly from conversations with Balázs Trencsényi whose help in navigating primary and secondary sources has been invaluable. Also, work with Czech texts was greatly facilitated by the expertise and work of Veronika Klempova. Finally, I owe much to the love and support of friends and family for the completion of this thesis and the M.A. program as a whole.

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Introduction

From the perspective of the state, defining the nation presents far more than a perfunctory task or an intellectual exercise. Perhaps this was nowhere quite as apparent as in the new states in East Central Europe formed from the territory of formerly multinational empires after the First World War. Within states created on claims to national self-determination in which nationality became an institutionalized statistical category, defining the nation in a particular way corresponded with serious consequences for minority rights provisions, census results, the engineering of national majorities, and the relationship between individuals and the state.

Given such high stakes in societies where diverse cultures lived side by side and often possessed fluid notions of national belonging, some states like Czechoslovakia hoped in vain to avoid conflict and controversy by not explicitly defining the nation or nationality in either the constitution or census laws.[1] Despite its best efforts at equivocation, the Czechoslovak state could not escape affirming or denying some conception of nationality in the course of daily state administration. As the state's perceptions of nationality and nationhood manifested themselves, controversy erupted as political actors proposed competing conceptualizations of the nation which naturally pointed towards different futures for politics and governance. In Czechoslovakia, a debate about the nature and origins of the nations emerged in the late 20's as the values of an avowedly western, tolerant, and cosmopolitan Czechoslovak nation appeared to clash with the inequality of national minorities and limited democratic practices. This debate reached a fever point in discussions over the ideal design of the upcoming 1930 census. In a debate that continued for more than a decade, figures as diverse as the Czech philosopher Emanuel Rádl and the Sudeten German historian Eugen Lemberg proposed opposing conceptions of the nation

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[1] Čapková, *Czechs, Germans, Jews?*, 33.

as a means to address the contradiction between Czechoslovak national ideals and actual state practices. Far from being an obscure episode of academic sparring, this debate filled the pages of prominent political journals and appeared on the front pages of the most popular newspapers in the course of the late 20's and 30's.

Surprisingly, little mention is made of the Czechoslovak debate on the nature and origins of nations within the larger body of literature on the history of the field of nationalism studies or in biographical works on the debate's participants. This is all the more baffling given that the Czechoslovak debate advanced rather avant-garde topics such as the objective vs. subjective nature of nations, their antiquity or novelty, and the validity of a Western political vs. Eastern organic national typology. Further, it is rarely mentioned that scholars important to the study of nationalism such as Hans Kohn, Karl Deutsch, and even Ernest Gellner all possessed connections to interwar Czechoslovakia and potentially even to this debate and its political circumstances. Although scholars of the history of nationalism studies like Paul Lawrence and Anthony Smith have acknowledged the importance of the interwar period for the development of theories of the nation and of nationalism, neither has mentioned a debate in interwar Czechoslovakia.[2] Even the biographical work on figures like Emanuel Rádl and Eugen Lemberg by authors such as Karen Pohl focuses somewhat too closely on the figures they follow to show them within the context of a larger debate to which they wish to contribute.[3] Given the absence of a debate in the history of nationalism studies literature and the literature on individual nationalism theorists like Rádl and Lemberg, questions remain regarding the circumstances, content and practical function of the debate.

Primarily, this thesis seeks to understand why a debate about the nature and origins of

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[2] Lawrence, *Nationalism*; Smith, *Nationalism*.
[3] Pohl, "Die Soziologen Eugen Lemberg Und Emerich K. Francis: Wissenschaftsgeschichtliche Überlegungen Zu Den Biographien Zweier 'Staffelsteiner' Im 'Volkstumskampf' Und Im Nachkriegsdeutschland"; Loewenstein, "Ein Tscechischer Denker Der Krise: Emanuel Radl (1873-1942)."

the nation arose from political events in interwar Czechoslovakia, what types of theories were proposed in the course of debate, and how these theories of the nation related to the interwar Czechoslovak political context and proposed paths for future action. For the sake of clarity and practicality, this thesis will focus on the nationalism theory and political engagement of two figures: Emanuel Rádl and Eugen Lemberg. Largely, Rádl and Lemberg represent the two extreme ideological poles between which most of the interwar debate took place. I will show that while Rádl pitched a heavily voluntaristic, constructed, and perhaps even modernist conceptualization of the nation, Lemberg steadfastly held to his assertions that nations were objective forms of unity which had been constructed by a myriad of historical forces. By contextualizing and investigating the interwar works of both authors, a picture emerges of the topics covered by the interwar Czechoslovak debates, the interwar political issues which they wished to address, and the way in which theorizing about nations guided visions of a future political order. I argue that the debate on nations and nationalism under discussion arose from the palpable dissonance between the western, humanistic, and cosmopolitan Czechoslovak national ideology formulated by Tomáš Masaryk on the one hand and the various forms of inequality accompanying the status of minorities, perceived national chauvinism, and limited democratic practices inside the First Czechoslovak Republic on the other. The responses of Rádl and Lemberg to this clash led to relatively avant garde discussions over the subjective or objective nature of nations and the validity of a Western political vs. Eastern organic national paradigm.

To support the aforementioned claims, this thesis will comprise four chapters. A brief first chapter will address the placement of the interwar Czechoslovak debate on nations within literature on the history of nationalism studies. The second chapter provides context for the interwar debate by focusing on the nationalization of Bohemian and

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Moravian politics and society in the late Habsburg Empire. Crucially, an analysis of this time period displays how the rapid rise of the nation divided society and even national movements over competing conceptions of nationhood. During this time of accelerated change and division, the national ideology of Masaryk brought forward new humanistic constructions of Czech-ness and the nation which in turn would form the basis of the First Czechoslovak Republic. Next, the third chapter will show how a Czechoslovak national ideology linked to the supposedly cosmopolitan, democratic, and tolerant values of Western society after the First World War proved paradoxical in light of the status of national minorities, nationalization, and limited democracy in the First Czechoslovak Republic. Additionally, this chapter will focus on the different ways in which Rádl and Lemberg diagnosed the source of this paradox. Finally the fourth and final chapter will illustrate how the different interests and interpretations of interwar political events produced opposing views in a debate over whether nations were subjective and based on free will or objective and rooted in history. Disagreement over the validity of a Western political vs Eastern organic national model will be considered at the end of this chapter.

1. Where is the Interwar Czechoslovak Debate in Histories of Nationalism Studies?

As mentioned earlier in earlier, literature on the history of the study of nationalism contains little if anything about a debate on the nature and origins of nations in interwar Czechoslovakia. Although the small corpus of literature on the history of nationalism studies values the contributions of the interwar era for its production of national typologies and early forms of modernist thought, it nevertheless overlooks Czechoslovak debates and intellectual culture. Current historical literature and biographical material on Rádl and Lemberg lack a more inclusive view of the circumstances and content of this interwar debate but do provide a useful starting point for contextualization. All of this seems to justify an attempt to explain the content of a debate sparked by political complications surrounding the inconsistencies of the Masarykian national narrative and its turn to the West after the First World War.

There exists a small body of literature focused on providing a history of the study of nationalism or the history of theories of nationalism. Among the best received recent works, Paul Lawrence's 2005 book *Nationalism: History and Theory* sets out to create a historiographical account of diverse and conflicting theories of nations and nationalism which moves beyond merely recounting works of the best known theorists.[4] In addition, Anthony Smith has made attempts in multiple books to put forth a history of theories of nationalism, even if he often centers too much on theories at the expense of a view of theorists and their contexts.[5] As might be expected, a great deal of Smith's emphasis is placed on investigating the roots of modernist thought.[6] Umut Özkirimli surveys the "key" theories of nationalism in a

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[4] Lawrence, *Nationalism*, 1.
[5] Smith, *Nationalism*; Smith, *Theories of Nationalism*.
[6] Smith and Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism*.

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way similar to the work of Anthony Smith.[7] Other lesser known and less historically expansive works focusing on the history of nationalism theory might also include books like *Nation Formation* by Paul James.[8]

Literature written on the history of the study of nationalism, as mentioned earlier, has suggested that the interwar era was importation for the study of nations and nationalism. Paul Lawrence's book *Nationalism: History and Theory* points to a number of interwar discussions to argue that the interwar period marked the beginning of important trends such as the creation of national typologies and the inclusion of a greater number of disciplines in the study of nationalism.[9]Having shown a sustained interest in surveying the history of nationalism studies in multiple books, Anthony D Smith has asserted that interwar national typologies held moralizing tendencies and often saw certain national models as paths for a better future, but that this did not detract from the fact that they were useful to post-Second World War theories and theorists and even lay the seeds of modernist thought.[10] Like Lawrence and Smith, Umut Özkirimli sees work on nationalism from the years between 1918 and 1945 as influencing modernist theorists of the nation after the Second World War primarily through classifications of nationalism.[11]

Nearly all the works on the history of nationalism theories consider Hans Kohn, a Prague native, and his ethnic vs. civic national paradigm to be a product of interwar thought and perhaps the crowning achievement of its modernist tendencies and typologies. Lawrence explains that while Kohn first published his ethnic vs. civic national paradigm in 1944, he had formulated his thoughts on the matter during the interwar era.[12] Smith holds that Kohn's work presented an important complex ideological national typology utilizing spatial, chronological,

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[7] Özkırımlı, *Theories of Nationalism*.
[8] James, *Nation Formation*.
[9] Lawrence, *Nationalism*, 62. Lawrence focuses on the entrance of psychology to the study of nationalism, the creation of typologies, and the pioneering work of Hans Kohn.
[10] Smith and Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism*, 16.
[11] Özkırımlı, *Theories of Nationalism*, 36.
[12] Lawrence, *Nationalism*, 91.

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and intellectual components.[13]In line with the importance of the interwar period to larger trends in nationalism studies, Kohn's distinction between a "voluntarist" or free associational nationalism and an organic type revolutionized the study of nationalism and gave direction for the works of future modernist thinkers.[14]

Despite the attention paid to a Prague-born theorist and the existence of debates over a western political vs. eastern organic national typology in interwar Czechoslovakia described in this thesis, histories of the study of nationalism have passed over debates or theoretical works from the interwar Czechoslovak context. Although Lawrence certainly makes use of debates and works of a political hue in discussing the development of national typologies, he sticks to American, British, French, and German contexts. In particular, a number of British theorists are shown to be forbearers of Kohn's ethnic vs. civic typology in their articulation of an ethnic German national form.[15] Like Lawrence, Smith and Özkirimli predominantly cover the products of British and American intellectual cultures in their analysis of interwar studies. Özkirimli from the beginning tells his readers that he primarily focuses on English language texts and Anglo-American contexts seeing as they have had the greatest impact.[16] Further, while Kohn is often examined in sections analyzing the interwar period, the contact Kohn had with the interwar Czechoslovak context is afforded no mention. Discussion of interwar writings and debates, even in texts moving beyond the canon of nationalism theorists like Lawrence's, miss debates on nations and nationalism from East Central European contexts which came about from political circumstances.

While the history of nationalism studies literature has overlooked interwar Czechoslovak debates on nations and nationalism, full descriptions of the debates remain

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[13] Smith and Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism*, 196.
[14] Ibid., 146.
[15] Lawrence, *Nationalism*, 69; Rose, *Nationality as a Factor in Modern History*; Muir, *Nationalism and Internationalism*. John Holland Rose and Israel Zangwill are shown to be important for distilling a negative German nationalism, while Muir suggested that a nation could form among peoples feeling certain strong affinities.
[16] Özkırımlı, *Theories of Nationalism*, 8. Such a statement would seem to neglect the number of theorists with Continental European backgrounds and who likewise might be expected to be influenced by continental European debates and intellectual cultures.

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beyond the scope of historical works on individual theorists and other scholarship on the interwar period. Biographically geared historical work on Rádl by Bedrich Loewenstein and on Lemberg by Karen Pohl do not fully frame their subjects within a larger debate and tend to focus on other aspects of their lives.[17] Similarly, Kareřina Čapková's brilliant analysis of the controversey around the 1921 census and the complex national issues accompanying Czech-Jewish and Zionist movements in Czechoslovkia enable historians to imagine some of the circumstances surrounding a debate on nations without discussing the debate's content.[18] Similar comments could be made about the pioneering scholarship of Andrea Orzoff on the national mythology of Masaryk's First Republic and of Tara Zahra's study of the nationalization of children in the interwar period.[19] All these works serve as invaluable resources to understanding how a debate emerges while not fully concentrating on the debate and its content.

Overall, the interwar debate outlined in this thesis is missing from the history of nationalism studies literature while not wholly fully described in other historical works on interwar Czechoslovakia. Given the history of nationalism theory's interest in the interwar period for national typologies, nascent modernism, and the formation of Kohn's thought, the omission of the interwar Czechoslovak debates is surprising. Although secondary literature written on interwar Czechoslovakia is not sufficient for describing the content of interwar debates, it is nonetheless a valuable starting point for contextualization.

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[17] Loewenstein, "Ein Tscechischer Denker Der Krise: Emanuel Radl (1873-1942)"; Pohl, "Die Soziologen Eugen Lemberg Und Emerich K. Francis: Wissenschaftsgeschichtliche Überlegungen Zu Den Biographien Zweier 'Staffelsteiner' Im 'Volkstumskampf' Und Im Nachkriegsdeutschland." Pohl is primarily concerned with the continuation of Lemberg's involvement in the *Staffelstein* movement in his post-war work, while Loewenstein focuses on the joining Radl's philosophical and biological influence his thoughts on the nation and history. Both are highly valuable works but limited in showing a wider context for a debate and the views of other historical actors.

[18] Čapková, *Czechs, Germans, Jews?*.

[19] Zahra Orzoff, *Battle for the Castle*; Zahra, "Reclaiming Children for the Nation." Orzoff in particular plays an important role in this thesis for her contributions in showing the complications of shifting Masaryk's Czechoslovak national narrative towards perceived "Western" values.

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2. The Late Habsburg Context: Nationhood, Division, and Masaryk's National Ideology

The four decades leading to the First World War proved to be an important era in accelerating the growth of national movements and establishing the grounds for the interwar debates on nations and nationalism. Although Czech and German national movements had existed in Bohemia and Moravia at a much earlier date, the late 19th century transformed these movements into veritable social and political forces at a feverish pace. In particular, the 1880s and 90's ushered in a new kind of mass politics in the Austrian half of the Habsburg Empire in which the nation and the right to speak on behalf of it were established as predominant legitimizing forces. While politics quickly became nationalized, formerly non national facets of daily life in Bohemia and Moravia soon divided on national lines as the choice of stores, schools, associations, media, and even beer all became markers for national allegiance. The same process which ascribed national meaning to the lives of an ever growing portion of the population also generated extremely divisive tendencies. Far from only forming a separating line between followers of Czech and German national movements, rapid social and political nationalization also tore apart national movements over contesting conceptualizations of nationhood. Later, the alteration of the dynamics of this social and political competition within a multinational state following the rise of a Czechoslovak nation state did much to promote a debate over the concept of the nation. Also, within a context of accelerated change and division in the late Habsburg Empire, Tomáš Masaryk sought to define the nation and Czech-ness. Masaryk contested existing configurations of the "nation" and "Czech-ness" as a response to the era of accelerated change he witnessed. Masaryk's conceptualizations in turn engendered great change and contestation after the establishment of the First Czechoslovak Republic. Between 1880 and 1914, the new primacy of the nation in politics and society of Bohemia and Moravia, the divisions it engendered, and the national ideology of Thomas

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Masaryk remained factors laying the groundwork for the interwar debate on the nature and origins of nationalism.

The Acceleration of National Concept in Politics in Society

Changes from the late 19th century to the First World War, established the nation as the legitimizing concept in politics and a pervasive concept in previously non-national elements of the social life in Bohemia and Moravia. The changes which came with the electoral reforms of the late 19th century suggested that mass politics necessarily meant national politics in Bohemia and Moravia. Within a relatively short period of time, politics went from being primarily non-national to predominantly national. The nation and notions of nationhood materialized as ideals central to politics and society in an unprecedented fashion in Bohemia and Moravia during the last forty years of Habsburg rule.

For the decades immediately following the creation of nascent national movements in the early to mid 19th century, politics remained primarily non-national. In fact, the case for the prevalence of national movements in politics and society during the 50's and the 60's has been highly over stated. National movements until the late 70's and 80's remained a predominantly elite phenomenon, and politics divided on issues which were not primarily political.[20] Although Central European national movements featured prominently in the experiences of the 1848 revolutions, the neo-absolutist Habsburg government established following the unrest managed to greatly curb the movement of voluntary associations including national movements for a decade afterwards.[21] When neo-absolutism collapsed following Habsburg military defeat in Italy and financial ruin at the end of the 1850's, the monarchy made strategic concessions to privileged elements of civil society which enabled some participation in governance through the establishment of an Imperial Council and an

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[20] Křen, *Die Konfliktgemeinschaft*, 96.
[21] King, *Budweisers into Czechs and Germans*, 29–30.

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Imperial Legislature.[22] Still, even in this context, politics in Bohemia and Moravia predominantly divided on issues related to centralism and federalism.[23] Given the nascent Czech national movement's emphasis on the state rights of the historic Bohemian Crown Lands and calls for language equality, members of the Old Czech political party like Palacky joined forces with conservative Bohemian landowners in a federalist political faction.[24] Many self-declared German liberal nationalists pushed for a centralist government.[25] Liberal German nationalists conceived of German-ness in more elitist and meritocratic terms where entry into the national community relied first and foremost on a devotion to German language and culture.[26] Largely, liberal German political forces enjoyed considerably greater political prominence in municipal politics and in the Austrian legislature until a much later date. Overall, both German and Czech nationalists remained subservient to other political issues such as federalism or centralism and imputed national meaning to a limited number of lives until the mass politics of the late 1870's and 1880's.

The growth of public life and civil society resulting from modernization and industrialization in the 1870's and 80's greatly enabled national associations and politics to become powerful players at local and municipal levels of government in Bohemia and Moravia. Nationalist intellectuals and national movements themselves had grown in the early to mid 19th century from of an urban civil society created by the modernization of the Habsburg Monarchy.[27] A civil society which Gary Cohen has described as a sphere of individual and group discourse separate from the state but addressing issues related to politics and governance created media platforms and an urban landscape capable of fostering national

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[22] Cohen, "Nationalist Politics and the Dynamics of State and Civil Society in the Habsburg Monarchy, 1867-1914," 247.
[23] King, *Budweisers into Czechs and Germans*, 30.
[24] Glassheim, *Noble Nationalists*, 19.
[25] King, *Budweisers into Czechs and Germans*, 36.
[26] Judson, *Exclusive Revolutionaries*, 223.
[27] Cohen, "Nationalist Politics and the Dynamics of State and Civil Society in the Habsburg Monarchy, 1867-1914," 246–7.

movements propagated by intellectuals.[28] As industrialization and urbanization correlated with a growth of urban national associational life, opportunities for new national associations to penetrate governance also manifested themselves. By the 1870's the number of Czech national associations in urban areas like Budějovice/Budweis, for example, had grown tenfold in the period of a decade partly due to demographic changes stemming from industrialization and urbanization.[29] New industrial markets and swelling urban centers created in the 70's and 80's increased the responsibilities of the Habsburg government, and public services administered at the municipal level became more and more important.[30] Increasingly, national associations proved themselves to be the most capable of seizing control of new public services and establishing strongholds in municipal councils and regional diets.   [31]These spheres of national political influence served as important bases from which mass politics further popularized national politics.

When the Habsburg Empire ushered in an era of mass politics through electoral reform, national parties fared the best amongst the newly enfranchised electorate. Politics as a whole quickly nationalized as a result. In 1882, Austrian Minister of the Interior Eduard Taaffe lowered the tax threshold for voting in the central legislature to five florins, thus greatly enlarging the electorate by enfranchising middle class voters.[32] Similar incremental expansions of the electorate likewise occurred throughout the 1880s and 1890's.[33] In expanding the electorate, Taaffe hoped to weaken the political power of Habsburg liberals and to strengthen the position of his Iron Ring alliance which included Slavic nationalists, federalists, and Catholics.[34] This ultimately did occur as new liberal attacks on the conservative Habsburg political order merely invoked the animosity of the newly

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[28] Ibid., 245.
[29] King, *Budweisers into Czechs and Germans*, 51.
[30] Cohen, "Nationalist Politics and the Dynamics of State and Civil Society in the Habsburg Monarchy, 1867-1914," 256.
[31] Ibid., 257.
[32] Judson, *Exclusive Revolutionaries*, 198.
[33] Kann, *A History of the Habsburg Empire, 1526-1918*, 425.
[34] King, *Budweisers into Czechs and Germans*, 55; Judson, *Exclusive Revolutionaries*, 198.

enfranchised classes who already possessed a distaste for liberalism because of perceived links to exploitative capitalism.[35] Nevertheless, there were unforeseen consequences. The parties which profited the most from the expansion of the electorate were national parties. Using the nation as a guiding principle in politics allowed national political parties to sew together existing constituencies with a variety of newly enfranchised social elements in a way interest or issue based parties could not do.[36]As a result, parties which had once been unified by issues or ideals split into separate Czech and German national camps.[37] The necessity of appealing to the nation in mass politics dawned on political arrivistes as well as established parties.

Following the expansion of electoral politics, old and new parties alike quickly embraced or reconciled themselves to a status quo where the nation and the right to speak on behalf of it was the central focus and legitimizing force in politics. More traditional elite-led Czech national parties like the Old Czechs which had previously emphasized their devotion to the federal cause adapted their rhetoric to more populist appeals to the Czech nation and Czech-ness.[38] Soon, however, the more explicit language of national reform inherent in the Young Czech movement led to political success in the 1890's.[39]Like Czech political parties, the more explicit national rhetoric used by *völkisch* and Pan-German nationalists resonated with middle class voters in the 1880's and 90's. German liberals, who used to base the brunt of their political appeal on less national progress-based issues, quickly adopted national rhetoric out of political necessity.[40] For German liberals, the nation became a unifying interest group above social divisions which could be defined in a way to be congenial to liberal

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[35] Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna*, 117–8.
[36] King, *Budweisers into Czechs and Germans*, 74.
[37] Ibid., 75.
[38] Ibid., 76.
[39] Ibid., 82–3.
[40] Judson, *Exclusive Revolutionaries*, 200.

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values.[41]Overall, the national community replaced the rhetoric of the liberal community in politics to draw more populist elements.[42]In many ways, the acceptance among most parties of the central role of the nation was mirrored by the institutionalization of the nation in law and society in the last decade and a half leading to the First World War.

While the nation had been of limited importance in party politics and governance before the era of mass politics, it morphed into a political actor increasingly recognized by the Habsburg state in the closing two decades of the Empire's existence. Through the mobilization of mass politics, national movements in Bohemia and Moravia had ascribed national meaning to the lives of an unprecedented number of people and had firmly established nationhood as a concept in Bohemian and Moravian society. In the early years of the 20th century, nations became constituent members of Austrian Cisleithania in law.[43]Hoping to ameliorate tensions between Czech and German movements, the 1905 Moravian Compromise divided voters in Moravia equal but separate Czech and German national cadastres which possessed collective rights and autonomy in regards to commerce, education, and agriculture.[44]Similar schemes which institutionalized national belonging as a legal category recognized by the state were tried in municipal politics in Budějovice/Budweis.[45]Such laws attested to the pervasiveness of concepts of nationhood in Bohemian and Moravian politics and society as governance was nationalized but in a multinational way.

As a whole, the concept of the nation rapidly proliferated in politics and governance in the last four decades leading to the First World War. While limited in significance and numbers prior to the 1870's, mass politics established the nation as the key principle of political legitimization. The centrality of the nation ascribed meaning to a larger and larger

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[41] Ibid., 200–1, 217.
[42] Ibid., 223.
[43] King, *Budweisers into Czechs and Germans*, 115.
[44] Zahra, "Reclaiming Children for the Nation," 510.
[45] Ibid.

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populace and culminated in the Habsburg state even recognizing German and Czech nationhood as legal categories. As one might expect, the division of Bohemia and Moravia's inhabitants into national camps engendered divisive tendencies and fundamental disagreements over the meaning of the nation and conceptions of nationhood.

Division: National Competition and Intranational Disagreement

The swift societal and political shift towards concepts of the nation and nationhood in politics and society in Bohemia and Moravia was far from a smooth movement. National movements often battled for the loyalties of the same individuals in a competition where the bounds between national belongings were far from mutually exclusive. By the end of the 1890's, national competition between Czech and German national movements had permeated nearly every level of society and daily life in Bohemia and Moravia. Far from being limited to a mere division between "Czechs" and "Germans", competing notions of nationhood splintered the ranks of German and Czech national movements in a region typified by the fluidity of national identities.

In Bohemia and Moravia in the 90's and the first decade of the 20th century, competition between German and Czech national movements permeated practically all facets of social life, and this was nowhere as clear as in the battle over language education. Both Czech and German national groups struggled to use their political influence and associational strength to promote schooling in their national language, usually at the other's expense. Czech nationalists viewed German language schooling as privileged by the state and dangerous in its capability to Germanize Czech children who belonged to the Czech nation.[46] Frustrated by the disproportionate numbers of "Czech" children attending German schools, Czech nationalists exerted considerable energy to closing German schools, including Jewish schools, in mixed

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[46] Ibid., 507.

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language areas.[47] On the other hand, German educational organizations like the German *Schulverein* labored to keep German schools open in areas with small German-speaking minorities at any cost while also maintaining disproportionate number of German-speaking schools.[48]

In the midst of the battle for schools, national concerns also heavily impacted economic and consumer activities. The consumption of print media, for instance, represented an ever more economic choice as newspapers filtered news about even the most trivial local events through the filter of nationhood.[49] Czech and German nationalists waged war against one another in attempts to increase their nation's respective influence in local industry. In a city like Budějovice/Budweis, such activities entailed Czech and German nationalists setting up competing breweries where previously only a single non-national establishment had existed.[50] Czech nationalists in some localities in Bohemia and Moravia instigated the "To Each His Own" campaign which declared the nationality of local businesses, and urged Czechs to only buy products from Czech stores.[51] Czechs were encouraged to report on fellow Czechs supporting "foreign" stores, and it quickly became evident that spending money just like education could be a national action.[52] National competition, however, pushed far beyond quarrels over consumption and education, sometimes meaning real violence.

National competition in the late 1890's and first decade of the 20th century often entailed episodes of violence which were destabilizing from a municipal governance and an imperial perspective. In the closing years of the 19th century, a piece of proposed legislation known as the Badeni Language Ordinances requiring government officials in Bohemia to be fluent in Czech and German, sparked violence from Germans and Czechs alike. Initially, the

[47] Kieval, *The Making of Czech Jewry*, 43.
[48] Judson, *Exclusive Revolutionaries*, 208.
[49] King, *Budweisers into Czechs and Germans*, 124.
[50] Ibid., 106–9.
[51] Kelly, *Without Remorse*, 17.
[52] Glassheim, *Noble Nationalists*, 8.

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proposed law incited rioting among various groups of German nationalists in Plzen, Brno, and Prague.[53] It also led to violent interruptions at a parliamentary meeting in Vienna.[54]When the law was revoked, Czech nationalists released a torrent of public rage and smashed the windows of German and even Jewish shops in cities like Prague.[55]These instances of violence and destabilization triggered by national competition in many ways typified the destructive influence national competition had from the late 1890's until the First World War. National conflicts came to represent an obstacle to the governing and administrative functions of the Habsburg state, which dealt with matters as best it could through attempted compromises as occurred in Moravia and through emergency measures declared in parliament.[56] Despite the remarkably explosive nature of an ever more pronounced cleft between Czech and German nationalists, the division of the era showed itself to be even more pervasive in nature.

Importantly, the swift ascent of the nation in politics and society generated disagreement over nationhood, especially among German nationalists, which then tore apart national movements. Although there existed considerable consensus among German nationalists at the turn of the century that the nationality problems of Bohemia and Moravia should be solved by a form of ethnic federalization and autonomy, there was no agreement about what the German nation was and who belonged to it.[57] While German liberals increasingly used national rhetoric in politics, they attempted to define German-ness in a less exclusive merit-based way that emphasized German cultural and economic contributions to civilization.[58]*Völkisch* nationalists who had gained a great amount of ground largely because of the nature of populist politics and an expanded electorate on the other hand asserted that the German nation was blood-based, organic, and ruled by primeval forces which naturally

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[53] Kelly, *Without Remorse*, 46.
[54] Ibid.; Kann, *A History of the Habsburg Empire, 1526-1918*, 446.
[55] Kieval, *The Making of Czech Jewry*, 73.
[56] Cohen, "Nationalist Politics and the Dynamics of State and Civil Society in the Habsburg Monarchy, 1867-1914," 270–1.
[57] King, *Budweisers into Czechs and Germans*, 82.
[58] Judson, *Exclusive Revolutionaries*, 223.

endowed its members with a certain spiritual outlook.[59] As time progressed, somewhat different and unique conceptions of German-ness were pitched by Christian Socials and Social Democrats.[60] Fundamental disagreement over nationhood wreaked havoc on the unity of German political and associational live.

Politically, liberal and *Völkisch* German nationalist forces drifted apart from one another more profoundly in the 1890's based on different conceptions of nationhood. Anti-Semitism represented a proxy issue for discussing whether the German nation was based on merit and a devotion to German language and culture or whether it was organic and blood-based.[61] In German associational life, Excluding Jews from organizations like the *Schulverein* became a point of separation between liberal and *völkisch* factions.[62] For both politics and associational life, large numbers of nationalists moved from liberal parties to a form of populism where anti-Semitism was a symbolic practice of affirming an organic blood based nation.[63] For their part, German liberals in places like Prague recognized that they had to use national language if they had any hope of surviving in mass politics, but they likewise acknowledged that losing Jewish votes and participation by pushing forms blood based nationalism could equally damage their standing.[64] The growing estrangement between liberal and *völkisch* forms of German nationalism suggested that it would be absurd to talk about a singular German national community in Bohemia and Moravia. Instead there were multiple Germandoms.

Although less severe than the situation among German nationalists, mass national politics did divide notions of Czech-ness as well. In the early 90's, the Young Czechs were swept to electoral dominance by criticizing the Old Czech party for not gaining sufficient

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[59] Cohen, *The Politics of Ethnic Survival*, 153.
[60] King, *Budweisers into Czechs and Germans*, 95.
[61] Judson, *Exclusive Revolutionaries*, 253.
[62] Ibid., 254.
[63] Ibid., 245.
[64] Cohen, *The Politics of Ethnic Survival*, 159,182.

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national concessions and for not significantly advancing Bohemian state rights.[65] As soon as the Young Czechs failed to achieve similar national reform once in power, reformist groups within the party formed. Reformists and new radical nationalist parties in the late 90's more and more defined Czech-ness in an integral negative sense focusing on anti-German, anti-Semitic, anti-internationalist, and anti-modern sentiment.[66] Especially in attempts to take control of local governments, new hyper nationalist parties employed same populist, negativist, and anti-Semitic rhetoric used by *völkisch* German nationalists in Viennese politics.[67] Despite the presence of extreme negativist Czech nationalist factions, Czech national politics remained more unified than German nationalist parties.

All in all, the ascendency of the nation in political and social life in Bohemia and Moravia created considerable division in the twenty-five years leading to the First World War. National competition permeated all levels of social life, and even tended to be violent and destabilizing in many cases. The primacy of the nation in politics corresponded with highly divisive debates over the shape of the nation and its makeup. The rapid rise of the concept of nation in politics and society and the violent disagreement over its content provided ample opportunities for contestation. In this context, Tomáš Masaryk would contribute his own conceptualizations of the nation and Czech-ness.

Masaryk, the Nation, and the Meaning of Czech History

In the twilight of the 19th century Tomáš Masaryk attempted to define the nation and to distill the qualities of Czech-ness as a response to the violent change of the era in which he lived. During his lifetime, the nation had risen from a concept of limited importance to the status of the central principle and even goal of politics in an ever more divided society.

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[65] Kelly, *Without Remorse*, 38–39.
[66] Ibid., 39–43.
[67] Frankl, *Prag ist nunmehr antisemitisch*, 180.

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Tension between German and Czech national movements and the negativity of some conceptions of Czech-ness impelled Masaryk to work for the philosophical exaltation of the Czech national program. As a response to such tensions, Masaryk contributed somewhat novel conceptualizations of the nation and Czech-ness which would provoke controversy when used as the groundwork of a nation state in 1918.

The Czech politics of the late 80's and the 90's posed existential questions for the Czech national movement which Masaryk sought to address. In 1886, historians revealed that medieval manuscripts considered by an earlier generation of Czech national leaders were actually forgeries.[68] The forgeries undermined traditional narratives of a national rebirth and posed existential questions for Czech national leaders.[69] In the wake of the forgeries, a famous 1886 article called "Our Two Questions" asked readers whether a small Czech nation could ever hope to contribute anything significant to humanity, and if not whether it would be more practical for the Czech national program to merge with a much larger German national culture?[70]Throughout the decade which followed, many voices sought to answer these questions as differing constructions of Czech nationhood proliferated.

Among the contestation, the noisy patriotism and chauvinism inside numerous Czech political parties led to Masaryk's disillusionment with mainstream Czech national politics. Masaryk served in the multinational Habsburg *Reichsrat* in Vienna from 1891 to 1893 as a member of the Young Czech Party. During his time in the *Reichsrat*, more radically nationalist reformist factions gained ground in an ideologically diverse Young Czech Party.[71] Typical of a new right movement, reformists held increasingly negative and radical notions of Czech-ness and demanded increasingly radical nationalist rhetoric from party leadership.[72] Such rhetoric was met with enough sympathy among Young Czech leadership to convince Masaryk that he

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[68] Hauner, Milan, "The Meaning of Czech History: Masaryk versus Pekar," 27.
[69] Ibid., 26.
[70] Ibid., 27.
[71] Kelly, *Without Remorse*, 48.
[72] Agnew, *The Czechs and the Lands of the Bohemian Crown*, 2004, 147.

could no longer see his future with the party.[73] He resigned his *Reichsrat* seat in 1893 in a retreat from a Czech political scene he viewed as being tarnished by noisy patriotism and chauvinistic notions of Czech-ness.[74]

Within this context, Masaryk's interests in defining the nation and Czech-ness rested upon the ability of these concepts to elevate the Czech national movement and politics in general above petty egoism and discord. Masaryk did not mourn the passing of the forged medieval manuscripts since the content of the Czech national program needed to be based on more than medieval myth.[75] Additionally, if a reason for the existence of the Czech nation needed to be found after the revelation of the forged documents, it could not be found in negative politics and bellicose patriotism. As a positivist, Masaryk located the source of political conflict in a lack of information and in a lack of processes of scientific inquiry.[76] As such, concepts such as the nation and Czech-ness needed a scientific base. Throughout the 90's, Masaryk regarded his mission to be the defense of the Czech nation from the forces of ignorance and superstition, most evident radical nationalists' use of negative national definitions, anti-Germanism, and anti-Semitism.[77]These forces were markers of chauvinistic and primitive nationalism and needed to be overcome.

Partially as a result of these concerns, Masaryk conceptualized the nation as a force which was in its essence scientific and reasonable and eschewed egoism in favor of the higher value of humanity. In line with Herder, nations could be viewed as natural organs of society.[78]Masaryk consistently emphasized that all nations were created equal regardless of their size as long as each can serve a function which benefited all humanity.[79]With this in

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[73] Ersoy, Górny, and Kechriotis, *Modernism*, 201.
[74] Ibid.
[75] Orzoff, *Battle for the Castle*, 28.
[76] Ibid., 30.
[77] Beller, "The Hilsner Affair: Nationalism, Anti-Semitism and the Individual in the Habsburg Monarchy at the Turn of the Century," 58.
[78] Hahn, "Masaryk and the Germans," 101.
[79] Masaryk, University of London, and School of Slavonic and East European Studies, *The Problem of Small Nations in the European Crisis*, 21–3.

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mind, ethnic groups rose to the status of nations when they could clearly state future political aims which were useful in a universal sense.[80] In the case of the Czech nation, Masaryk suggested that opposition to Germans was not a quality capable of serving humanity or providing for a spiritual national base for the Czech nation.[81] Since Masaryk as a realist saw history as the summation of human knowledge, he claimed that positive themes had to be found in the Czech past towards which the future of the national program could be oriented.[82]History would serve the needs of the present by providing source material for determining the desirable future aims of the Czech movement.[83]By essentially politicizing the content of the Czech national program, Masaryk hoped that national politics would transform into a more enlightened and philosophical discussion, while the national program itself would go through a process of spiritual deepening which would render it more full in content.[84]

Given these goals, Masaryk put forth his form of ideal Czech-ness and a national program in his 1895 publication *Česka Otazka.* Masaryk discovered the humanistic Czech values he sought in the ideals of the Hussites and the "Czech Reformation". After scouring Czech history for material for a national program, Masaryk claimed that the Czech Reformation embodied by Hus and the Czech Brethren presented humanistic ideals of great importance for Western civilization.[85] These ideals had been resurrected by the modern Czech national movement or Second Czech Reformation.[86]According to Masaryk, the Czech Reformation and Hus had fundamentally challenged the theocracy, temporality, and spiritual stagnation of Medieval Christian society.[87]Hus and the Brethren rooted their movement in principles of reason, democracy, education, and anti-aristocracy in seeking a higher moral

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[80] Suda, Zdenek, "The Theories of Nation in the Work of T.G. Masaryk and Emanuel Radl," 320.

[81] Hauner, Milan, "The Meaning of Czech History: Masaryk versus Pekar," 28.

[82] Schmidt-Hartmann, Eva, "The Fallacy of Realism: Some Problems of Masaryk's Approach to Czech National Aspirations," 139.

[83] Ibid., 137.

[84] Ibid., 135–7.

[85] Hauner, Milan, "The Meaning of Czech History: Masaryk versus Pekar," 27.

[86] Ibid.

[87] Masaryk and Wellek, *The Meaning of Czech History.*, 8.

order above the unthinking and morally deplete authoritarianism.[88]

Masaryk claimed that the Czech Reformation had forged a Czech national spirit whose ideals inspired Luther and even elements of enlightenment reason.[89]While the spirit of the Czech Reformation was silenced by the defeat at White Mountain, Palacky and other awakeners ushered in a rebirth of this reformation by espousing democracy, resistance to authoritarianism, and a fusion of faith and reason.[90] In Masaryk's mind, the duty of the Czech nation and its destiny was to push the ideals of the Czech Reformation further.[91] Primarily, this meant promoting reason, democracy, and respect for the individual for the benefit of all mankind. In doing so, the Czech nation fused respect for individuality and free will within a universal framework. The Czech national program could also solve the "social question" of the day by promoting the Hussite emphasis on inner moral reform and the desire to "overcome the Rome within ourselves".[92]Taken as a whole, Masaryk believed this universal and humane function for the Czech nation could defeat the negativity, egoism, and pettiness of radical Czech nationalists.

Masaryk's conceptualization of the nation and his meaning of Czech history stemmed from concerns in a 19th century context where nationhood had developed quickly and had divided society over competing constructions of nationhood. Masaryk designed his models of the nation and of Czech-ness to evoke humanity and democracy in a way that would displace ignorance, myth, and egoism. Far from remaining uncontested, the application of Masaryk's national ideology to a nation state would later become a topic of high profile debate in the interwar period.

Chapter Conclusion

The four decades leading up to the First World War introduced unprecedented and

[88] Ibid., 11–14.
[89] Ibid., 10.
[90] Ibid., 130.
[91] Hauner, Milan, "The Meaning of Czech History: Masaryk versus Pekar," 28.
[92] Masaryk and Wellek, *The Meaning of Czech History.*, 143.

violent changes to Bohemia and Moravia and the Habsburg Empire in general which proved to be important to the interwar debate on the nature and origins of nations. If it is assumed that periods of rapid social and political change manufacture fundamental disagreement over the meaning of political concepts, it is not hard to imagine that this time period would generate considerable debate over the use of concepts of the nation and notions of nationhood. Following electoral reform in the late 19th century, the nation quickly became the central legitimizing concept in politics. The national competition which mass national politics brought about created fissures in the social fabric of Bohemian and Moravian society. National movements themselves fractured due to disagreements over conceptions of nationhood. Following a period of change and existential crisis for the Czech national movement, Tomáš Masaryk proposed new conceptualizations of the nation and of Czech-ness which later became a fundamental reference point for interwar debates on nationalism.

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3. National Ideology and Interwar Paradoxes: The Beginning of A Debate

The turmoil and trauma of the First World War generated a strange mixture of continuity and discontinuity accompanied by very different fortunes for Czech and German national movements. In line with developments during the twilight years of the Habsburg Empire, the nation continued to be the key guiding principle in politics, and nationality grew as a legally recognized category in society after the War. The divisions within national movements wrought by competing conceptualizations of nationness, most markedly among Germans, persisted to be a post- World War I reality. Much of the continuity ended here, however. A new Czechoslovak nation state converted previously multinational space into property of a Czechoslovak nation with millions of people becoming national minorities overnight. The national ideology articulated by Tomáš Masaryk at the end of the end of the 19th century formed the ideological base of the new state, but even this ideology experienced change and innovation. Masaryk's meaning of Czech history morphed into a Czechoslovak national narrative which was linked to the culture and values of "Western" European democracy. As the basis of a state, Czechoslovakia's democratic and humanistic ideals fell short of their mark and produced a profound contradiction between ideology and practice. Minorities occupied a somewhat less equal position in a Czechoslovak democracy which used forces of nationalization more than has sometimes been acknowledged. Additionally, Masaryk's Czechoslovak national model accommodated remnants of old chauvinistic conceptions of nationness he wished to discard. Taken together, the clash between a democratic and humanitarian national paradigm linked to an over- idealized vision of Western European democracy and the presence of inequality in the Czechoslovak state structure produced a situation begging to be addressed in a debate over nationalism.

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The roots of the interwar debates on nationalism had their roots in this clash. Specifically, a number of intellectual figures viewed the disparity between the Western, democratic, and egalitarian values of Masaryk's Czechoslovak national model and the inequality of the First Republic through different ideological frames. Some, like the Czech philosopher and public intellectual Emanuel Rádl recognized the merits of a more humanistic Czechoslovak national program and the realization of a state modeled on Western European democratic values but blamed the lingering "organic" notion of nations as the source of inequality. Others, like the Sudeten German historian Eugen Lemberg instead regarded "organic" nations as structures around which societies should be built and blamed imported Western European state models and values for practices of "national domination" in Czechoslovakia. While it remains unclear whether Rádl knew anything of Lemberg's work, he exhibited an extensive knowledge of Sudeten German identity building movements of which Lemberg was a part. Lemberg, on the other hand, could not help but be familiar with Rádl's writings and often went to great lengths to respond to Rádl's viewpoints. The divergent perceptions of interwar events held by Rádl and Lemberg led to two very different solutions: calls to make Czechoslovak nationalism based on free-will and calls for the destruction of the Czechoslovak state and its national ideology in favor of a new type of Central European state.

Background to the Interwar Debate

The First World War and its immediate aftermath brought about important transformations for Tomáš Masaryk and his national ideology. As part of an attempt to procure Entente support for a Czechoslovak state during the war and to retain this support after the war, Masaryk made a concerted effort to tie his Czechoslovak national narrative to the supposed values and cultural heritage of Western European society. This resulted in modeling the First Czechoslovak Republic on the institutions and ideals of Western

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democracies like France and Great Britain. This emulation yielded mixed results as Czechoslovakia showed itself to be a more tolerant and open society than its neighbors but with serious underlying contradictions. Despite high minded democratic ideals, the new state practiced a rather limited version of democracy with the position of national minorities symbolizing a form of basic inequality. Additionally, Masaryk's cosmopolitan and enlightened national ideology bore certain similarities to the integral blood based conceptions it was meant to displace. The inequality of the state and the deficiencies of Masaryk's new Western ideology created situations which the participants of an interwar debate on nationalism wished to contribute to.

The rise of a nation state in the First Czechoslovak Republic following the First World War relegated the multinational Habsburg Empire to the past. The multinational spaces in which the nation arose as the guiding concept in politics and society in Bohemia and Moravia became the property of a Czechoslovak nation after 1918. A combination of Entente geopolitical interests, the wartime diplomacy of Masaryk and Beneš, and a successful national resistance movement based in Prague at the end of the war culminated in awarding Czechoslovak national rights and self determination claims with a Czechoslovak nation state in 1918.[93] Some German dominated regions of Bohemia had Moravia declared themselves to be part of Austria using similar national self determination claims, but to no avail.[94] The treaty of St. Germain confirmed Czechoslovakia to be a successor state of the Habsburg Empire consisting of the lands of Bohemia, Moravia, Slovakia, Subcarpathian Ruthenia, and the province of Těšin.[95]

Importantly, the wartime struggle for a Czechoslovak state and its ultimate realization after 1918 correlated with the linking of the Masarykian Czech and Czechoslovak narratives with the "West". As part of both a wartime attempt to win the support of Entente for a

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[93] Orzoff, *Battle for the Castle*, 40–4.
[94] Hahn, "Masaryk and the Germans," 104.
[95] Agnew, *The Czechs and the Lands of the Bohemian Crown*, 2004, 176–7.

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Czechoslovak state and to retain this support in the turbulence of the interwar period, Masaryk and Beneš came to view the democratic and reformist liberal values of their Czechoslovak national narrative as belonging to Western European civilization.[96]Masaryk and Beneš depicted their philosophical, educated, tolerant, and cosmopolitan Czechoslovak nation as related to vaguely defined British and French "Western" values which supposedly stood clearly in opposition to Austrian tyranny and the "East".[97] The Czechoslovak state built a cult around the figure of Tomáš Masaryk as the personification of the Czechoslovak nation's devotion to liberty, truth, justice and Wilsonian democracy in a way intended to remind Western powers and Czechoslovak citizens that Czechoslovakia was an intricate part of Western European civilization.[98] Internally, Czechoslovak state leaders hoped this cult could integrate national minorities by emphasizing the democratic, tolerant, and cosmopolitan nature of the Czechoslovak nation and of Czechoslovak citizenship.[99] Masaryk's meaning of Czech and later Czechoslovak history then symbolized democracy, humanity, and the West.

Considerations for this new Western Czechoslovak nation and state manifested themselves in efforts to fashion a Western democratic state structure and a humane minority policy capable of integrating minorities. In line with this, the 1920 Czechoslovak constitution deemed the state to be a democratic republic in which a president and a bicameral legislature were elected by equal, proportionate, and universal suffrage.[100]The constitution outlined a wide range of political and civil rights for citizens and a legal separation of powers.[101] Inside this democratic system, Masaryk and Beneš hoped to win over national minorities by affording them more than the bare minimum of rights which the minority treaties required by

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[96] Orzoff, *Battle for the Castle*, 51.
[97] Ibid., 52.
[98] Ibid., 119.
[99] Ibid., 131.
[100] Bugge, Peter, "Czech Democracy 1918-1938- Paragon or Parody," 4.
[101] Ibid.

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St. Germain.[102]   While Germans and other minorities were denied rights to autonomy, rights to education in minority languages and rights to use minority languages with Czechoslovak officials given certain requirements were enshrined in the constitution.[103] Democratic institutions and minority rights provisions were intended to mirror the Czechoslovak nation's turn towards a democratic, tolerant, and cosmopolitan direction.

In practice, however, Czechoslovak democracy often fell short of its lofty ideals. Masaryk understood democracy more as a system of governance which assessed problems philosophically and solved them scientifically instead of a system in which the bounds between rulers and the ruled were torn down.[104]Masaryk's "castle" headed an extremely powerful executive branch which held extraordinary powers such as the control of the foreign ministry, chancellery, and a well funded domestic and foreign propaganda machine known as Zamini.[105]In comparison, the Czechoslovak parliament was a quite weak body where parties took precedence over candidates.[106]The result was that a group of the five most powerful party leaders, known as the Pětka, determined parliamentary affairs amongst themselves behind closed doors and haggled over their respective spheres of influence and power in civil service sectors of the government.[107]While more democratic than neighbors, Czechoslovak democracy possessed marked democratic deficits.

The shortcomings present in Czechoslovak democratic practices also appeared in the less than equal status of national minorities in the state. This, as will be later evidenced, seemed less characteristic of Western European democracy to some contemporary observers. The 1920 Constitution proclaimed the Czechoslovak state to have been made by and

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[102] Cornwall, "Dr Edvard Benes and Czechoslovakia's German Minority, 1918-1943," 176.
[103] "The Constitution of the Czechoslovak Republic," 45–6; Cornwall, "Dr Edvard Benes and Czechoslovakia's German Minority, 1918-1943," 176.
[104] Bugge, Peter, "Czech Democracy 1918-1938- Paragon or Parody," 21.
[105] Orzoff, *Battle for the Castle*, 69.
[106] Bugge, Peter, "Czech Democracy 1918-1938- Paragon or Parody," 11.
[107] Ibid., 13–15.

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primarily for a Czechoslovak nation.[108] Additionally, the same constitution deemed the "Czechoslovak language" to be the official language of the state.[109] Although minority treaties considered the millions of Germans, Hungarians, Poles, and Jews living in Czechoslovakia to be equal Czechoslovak citizens, they were also national minorities outside of the state-bearing Czechoslovak nation.[110] Further, despite the fact that all citizens of the Czechoslovak republic were equal members of the state, no minority parties or representatives had been present in the drafting of the Czechoslovak constitution.[111] This suggested that minorities were merely free to participate within a system already created by members of a state-bearing nation.[112] All of these details combined to question the democratic credentials of the new republic and its "Western" values.

Alongside the humane treatment of national minorities, questions remained regarding the new enlightened, cosmopolitan, and "Western" Czechoslovak nationalism as it often seemed to accommodate many of the same blood-based qualities of the integral national models Masaryk sought to displace. The idea of Czechs and Slovaks constituting a single nation gained ground during the course of the First World War partially because it offered an opportunity to strengthen a national majority in a postwar state.[113] A Czechoslovak nation was far from uncontested, and many Slovak politicians and parties continued to assert rights to a separate nation state throughout the interwar era.[114] Despite this, the state often treated entry into this Czechoslovak nation as an observable fact and rooted in descent. During the course of the 1921 Census, government officials reversed the declared nationality of at least a thousand citizens by declaring them to be members of the Czechoslovak nation based on

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[108] Agnew, *The Czechs and the Lands of the Bohemian Crown*, 2004, 180.
[109] Ibid.
[110] Cornwall, "Dr Edvard Benes and Czechoslovakia's German Minority, 1918-1943," 194–5.
[111] Bugge, Peter, "Czech Democracy 1918-1938- Paragon or Parody," 8–9.
[112] Hahn, "Masaryk and the Germans," 107.
[113] Felak, "Slovak Considerations of the Slovak Question: The Ludak, Agrarian, Socialist, and Communist Views in Interwar Czechoslovakia," 138.
[114] Ibid., 145–6.

"objective national characteristics".[115] Similar practices occurred in Moravia where children were reassigned to Czech schools due to their objective belonging to the Czechoslovak nation.[116]

In fact, the creation of a Czechoslovak state and its understanding of nationness offered hospitable grounds for nationalization efforts often backed by the very integral nationalist groups and impulses Masaryk's cosmopolitan and humanity-centric nation model wished to counter. Nationalist propaganda organizations like the *Národni Jednoty* called for a reversal of hundreds of years of German authoritarianism by asserting ownership of local governments and by launching campaigns to reassert Czech authority over "Germanized" regions.[117] Organizations like the *Národni Jednoty* could often rely on state support and state nationalization aims in their heavy handed attempts to increase Czech presence in the borderlands at the expense of German communities.[118] Due to the fact that these nationalist propaganda organizations counted among the radical nationalist elements opposed by Masaryk's enlightened nationalism, a certain irony accompanied a Western Czechoslovak state's aid of their often heavy handed nationalization campaigns.

Faced with the inequality of national minority status and the problematic shift of the Czechoslovak national narrative to the West, Czechoslovakia's Germans continued to be marked by the same division stemming from long standing disagreements over nationness. German minorities in Czechoslovakia formed a field of competing claims and stances towards their minority status.[119] By 1926, some German parties known as the activists, ended their boycott of Czechoslovak democratic institutions and entered government to better procure

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[115] Zahra, "The 'Minority Problem' and National Classification in the French and Czechoslovak Borderlands," 161.
[116] Zahra, "Reclaiming Children for the Nation," 517–8.
[117] Cornwall, "The Struggle on the Czech-German Language Border, 1880-1940," 929.
[118] Ibid., 949.
[119] Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, 60–1.

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collective national rights and greater equality.[120]After the war, the German Social Democrats were the most popular of the German parties in Czechoslovakia followed by the Christian Socials and the Agrarians.[121] All three of these parties eventually agreed to work inside the Czechslovak government.[122] Other German parties, known as the *kampfgemeinschaft*, refused to participate in Czechoslovak democracy since doing so would lend legitimacy to a government which held Czechs as masters and not equals.[123] While 70% of all German votes were cast for activist parties in 1929, an economic depression disproportionately impoverishing Sudeten Germans and the rise of the Nazis in Germany radicalized German minority politics.[124] By 1935 Konrad Henlein's radical and Nazi-backed *Sudetendeutsche Partei* became the most popular political party in Czechoslovakia, and anti-activist sentiment prevailed.[125]

Overall, the establishment of a Czechoslovak republic and the position of national minorities in politics and society created contradictions which many later would wish to respond to. The Czechoslovak state swept away Habsburg multinational space while the primacy of the nation in politics and society remained. Masaryk's national ideology promised to make the new Czechoslovak state a paragon of democracy, humanity, and equality. Nevertheless, equality, democracy, and free will did not square well with the existence of a state declared the property of a singular nation. Czechoslovak nationalization efforts, the status of minorities, and the engineering of a Czechoslovak national majority only made such a fact more apparent. Masaryk's national ideology and republic became a target for those seeking national reform or the destruction of the Czechoslovak state.

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[120] Wingfield, *Minority Politics in a Multinational State*, 60.
[121] Agnew, *The Czechs and the Lands of the Bohemian Crown*, 2004, 181.
[122] Ibid.
[123] Wingfield, *Minority Politics in a Multinational State*, 61.
[124] Broklova, "Opinions of German Activist Parties in Czechoslovakia 1918-1938. A Contribution to the Question of Czech-German Coexistence in Inter-War Czechoslovakia," 188.
[125] Ibid.

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Emanuel Rádl and Interwar Crisis

The dissonance between a Czech nationalism linked to Western democratic values and the democratic deficits and inequalities of the First Czechoslovak Republic drove some Czech intellectuals to action. Rather than rejecting the values and intentions of Masaryk's national ideology, some criticized the First Republic in hopes that criticism would eventually yield to reform and a more genuine implementation of democratic values. Perhaps the best example of such an individual was Emanuel Rádl. Highly influenced by Masaryk's thoughts on democracy and humanity as well as accepting the desirability of a Western European style democratic state, Rádl saw great danger in the "organic" conceptualizations of nations and the state in Masaryk's work. Throughout the interwar period, Rádl provided a Masarykian critique of Masaryk's First Republic. The ultimate aim of this critique was to amend Masaryk's Czechoslovak national model to be based on free-will.

Twenty years Masaryk's junior, Rádl came from a generation of Czech intellectuals heavily impacted by Masaryk's philosophy. Rádl studied biology at Charles University and was influenced by Masaryk's lectures on philosophy and religion during his student years.[126] In particular, Masaryk's moralist philosophy, his discussion of religion and the crisis of modernity, and his fusion of Christian Platonism and scientific criticism impressed Rádl as a student.[127] Similar to other Czech intellectuals like Karel Čapek, Fratišek Langer, and Ferdinand Peroutka, Rádl remained skeptical of Masaryk's philosophy of history and his metaphysics while nevertheless agreeing with the tenets of Masaryk's philosophy which stressed the fostering of democratic institutions, a democratic mentality, and issues of social justice.[128] Rádl also held Western European, particularly British and French, styles of

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[126] Ersoy, Górny, and Kechriotis, *Modernism*, 137–8.
[127] Loewenstein, "Ein Tscechischer Denker Der Krise: Emanuel Radl (1873-1942)," 137–8.
[128] Ersoy, Górny, and Kechriotis, *Modernism*, 149–50.

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democracy and state structure in high regard.[129] Masarykian principles and valuations of Western European democracy continued to guide the content of Rádl's political activism and his critique of Masaryk's First Republic throughout the interwar period.

After the establishment of the First Czechoslovak Republic, concerns for social justice, equality, and the foundation of a democratic society impelled Rádl to move in the direction of political activism. In the early years of the republic, Rádl founded the Prague chapter of the academic YMCA, the Czechoslovak League for Human Rights, and the League against Anti-Semitism.[130] Above all else, the position of national minorities, the situation regarding collective national rights, and the relationship between national minorities and the state gave Rádl considerable cause for concern. The status of minorities in Czechoslovakia and the safeguarding of sufficient collective national rights were relevant to more than national minorities, as such issues served as a measure of the democratic worth of the Czechoslovak Republic and would impact the unity of the state.[131] Rádl grew increasingly frustrated by what he saw as the tendency of the Czech intelligentsia to treat important matters of governance such as minority rights as the exclusive domain of Masaryk and the castle, and made attempts to bring such issues to debate by writing in various journals and popular newspapers like the *Narodni Listy* and the *Prager Tagblatt*.[132] In the course of Rádl's activism, the practice of the Czechoslovak state's style of democracy and its treatment of minorities formed central issues of criticism.

According to Rádl, the status of national minorities and the relationship between Czechoslovak citizens of minority status and the state revealed a highly weak form of democracy. In Czechoslovakia, Rádl argued, national groups like the German national minority were treated as political parties rather than constitutive organs of the state, and

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[129] Rádl, *Der Kampf zwischen Tschechen und Deutschen*, 125. Rádl makes this fairly clear in his discussion of political nations as well as in his discussion of English contract democracy and French "rights" democracy.
[130] Loewenstein, "Ein Tscechischer Denker Der Krise: Emanuel Radl (1873-1942)," 135.
[131] Rádl, *Der Kampf zwischen Tschechen und Deutschen*, 115–6.
[132] Rádl, "Schriftsteller Als Diener Der Politik," 1.

lacked collective national rights and rights to autonomy.[133] Further, Masaryk spoke of the Czechoslovak state conceding rights to national groups like Germans in a way which merely allowed Germans to participate in a state already formed by the Czechoslovak nation.[134] This, according to Rádl, necessarily meant that Germans were not equal citizens of the Czechoslovak state since free citizens, as components of the state itself, did not require concessions from a ruling body.[135] Rádl suggested that granting the Germans rights was a practice different than English or American-style democracies.[136] Rather, Masaryk meting out rights through his beneficence or moral superiority, in Rádl's mind, embodied a form of government which differed little from the enlightened absolutism Masaryk claimed to have been fighting in the Habsburg Empire.[137] As such, Czechoslovak democracy lacked the very elements of free will, equality, and humanity which had drawn Rádl to Masaryk's philosophy.

This weak democratic practice and its differentiation between citizens quickly lent itself to carrying out unjust and unequal actions where the state privileged one group of its citizenry over the other in acts of nationalization. In the course of the 1920's, land reform presented an issue where Rádl saw Czech political parties and government bureaus seamlessly employing national and social rhetoric in tandem. Essentially, Rádl claimed that land reform was being driven to national ends as officials purposely settled Czech colonists in mixed language areas and disproportionately awarded lands and property of importance to industry to Czech applicants.[138] Ultimately, Rádl believed that nationally-based land reform was dangerous to equality and the lawful functioning of society since a belief in law became replaced by a belief in force.[139] This prognosis applied equally for the actions of Czech national defense and propaganda organizations which pressured the government to support

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[133] Rádl, *Der Kampf zwischen Tschechen und Deutschen*, 199.
[134] Ibid., 197.
[135] Ibid., 196.
[136] Ibid., 195.
[137] Ibid., 200.
[138] Ibid., 151–3.
[139] Ibid., 155.

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efforts to capture local governments, increase Czech census numbers, support Czech schools in predominantly German speaking areas, and generally to weaken Germans.[140] Rádl saw such organizations as idealess dealers in ethnic nationalism and xenophobia able to capitalize on the state's nationalization aims.[141] Overall, nationalization efforts saw the state privilege one segment of its population over the other in a way a Western democracy supposedly did not.

By and large, Rádl viewed the democratic shortcomings and nationalization efforts of Masaryk and his First Republic as the natural result of understanding nations, states and even democracy as organic structures. Rádl classified Czechoslovak democracy as an "organic" democracy which had little in common with English contract theory democracy or French rights-based or majoritarian democracy.[142] Breaking from Western individualism, German philosophy from Herder to Fichte instead nourished a strain of thought which held that the basic building blocks of society were the products of organic elements such as blood, traditions, and subconscious spiritual forces.[143] These elements in turn created a national *geist* upon which a state was grounded. The founders of the First Republic understood the state in this way, and as a result "organic" democracy meant the rule and sovereignty of the nation.[144] According to Rádl, this organic understanding of states, nations, and democracy undermined the free will, respect for the individual, and equality present in Masaryk's national ideology. It was especially not a western understanding of democracy and the state but a product of German philosophy.[145]

This organic understanding of the state and democracy applied equally to conceptions of nationality in the First Czechoslovak Republic in a way undermining free will and became

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[140] Ibid., 144–5.
[141] Ibid., 144.
[142] Ibid., 195.
[143] Ibid., 87.
[144] Ibid., 87,89.
[145] Ibid., 132.

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most apparent to Rádl in the controversy following the 1921 census. For the first time in Bohemia and Moravia, an official state census asked citizens to list their nationality in the 1921 Czechoslovak census.[146] The census required citizens to "truthfully" declare their nationality without providing an official definition of nationality or guidelines for how a citizen might "truthfully" declare.[147] These deficiencies yielded problematic results in a country where national identities were fluid and not mutually exclusive. Law gave local officials and census takers the right to overturn declarations they believed to be untruthful by the use of "objective national characteristics".[148] Thousands of individuals had their nationality forcibly changed from "German" to "Czechoslovak", and at least one thousand of these reversals of national identity contested in Czechoslovak courts.[149] For Rádl, these occurrences implied that the Czechoslovak state understood nationality as something which was to be objectively detected rather than chosen.[150] As a result, nationality was in no way, shape, or form governed by free will.

The controversy surrounding the census crucially led Rádl to the conclusion that the national ideology of Masaryk was incomplete, based on organic notions borrowed from German philosophy, and presented a danger for the unity of the Czechoslovak state and its moral integrity. As the 1921 census suggested, there was no free will in nationality, and individuals were still ruled by forces outside their control. According to Masaryk, the nation was a political program articulating aims for an ideal future.[151] Although Rádl acknowledged the merit of this idea, he found it troubling that an individual could not choose to be a part of such a political program or not.[152] While Masaryk's conception of the nation and Czechness responded to increasingly integral, blood-based, and negative national models, it also

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[146] Čapková, *Czechs, Germans, Jews?*, 48.
[147] Zahra, "The 'Minority Problem' and National Classification in the French and Czechoslovak Borderlands," 160.
[148] Ibid.
[149] Ibid., 161.
[150] Rádl, *Národnost jako vědecký problém*, 63.
[151] Suda, Zdenek, "The Theories of Nation in the Work of T.G. Masaryk and Emanuel Radl," 320.
[152] Ibid., 323.

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strangely accommodated these understandings. If such a conceptualization of the nation was applied to Western models for a democratic state, contradiction and national despotism were the likely results. For the sake of the state's unity and its devotion to western values of free will, democracy, and respect for the individual to be salvaged, Rádl held that Masaryk's national model itself had to be made more amenable to the tenets of free will.

Overall, Rádl's perception of interwar Czechoslovakia was of a clash between worthy democratic state-based aspirations of a western hue and the real practice of a German organic based understanding of the state, democracy, and the nation. Rádl shared Masaryk's goal of forming a Western style democratic state, his devotion to free will and individualism, and conception of the nation as a political program. Nevertheless, Rádl saw the inequality of national minorities in Czechoslovakia as evidence that non-Western organic views of the state, democracy, and the nation prevented such goals from becoming reality. Organic understandings of democracy and the state promoted state actions which privileged one segment of the state's citizenry over the other and also undermined free will in regards to nationality. These practices, in Rádl's mind, were German and Eastern, and not characteristic of Western democracy. If Masaryk's vision of a humane and democratic Czechoslovak nation and state were to be realized, Masaryk's national ideology had to be democratized and subject to free will.

Eugen Lemberg and Interwar Crisis

More radical than reform-minded intellectuals like Rádl, German intellectuals who hoped to provide some form of national unity to the disjointed German national movement in Czechoslovakia provided harsher critiques of the contradictions and inconsistencies of the interwar First Republic. Many of these figures, like the Sudeten German historian Eugen Lemberg and the members of the *Staffelstein* movement, saw a Western style democratic state

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and Czechoslovak national narrative as veiled forms of national dominance ultimately dangerous to German national unity in Czechoslovakia. Viewing many of the same inconsistencies between Czechoslovak rhetoric and state action as Rádl but from a different perspective, Lemberg did not hold "organic" forms of national thought responsible. Instead he insisted that the attempt to import Western European state structures and cultural values coupled with an anachronistic or perverted national ideology in Masaryk's national narrative were the source of interwar inequality. As a result, Lemberg advocated the complete destruction of the Czechoslovak state and its national ideology in favor of a new kind of state order in Central Europe.

Lemberg came from a generation of German intellectuals highly impacted by the fall of the Habsburg Empire and the designation of minority status for Germans at a time of great disunity for the German national movement in Bohemia, Moravia, and Slovakia. He was born in 1903 in the Western Bohemian city of Pilsen/Plzeň and belonged to a generation not old enough to have fought in the First World War but heavily affected by the fall of the Habsburg Empire and the rise of a Czechoslovak state.[153] Lemberg entered Charles University in the early years of the First Republic to pursue Germanic and Slavic studies.[154] The German wing of the university at the time was a hotbed for practitioners of *volksgeschichte* and *geistesgeschichte* who sought to provide a regional historical identity for Germans in the new Czechoslovak state.[155] Lemberg was highly influenced by this brand of history and soon became heavily involved in an elitist, Catholic, and *völkisch*-oriented German nationalist youth movement led by a church historian named Eduard Winter.[156] The movement's name was the *Staffelstein,* and its stated aims to unify Germans in Czechoslovakia while resisting

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[153] Pohl, "Die Soziologen Eugen Lemberg Und Emerich K. Francis: Wissenschaftsgeschichtliche Überlegungen Zu Den Biographien Zweier 'Staffelsteiner' Im 'Volkstumskampf' Und Im Nachkriegsdeutschland," 30.
[154] Burian, "Eugen Lemberg," 182.
[155] Pohl, "Die Soziologen Eugen Lemberg Und Emerich K. Francis: Wissenschaftsgeschichtliche Überlegungen Zu Den Biographien Zweier 'Staffelsteiner' Im 'Volkstumskampf' Und Im Nachkriegsdeutschland," 33.
[156] Ibid., 31.

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integration in Czechoslovak society imprinted themselves in Lemberg's academic and political activity. [157]

Throughout the interwar period Lemberg worked tirelessly inside the *Staffelstein* movement to create and promote a uniform regional identity capable of unifying Czechoslovakia's Germans. As has been shown, the German national movement in Bohemia, Moravia, and Slovakia had splintered over differing conceptions of nationness well before the creation of Czechoslovakia. Inside a Czechoslovak nation state, the *staffelstein* strove to provide unity for Germans in Czechoslovakia above party and social differences in the midst of Czechoslovak integration and nationalization efforts.[158] This program entailed the formation of a historically-based Sudeten German national identity which provided a unique function for a Sudeten German *völksgruppe.*[159] According to Lemberg and other members, identity building also necessitated the building of barriers between national groups in Czechoslovakia and a struggle to fight integration into Czechoslovak society since the mixing of natural cultures could only weaken the German nation and produce a society which was neither Czech nor German.[160] As a result, the *staffelstein* rejected participation in Czechoslovak democracy as a divisive distraction to the unity of the Sudeten German *völksgruppe.*[161] It also criticized the imposition of a "Western" form of government which could not provide for traditional relationships between nations and the state and thus the unity of the Sudeten German *völksgruppe.*[162]

One of the greatest dangers of the First Czechoslovak Republic, according to Lemberg, lay in the complications of trying to implement a centralized Western style

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[157] Ibid., 33–4.
[158] Ibid., 32.
[159] Lemberg, *Die Historische Ideologie von Palacky Und Masaryk Und Ihre Bedeutung Für Die Moderne Nationale Bewegung*, 53:454.
[160] Lemberg, *Das Gesicht des tschechischen Volkes*, 33.
[161] Pohl, "Die Soziologen Eugen Lemberg Und Emerich K. Francis: Wissenschaftsgeschichtliche Überlegungen Zu Den Biographien Zweier 'Staffelsteiner' Im 'Volkstumskampf' Und Im Nachkriegsdeutschland," 34.
[162] Ibid., 33; Lemberg, *Die Historische Ideologie von Palacky Und Masaryk Und Ihre Bedeutung Für Die Moderne Nationale Bewegung*, 53:456.

democratic state in East Central Europe. Lemberg professed to value the individuality and diversity of organic nations in a way centralized nation states with their propensity towards assimilation and uniformity could not.[163] Masaryk went to great lengths during the war to link the Czechoslovak national narrative to the values of the Western Entente powers, and this had an impact on the shape of postwar state design.[164] Based on a western European state and national model, the post World War I Czechoslovak state reigned supreme and claimed to have the same one to one relationship with each of its citizens even if they happened to be of a nationality other than "Czechoslovak".[165] Problematically, however, the Czechoslovak state ideology did not apply equally to all of its citizens, and the state did not recognize group rights or rights to autonomy for separate organic nations.[166]As a result, integration and nationalization efforts attempted at most to "Czechify" the territory and people within state borders or at the very least to integrate them into the state.[167] These actions had a negative impact on the unity of Germans in Czechoslovakia and were particularly resented by Lemberg.

Problematically, modeling Czechoslovakia on the structure of Western nation states was a recipe for a form of national dominance relying on state force. This dominance would push types of nationalization and integration compromising the individuality and integrity of naturally separate national groups. Regions predominantly settled by German populations became seen as "Germanized" which could be "Czechified" by the use of state power.[168] Additionally, the state could rely on its power to manipulate objective national characteristics to solidify Czechoslovakia's credentials as a nation state, to strengthen national majorities in

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[163] Lemberg, *Das Gesicht des tschechischen Volkes*, 28–9; Lemberg, *Die Historische Ideologie von Palacky Und Masaryk Und Ihre Bedeutung Für Die Moderne Nationale Bewegung*, 53:456.
[164] Lemberg, "DER STAAT IM DENKEN DES TSCHECHISCHEN VOLKES," 475–6.
[165] Lemberg, *Das Gesicht des tschechischen Volkes*, 32.
[166] Ibid.
[167] Lemberg, *Wege und wandlungen des national-bewusstseins; studien zur geschichte der volkwerdung in den Niederlanden und in Böhmen,*, 219.
[168] Lemberg, "DER STAAT IM DENKEN DES TSCHECHISCHEN VOLKES," 386.

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mixed German areas, and to generally nationalize the state's populace.[169] The state even attempted to force German citizens to serve in the Czechoslovak army with mixed results.[170] All these actions were accompanied by the central state's refusal to allow of national autonomy, self administration, or national group rights.[171] Czech nationalism weakened its "spiritual" content as it relied on methods of state-based violence in a quest for national domination.[172] Nationalization and integration also stifled the creative powers of organic nations such as the Germans by artificial state means. According to Lemberg, these results contradicted Masaryk's prior calls for national equality and aims to strengthen Czech nationalism through internal reform.[173]

Contrary to Rádl, Lemberg asserted that the real cause of inequality and the source of contradiction in the Czechoslovak state's national ideology was actually Masaryk's perversion of organic notions of the nation drawn from German philosophy and not the notions themselves. As will be shown later, Lemberg believed that nations expressed national unity in their given *zeitgeist*. Largely, Masaryk's meaning of Czech history and efforts to promote national equality in the Habsburg Empire typified the Herderian *geist* of his era.[174] Nevertheless, as soon as Masaryk's national ideology opportunistically adopted forms of state-based nationalism during the First World War, it ceased to be Herderian or spiritual.[175] Lemberg claimed that national movements based on the power of the state were typical of much earlier forms of nationalism and belonged to the Middle Ages rather than the organic

[169] Zahra, "The 'Minority Problem' and National Classification in the French and Czechoslovak Borderlands," 159. As will be shown later, Lemberg saw regarded the 1921 census and manipulation of objective criteria as nothing more than evidence of the state's heavy handed power in matters of nationalization.

[170] Lemberg, *Wege und wandlungen des national-bewusstseins; studien zur geschichte der volkwerdung in den Niederlanden und in Böhmen,*, 220.

[171] Ibid., 219.

[172] Lemberg, *Das Gesicht des tschechischen Volkes*, 32.

[173] Lemberg, *Wege und wandlungen des national-bewusstseins; studien zur geschichte der volkwerdung in den Niederlanden und in Böhmen,*, 219.

[174] Lemberg, "DER STAAT IM DENKEN DES TSCHECHISCHEN VOLKES," 371.

[175] Lemberg, *Wege und wandlungen des national-bewusstseins; studien zur geschichte der volkwerdung in den Niederlanden und in Böhmen,*, 214–5.

national philosophy of German romanticism.[176] As such, Masaryk's fusion of an older style of state-based nationalism and a Herderian national model proved to be anachronistic and produced dominance instead of equality and humanity.

Given the oppressive nature of Masaryk's national ideology and its fundamentally anachronistic and inorganic nature, Lemberg advocated the destruction of the Czechoslovak state and its national ideology in favor of a more organic Central European state form. The task of Sudeten Germans was to destroy the inorganic Western-European style nation state order in East Central Europe and to fight for the construction of new states which would recognize the rights and primacy of the numerous organic nations contained within their borders.[177]Lemberg claimed that the Sudeten Germans should no longer live in the state owned by a foreign nation.[178] Instead, Central European states should be established which build the political and economic life of their inhabitants while strictly denying themselves of uniform cultures, languages, biological compositions, customs, and numerous other characteristics.[179] The state would have to acknowledge German unity in Bohemia, Moravia, and Slovakia as an organic fact and allow it to flourish in separation from other national cultures and state powers.[180]

As a whole, Lemberg addressed many of the same contradictions contained within Masaryk's First Republic as Rádl but from an entirely different vantage point. Lemberg's primary concern during the interwar period was providing a historical base for a unified German identity in Czechoslovakia. He did not hold to the tenets of Masaryk's humanistic and democratic national philosophy. Instead, while Rádl perceived value in western democracy and state structures, Lemberg saw Western state and national models as imported

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[176] Ibid., 214.
[177] Lemberg, *Die Historische Ideologie von Palacky Und Masaryk Und Ihre Bedeutung Für Die Moderne Nationale Bewegung*, 53:457.
[178] Lemberg, "Zur Tschechischen Aussprache Uber Das Nationalitaten Problem," 70.
[179] Ibid., 69.
[180] Ibid., 70.

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tools of national domination and a hindrance to attaining a unified German regional identity. German conceptualizations of organic nations were not the cause of interwar problems, but the perversion of these conceptions in the form of Masaryk's national ideology was. Reforming the Czechoslovak state and its national ideology was out of the question since Lemberg held both accountable for ultimately leading to the inequality of interwar Czechoslovakia. A unified German identity needed borders and separation from other nations a Western style state would never afford.

4. A Debate: Subjective vs. Objective and Western Political vs. Eastern Organic Nations

The practical inconsistencies of Masaryk's Czechoslovak national paradigm and its shift to the "West" posed questions which would guide the direction of an interwar debate on nations. During the interwar period, some observers wondered how a national narrative aiming to assert the primacy of humanity and free will over egoism and negativity could support forms of national inequality and retain an objective blood-based understanding of the nation. Others questioned whether the practices which Masaryk's national ideology engendered were really typical of Western European democracies or what it really meant to be Western European. Interestingly, these questions led to a debate over whether nations were subjective and will-based or objective and products of nature. Another debate over Western political and Eastern organic nations then followed. A number of prominent Czech and German intellectuals entered into both discussions by publishing books, articles, and newspaper articles.[181]Debates about the subjective nature of nations and about the validity of an Eastern Ethnic vs. Civic Western nationalism have yielded meaningful literature in the field of nationalism studies but have nevertheless been viewed in a more academic and less political light. In Interwar Czechoslovakia, however, disputes over the subjective will based or objective organic nature of nations and the ensuing debate over Western political nations and Eastern ethnic nations held political implications stemming from attempts to reform the Czechoslovak national narrative or to destroy it and the First Republic in favor of a new setup allowing for the formation of a unified regional German identity.

In this debate, the political motives and nationalism theory of Emanuel Rádl and Eugen Lemberg formed the two poles between which most of the debate was conducted. Rádl

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[181] Antonin Boháč, Cyril Horáček, Zdeněk Smetáček, Gustav Peters, and Heinrich Rauchberg all represent such figures.

perceived the subjective nature of nations to be key to attempts to make Masaryk's Czechoslovak national ideology open to free will, while Lemberg saw solid ground for Sudeten German identity building in objective and organic national models. Similarly, Rádl's proposal for a Czechoslovak political nation provided a way to solve equality and unity-based issues in the state and to reconcile them with cherished "Western European" values. In political nations, Lemberg saw nothing but an increased threat to Sudeten German unity and identity building. Overall, Rádl and Lemberg addressed subjective and objective nations and a Western political vs. Eastern organic national paradigm from the position of their respective concerns in a debate naturally derived from a Western shift of the Czechoslovak national narrative and its contradictions in the interwar era.

Subjective Will-Based vs. Objective Organic Nations

In interwar Czechoslovakia, political events transformed discussions over whether objective or subjective criteria should be used to determine nationality into a debate over whether nations themselves were governed by free will or determined by organic historical processes. Partially, the controversy surrounding the 1921 census sparked a larger debate about whether nations were objective or subjective. The census for both Rádl and Lemberg appeared characteristic of larger paradoxes and inequalities plaguing Czechoslovakia. Practices allowing census takers to assign national identities to individuals suspected of not truthfully reporting their nationality presented Rádl with evidence that Masaryk's national ideology retained the old organic or "objective" view of nations which had long nourished chauvinistic Czech nationalism. Where Rádl blamed organic and objective national models, Lemberg argued that the real culprit was the violent assimilatory nationalism of the state which ignored the rights of "organic" or "objective" nations. In an attempt to solve the paradox of Masarykian national ideology, Rádl argued that nations were subjective, modern,

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based on free will, and a higher form of constructed unity. Regarding this view as dangerous to Sudeten German identity building efforts, Lemberg retorted that nations were organic products of a complex history which did not always manifest themselves in the same way throughout the ages.

Rádl read the controversy surrounding the 1921 census as the ultimate sign that nations could not be objective and that objective criteria could not determine national belonging. In many ways the census was a microcosm of the larger paradox of Czechoslovak national ideology in that it hinted at the possibility of free will in national belonging but ultimately opted for an objective or organicist view. The use of "objective criteria" justified the actions of census takers who turned thousands of self-declared Germans into Czechoslovaks and claimed that these individuals unwittingly belonged to an organic Czechoslovak nation at birth.[182] Rádl held these procedures which attempted to investigate the biological and cultural past of an individual for the purpose of determining nationality to be simplistic and resting on a false understanding of nationality.[183] In contrast to the ascription of nationality through objective criteria, Jews in Czechoslovakia could choose between different national categories and could declare "Jewish" nationality without reference to any objective criteria.[184] Many individuals in Czechoslovakia defied mutually exclusive national categories as they were products of mixed language families, and it seemed unsettling to Rádl that anybody believed a government office could scientifically detect the nationality of such people.[185] In light of an unequal application of free will and national ascription and an inability to create criteria capable of capturing demographic complexity, Rádl asserted that people were not born with a nationality as a given fact and that free will governed entry into

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[182] Zahra, "The 'Minority Problem' and National Classification in the French and Czechoslovak Borderlands," 160–1.
[183] Rádl, *Národnost jako vědecký problém*, 62.
[184] Ibid., 71.
[185] Ibid., 54.

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the nation.[186]

According to Rádl, the organic or objective conception of nationality inherent in the census represented a primitive form of unity since it grouped individuals based on qualities they could not control. In organic national models, humans became slaves to the past and to nature since national belonging was governed by unalterable characteristics like blood, descent, perceived cultural background, and mother tongue.[187]National models inspired by German philosophy regarding the nation to be a result of primeval forces of the subconscious which endowed their members with a specific spiritual outlook and certain characteristics fell prey to this lack of free will.[188]In these national understandings, Rádl argued that there was little to separate the nation from base animal instincts, and this certainly could not be labeled "spiritual" as romantic and *völkisch* nationalists often labeled their brand of nationhood.[189]Instead, the individual mattered little in an organic nation, and the nation existed only to exist.[190] Rádl considered this to be a more primitive type of unity and as such characteristic of a "tribe" or *Volksstamm.[191]*

Nations differed from tribes in that they were formed by free will instead of objective or organic elements and represented a desire to achieve future unity and political ideals. Like Masaryk, Rádl asserted that to overcome a chauvinistic or primitive unity a group had to articulate clear political goals for its future upon which its members could agree.[192] As such, a nation must necessarily decide what is moral, useful, and practical, but not already in existence and then work for its realization.[193]Rather than expressing historical or organic unity, Radl's conceptualization of the nation was future seeking and symbolized mankind's

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[186] Ibid., 64.
[187] Rádl, *Der Kampf zwischen Tschechen und Deutschen*, 122.
[188] Rádl, *Zur politischen Ideologie der Sudetendeutschen*, 12.
[189] Ibid., 13.
[190] Ibid., 15.
[191] Rádl, *Der Kampf zwischen Tschechen und Deutschen*, 122.
[192] Suda, Zdenek, "The Theories of Nation in the Work of T.G. Masaryk and Emanuel Radl," 323.
[193] Rádl, *Zur politischen Ideologie der Sudetendeutschen*, 15.

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victory over a "natural" or "organic" state of existence.[194] Unlike Masaryk, Rádl time and time again stressed that membership in the nation stemmed from free will and not blood, descent, or even language.[195] Individuals chose their nationality as a political program for the future.[196]

Claiming that nations were subjective and constructed through an act of free will naturally prompted a rejection of the rootedness of organic nations in history. In his book *Der Kampf zwischen Tschechen und Deutschen*, Rádl suggested that the concept of the "nation" had attained such an axiomatic status that it would be difficult for most contemporaries to fathom that the concept could be as time contingent as the idea of transubstantiation or the necessity for absolute monarchy.[197] Indeed, Rádl affirmed that the history of Bohemia and Moravia could not be framed as a centuries old war between two unbridgeable Czech and German nations with ancient roots. Instead, what other historians had framed as a war between organic nations discernible by reference to objective characteristics was in reality a story of two Czech and German tribes or *Volksstämme*.[198] Czech and German tribes lived together in times of peace, and many of the great historical achievements in Bohemian and Moravian history resulted from cooperation between these two tribes. The violence which sometimes erupted between Czechs and Germans over the centuries embodied instinctive tribal xenophobia and was not evidence for the historical rootedness of separate Czech and German nations. [199]

In conjunction with this rejection of histological and organically rooted nations, Rádl warned that any hopes to find a singular organic national spirit in history which united all members of the nation throughout the ages and endowed them with similar traits would be

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[194] Ibid., 14.
[195] Rádl, *Der Kampf zwischen Tschechen und Deutschen*, 186.
[196] Rádl, *Národnost jako vědecký problém*, 63.
[197] Rádl, *Der Kampf zwischen Tschechen und Deutschen*, 121.
[198] Ibid., 122.
[199] Ibid., 56,127.

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met with disappointment[200]. Such a statement particularly offended the sensibilities particularly of radical German nationalists but also must have struck a chord with many Czech romantic nationalists. According to Rádl, romantic German nationalists spoke of an organic primeval German spirit which endowed its members with a characteristically German temperament and spiritual view of the world.[201] Unfortunately, a uniform German spiritual outlook evaded detection even in relatively recent history. Nobody could reasonably speak of an ancient nation which manifested itself in a consistent way throughout history. Even in modern history, "Germandom" was typified by numerous different traits and one could reasonably speak of multiple "Germandoms".[202] The differences between the poets of the Napoleonic era, German liberals, Kant, and the National Socialists, attested to the fact that Germandom was constructed and never in the same way over time.[203] In Rádl's opinion, Germandom and Czechdom for that matter were not organic or natural, but constructed.

In response to the subjective free will-based conceptualizations of the nation, Lemberg implied that Rádl had fundamentally misunderstood the problems posed by the census and asserted that nations indeed still constituted organic and objective entities. Lemberg acknowledged that the circumstances of interwar political events had instigated a debate over objective or subjective characteristics of national belonging.[204]Additionally, he admitted that the use of "objective criteria" had a somewhat negative impact on the national minorities of East Central Europe.[205] With this in mind, sometimes policies asking individuals to declare their own nationality, as occurred in Polish Upper Silesia, could aid national minorities in their resistance to nationalization forces.[206]Nevertheless, the use of subjective over objective

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[200] Rádl, *Zur politischen Ideologie der Sudetendeutschen*, 16.
[201] Ibid., 12.
[202] Ibid., 16.
[203] Ibid.
[204] Lemberg, *Wege und wandlungen des national-bewusstseins; studien zur geschichte der volkwerdung in den Niederlanden und in Böhmen,*, 3.
[205] Ibid.
[206] Ibid., 4. Lemberg discusses this instance of the employment of subjective criteria alongside Ernst Renan and France's concern over the loss of Alsace.

criteria in these situations did not mean that nations themselves were subjective. Rather it implied that those in control of Central European nation states possessed the power to manipulate objective criteria in a way that pursued integration and nationalization aims.[207]Nations remained organic entities constructed over centuries of human history, but subjective criteria occasionally held the potential to weaken the state's attempt to overrun organic nations.

Building upon this, Lemberg contended that nations were actually organic products of history and that Rádl's free-will based nation brought forth a highly incomplete conceptualization severely limited by a less than scientific interpretation of history. In general, Lemberg found Rádl's conception of subjective nations based on free will to be reductive and entirely incapable of explaining the psychological component of national belonging. Lemberg claimed that even the most sociologically inclined historians of his time could never be led to believe that free will was sufficient for the creation of the nation or for national unity.[208] Chief among its many shortcomings, Rádl's constructed and modern conceptualization of the nation failed to explain why the individuals felt such a deep psychological bond to the nation.[209] In opposition to free will theories, Lemberg pointed to a number of different historical forces such as language, religion, culture, settlement patterns as key to the formation of nations which were to be viewed as products of hundreds of years of human history.[210] In searching for answers to whether national belonging operated as a function of subjective free will or objective criteria, scholars would uncover more answers in exploring these historical nation building forces. Historical forces ultimately determined feelings of national loyalty, and

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[207] Ibid., 3.
[208] Ibid., 4.
[209] Lemberg, "Zur Tschechischen Aussprache Uber Das Nationalitaten Problem," 66.
[210] Lemberg, *Wege und wandlungen des national-bewusstseins; studien zur geschichte der volkwerdung in den Niederlanden und in Böhmen,*, 127–8. Lemberg claims that geography, settlement, proximity to other nations, and psychology were particularly important for the Czech nation in the early Middle Ages.

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national belonging could not therefore merely be seen as subjective.[211]

In pursuing the study of historically-rooted and organic nations or *Völker*, Lemberg began to construct a meta-theory of national consciousness drawn from his background in both *Völksgeschichte* and *Geistesgeschichte*. In his more academically geared texts, Lemberg contrasted his own scientific methods and those of the Gollist historians to the dilettantish nature of Rádl's philosophical history.[212] Lemberg employed a combination of *völksgeschichte* and *geistesgeschichte* to track the organic development of the nation over hundreds of years of history. *Völksgeschichte* offered a multidisciplinary approach to the study of nation formation by combining sociology, anthropology, demography, and local history.[213] *Geistesgeschichte* provided a useful tool to show how national belonging could manifest itself differently in different periods according to the *Zeitgeist*.

Both of these historical disciplines contributed to Lemberg's meta-theory of the organic historical nature of the nation and national consciousness. According to Lemberg's *volksgeschichte*, the *volk* or nation was organic in nature and formed through a complex combination of settlement patterns, geography, psychology, surrounding *völker*, and a number of other factors.[214] Proceeding from organic nature of the *volk*, Lemberg borrowed from *Geistesgeschichte* to explain that the unity of the *volk* is always expressed in different modes according to a time's *geist*.[215] Depending on an era's *Geist*, national unity could manifest itself in religion, kingdoms, humanism, the ideals of a patriotic nobility, a language of high culture, and the articulation of Herderian national task or function.[216] Organic nations showed their

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[211] Ibid., 5.

[212] Gabriel and Hroch, *Czech Philosophy in the XXth Century*, 31–3; Lemberg, *Die Historische Ideologie von Palacky Und Masaryk Und Ihre Bedeutung Für Die Moderne Nationale Bewegung*, 53:450. "Gollist" is a term meant to refer to the disciples of the historian Jaroslav Goll in Prague. Goll and his students, most notably Josef Pekař, pushed positivist views of the history of Bohemia and Moravia based on the work of Leopold von Ranke.

[213] Conrad, *The Quest for the Lost Nation*, 19.

[214] Lemberg, *Wege und wandlungen des national-bewusstseins; studien zur geschichte der volkwerdung in den Niederlanden und in Böhmen,*, 127. Throughout his work, Lemberg uses "*Völk*" and "nation" in an almost inter-changeable manner.

[215] Ibid., 5–6.

[216] Ibid., 234–6.

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unity in these various historical *Geister* depending on the era and were simultaneously transformed by them. For example, the national unity formed in the Middle Ages through settlement, geography, and language was later expressed through humanism as the nation recognized itself as the bearer of its history and antiquaries wrote local histories and genealogies.[217] The original unity formed in the Middle Ages was expressed while humanism added new content to national consciousness in a particular manner.

In light of Rádl's remarks that notions of the nation had varied over time, Lemberg's understanding provided the possibility of seeing the dissimilar manifestations of national unity over time as part of an organic evolution or progression. Even if national unity had been expressed differently in different eras, this was still an organic process. Lemberg believed that it was possible to speak of the coming and going of numerous nations over the ages when nations were believed to be solely functions of free will.[218] Nevertheless, once it became apparent that a kernel of national unity formed due to a variety of factors and then unity was manifested in the mode of its time, nations appeared deeply rooted in the unique historical processes which had shaped them over hundreds of years and not merely governed by the will of individuals. The consciousness of unity among Czech and German nations had formed in the Middle Ages from the circumstances surrounding settlement, geography, their proximity to nearby peoples, and the psychological impact this engendered. In the Middle Ages, national unity took a particularly political and state-based form. Later, humanism and the writing of history developed and altered the nature of this unity. The aristocratic patriotism of the baroque period eventually gave way to an era where a high language of literature and a resulting devotion to art and culture added a new layer to national unity. All of these forms of unity led to the present day where it was often not easy to trace the complex twists and transformations of multilayered national unity. Nations, for Lemberg, were organic products

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[217] Ibid., 235–6, 115–6.Lemberg discusses humanism and its propensity towards local history as a modern nation building force most clearly in his discussion of the Low Countries.
[218] Ibid., 4–5.

of history and objective.

Western Political Nations vs. Eastern Organic Nations?

The westward drift of the Czechoslovak national narrative and the problematic status of national minorities in the Czechoslovak state ensured that a discussion over Czechoslovakia's ability to become a Western "political" nation surfaced as a corollary of the subjective free will vs. objective organic debates. Intellectuals in interwar Czechoslovakia tried to distill the particular qualities that made a nation or a state "Western" European. Further, if a standard model for Western European states and nations existed, some thinkers like Rádl wondered whether this model could be implemented in Czechoslovakia. If nations were will-based and the existing attempts to link Czechoslovakia with the West could be pushed even further to mirror Western European national models, political nations encompassing the state's entire citizenry could hold a possible solution to the disunity caused by the inequality of national minorities. For those believing in the organic nature of nations, like Lemberg and members of the *Staffelstein*, these proposals merely served as dangerous exercises in absurdity.

In this discussion over the possibility of political nations, Rádl argued that understandings of the nation differed in Eastern and Western Europe, and that Czechoslovakia could escape the chauvinism of Eastern nationalism by adopting a "political" Western European national model capable of unifying all of the state's citizens. Seeing this idea as potentially even more dangerous to the Sudeten German unity than the Masarykian status quo, Lemberg attempted to counter Rádl's claims by deeming them a-historical and resting on a false and simplistic knowledge of Western European national models, all while extolling the virtues of a spiritual, not chauvinistic, "Eastern" nationalism.

In his book *Der Kampf zwischen Tschechen und Deutschen*, Rádl built upon his claims

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that nations were subjective by asserting that the conceptualization of the nation as a will towards political unity reigned supreme in the West. In this way, Western European and North American understandings of the nation differed radically from those of Central and Eastern Europe. In the West, people viewed the nation as having been formed by the will of a people to organize themselves under the recognition of a government and a particular rule of law.[219] The recognition of the different origins, races, tribes, religions, and languages of co-nationals did not simply dissipate, but the will to form a state community formed the base of the national community.[220] The Western nation stood as a work of man striving for the most complete organizational form possible within the boundaries of a state.[221] Members of western political nations elevated the rule of law, codified rights, administration of the state, and the state's care for the needs of all its citizens above the animal nature of familial unity.[222] These products of a people's collective will to live under the same law and to forge a new future together unified them within a political nature more civilized than the organic unity of a tribe or Central European *Völk*.

Rádl cited France, Great Britain, the United States, and Canada as the exemplars of Western political nations. He argued that older Western European states contained tribal differences such as those between Franks and Gauls in France or the conglomeration of different Celtic and Germanic factions in Great Britain.[223] In both states, feelings of local or tribal unity and pride lived on, but these forms of unity did not erase the intense feelings of loyalty citizens of these political nations felt towards the state.[224] This loyalty derived from the fact that the state had formed first under the regulations of kings and later as citizens had struggled to build just political communities which united them under a common idea in the

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[219] Rádl, *Der Kampf zwischen Tschechen und Deutschen*, 125.
[220] Ibid., 126.
[221] Ibid., 129.
[222] Rádl, *Zur politischen Ideologie der Sudetendeutschen*, 38.
[223] Rádl, *Der Kampf zwischen Tschechen und Deutschen*, 122.
[224] Ibid., 125–6.

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process.[225] Additionally, extreme linguistic, tribal, and racial dissimilarity marked the citizens of the United States and Canada. These citizens, however, rejected the primacy of the unity given to them by nature in favor of forming a political community whose laws gave direction to a desired future.[226] As a whole, the Western nation and state did not deny the existence of natural forms of unity, but the nation integrated all organic components in the will to build a political community which articulated a desirable future.

Unfortunately in Radl's opinion, the Czechoslovak nation had been conceived of in terms of a typically "Eastern" conceptualization influenced by German philosophy, which strictly regarded the nation as a product of nature. Both Czech and German national movements worked from the teachings of Joann Gottfried Herder, who had concluded that the nation was a tribe that became aware of its tribal unity and strove for political autonomy or independence.[227] Accordingly, the nation reflected a past god given unity in which choice or the future played practically no role.[228] The nation in this sense built from biology, racial instinct, the notion of a community of fate or *Schicksalgemeinschaft*, and rigid notions of language communities developed by Fichte.[229] While this notion of the nation had been met with practically no understanding in England, France, Belgium, and Switzerland, it became the standard model East of the Rhine.[230] In Central Europe, the historical weakness of states and the insufficient power of either the rulers or the ruled to unify the entirety of a given political unit resulted in the adoption of Herder's organic conception of the nation and tribal unity as a surrogate.[231]

In opposition to the progress and inclusion of the Western political view of the nation, organic Eastern views divided the peoples contained within states and held a particular

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[225] Rádl, *Zur politischen Ideologie der Sudetendeutschen*, 38.
[226] Rádl, *Der Kampf zwischen Tschechen und Deutschen*, 125; Rádl, *Zur politischen Ideologie der Sudetendeutschen*, 13.
[227] Rádl, *Der Kampf zwischen Tschechen und Deutschen*, 124.
[228] Rádl, *Zur politischen Ideologie der Sudetendeutschen*, 34.
[229] Rádl, *Der Kampf zwischen Tschechen und Deutschen*, 129.
[230] Ibid., 127.
[231] Ibid., 126.

proclivity to petty violence. The tribal patriotism and concern for the natural purity of the tribe contained naturally within eastern views of the nation energized instinctive forms of xenophobia and hatred for foreign tribes.[232] In the name of patriotism and the nation, nationalists glorified what many western observers might consider chauvinism and the petty exaltation of differences.[233] Also, the prestige attached to this tribal patriotism naturally produced a mental division between the interests of the nation and the interests of the state which had no place in Western national models.[234] The national policies of the Czechoslovak state had clearly adopted this division with problematic results. The Eastern conception of the nation produced chauvinism, division, and violence which a Western political model might prove capable of negating.

Rádl pointed to the shift of the Czechoslovak national model towards the West and the visibly constructed nature of "Czechoslovaks" as evidence that a political nation could be formed if one was disabused of eastern delusions of organicism. The Czechoslovak nation did not bear the marks of the organic unity so important in eastern notions of national unity in Rádl's eyes, but this was far from an indictment. Before 1918, Czechs and Slovaks had lived apart from one another for a thousand years, and Magyar dominance over Slovaks and German dominance over Czechs had shaped both groups in different ways.[235] Many Slovak nationalists refused to recognize the Czechoslovak nation as an organic product of history and called for concessions to provide for Slovak cultural uniqueness.[236] Also, while the official language of the state was "Czechoslovak", state officials often had to resign themselves to the reality of "Czechoslovak languages" in acknowledging some difference between Czech and Slovak.[237] Therefore, lacking organic unity at the founding of the First Republic, the

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[232] Ibid., 127.
[233] Ibid.
[234] Ibid., 129.
[235] Ibid., 133.
[236] Ibid., 128.
[237] Ibid., 136.

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declaration of a Czechoslovak nation sprang not from natural instinct or organic rootedness but from the will to achieve the aims of a political program in the future and to live under the same laws as a political entity.[238] As a result of this, the Czechoslovak nation already existed as a nation based on a political will towards unity in a Western sense instead of as an organic national unity in an eastern understanding.

These observations about the constructed political form of the Czechoslovak nation led Rádl to the conclusion that the Czechoslovak nation should continue its progress towards becoming a fully political nation in a western sense. Constructing a political nation capable of accommodating all citizens of the Czechoslovak state would greatly advance attempts to unify the state.[239] Multiple languages and histories already existed in a Czechoslovak nation which also allowed for Slovak individuality.[240] Therefore, Rádl argued that he could see no contradiction in adding German and Magyar as Czechoslovak languages and enabling Czech, Magyar, and Jewish citizens to choose to form a new future together as part of the Czechoslovak nation.[241] Further, Jewish, Magyar, and German members of the nation would be provided room to cultivate their individuality just like the Slovaks.[242] The Czechoslovak state had already been linked with western notions of democracy, so it made sense to form a political nation where the citizenry of the state was contiguous.[243] In fact, if political forces had brought about the Czechoslovak Republic and it was recognized that the Czechoslovak nation was a program for the future, shutting out German, Magyar, or Jews from the nation violated basic democratic principles. [244]

For Lemberg, Rádl's notion of a political nation represented an absurdity, but it was all the more dangerous because of this. Simply put, at no point could a scholar like Lemberg who

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[238] Ibid., 134.
[239] Ibid., 136.
[240] Ibid.
[241] Ibid.
[242] Ibid., 137.
[243] Ibid.
[244] Ibid.

affirmed the organic and objective nature of nations believe that the Czechoslovak state could create a Czechoslovak political nation. Nations, after all, had their origins and distinct nature in complex historical forces which had evolved over hundreds of years. Therefore, the attempt to create a political nation would likely function as a quest to exalt the state over the nation. As such, Rádl's quest to form a political nation had to be rejected by Sudeten Germans who must regard it as a recalibrated form of the Palacky-Masaryk national narrative.[245] The conflict between state's rights and national rights contained in this Masarykian ideology had worked to the demise of the German community as it showed itself to be a source of assimilation and forced integration in the First Republic.[246] Lemberg did not expect Rádl's own entwinement of the state and nation would have much better results. Despite the impossibility of success of creating a political nation, Rádl's high profile in the international community and influence over a younger generation of Czechoslovak intellectuals made him a threat which Sudeten Germans could not afford to underestimate.[247]

In considering Rádl's proposal for the creation of a western political nation, Lemberg warned that western forms of nationalism based on the state did not spawn from a void and possessed preconditions rooted in specific historical processes. History going back to the Middle Ages had shaped the nationalism of states whose national models Rádl had deemed to be Western. The French Revolution or the organization of the populace of the French state under an idea, for example, did not count as the sole contributing factors to the creation of the French nation.[248] Instead, a history of an extraordinarily strong monarchy and its ability to organize a uniform culture preconditioned the equation between the state and the nation in

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[245] Lemberg, *Wege und wandlungen des national-bewusstseins; studien zur geschichte der volkwerdung in den Niederlanden und in Böhmen,*, 220.
[246] Ibid., 219.
[247] Lemberg, *Der Staat im Denken des tschechischen Volkes*, 384–5.
[248] Lemberg, *Wege und wandlungen des national-bewusstseins; studien zur geschichte der volkwerdung in den Niederlanden und in Böhmen,*, 125.

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France.[249] Crucially, the French state imposed cultural and linguistic unity over a period of centuries and well before any group within the state could express their unity as a separate cultural, linguistic, or blood based community.[250] Similar developments had taken place in the other Western states Rádl hoped to follow.[251] Lemberg suggested that it therefore followed that a state-based national model was itself a product of history and could not be imported and implemented overnight in Czechoslovakia simply because it was thought to have certain beneficial qualities.

In addition to the lack of attention paid to the historical development of the "West", Lemberg warned Rádl that the nature of western nations was not as purely political and ideologically-based as they appeared at first glance. Rádl portrayed western nations conceptualizations of the nation to be primarily political and future seeking while lacking the divisiveness of an eastern obsession with origins, organic qualities, and language.[252] Despite this, there was sufficient evidence from the recent history of many western national movements that concerns for origins and languages did manifest themselves. The problematic division of Belgium's citizenry brought forth one such example of a western politically-based national unity gone woefully awry.[253] The movement to separate Ireland entirely from British rule also deviated from the supposedly political quality of western nationalism.[254] In fact, Great Britain itself faced questions of unity rooted in the diverse makeup of the British Empire. All of these examples afforded ample reason for Rádl to alter the clear lines of his Western political vs. Eastern organic national paradigm and to acknowledge that the organic nation would continue to have a future in the West. [255]

Alongside a more complicated view of Western European nationalism, Lemberg

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[249] Ibid.
[250] Lemberg, "Zur Tschechischen Aussprache Uber Das Nationalitaten Problem," 67.
[251] Ibid.
[252] Ibid., 63.
[253] Ibid., 68.
[254] Ibid.
[255] Ibid.

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asserted that historical developments in the east had produced a situation where a state could not expect to integrate the dissimilar nations living in its territory. Contrary to the historical strength of west European states, Central and Eastern Europe had been marked by the centuries-long existence of weak states which never possessed sufficient power to impose a unified language or a unified culture.[256] By the time an enlightened monarchy in the Habsburg Empire attempted to transform its populace into a unified political nation in a way similar to what Rádl had suggested for Czechoslovakia, numerous peoples had already become aware of their organic national unity which had developed through numerous historical forces over a period of hundreds of years.[257] The Czech national movement itself evidenced that historical forces over the centuries had led to an organically perceived national unity which would not simply allow itself to dissolve into a homogeneous cultural or political fabric of a larger state.[258] The multinational nature of the Habsburg Empire was determined by long standing historical trends in Central Europe.

While Rádl's evaluation of national understandings east of the Rhine was negative, Lemberg argued that the history of weak state power had actually stimulated a positive form of spiritual eastern nationalism. The eastern *Völk* or nation devoted itself to inner spiritual development unconnected to the state and sometimes even in opposition to it.[259]Separation from other nations in the cultivation of a unique national spirit did not incentivize petty hatred or xenophobia as Rádl had asserted.[260] In fact, those who derided the romantic nationalism of German philosophy often failed to mention that it was inherently linked to the creation of a *Sendungsidee* which extended beyond national egoism in benefiting all mankind.[261] In line with this thought, separation between nations allowing for the growth of spiritual

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[256] Lemberg, *Wege und wandlungen des national-bewusstseins; studien zur geschichte der volkwerdung in den Niederlanden und in Böhmen,*, 126.
[257] Ibid.
[258] Lemberg, "Zur Tschechischen Aussprache Uber Das Nationalitaten Problem," 67.
[259] Lemberg, *Wege und wandlungen des national-bewusstseins; studien zur geschichte der volkwerdung in den Niederlanden und in Böhmen,*, 127.
[260] Lemberg, *Das Gesicht des tschechischen Volkes*, 33.
[261] Lemberg, "Zur Tschechischen Aussprache Uber Das Nationalitaten Problem," 68–9.

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individuality did not mean hatred but something more akin to symbiosis. Problematically, a nation that relies too much on a state for expressions of its unity could not hope to achieve as spiritual of a form.[262] As such state weakness in Central and Eastern Europe might be lauded as leading to a particular spiritual nature.

Chapter Conclusion

The methods used by the Czechoslovak state to determine the nationality of its citizens and an attempt to democratize Masarykian national ideology produced a discussion about whether nations were subjective and based on free will or objective and rooted in history. Emanuel Rádl put forth a radical will-based construction of the nation which rejected its organic nature and its historical rootedness. Rádls will-based nation was constructed and therefore seen to be a higher form of unity. Eugen Lemberg rejected this modernist and voluntary conceptualization of the nation. According to his *Geistesgeschichte* periodization, nations were complex products of history which had expressed themselves in different ways according to a given era's *Zeitgeist.*

Accompanying the debate on the subjective or objective nature of nations, a parallel debate over the validity of Rádl's western political vs. eastern organic national typology ensued. The dynamics of Rádl's national dichotomy grew out of a desire to reconcile the Masarykian Czechoslovak national ideology with the western values to which it had been attached. A western political nation, for Rádl, bound together all citizens of a state based on the will to live under the same laws and to build a future together. Alternatively, the eastern organic nation was a product of German romanticism and unified a group on a more base

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[262] Lemberg, *Das Gesicht des tschechischen Volkes*, 28–29, 32. For Lemberg, this was not just true of the Czechoslovak state. The tendency to think in terms of the state in Germany going back to the time of German unification had also produced spiritual weakness. In general, Lemberg spoke somewhat unfavorably of Bismarck and the German Empire. According to Lemberg it was the task of Sudeten Germans, as a distinct branch of Germandom, to reinvigorate the spiritual elements of a larger German nationalism which transcended state boundaries.

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biological level. Rádl's national typology allowed him to see the survival of the Czechoslovak state in the construction of a political nation encompassing all the state's citizens. Lemberg firmly rejected Rádl's dichotomy and his proposal for a Czechoslovak political nation. Nations had developed under different historical circumstances in the East and in the West, and it wasn't possible to disreagard the past and simply choose a new national model. Lemberg asserted that even western nations contained organic components, and that eastern nationalism was spiritual rather than violent and base.

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5. Conclusion

The debates in interwar Czechoslovakia over organic and free-will based conceptions of the nation and over East vs. West national typologies centering on the possibility or impossibility of political nations had roots in political events in the late Habsburg Empire and in the ideological conflict of the First Czechoslovak Republic's national ideology. The swift ascendancy of nationhood in politics and society in the closing decades of Habsburg rule brought about an increasingly expansive competition between Czech and German national movements, while competing notions of nationhood splintered the ranks of national movements themselves. In an environment of heightened conflict, Tomáš Masaryk's national ideology attempted to combat negative and chauvinistic national models with a national ideology asserting the primacy of humanity, free will, democracy, and respect for the individual. Although calculated to combat chauvinism and division, Masaryk's ideology triggered as much change and contestation as the national models it was designed to overthrow.

The course of the First World War and the formation of a Czechoslovak nation state thrust Masaryk's national ideology into a state of paradox. During the First World War, Masaryk endeavored to align his vision of a democratic, tolerant, and cosmopolitan Czechoslovak nation with the perceived values and cultural heritage of the "West". Nevertheless, limited democratic practices and issues surrounding the unequal status of national minorities in Czechoslovakia clashed with the cosmopolitan, democratic, and western ambitions of Masarykian national ideology. Emanuel Rádl blamed organic understandings of the nation and state drawn from German philosophy for the tendencies of Masarykian ideology to accommodate elements of the older chauvinistic and blood-based forms of nationalism it was meant to depose. Eugen Lemberg, on the other hand held Masaryk's attempt to import a

Western state-based national model responsible for ushering in a form of national domination dangerous to the unity of Germans in Czechoslovakia.

Overall, the problems posed by the shift of the Czechoslovak national narrative to Western values and the practical application of such a model inside a nation state with a highly diverse populace triggered debates over the nature and origins of nations. These debates were abundant in the proto-modernist motifs and typologies historians of nationalism studies believe to be the important contributions of interwar nationalism theory. Political circumstances surrounding the census and the status of national minorities in a Czechoslovak nation state forced a debate about whether nations were organic or subjective and will-based. Seeking to modify the Masarykian national narrative to be open to democracy and free will and to protect the unity of the Czechoslovak state at the same time, Rádl argued for a radically subjective understanding of the nation as a will towards a higher form of future unity which was primarily modern and constructed. Lemberg rejected such will-based definitions of the nation as being entirely reductive. Nations, in his eyes, had undergone a tortuous evolution over the centuries which could not simply be untangled and overcome by will in the modern era.

Additionally, attempts to align Masaryk's Czechoslovak state and national ideology with Western states and national forms instigated discussions over a Western political vs. Eastern organic national paradigm and its validity. The literature on the history of nationalism studies has sometimes pointed to articulations of a particular ethnic German nationalism in the interwar era as preludes to Kohn's future civic vs. ethnic paradigms. The national paradigms debated in Czechoslovakia seem at the very least equally worthy of mention given the simultaneous employment of expansive ideological, spatial, and historical components. Rádl claimed that there was a difference between how the nation was understood west of the Rhine and how it was viewed east of the Rhine. While the nation was perceived in a political sense

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replete with voluntary and inclusive tendencies in the West, it was viewed in an organic and biological manner influenced by German romantic philosophy east of the Rhine. According to Rádl, the nation of the West built futures rooted in conceptions of progress while the nation of the East harbored instinctive xenophobia. Therefore, a progress-based political nation was desirable for Czechoslovakia. In response to these views, Lemberg held that such a nation was impossible in Czechoslovakia and dangerous to the organic unity of the German community. For Lemberg, Western and Eastern national forms were immutably different because of the different historical processes which created them. Even so, Lemberg criticized Rádl for the simplicity of his East vs. West national model and viewed his political nationalism as a danger to Sudeten Germans.

While the research above presenting an interwar dialogue on the nature and origins of nations in interwar Czechoslovakia has certain limitations, these limitations in turn point towards new research and new narratives in the history of nationalism studies. This thesis does not claim to be comprehensive or to encompass all views expressed in interwar Czechoslovak debates on nations and nationalism. Rádl and Lemberg formed the core of this text's focus in order to provide a point of entry into a much larger debate. Additionally, this thesis has not directly investigated instances of transmission from an interwar Czechoslovak context to other theorists and contexts. Despite these limitations, a contextualization of the works of Rádl and Lemberg leads to certain conclusions and directions for future study.

This thesis suggests that an interwar Czechoslovak debate on the nature and origins of nations should be considered within the literature on the history of nationalism theory. If the legacy of the interwar era in the grand scheme of the study of nationalism was that it created meaningful national typologies and created the grounds for future forms of modernism, the Czechoslovak context must not be elided. As has been evidenced, more than describing the distinctive nature of a typical blood-based or ethnic German nationalism, debate raged in

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Czechoslovakia over a typology which imputed ideologically-based values to a larger "Eastern" organic nationalism and a politically perceived "Western" nationalism. Additionally, discussions over the historical and organic nature of nations or their constructed and voluntary nature seem to typify the interwar period's fostering of early forms of modernist thought. As a whole, based on the value scholars have seen in the creation of interwar national typologies and elements of modernism, the interwar Czechoslovak context ought to be viewed alongside English, French, American, and German works already seen to have contributed to the study of nationalism.

Finally, the debates and issues uncovered as part of this thesis leave the possibility of pursuing an enlarged study of a more expansive Czechoslovak nationalism studies scene in the interwar period or perhaps even a search for theoretical debates in other interwar East Central European states. In the course of researching Emanuel Rádl and Eugen Lemberg, works related to nations and nationalism by other authors like Zdeněk Smetáček, Antonin Bohač, and Gustav Peters inevitably appeared. An enlarged research of a larger list of authors from interwar Czechoslovakia period might yield numerous more debate topics and theories than the research presented here. Further, while interwar Czechoslovak debates on nationalism are missing from a larger literature on the history of nationalism studies, it would be interesting to see what sorts of theoretical debates on nations and nationalism emerged in other East Central European states during the interwar period.

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