

All Czechs, but Particularly Women: The Positionality of Women in the
Construction of the Modern Czech Nation, 1820s - 1850s

by

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Abstract

My dissertation examines a complex set of the social, physical, physiological, and moral requirements through which nationalists strove to create the ideal woman who would guarantee the construction of the modern Czech nation, then part of Austria. I focus on the period between the 1820s and the 1850s when - uninterrupted by political events - numerous texts aimed at women appeared in the Czech community. Setting these sources in the larger scholarship on women, gender, nationalisms, sexuality, and medicine, and understanding the categories of gender and woman as fluid concepts, I explore how Czechs proposed that women become the nation's crucial imaginary citizens.

My study offers an expanded picture of how Czechs strove to make women responsible for the future national existence. Like others in subaltern and minority contexts, Czechs urged women to participate in the nation's construction. But the encyclopedia for women, the story of Kateřina Maršalová, a female soldier who was presented as a role model despite her gender and social transgression, and even the way advice books promoted female friendships demonstrate that women's participation in public nationalist activities could be highly controversial, even suggesting that women's relegation to the private helped to achieve modernity. Furthermore, the lens of Foucauldian biopolitics gives new purchase on these nation-building processes by showing them as strategies to manage both the individual and the national body. In the context of the notion of malleable heredity, the focus on women's physical and

physiological fitness and their supposedly innate connection with education made women primarily accountable not only for their own health and the health of their families but also for the national future. My analysis expands notions of what was involved in constructing a nation, showing important connections between the liberal movement of nationalism and biopolitical forms of power. I demonstrate how the positionality of women was instrumental in creating a resilient modern national community, exerting a decisive influence over the construction of gender relations, as well as for the ways we consider histories of modern state formations, their periodizations, and temporalities both in the Czech context and more generally.

Chapter 1

Introduction

“Let us see to it that our maidens do not hesitate to live as Czechs,” exclaimed journalist and playwright Josef Kajetán Tyl in a feuilleton published in a Czech nationalist journal in 1833.¹ Tyl’s appeal addressed a diverse group of men and women who all believed in the existence of a Czech nation, considered themselves to be part of the Czech national community, and strove to work on its behalf. Tyl explained that women’s participation in the nation-building project would guarantee that “surely we will make great advances in our effort.”² Although this opinion may not have been shared by everyone to the same degree, by the late 1820s numerous texts aimed at women started to appear in Czech national publications. Ranging from journal articles discussing the importance of women in establishing the Czech national community, to novels and poems to prescriptive literature and popular medical treatises, these texts implied what Tyl summarized so well: Czech nationalists, including teachers, writers, (Austrian) state employees, small-scale industrial entrepreneurs, physicians and clergy, began to pay attention to women’s participation and positionality in the process of national construction. These discussions were interrupted neither by the collapse of the 1848 – 1849 Revolution nor the subsequent decade of censorship imposed by the Austrian

¹ Josef Kajetán Tyl in *Jindy a Nyni* (1833), quoted in Vincenc Vávra, *O účastenství žen v českém probuzení* (Brno: Vesna, 1896), vi. All translations are mine.

² Tyl, quoted in Vávra, vi.

minister of the interior Bach regime. During this period, many in the national community clearly thought that teaching women how to “live as Czechs” was among the prerequisites for a successful national future. As Tyl fiercely stated, “if maidens are in the front lines of warriors fighting to uplift and promote our nationality, who would be able to resist them?”³

This dissertation explores how Czech nationalists who lived and worked in the context of the nineteenth-century Austrian Empire, where the Czech national movement constituted a type of “governmentality without government,” constructed the ideal Czech national woman.⁴ I examine how these nationalists between the late 1820s and the late 1850s proposed and constructed a complex set of social, cultural, physical, physiological, and moral rules and requirements to create a woman who, in Tyl’s words, nobody could “resist,” and who would “uplift and promote” Czechness. This process was not solely about forging a critical “imaginary” citizen who would ensure the Czech nation’s future existence and prosperity.⁵ While the context of the Czech national movement serves as the focal point, my dissertation contributes to the broader scholarship that links women with concerns over national prosperity and advancement and explores the ways women are constructed to ensure the (national) community’s future existence, success, and modernity. In proposing that women “live as Czechs,” Tyl’s statement has broader implications and suggests that the nationalists simultaneously proposed how – to borrow from feminist thinkers such as Simone de Beauvoir and

³ Ibid.

⁴ On the concept of “governmentality without government,” see, for example, Ilana Feldman, *Governing Gaza: Bureaucracy, Authority, and the Work of Rule, 1917-1967* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008).

⁵ In using the term “imaginary” citizen, I follow Benedict Anderson’s concept of “imagined community” in Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Community: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, 1983).

Monique Wittig - women should become women. Creating a modern national community also meant creating modern gender and social categories and relations.⁶

The Czech attempt to create the ideal national woman also has important implications for histories of modern national movements and state formations more generally. My dissertation demonstrates that the various rules and requirements for women encompassed social as well as biological characteristics. While these are not pairings usually discussed in histories of nationalisms, at least in this earlier period, they show important connections and tensions between liberal understandings of gender and a disciplining system of biopolitics/biopower that occurred in a process of constructing a modern nation and its crucial imaginary citizens. Moreover, the lens of biopolitics gives new purchase on these nation-building processes by showing them as strategies to manage both the individual and the national body. The complexity of the parameters imposed on women adds to such larger issues as the existence and applicability of the public/private dichotomy in modern national contexts. Furthermore, the perspective of women and gender - showing that attention to women's positionality and gendered aspects of national reproduction in a context of a nineteenth-century European national process does not completely revolve around political events and changes - has an impact on the ways in which we consider of the role of temporality and periodization of histories as well as adding to discussions of modern, national concepts of health and biopolitics/biopower.

Attention to women and gender as part of the scholarship on nations and nationalisms is hardly a new area of focus. As numerous scholars from various fields and

⁶ Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, trans. Constance Borde and Sheila Malovany-Chevalier (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010), 283; and Monique Wittig, "One Is Not Born a Woman," in *The Straight Mind and Other Essays*, 9-20, (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992).

disciplines have shown, women were crucial for a nation's construction, particularly nation-building processes, where (male) activists frequently considered women central to the nation's future success and where women emerged as important agents.⁷ The studies on individual nations as well as comparative and transcultural contexts have discussed women's participation and positions as well as connections between women, nationalisms, and sexuality in various national movements worldwide.⁸

Much of the Czech scholarship has focused on placing women into Czech national history and on women and the history of everyday life.⁹ Some scholars, however,

⁷ Pioneering works focusing on women, gender and nation include Kumari Jayawardena, *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World* (London: Zed Books, 1986); Sylvia Walby, "Woman and Nation," *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 33 (1992): 81-100; Nira Yuval-Davis, *Gender and Nation* (London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage, 1998); Nira Yuval-Davis and Floya Anthias (eds.), *Woman, Nation, State* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1989). See also Ida Blom, "Gender and Nation in International Perspective," in *Gendered Nations: Nationalism and Gender in the Long Nineteenth Century*, edited by Ida Blom, Karen Hagemann and Catherine Hall (Oxford: Berg, 2000), 3-26.

⁸ Scholarship on nationalism and sexuality, gender representations and concepts of femininity and masculinity include George L. Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality: Middle-Class Morality and Sexual Norms in Modern Europe* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988); Maria Bucur, "Between the Mother of the Wounded and the Virgin from Jiu. Romanian Women and the Gender of Heroism during the Great War," *Journal of Women's History* 12, no. 2 (Summer 2000): 30-56; Karen Hagemann, "Female Patriots: Women, War and the Nation in the Period of the Prussian-German Anti-Napoleonic Wars," *Gender & History* 16, 2 (2004): 397-424; Karen Hagemann, "'Heroic Virgins' and 'Bellicose Amazons': Armed Women, the Gender Order and the German Public during and after the Anti-Napoleonic Wars," *European History Quarterly* 37 (Oct 2007): 507 – 527; Karen Hagemann, Ralf Pröve (eds.), *Landsknechte, Soldatenfrauen und Nationalkrieger - Militär, Krieg und Geschlechterordnung im historischen Wandel* (New York: Campus Verlag, 1998); and Karen Hagemann, Alan Forrest and Jane Rendall (eds.), *Soldiers, Citizens and Civilians: Experiences and Perceptions of the French Wars, 1790-1820 (War, Culture and Society, 1750-1850)* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009). See, also, Stefan Dudink, Karen Hagemann and John Tosh (eds.), *Masculinities in Politics and War: Gendering Modern History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004); and Stefan Dudink, Karen Hagemann, and Anna Clark (eds.), *Representing Masculinity: Male Citizenship in Modern Western Culture* (New York, N.Y.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

⁹ See, in particular, the work of Milena Lenderová, *K hřichu i k modlitbě: žena v minulém století* (Prague: Mladá fronta, 1999); Milena Lenderová, *Žena v českých zemích* (Prague: Nakladatelství Lidové noviny, 2008); Milena Lenderová, *Zdenka Braunerová* (Prague: Mladá Fronta, 2000); Milena Lenderová, *Tragický bál, život a smrt Pavlína ze Schwarzenbergu* (Prague: Nakladatelství Paseka, 2004); Milena Lenderová (ed.) *Eva nejen v ráji: žena v Čechách od středověku do 19.století* (Prague: Univerzita Karlova: Karolinum, 2002); Marie L. Neudorflová, *České ženy v 19. století: úsilí a sny, úspěchy i zklamání na cestě k emancipaci* (Prague: Janua, 1999); Jiří Pešek a Václav Ledvinka (eds.) *Documenta Pragensia XIII: Žena v dějinách Prahy: sborník příspěvků z konference Archivu hl. m. Prahy a Nadace pro gender studies 1993* (Prague: Scriptorium, 1996); Wilma A. Iggers, *Women of Prague: Ethnic Diversity and Social Change from the Eighteenth Century to the Present* (Providence, RI & Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1995); Zofia Tarajło-Lipowska, "Polska szlachcianka Honorata z Wisniowskich Zapová w służbie idei

have contributed to the larger scholarship that has since gone beyond a simple description of women's life or simply asserting the importance of women to national- and other community- building processes.¹⁰ Numerous scholars working on different geographical and temporal contexts have begun to explore how activists of national processes discussed the positionality of women, what types of specific requirements they proposed for women, and how the requirements changed and evolved for the purpose of establishing a resilient and advanced community.¹¹ Especially interesting are studies analyzing the ways some activists of national movements proposed the idea that woman

slowianskiej w Pradze," in *Wielkie tematy kultury w literaturach słowiańskich 2*, ed. Poźniak and Skotnicka-Maj, 57-63 (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego 1999); Zofia Tarajlo-Lipowska, "Pod rouškou spořádaného manželství aneb smutný případ Honoraty Zapové," in *Sex a tabu v české kultuře 19. století*, edited by Václav Petrboř, 104-113, (Prague: Academia, 1999); Zofia Tarajlo-Lipowska, "Snahy o sblížení národů na salónní půdě: Honorata z Wiśniowskich-Zapová a český salon," in *Salony v české kultuře 19. století*, edited by Helena Lorenzová a Tařána Petrasová, 108-115, (Prague: Koniasch Latin Press, 1999); and Zofia Tarajlo-Lipowska, "Polský prvek v českém národním obrození v osobě Honoraty z Wiśniowských Zapové," in *Národní obrození a rok 1848 v evropském kontextu. Sborník příspěvků z mezioborového vědeckého sympózia*, edited by Milan Skřivánek, 167-172, (Litomyřl, Czech Republic: Město Litomyřl, 1998).

¹⁰ A few scholars have examined positionality of women and the ways gender relations functioned in the nineteenth-century Czech context. See Katherine David, "Czech Feminists and Nationalism in the Late Habsburg Monarchy: The First in Austria," *Journal of Women's History* 3, no. 2 (Fall 1991): 26-45; Jitka Malečková, "Nationalizing Women and Engendering the Nation: The Czech National Movement," in *Gendered Nations: Nationalism and Gender in the Long Nineteenth Century*, edited by Ida Blom, Karen Hagemann and Catherine Hall (Oxford: Berg, 2000), 293-310; Jitka Malečková, "The Emancipation of Women for the Benefit of the Nation: The Czech Women's Movement," in *Women's Emancipation Movements in the Nineteenth Century*, edited by Sylvia Paetschek and Blanka Pietrow-Ennker, 167-188, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004); Jitka Malečková, *Úrodná půda: žena ve službách národa* (Prague: ISV, 2002); and Alena Šimůnková, "Statut, odpovědnost a láska: vztahy mezi mužem a ženou v české měšťanské společnosti v 19. století," *Český časopis historický* 95/1997 (1): 55-109; and Alena Šimůnková, "Ideals and Reality: The Relations between the Sexes in the Czech Bourgeois Society of the Nineteenth Century," *Česká literatura* 47, no. 6 (1999): 654-665.

¹¹ See, for example, Heidrun Zettelbauer, "*Die Liebe sei Euer Heldentum:*" *Geschlecht und Nation in völkischen Vereinen der Habsburgermonarchie* (Frankfurt/Main; New York: Campus, 2005); Pirjo Markkola (ed.), *Gender and Vocation: Women, Religion and Social Change in the Nordic Countries, 1830-1940* (Studia Historica, number 64.) (Helsinki: Suomalainen Kirjallisuuden Seura, 2000); Jean Quataert, *Staging Philanthropy: Patriotic Women and the National Imagination in Dynastic Germany, 1813-1916* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001); Jadwiga E. Pieper-Mooney, *The Politics of Motherhood: Maternity and Women's Rights in Twentieth-Century Chile* (Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2009); Lila Abu-Lughod (ed.), *Remaking Women: Feminism and Modernity in the Middle East* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1998); Michele Mitchell, *African Americans and the Politics of Racial Destiny after Reconstruction* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Kumkum Sangari, Sudesh Vaid (eds.), *Recasting Women: Essays in Indian Colonial History* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1990); and Fatima Mernissi, *Beyond the Veil: Male-Female Dynamics in Modern Muslim Society* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987).

had to be represented in order to ensure a nation's success. Johanna Valenius has discussed the gender, sexual, and corporal constructions and the representation of the "Finnish Maid."¹² Jitka Malečková's discussion of the ways in which nineteenth-century nationalists appropriated Vlasta and Libuše, two female figures from the mythical Czech past, simultaneously sought to correct the conventional interpretation of Czech history according to which men and women harmoniously cooperated on the construction of the nation.¹³ Such similar studies make clear that gender and social identities and categories of woman, as well as notions of femininity and masculinity that were crucial to defining modern nations, were constructed strategically and that they shifted over time. In addition, studies such as these have shown how modern gender relations get constructed and adopted to the point that they gradually appear to be natural and standard. My dissertation offers a complex perspective on this process.

In order to carry out the project, my dissertation builds on two basic premises. First, I draw on the contention that social, gender, sexual, and other categories are socially constructed entities and that they shift and change in different temporal and geographical contexts.¹⁴ Particularly helpful is the work of several scholars who have argued that gender identity categories were socially and culturally constructed and essentialized so that they are perceived as natural. In line with Judith Butler's assertions in *Gender Trouble* and *Bodies That Matter*, I examine the process of creating the ideal Czech woman in the sense that one's gender and subject position is never fixed or stable

¹² Johanna Valenius, *Undressing the Maid: Gender, Sexuality and the Body in the Construction of the Finnish Nation* (Bibliotheca Historica, number 85.) (Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura, 2004).

¹³ Jitka Malečková, "The Emancipation of Women for the Benefit of the Nation: The Czech Women's Movement."

¹⁴ In addition to de Beauvoir, see also Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, "African-American Women's History and the Metalanguage of Race," *Signs* 17, No. 2. (Winter, 1992): 251-274; Denise Riley, *Am I That Name?: Feminism and the Category of Women in History* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003).

but is performed differently in various contexts and situations.¹⁵ Ludmilla Jordanova's book *Sexual Visions* brings Butler's theoretical contentions closer to the temporal and cultural context of my own work. In this sweeping study, Jordanova points to a comprehensive web of connections and intersections through which medicine and science between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries socially constructed gender identities and categories.¹⁶ Sarah B. Hrdy's work has added especially strong arguments against what came to be understood as the natural biological role of the woman. Linking biology with the social, she has destabilized the notion of essentialized biological roles and instincts that naturally apply to all women.¹⁷

Building on this body of work, I argue that despite the fluidity of meanings, concepts, and ideas about "woman" and despite the complexity of the process, the nationalists strove to create a category of "woman" that appeared "naturalized" so that she could benefit her nation. The process included contested debates over the definitions of correct roles and duties of the woman, and requirements imposed on social conduct, including women's participation in the social and cultural activities of the national community. Additional propositions focused on requirements related to women's physical, physiological, and moral characteristics that would ensure the nation's survival and future prosperity. The national purpose was the major factor that shaped the way a "woman" was to be created. Thus, with the national interest at the center of inquiry, my

¹⁵ Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1999); Judith Butler, *Bodies that Matter: on the Discursive Limits of "Sex"* (New York: Routledge, 1993). In *Undoing Gender* (New York: Routledge, 2004), however, Butler has focused on the ways gender is "made," rather than solely "performed."

¹⁶ Ludmilla Jordanova, *Sexual Visions: Images of Gender in Science and Medicine between the Eighteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1993).

¹⁷ Sarah B. Hrdy, *The Woman that Never Evolved* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981); and Sarah B. Hrdy, *Mothers and Others: The Evolutionary Origins of Mutual Understanding* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009).

dissertation examines a multitude of aspects and concerns that were at play in the project of envisioning and establishing a “woman” for the benefit of the nation.

The debates over the constitution of “woman” were nuanced by women’s own participation in the debates, and I offer the perspective of female members of the Czech national community whenever I was able to locate relevant sources. Even if such a perspective is often missing from archives, women’s own voices shed an important light on the actual process of the attempts to apply these rules and requirements. Women’s own perspectives, available through personal letters and diaries, also point to the similarities and differences in opinions between men and women and among different individuals.

Second, I follow several scholars of nations and nationalisms who have asserted that modern nations are to some extent invented entities.¹⁸ Following their arguments, I examine the process of creating rules, requirements and the category of woman as part of the larger project of inventing a nation’s social and cultural rules, requirements, and norms. As Vladimír Macura, who first analyzed the Czech national movement as a type of culture, and Robert Pynsent in his study of the construction of the Czech and Slovak nationality and personality have shown, similar to activists in other such contexts, Czech nationalists engaged in the project that Eric Hobsbawm described as “invented traditions.”¹⁹ Macura argued that it was such an invented tradition, in part constructed artificially, “outside reality, time and space,” invented by contemporary nineteenth-

¹⁸ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Community*; Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

¹⁹ Vladimír Macura, *Znamení zrodu: české obrození jako kulturní typ* (Jinočany, Czech Republic: H&H, 1995); Robert B. Pynsent, *Questions of Identity: Czech and Slovak Ideas of Nationality and Personality* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 1994).

century nationalists.²⁰ As he claimed, activists of the Czech nation-building movement referred to earlier historical, linguistic, literary, and cultural traditions and models, but used and appropriated them so that they fit their idea of the modern Czech nation. However, when they needed to supply a model or a person that did not exist, such as female writers who would prove the advancement of the nation, they simply invented them.²¹ Macura did not argue that inventions were unique to the Czech context; however, in those cases when a nation needed to create its own past, he claimed that invention became a “fully fledged component of creating the national culture as a whole.”²² Furthermore, as he argued, in the Czech context (and, arguably, other similar contexts), such inventions included an important aspect of striving for higher credibility – they would show that the nation had its own (and long) history and that it belonged among other well-established nations. This also means that, as Malečková likewise pointed out in her theoretical essay on women in contexts of uneven development, the positionality of women was a constant source of comparisons with other contexts. As she has argued, activists of such similar national movements attempted to show “that not only the morals and character, but also the position, education, abilities and achievements of women in

²⁰ Macura, *Znamení zrodu*, 102-117; for this quotation see 104.

²¹ The inventions of female (but also male) writers, the usage of a fictive pen/nick name/different identity for an already published male/female author, as well as attributing work originally written by one author to the name of another writer all point to a practice of “multiplying” the number of nationalists and writers in an otherwise small community. However, the practice inventing female writers clearly has a further significance as it points to attempts for higher credibility of the Czech national community. See Macura, *Znamení zrodu*, 109.

²² The most renowned examples of the invention of documents are probably the “Rukopis královedvorský” [Manuscript of Dvůr Králové] and the “Rukopis zelenohorský” [Manuscript of Zelená hora]. These two texts were allegedly discovered in 1817 and presented as two of the oldest texts written in Czech. Although the authenticity and historicity of the documents was immediately disputed, the debates surrounding these two documents continue to be a source of controversies to this day.

their nation were comparable with, if not better than, those of women in developed countries.”²³

My discussion of the rules and requirements imposed on the ideal national woman brings together social and the biological characteristics. It would seem that reading these aspects together is contradictory. But in the early nineteenth-century context, as it is often now, “fitness” was understood in both social and biological terms. Czech nationalists were situated, and sometimes also educated, as was the case of physicians, in the wider European context and drew from this larger pool of ideas. The propositions, rules, and requirements of mainstream German-language culture of Imperial Austria, from which these nationalists strove to differentiate themselves but which they simultaneously emulated and adapted, played an important role.²⁴ Czechs also frequently drew on ideas from other European empires. But creating the modern Czech nation was not predicated only on opposition to the imperial setting and “tensions of empire.”²⁵ Czech nationalists also compared their nation, culture, and women with other national contexts that they perceived as more or less advanced, making the nation-building endeavor part of a transnational exchange of ideas.²⁶ They were informed by and appropriated outside,

²³ Jitka Malečková, “Women in Perceptions of Uneven Development,” in *Criteria and Indicators of Backwardness: Essays on Uneven Development in European History*, edited by Miroslav Hroch and Luďa Klusáková (Prague: Variant Editors/Faculty of Arts, Charles University, 1996), 143.

²⁴ Macura, *Znamení zrodu*, esp. chaps. 5, 6 and 7.

²⁵ Important studies focusing on women, gender and empire and (post) colonial experience include Frederick Cooper, Ann Laura Stoler (eds.), *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997). Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Conquest* (New York: Routledge, 1995); and Anne McClintock, Aamir Mufti, and Ella Shohat (eds.) *Dangerous Liaisons: Gender, Nation, and Postcolonial Perspectives* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997).

²⁶ Czech nationalist journals commonly featured articles and news about well-established countries such as France or England. But Czech nationalists were also interested in nations that – just like them – did not live in their own nation-state and for this reason forged their own social and cultural rules and future existence. Thus, they frequently pointed to Poland or Serbia and even the Ottoman Empire. They were also concerned with the situation in the United States – a country they both highlighted as an example of liberty and progress, but also severely criticized for permitting slavery and mistreating blacks.

foreign notions and concepts that they considered as fitting the purpose of the modern Czech nation.

In building and establishing their community, nationalists were convinced that Czechs formed their own nation with its distinct history, language, territory, and culture. As Jiří Kořalka has pointed out, they formulated their national identity in relation to the Austrian state, and recent historiography, including Pieter Judson, Jeremy King, Nancy Wingfield and Tara Zahra has suggested that the majority of people who lived in the Bohemian territory probably did not feel the need to define their national identity.²⁷ Some of the nationalists did not even have full command of the Czech language since German was the official language of administration. Nonetheless, they saw it as their task to (re)create and reproduce the national community, to promote the Czech language and cultural traditions, and convince others to participate in building the modern Czech nation and feel responsible for its future existence. One key priority in this project was to establish the rules for the national community and teach them to its current and prospective members.²⁸

²⁷ For a discussion of the development of national identity and consciousness, and national “indifference,” see Jiří Kořalka, *Češi v habsburské říši a v Evropě 1815-1914* (Prague: Argo, 1996); Pieter M. Judson and Marsha L. Rozenblit (eds.), *Constructing Nationalities in East Central Europe* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2005); Jeremy King, *Budweisers into Czechs and Germans: A Local History of Bohemian Politics, 1848-1948* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002); Pieter M. Judson, *Guardians of the Nation: Activists on the Language Frontiers of Imperial Austria* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2006); Nancy M. Wingfield (ed.), *Creating the Other: Ethnic Conflict and Nationalism in Habsburg Central Europe* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2003); Nancy M. Wingfield, *Flag Wars and Stone Saints: How the Bohemian Lands Became Czech* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2007); Hillel J. Kieval, *Languages of Community: The Jewish Experience in the Czech Lands* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); and Tara E. Zahra, *Kidnapped Souls: National Indifference and the Battle for Children in the Bohemian Lands, 1900-1948* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008).

²⁸ As participation in the Czech national movement was a conscious choice that was not necessarily drawn along “ethnic” lines, not all Czech nationalists actually knew Czech. Many had to learn it first. Hiring private language tutors or attending educational institutes was also an option for both men and women. It could be argued that women knew Czech better than men as they did not have access to higher education and had to communicate in Czech when taking care of their household duties. Therefore, women might

Nationalist publications, read by men and women, served as an important channel through which nationalists strove to put forward and reproduce the gender-specific requirements regarding social conduct as well as health. In this way, education –policing and self-policing - was used as a form of biopolitics/biopower; a system of disciplining people while making them both autonomous subjects able to make their choices, and, at the same time, subjugated by their responsibility for the prosperity of their community. The concept of education focused on the biological existence of the national community and served to create a sense of moral underpinning of the process of national construction. In other words, education suggested a model of how people should be to participate in the success of the national community. The nineteenth-century Czech national process, then, is an important addition to discussions of the Foucauldian notion of biopolitics/biopower, showing that the sovereign power did not have to be imposed by state or government. My analysis thus shows that in the absence of a nation-state, nationalists themselves emphasized the responsibility of individual members, and particularly women, in securing the well-being of the national community.²⁹ Individual people (and particularly women) become agents accountable for the existence and prosperity of the national community.

My project is situated in the larger framework of the public and private spheres and contributes to the discussions about the existence and applicability of the public/private dichotomy. Czech nationalists - like activists in other subaltern and minority settings - lacked their own autonomous public sphere. Participation in

have been in a better position than men, because they needed to practice at least some Czech when running the household.

²⁹ Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction, vol. 1.*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Random House, 1978).

nationalist activities and proclaiming themselves Czech was to a certain degree a subversive identity. Those who wanted to be part of the Czech community were - at least ideally - supposed to reject the mainstream (German) language and customs and to work on the nation's behalf. This could have an effect on one's position in society and on the job market. At the same time, with the exception of 1848, forming public (official) groups and associations, particularly those with a non-Austrian nationalist agenda, was difficult and discouraged. Police investigations, official bans of groups or meetings, and censorship were common.³⁰

In spite of this, Czech nationalists made a point of differentiating between the (nationalist) public and private spheres, which they discussed in particularly gendered terms. In accordance with Partha Chatterjee's arguments about the positionality of women in the Indian national movement, Czechs too often called on women to take an active part in their nation's constructions, frequently stressing women's participation in nationalist public activities.³¹ However, this is not the full story. The Czech encyclopedia for women, an unpublished nationalist project that strove to offer authoritative opinions on issues of particular relevance to women, highlighted nationalist public consequence of women's activities but emphasized that women's place is at home. The story of Kateřina Maršalová, a female soldier who was presented as a role model despite her gender and social transgression, and even the way advice books promoted friendships between women demonstrate that women's participation in public nationalist activities could be highly controversial. As my dissertation makes clear, many Czech nationalists proposed the connection between women and the private sphere as the ideal for Czech women.

³⁰ Jitka Lněničková, *České země v době předbřeznové 1792-1848* (Prague: Libri, 1999), 45-57.

³¹ Partha Chatterjee, "The Nation and Its Women," chap 6 in *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*, 116 - 134 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

This possibly suggests that women's relegation to the private helped to achieve modernity. The Czech case thus corrects Chatterjee's findings, showing the importance of emphasizing the connection between women and the private sphere in the process of constructing a modern nation.

However, my findings have also shown that although in theory, female friendships should have emphasized the connection between women and the private sphere, the evidence of actual friendships that Czech nationalist women formed did not follow this trajectory. Rather, the correspondence makes clear that their friendships not only allowed the women to discuss their own ideas and visions but also supported them in the activities that had public nationalist significance. These "nationalist romantic friendships" thus do not fit into the polarized and gender segregated world described by Carroll Smith-Rosenberg and other scholars who discussed female friendships as being firmly placed in the private sphere.³² Rather, these specific friendships remind of the bonds between activists of international women's movement later in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, or perhaps the South Asian and European friendships at the turn of the nineteenth-century described by Leela Gandhi.³³ These Czech female friendships contribute to the complex picture of women's relationships in the past. They also serve as yet another example of how women's participation in the nationalist activities blurs the

³² Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations between Women in Nineteenth-Century America," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 1, no. 1 (1975): 1-29. See, also, Lillian Faderman, *Surpassing the Love of Men: Romantic Friendship and Love between Women from the Renaissance to the Present* (London: The Women's Press, 1991).

³³ Aletta Henriette Jacobs, Mineke Bosch, Annemarie Kloosterman, *Politics and Friendship: Letters From the International Woman Suffrage Alliance, 1902-1942* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1990); Leila J. Rupp, *Worlds of Women: The Making of an International Women's Movement* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997); and Leela Gandhi, *Affective Communities: Anticolonial thought, Fin-De-Siècle Radicalism, and the Politics of Friendship* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006).

boundaries of public and private spheres, demonstrating the importance of the private sphere in an emerging modern national community.³⁴

The framework of the public/private dichotomy is also particularly useful in analyzing the physical and physiological propositions regarding health and fitness. Czech nationalists who wrote about and offered guidelines pertaining to healthy lifestyle and proper national reproduction made clear that women are responsible for their own health and fitness. But at the same time, these nationalists also asserted that women were accountable for selecting the right marriage partner who would ensure the correct reproduction of the national community. In addition, as housekeepers, wives, and mothers, women were also responsible for ensuring the health and fitness of their families. These propositions and the various rules and requirements for women in the process of establishing a modern middle-class community effectively blur the ideal boundaries of the private and public spheres.

My study also shows that attention to women and the lens of gender offer a new purchase on temporality and periodization of national processes and histories. For example, my research has shown that ideas on national health and fitness predate the circulation of (social) Darwinist notions not only in the Czech national community but also in the larger European context.³⁵ As historians of medicine have shown, people were interested in maintaining health – in the universal sense - earlier in the nineteenth century and even before. However, some Czech nationalists, including university-trained

³⁴ Leila J. Rupp, *Sapphistries: A Global History of Love between Women* (New York: New York University Press, 2009).

³⁵ For a discussion of the first traces of modern eugenics in the Czech Lands, see Michal Šimůnek “Eugenics, Social Genetics and Racial Hygiene: Plans for the Scientific Regulation of Human Heredity in the Czech Lands, 1900 -1925,” in *Blood and Homeland: Eugenics and Racial Nationalism in Central and Southeastern Europe 1900 – 1940*, edited by Marius Turda and Paul J. Weindling, 145-166 (Budapest and New York: Central European Press, 2007).

physicians, began discussing gender-specific propositions and concerns over the health and population management as part of their vision of a modern (nationalized) concept of medicine. Their propositions regarding the proper lifestyle were not specifically Czech; they did not make distinctions between Czechs and the “others,” and were not motivated by the same concerns as the ideas formulated later in the nineteenth-century. These ideas nevertheless show that in order to be Czech one was expected to adhere to the rules, live what was considered to be the proper lifestyle and be healthy. Furthermore, the discussion of proper lifestyle, health, and fitness makes clear that the role of women’s bodies in nationalist projects was harnessed much earlier than scholars have discussed. Similarly, my study shows that attention to issues such as prostitution and its negative consequences for the health of the population took place much earlier than scholars have discussed.

In addition, my dissertation demonstrates that the dominant conventional model that scholars of Czech national movement have adopted does not adequately describe the perspective of women. Historian Miroslav Hroch who proposed this model suggested that “smaller European national movements,” where he also included the Czech nation-building process, can be divided into three phases that correspond with politically significant events and changes.³⁶

³⁶ Miroslav Hroch’s periodization of nation-building movements focuses on nineteenth-century nation-building processes in Europe, particularly those that Hroch identified as “small nations.” These were nations that “formed an ethnic...but never an independent political unit...lacked a continuous tradition of cultural production in a literary language of their own, or had once possessed one, which was subsequently obliterated or underwent serious degeneration.” See Miroslav Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe: A Comparative Analysis of the Social Composition of Patriotic Groups among the Smaller European Nations* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 8-9. Hroch’s periodization consists of three phases. The first phase, or “phase A,” is described as the “period of scholarly interest.” The second phase, or “phase B,” is the “period of patriotic agitation.” Finally, the last, or “phase C,” is the period of the “rise of the mass national movement.” See, Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe*, 23. As Hroch has argued, the phases occur at different times in different nation-building

According to this highly influential model, the attempts to create the modern Czech national community out of Bohemia originated at the end of the eighteenth century, after the French Revolution of 1789.³⁷ The movement moved to its second phase around the Congress of Vienna – an 1814-1815 conference where representatives of Austria, Britain, France, and Russia met to discuss the organization of Europe in the aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars. This second phase was then interrupted by the collapse of the 1848 – 1849 Revolution and the subsequent decade of reinforced absolutism imposed by the Austrian minister of the interior Bach regime. This period, which in the Czech case copies the contours of what has become to known as the “Pre-March” period, was what Hroch identified as the most important phase. As he argued, this was a period during which these national movements gained larger social significance and impact. Finally, during the third phase, which in the Czech case dates from the 1860s, after the fall of the Bach regime until the end of the First World War, the movement reached massive participation, a full social structure and began to include political demands. It then resulted in the formation of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1918.

While these are important markers, the political events do not necessarily correspond with the process of creating the category of the Czech national woman.

context. Thus they invite a diachronic comparison of specific aspects of the national processes including the positionality of women.

³⁷ Hroch includes a brief survey of the Czech national movement and his proposed periodization of the Czech National Movement. See Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe*, esp. 44-45. See also Hugh LeCaine Agnew, *The Czechs and the Lands of the Bohemian Crown* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 2004); and Hugh LeCaine Agnew, *Origins of the Czech National Renaissance* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1993). For more in-depth studies in Czech, see Jitka Lněničková for the time period between 1792 and 1848 (Lněničková, *České země v době předbřeznové 1792-1848*; and Marcela C. Efmertová for the time period between 1848 and 1918 (Marcela C. Efmertová, *České země v letech 1848-1918* (Prague: Nakladatelství Libri, 1998). For a cultural history of nineteenth-century Bohemia, see Derek Sayer, *The Coasts of Bohemia: A Czech History* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1998).

Rather, my research has shown that this endeavor lasted approximately from the late 1820s through the late 1850s. Although various Czech texts paid attention to the positionality of women from the late eighteenth century, it wasn't until the late 1820s when a larger number of nationalist publications began to appear in the Czech national context and an increasing number of texts started an effort to propose the criteria of women's national fitness. Written by Czech nationalists but also translated and appropriated from other contexts, these publications aimed at those who felt compelled to demonstrate their Czechness by subscribing to and reading Czech-written texts. In this way, the texts served to spread knowledge of the Czech language.³⁸

At this time, Bohemia, the center of Czech nationalist efforts, continued to witness the growth of industry (textile, food, mechanical engineering, and glass) as well as crafts.³⁹ Although still relatively small in number and on the margins of the mainstream German-language culture of Imperial Austria, by the early 1830s, the movement had diversified to include small-scale industrial entrepreneurs and traders as well as intellectuals and state employees.⁴⁰ As my research has shown, the pool of women who identified as Czech nationalists was equally diverse and included women who worked in their parents' establishments, as well as governesses, teachers, seamstresses, and actresses. A few women wrote literature, although - with the exception of the renowned Czech female writer Božena Němcová – not as their main occupation.

³⁸On the status of the Czech language, see Lněničková, *České země v době předbřeznové 1792-1848*, 117. Education was compulsory in Austria since 1774. Legislation passed in 1805 required children between the ages of six and twelve to attend school, and at the elementary level, the language of instruction was the children's mother tongue. Education on the secondary and university levels was conducted in German. See Lněničková, *České země v době předbřeznové 1792-1848*, 401-408. Lněničková states that by the first half of the nineteenth century attendance at the elementary and secondary schools was approximately 75 percent. See Lněničková, *České země v době předbřeznové 1792-1848*, 401.

³⁹Lněničková, *České země v době předbřeznové 1792-1848*, 177-199.

⁴⁰Ibid., 173-199.

Members of this emerging Czech-identified petty bourgeoisie gradually – even though not completely - overtook the importance that the aristocracy and clergy had held and began to form a substantial part of the national movement.⁴¹ Their participation signified a turn to the practical task of establishing the national community and its rules and requirements.⁴²

These transformations, nonetheless, did not go hand in hand with political changes. Prior to the outbreak of the European-wide Revolutions of 1848,⁴³ which allowed Czech nationalists to formulate and publicly voice their political demands; state (Austrian) authorities represented by the figure of Minister of State Klemens von

⁴¹ However, members of the aristocracy and clergy continued to form part of the Czech national community. On aristocracy, see Rita Krueger, *Czech, German, and Noble: Status and National Identity in Habsburg Bohemia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009); Eagle Glassheim, *Noble Nationalists: The Transformation of the Bohemian Aristocracy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005); and Josef V. Polišínský, *Aristocrats and the Crowd in the Revolutionary Year 1848: A Contribution to the History of Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Austria* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1980). The Polish-born Honorata z Wiśniowských Zapová also came from an aristocratic background. See, for example, Edvard Jelínek, *Honorata z Wiśniowských Zapová: zápisky z rodinné korespondence a vlasteneckých vzpomínek* (Prague: Nakladatelství J. Otto, 1894); and Zofia Tarajło-Lipowska, “Polska szlachcianka Honorata z Wisniowskich Zapová w służbie idei słowiańskiej w Pradze.”

⁴² As the Czech national journals show, the presence of the middle class became very prominent toward the end of the second half of 1830s. For a discussion of the changing structure of the national community see Otto Urban, *Česká společnost 1848-1918* (Prague: Svoboda, 1982); Lněničková, *České země v době předbřeznové 1792-1848*, 144 and 173-199. For a discussion of the emerging Czech liberalism, see Otto Urban, “Český liberalismus v 19. století,” in *Český liberalismus, texty a osobnosti*, edited by Milan Znoj, Jan Havránek, Martin Sekera, 15-27 (Prague: Torst, 1995); Otto Urban, “Czech Liberalism 1848-1918” in *Liberty and the Search for Identity: Liberal Nationalisms and the Legacy of Empires*, edited by Iván Zoltán Dénes, 273-307 (Budapest; New York: Central European University Press, 2006). See, also Jiří Štaif, *Obezřetná elita: česká společnost mezi tradicí a revolucí, 1830-1851* (Prague: Dokořán, 2005); Pieter M. Judson, *Exclusive Revolutionaries: Liberal Politics, Social Experience, and National Identity in the Austrian Empire, 1848-1914* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996). For a broader context of nineteenth-century European liberalism, see Stefan Auer, *Liberal Nationalism in Central Europe* (London; New York: Routledge Curzon, 2004); James J. Sheehan, *German Liberalism in the Nineteenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978); Dieter Langewiesche, *Liberalism in Germany* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000); and Anthony Howe, Simon Morgan (eds.), *Rethinking Nineteenth-Century Liberalism: Richard Cobden Bicentenary Essays* (Aldershot, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006).

⁴³ For a general discussion of the 1848-49 Revolution and its impact in the Czech and larger European context, see, for example, Milan Skřivánek (ed.), *Národní obrození a rok 1848 v Evropském kontextu* (Litomyšl: Město Litomyšl, 1998); Dieter Dowe, Heinz-Gerhard Haupt, Dieter Langewiesche (eds.), *Europa 1848: Revolution und Reform* (Bonn: J.H.W. Dietz Nachf., 1998); and Axel Körner (ed.), *1848, A European revolution?: International Ideas and National Memories of 1848* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004).

Metternich continuously suppressed political life and nationalist demands. Public manifestations by different ethnic groups and nationalist affiliations were suspected of anti-governmental political activity.⁴⁴ In the decade of reinforced absolutism that followed the collapse of the Revolutions of 1848 and the dissolution of the Imperial Diet in 1849 where Czech representatives for the first time proposed the formation of an independent administrative unit within the Austrian empire, nationalist activities were discouraged even more.

However, these political events did not mean that Czech nationalists would stop paying attention to women. Although the number of national publications decreased, and the content of the journals changed, Czech publications continued to discuss how women should be to benefit their nation. In fact, one of the most interesting and unique articles, in which a university-trained physician Jan Špott discussed gender-specific requirements for proper national reproduction was written in the beginning of a decade that is otherwise assumed to have interrupted the continuity of the national movement.

Women's participation in the activities of the Czech national community also changed but was not interrupted, and women continued to organize their own activities. As Alena Šimůnková suggested in her discussion of the development of modern Czech gender relationships and my research has made clear, it was rather the period after 1860, a period when the activities of the Czech national community began to flourish again, that the rules and requirements for women were solidified.⁴⁵ My dissertation suggests that adopting alternative models of periodization and temporalities that would not be centered on political events but rather be more attentive to issues such as women's positionality,

⁴⁴ Lněničková, *České země v době předbřeznové 1792-1848*, 45-57.

⁴⁵ Šimůnková, "Statut, odpovědnost a láska;" and Šimůnková, "Ideals and Reality."

provides an important insight and nuances our understanding of the processes of modern nation-state formations.⁴⁶ This is important not only for the history of the Czech national movement but also other similar nineteenth-century national movements whose activists strove to guarantee their future.

My dissertation is based on extensive research conducted in archives and libraries in Prague and Brno, the Czech Republic, and in New York City. While in the Czech Republic, I studied Czech-language sources aimed at those who were, or strove to be, part of the Czech national community. The Library of the National Museum in Prague and the Library of the Náprstek Museum, also in Prague, both proved to be especially important depositories of pre-1860s Czech nationalist journals. The Library of the Museum of Literature in Prague and the National Library in Prague as well as the Moravian Library in Brno offered particularly rich collections of novels, short stories, advice books, and popular medical treatises written or translated into Czech as well as biographies of, and memoirs by, Czech nationalists. These texts allowed me to analyze the development of ideas regarding how women were to act and live in order to be ideal members of the Czech national community. Although I often had to compile materials from various libraries, the sources that discussed women's positionality in the Czech nation-building process before the 1860s were fairly readily available when I began my research.⁴⁷ In comparison, archival collections that conveyed women's own perspectives

⁴⁶ Early in the twentieth century, Vlasta Kučerová suggested one such alternative periodization in her study of the nineteenth-century women's movements. Although she did not neglect the impact of political events, she discussed women's activities as divided by different generations. Vlasta Kučerová, *K historii ženského hnutí v Čechách: Amerlingova éra* (Brno, Czech Republic: Ženská revue, 1914).

⁴⁷ Over the course of my research, however, some materials became difficult to access. The National Library in Prague, for example, began to relocate early nineteenth-century sources to different collections and scan them, and both projects thus made the documents unavailable for extended periods of time. The Library of the National Museum in Prague, which houses an important collection of some precious and rare

were much scarcer.⁴⁸ Even so, the Literary Archive of the Museum of Literature in Prague provided access to collections of prominent Czech nationalists (both male and female) that became invaluable sources, including pre-1860s personal correspondence, diaries, and unpublished manuscripts. These collections allowed me to contrast the requirements placed upon women with their own ideas and aspirations as women who were part of the Czech national community and who reflected on them and put them on paper. I was able to merge the body of scholarship that analyzes how women should live with the scholarship that considers women's actual lives. In so doing, I am able to provide a more nuanced and comprehensive picture of the ways in which the nationalists envisioned and established the category of woman and formed modern gender relations. When I began to study the physical and physiological dimension of the requirements for the ideal woman, I found materials at the New York Academy of Medicine in New York City especially helpful. Prescriptive literature, lifestyle manuals, popular medical treatises, and journals that I read in New York allowed me to place the Czech advice books and prescriptive texts in a larger context and analyze them as part of larger transnational debates and discussions in which Czech nationalists also participated. The sources I found at the New York Academy of Medicine, which also heavily focus on women, enabled me to consider the Czech texts as part of the larger discussions of the modern concepts of health, both universal and nationalized, and biopolitical concerns over (national) health and fitness, as well as part of the larger concept of the ideal and fit

materials, began to move their materials due to a planned reconstruction of the building of the National Museum.

⁴⁸ The archival collection of the well-known writer Božena Němcová, however, presented a particular issue. Němcová is, arguably, the most famous nineteenth-century Czech (female) nationalist. Many scholars have focused on analyzing Němcová's work and life. Němcová's literary texts as well as her correspondence are frequently published and readily accessible in Czech libraries. For this reason, several archivists were surprised that I wanted to study the "original" texts and letters located in the archival collection since all the evidence was so easily accessible.

woman - a crucial member of the community who was supposed to guarantee the ideal national reproduction.

Several cross-disciplinary approaches that warrant paying special attention to the processes, dynamics, and mechanisms in which the categories of women and gender are contested provide the analytical framework in which I read and analyze the sources. I utilize the method of “thick description” outlined by Clifford Geertz, who emphasized viewing the actions of people “in terms of categories that were their own.”⁴⁹ My project is not “gender history” in the sense of Joan W. Scott, who made a point of differentiating between women’s history as way of simply inserting women in history and describing women’s lives in the past and gender history as an analytical approach.⁵⁰ My project does both. However, Scott’s definition is useful as it warrants paying attention to the ways gender relations were structured. In respect to working with my sources – collecting, analyzing, and writing about them - I draw on feminist methodology. In particular, I make use of the feminist content analysis that suggests taking into account and reflecting upon even those sources, information, and texts that are missing from the archives.⁵¹ Furthermore, following the propositions made by various scholars including Donna Haraway, bell hooks, and Philip Deloria, I understand my dissertation as a project of

⁴⁹ Clifford Geertz, “Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture,” chap 1 in *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*, 3-30, (New York: Basic Books, 1973). See also Walter Prevenier and Martha C. Howell, *From Reliable Sources: An Introduction to Historical Methods* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), 115-116.

⁵⁰ Joan W. Scott, “Women’s History,” chap. 1 in *Gender and the Politics of History, revised edition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), esp. 17; and Scott, “Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis,” chap. 2 in *Gender and the Politics of History, Gender and the Politics of History, revised edition* esp. 42.

⁵¹ Shulamit Reinharz, *Feminist Methods in Social Research* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 162. See also Helen Roberts, ed., *Doing Feminist Research* (London and Boston, Mass.: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981); Susan Harding, ed., *Feminism and Methodology: Social Science Issues* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987).

what Haraway called “situated and embodied knowledges.”⁵² For this reason I use the first person in my writing. This does not mean that I would claim objectivity. In using the first person I reflect my own positionality as a researcher and scholar – putting myself in the picture and claiming location.⁵³

Chapter 2 explores the ways in which Czech nationalists discussed and proposed ways women should participate in the nation-building project. I show that nationalist publications devoted the most attention to underscoring women’s participation in public nationalist activities and implied that women combine this effort with their household duties. Even though one voice suggested that women should be able to decide whether they wanted to be in the household or participate in nationalist public activities, many nationalists, women among them, asserted that the ideal woman needed to keep to her “womanly” duties at home. I argue that many Czech nationalists between the late 1820s and the late 1850s identified the connection between women and the private sphere as a source of national advancement and modernity, even though – at the same time – women’s participation in nationalist activities never lost its public significance.

Chapters 3 and 4 further analyze the complex and sometimes seemingly contradictory character of these propositions. Chapter 3 discusses the phenomenon of romantic friendship between women. Although some Czech nationalist writers proposed the idea of friendships between women as a way to establish the private and public divide, implying that these friendships are bound by home and domesticity, I argue that

⁵² Donna Haraway, “The Persistence of Vision,” in *The Visual Cultural Reader*, edited by Nicholas Mirzoeff, 677-684 (New York: Routledge: 2002). For the quotation, see 679.

⁵³ Donna Haraway, “Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of the Partial Perspective” *Feminist Studies* 14, no. 3 (Autumn, 1988): 575-599; Philip J. Deloria, “Thinking about Self in a Family Way,” *The Journal of American History* 89, no. 1 (June 2002)<www.historycooperative.org/journals/jah/89.1/deloria.html; accessed 8 Feb, 2010>.

evidence of the actual friendships that Czech women formed in the context of the national community enabled them – in addition to the importance these relationships played in women’s personal lives – to express a different vision and ideas regarding their participation in the Czech national project. In other words, these romantic nationalist friendships did not enforce the “private” sphere but supported these women in their nationalist public activities. Chapter 4 considers the story of an eighteenth-century female soldier, Kateřina Maršalová. I analyze the ways an article in the prominent nationalist journal *Květy* presented Maršalová both as a model for other Czech women but also as a cautionary tale of the limits and possibilities of women’s positionality in the national movement.

Chapters 5 and 6 focus on the physical, physiological, and moral criteria that the ideal member of the Czech nation was supposed to possess and that would make women part of the community. These chapters show not only how women’s intended participation in the Czech national effort further complicates the public and private binary but also that the nation-building project inscribed bodies, and particularly women’s bodies, into a new system of governmentality imposed by concerns over the health of the national community. Chapter 5 discusses Czech nationalists’ fears that by marrying non-Czech men, women would fall out of the Czech community. This not only expands on the meanings and implications of ethnicity in the process of creating a seemingly ethnic-based national community. Combined with the then prevalent Lamarckian belief that heredity can be affected by social responses, women’s choice of marriage partners, age at marriage, and correct lifestyle also became particularly critical nationalist concerns. Building on Michel Foucault, I show how the ideas about ensuring a healthy national

future - and education on what it means to be fit for the national purpose – worked as a form of biopolitics/biopower, albeit carried out in the absence of government, and helped to establish a sense of the moral underpinning of the process of national construction. Chapter 6 examines how Czech nationalists strove to discipline women and the female body to secure a prosperous national future while making women accountable for the prosperity of the Czech nation.

By bringing in the perspective of a nineteenth-century European nation-building process and examining the complex set of the social, cultural, physical, physiological, and moral rules and requirements that Czechs proposed for women, my dissertation provides a complex picture of the ways in which women's bodies, physical and physiological fitness, domesticity, marriage, romantic friendships, sexuality, and gender transgression all contributed to the process of constructing the critical imaginary citizen responsible for the nation's future existence, advancement, and prosperity, as well as modern gender and the social category of woman. By analyzing the complexity of the propositions, my dissertation contributes to larger historiographical and theoretical debates regarding the applicability of the public and private dichotomy in a particular historical context. In exploring how Czechs established the nation's critical imaginary citizen, an effort that continued despite political events and changes, my dissertation also shows that constructing a modern national community was not only a liberal movement of nationalism, and liberal understanding of gender, but simultaneously a process that involved biopolitical forms of power and attention to the health of the national body, albeit carried out in the absence of own government. This is a significant contribution not

only to the existing scholarship on women, gender, and nation but also has important consequences for histories of nationalisms and modern state formations more generally.

Chapter 2

Negotiating Spaces, Blurring Boundaries: Women, the Public and Private Spheres, and the Construction of the Modern Czech Nation

In 1843, after several years of organizing social, cultural, and educational events for other Czech female nationalists and amid plans for opening her own educational institute for girls and young women, Antonie Bohuslava Rajská (1817-1852) received a marriage proposal. The offer came from a philosopher, educator, and physician Karel Slavoj Amerling (1807–1884) whom Rajská met at Czech nationalist meetings and with whom she shared an interest in women’s education. As part of their activities, the group of women who gathered around Rajská invited Amerling to hold lectures, and he used this opportunity to test his educational ideas before he opened his own educational institute known as Budeč.¹ When Budeč opened in 1843, Amerling anticipated that Rajská would run the female section while becoming his wife. Although a host of other reasons might have influenced Rajská’s decision, her reply made it clear that whereas Amerling evidently did not consider it a problem for a woman to combine the duties of a wife and professional woman, Rajská did not think this was possible. In her letter to Amerling, she explained that she knew “the duties of a woman,” and considered

¹ Budeč, a name reminiscent of a mythical Czech school, was Amerling’s project to put all nationalist educational activities including women’s projects under one roof. For more on Budeč and its structure, see Macura, *Znamení zrodu*, 94-101; Kučerová, *K historii ženského hnutí v Čechách*, 26-27; Žofie Podlipská (ed.), *Z let probuzení: Paměti a korespondence Bohuslavy Rajské z let 1839-1844, kniha 1.* (Prague: J. Otto, 1872), 153-156; or the unpublished manuscript by Blažena Skořepová, box 71, Karel Slavoj Amerling Collection, Literary Archive of the Museum of Literature in Prague (hereafter Amerling Collection, LAML).

them “too holy and too dear to devote to them only one-quarter, perhaps one-eighth of [her] energy.” She asserted that a “girl in [her] situation can be either a real woman or a head of an [educational] institute.”² Her proposition seems unusual for the mid-nineteenth century, and is perhaps echoed only in the well-known proposal that Virginia Woolf outlined some eighty years after Rajská.³ Perhaps Rajská simply did not want to marry Amerling, but her decision was not a momentary impulse. Instead, she continued to follow her principles after she refused to marry Amerling. The following year she opened her own educational institute. However, she abandoned it after she agreed to what some members of the Czech community considered to be an act of particular national importance: marrying a renowned Czech writer, journalist, and professor of Czech language and Slavic literatures, František Ladislav Čelakovský (1799-1852), with the intent to care for his household and children after his first wife had died.

In this chapter, I explore how Czech nationalists between the late 1820s and the late 1850s discussed some of the ways in which women were supposed to participate in the construction of the modern Czech nation. I do not simply provide an overview of the propositions, rules, and requirements. Instead, I analyze the ideas as a contribution to the larger debates on the existence and dichotomy of public and private spheres in modern liberal societies, and suggest that the binary provides a useful tool through which we can analyze women’s positionality in creating and establishing modern gender categories and

² Antonie Bohuslava Rajská to Karel Slavoj Amerling, December 12, 1843, František Ladislav Čelakovský Collection, correspondence of Antonie Rajská-Čelakovská, family correspondence (subsection Rajská), located in the Literary Archive of the Museum of Literature in Prague, Czech Republic (hereafter Čelakovský Collection, LAML). Emphasis in the original. See also Podlipská, ed., *Z let probuzení: Paměti a korespondence Bohuslavy Rajské z let 1839-1844, kniha 1.*, 116-117.

³ Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One’s Own* (Orlando, Fla.: Harcourt, 2005). The essay was first published in 1929.

roles, and a resilient and advanced modern – bourgeois – community.⁴ Paying attention to the continuities and changes that took place over the four decades on which my research focuses, I show that opinions were complex, even including Rajska's bold statement that women should be able to choose.

Czechs paid significant attention to underscoring women's participation in public nationalist activities. This is in line with another national process, i.e. Partha Chatterjee's findings that the Indian national movement allowed, and even required, women's participation in the public sphere.⁵ However, in a way that is reminiscent of the concept of "Republican motherhood" from the American context - i.e., an idea that woman's foremost duty is toward her community in the sense of being primarily responsible for raising good future citizens - Czechs always implied that women combine their nationalist public activities with their domestic duties.⁶ Showing how they negotiated the public/private binary, I suggest that many Czechs, women among them, embraced the idea that the ideal Czech national woman keep strictly to her womanly duties. I argue that promoting this connection was one way of showing that the Czech nation is as advanced, modern, and generally on par with the nations and contexts that Czechs considered well-established and from which they borrowed. At the same time, however, I argue that in the

⁴ See, for example, Carole Pateman, *Sexual Contract* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1988); Carole Pateman, "Feminist Critiques of the Public/Private Dichotomy," chap 6 in *The Disorder of Women: Democracy, Women, and Political Theory*, 118 - 140 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989); Joan B. Landes, *Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1988); Joan B. Landes, ed., *Feminism, the Public and the Private* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); Mary P. Ryan, "Women's Politics in Nineteenth-Century America," in *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, edited by Craig Calhoun, 259-288, (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1992). See, also, Ryan, Mary P, Joan B. Landes, "Women's History in the New Millennium: Rethinking Public and Private - Continuing the Conversation" *Journal of Women's History* 15, no. 2 (Summer 2003): 10-39.

⁵ Partha Chatterjee, "The Nation and Its Women," chap 6 in *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*, 116 - 134 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

⁶ On "Republican motherhood" in the American context, see Linda K Kerber, *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980).

Czech context, women's activities already and persistently kept their public significance, and that, in fact, in becoming the nation's crucial imaginary citizens, women effectively blurred the boundaries and made the creation of a nation a process that occurs in both the public and private realms. In this way, my analysis of the Czech nation-building process has important significance not only for the larger feminist discussions of the existence and applicability of the public/private spheres but also for histories of modern state formations more generally.

Public and Private Spheres, 1820s - 1850s

Czech nationalists lived and worked in a context of imperial Austria, and, like activists in other subaltern and minorities settings, lacked their own autonomous public sphere.⁷ As I have noted in the introduction, not everybody who lived in the historical territory of Bohemia consciously thought of their national identity in the sense of modern national affiliations. Those who wanted to be part of the Czech community made a conscious choice, often considering the act of becoming Czech as a sort of "initiation," perhaps reminiscent of entering into a secret society.⁸ Czech nationalists were - at least ideally - supposed to reject the mainstream (German) language and customs and to work

⁷ As numerous scholars have argued, the Habermasian concept of public sphere as a space in modern capitalist bourgeois society that allows people to meet and discuss ideas, as well as social and political issues may never have been more than an imaginary ideal type. Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger with the assistance of Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1989).

⁸ It was not unusual for the act to be accompanied by taking on patriotic nicknames. These were typically middle names symbolizing love to one's country, nation, Slavism, benignity, devotion, or bravery. In other cases, the nationalists at least changed their German names to more Czech-sounding ones. The practice concerned both men and women. For example, Amerling noted this practice when he described the initiation of Antonie Reissová [Rajská] and Marie Vidímská into Spolek Stavitelů, a nationalist association he founded in 1839 in support of his plans concerning Czech national education. As he stated, on "the great day of the oath, [they] were initiated [and] given patriotic names Bohuslava and Bohdana." See box 59, Amerling Collection, LAML.

on the nation's behalf.⁹ At the same time, forming public (official) groups and associations, particularly those with a non-Austrian nationalist agenda, was difficult and discouraged. Police investigations, official bans of groups or meetings, and censorship were common.¹⁰ This meant that Czech nationalists maneuvered between their loyalties toward the Austrian Empire and the Czech national movement. Thus, being a Czech was to a certain degree a subversive identity, which could have an impact on a person's social standing. In other words, even men – i.e., men who chose to identify as Czech nationalists - were excluded from the “official” public sphere.

In this situation, nationalist salons played a crucial role, particularly in the 1830s and the 1840s. Nineteenth-century bourgeois salons, modeled on aristocratic and upper-middle-class salons were not limited to the Czech nationalist milieu.¹¹ But the salons created and attended by Czech nationalists constituted a particular space. Typically open to both men and women, even though some salons were attended only by men or women, these gatherings were held in the homes of individual nationalists. Although the salons took place in what would traditionally be considered the private sphere, they were organized as places where people could meet, discuss, and plan issues of public nationalist relevance. Informed by the concepts proposed by Nancy Fraser and Michael

⁹ Macura, *Znamení zrodu*, esp. chaps. 5, 6, and 7.

¹⁰ Lněničková, *České země v době předbřeznové 1792-1848*, 45-57.

¹¹ Salons were held both in aristocratic and middle-class homes, German as well as Czech language environments, and they enjoyed great popularity. For a collection of essays discussing the phenomenon, see Helena Lorenzová a Taťána Petrasová (eds.), *Salony v české kultuře 19. století : sborník příspěvků z 18. ročníku symposia k problematice 19. století, Plzeň, 12.-14. března, 1998* (Prague: KLP, 1999). Some salons were ridiculed and criticized, in what seems like gender-related criticism, that they did not succeed in fulfilling their purpose and that their agenda declined to a level of gossip. Often, the target of the criticism was gender-related as it depicted the inability of their participants, specifically women, to speak Czech well enough. See, Božena Němcová, *Kávová společnost: Scéna ze společenského života zvláště krásné pleti, Rachejtle (1855)* (Prague, 1926); Bětka Rozmarná, “Český salon,” *Ženské listy* 5, no. 7 (1877a): 100-105; and no 8 (1877b): 116-121; or Maryša Šarecká, *Salony: s dobovými podobiznami* (Prague: F. Topič, 1920), esp. 78. Criticism, however, was not the case of the prominent nationalist salons of the late 1830s and 1840s.

Warner, I argue that these Czech nationalist salons can be understood as a form of “counter public,” albeit situated in and transposed to a non state setting. This specific Czech nationalist public space was also occupied by the minorities otherwise excluded from the official public sphere.¹²

The best documented women’s nationalist activity in the decade before the 1848 revolution also took the form of home meetings.¹³ These gatherings centered on Antonie Reissová, who took on a patriotic name Bohdana and adapted her last name to a more Czech-sounding Rajská. She came from a well-to-do German family that moved to Prague.¹⁴ The family supported Czech nationalist ideas and Rajská and her two sisters - Johanna and Karolína - had a private tutor, lawyer Josef Frič (1804-1876), who also taught them Czech. Frič, who eventually married Johanna, and his friend, Václav Staněk (1804-1871), a doctor of medicine, who married Karolína, were among the most prominent Czech nationalists, and their households were filled with nationalist activity. Along with Josef Jakub Jungmann (1773 – 1847), a linguist and author of Czech German dictionaries and compilations of Czech literature, Frič and Staněk held the best known

¹² Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics* (New York: Zone Books, 2002); and Nancy Fraser, “Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy,” in *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, edited by Craig Calhoun, 109-142 (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1992).

¹³ Vlasta Kučerová whose detailed study on women’s participation in the Czech national movement has predominantly focused on the period between the 1830s and the 1850s, described the activities of Rajská’s group as part of the Czech “women’s movement.” See Kučerová, *K historii ženského hnutí v Čechách*. Bonnie Anderson in *Joyous Greetings: The First International Women’s Movement, 1830-1860* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000) has also made clear that women were involved in projects across national borders and spaces, even though I unfortunately did not find any evidence that Czech women would be part of the international efforts. However, I do not analyze the Rajská groups’ activities as part of the Czech (or international) women’s movement, but rather with regard to the nationalist debates on the rules and requirements for women and positionality of women in the Czech national community. See also Karen M. Offen, *European Feminisms, 1700-1950: A Political History* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000).

¹⁴ Podlipská, ed., *Z let probuzení: Paměti a korespondence Bohuslavy Rajské z let 1839-1844, kniha 1.*, 15-16.

salons of the 1830s and 1840s. Before she eventually married Čelakovský, Rajská helped to care for her sister Karolína's children and lived in their household.

The meetings started in the Frič household after Rajská had met Amerling who offered to hold lectures for women.¹⁵ Some women who participated in the group's activities were friends of Johanna Fričová or Bohuslava Rajská,¹⁶ while others may have known about the group from other nationalists. In her diary, Rajská describes one way in which women found the group: "one girl left a message for me at home. She heard that I taught Czech and that someone held lectures for us and in the name of a few other girls she came to ask if they, too, could attend our lectures."¹⁷ The group's membership was probably still growing toward the mid-1840s and it may have reached up to thirty or thirty-five women.¹⁸ In 1843, the meetings may have partially moved to the finished nationalist educational institution Budeč where Amerling also created space for women. But, disputes over the concept of women's education already existed between Amerling and Rajská, parallel meetings might have taken place elsewhere. The groups' activities and Rajská's plans were interrupted by her marriage to Čelakovský whom she followed to Wroclaw where he taught at the time. Then the group transformed and new women gathered around Rajská's niece, Božena Staňková.¹⁹

The group provides an important perspective of women's own plans and ideas on the positionality of women in the modern Czech nation. Like women in other similar

¹⁵ Podlipská, quoting Rajská's diary, located the beginnings of the group to the household of Václav Staněk. See Podlipská (ed.), *Z let probuzení: Paměti a korespondence Bohuslavy Rajské z let 1839-1844, kniha 1.*, 28-29. Kučerová, in contrast, argued that the meetings started in Frič's household. See also Kučerová, *K historii ženského hnutí v Čechách*, 24-25.

¹⁶ Maryša Radoňová-Šarecká, *Ozářené krby: vlastenecké rodiny české* (Prague: Dělnické nakladatelství, 1945), 94.

¹⁷ Podlipská, (ed.), *Z let probuzení: Paměti a korespondence Bohuslavy Rajské z let 1839-1844 kniha 1.*, 40.

¹⁸ Kučerová, *K historii ženského hnutí v Čechách*, 28.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* 66-69.

nineteenth-century contexts, the women around Rajská took part in social, literary, and educational activities.²⁰ All of their activities were intertwined with activities undertaken by men, and Rajská, at least in the beginning, kept in close touch with Amerling, seeking his advice and asking him to hold lectures. But the women clearly did not rely solely on men and presented their own ideas as well. It is also very likely that the group had its own budget.²¹ In addition, my research has shown that some of the women who attended the meetings financially supported other nationalistic projects. It is quite possible that the women could have organized projects and activities that did not need to respect male nationalists' visions.²²

But, similarly to pre-Revolutionary Baden, for example, this environment that allowed, encouraged, and even required women's participation might have seemed liberal, yet the Czech nationalist counter public space was neither gender neutral nor completely welcoming.²³ Even though nationalist salons welcomed women, the spaces where nationalists could gather were gendered. Men could not form official public associations, but they could meet outside their homes, in cafés and pubs.²⁴ Women were, perhaps with the exception of Budeč, practically limited to the privacy of their own homes. They were never able to enter the nationalist public sphere and participate in nationalist public activities because Czech nationalists would have considered women

²⁰ See, for example, Ute Ferver, *Women in German History: From Bourgeois Emancipation to Sexual Liberation* (Oxford: Berg, 1989); Dagmar Herzog, *Intimacy and Exclusion: Religious Politics in Pre-Revolutionary Baden* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996); Paletschek and Pietrow-Ennker, *Women's Emancipation Movements*; Markkola (ed.), *Gender and Vocation*; Zettelbauer, "Die Liebe sei Euer Heldentum."

²¹ Vladimír Macura, "Příběh encyklopedie dam," *Tvar* 9, no. 5, (1998): 4.

²² This may also be the case of an almanac the women around Rajská planned to publish. But it may also include their plan to publish picture portraits of famous Czech women writers or plans to open own educational institute(s), all of which I will discuss later in the chapter.

²³ Herzog, *Intimacy and Exclusion*.

²⁴ See, for example, Vladimír Novotný (ed.), *Hospody a pivo v české společnosti* (Prague: Academica, 1997).

who did so to be, to follow Krall's interpretation of Hannah Arendt's idea of public sphere, degendered subjects.²⁵

Implications of Women's Activities in the Nationalist Public Sphere

In the late 1820s, as more Czech publications began to be published, Czech texts first began to pay greater attention to the positionality of women in the Czech national community. Czech nationalists did not formulate their ideas in isolation. In addition to drawing on outside sources – translating and appropriating ideas that they considered fitting with the purpose of the national community - there was always a more general background of early nineteenth-century ideas of gender categories, roles, and behavior. Eva Ryšavá, who has analyzed early nineteenth-century broadsides available in the Bohemian territory, has shown that the ideal woman was supposed to be religious, honest, beautiful, hardworking, and wealthy. She has also noted that this ideal encompassed the linguistic and class spectrum.²⁶ Czech nationalists must have been familiar with these ideas. Even the literature that focused on women in the Czech community later in the nineteenth century has made clear that the ideal of the national woman always comprised these five requirements. But nationalist texts also show that these were not the only obligations that the ideal Czech woman needed to fulfill to ensure the nation's future existence and prosperity.

²⁵ Lorraine Krall, "Hannah Arendt and the Degendered Public Sphere," paper presented at the annual meeting of the Southern Political Science Association, Atlanta, Georgia, January 6, 2010, http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p396339_index.html; (accessed March 15, 2010). For Arendt's discussion of the public, private (and social) spheres see, Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

²⁶ Eva Ryšavá, "Odras života městských žen v kramářských písních," in *Žena v dějinách Prahy*, 185-193, esp. 188.

Interestingly, the earlier texts that appeared in the 1820s did not specifically focus on promoting women's domestic obligations or connection to the private sphere. Instead, the writers stressed public significance of women's duties and obligations. The texts included short moralistic stories with religious or middle-class motifs published either as journal articles or separate books. Elizabethan nun Josefa Pedálová, also known under her order name as Marie Antonie or under her patriotic name as Dobrovlastka (1770 – 1831), and Magdalena Dobromila Rettigová (1785 -1845) were among those female writers who felt compelled to instruct girls and young women how to become good female members of the national community. Both writers clearly relied on literature from other contexts,²⁷ and their work was edited by other (male) nationalists; a common practice that both male and female writers were subjected to.²⁸

Pedálová's novel *Serafka*, published in 1825, provides an interesting glimpse into the desirable characteristics of the ideal Czech woman in the earlier stages of the nation-building effort.²⁹ The story, according to its author a cautionary tale for young Czech middle-class women, portrayed the female protagonist whose name also gave title to the novel as a "Czech girl of the same class" as Pedálová's intended female audience and, therefore, a "model and source of inspiration" to her female readers.³⁰ In this sense, the heroine represents the perfect embodiment and enactment of the qualities of the ideal, and middle-class, Czech woman. Pedálová depicts Serafka as beloved by her peers at school for being always kind, calm, attentive, hardworking, and helpful to others. At home, Serafka always dutifully assists her mother with domestic chores. When, a few years

²⁷ Although Pedálová's work only appeared in Czech, several books by Rettigová were published in both Czech and German.

²⁸ Macura, *Znamení zrodu*.

²⁹ Marie Antonie, *Serafka, dárek dcerkám městským* (Prague: U Josefy Fetterlowé z Wildenbrunu, 1825).

³⁰ Marie Antonie, *Serafka*, Preface, n. pag.

later, she falls in love with a young man Bohumír, Serafka, after much deliberation, chooses the convent.

It is unlikely that Pedálová's objective was to suggest that all Czech women needed to enter the convent, although Serafka's choice of convent over marriage might be read as also giving a preference to the work on behalf of others, possibly as a very particular way of underscoring nationalist work over domesticity. The overall message that Pedálová suggested through her fictional character was that the ideal woman is virtuous and beautiful, as well as kind and ready to work for the benefit of others. The novel's emphasis on being a good Christian woman is not particularly surprising considering that Pedálová was a member of a Catholic religious order.³¹

Like *Agata* and *Nezabudky*, two advice books published in the 1840s and the 1850s,³² Rettigová's *Dobrá rada slovanským venkovankám*, published in 1838, spelled out the course of a woman's life strictly in terms of marriage, childbearing, and child rearing. However, unlike the later texts, Rettigová's book indicates more flexibility. For example, Josef Pečírka, the Czech translator of *Agata*, published in 1846, allowed for the possibility that a woman might need to be able to provide for herself in case she loses her parents or husband. Nonetheless, he maintained that the ideal woman was a wife and mother.³³ Although Rettigová herself was married, she stated in the introduction that her book *Dobrá rada* offered valuable information a woman could use in case she needed to

³¹ The Catholic journals that were in favor of the Czech national efforts, *Časopis pro Katolické duchovenstvo* and *Přítel mládeže*, seconded Pedálová's depiction by emphasizing similar characteristics fit for the "proper" - Christian - woman. The first volume of *Časopis pro katolické duchovenstvo*, published an article by chaplain M. P. Fučík in the southern Bohemian town of Prachatice that discussed the correct upbringing of the youth, in this case the ways in which clergy could prevent "night wandering." See, M.P. Fučík, "Zdaliž a jakby mohl duchovní pastýř napomáhati, aby se noční, dobré mravy porušující toulání přetrhlo?" *Časopis pro katolické duchovenstvo* 1, no. 3 (1828): 430-431.

³² Josef Pečírka, *Agata čili průvodce životem pro vzdělané panny* (Znojmo, Czech Republic: Fournier, 1846); Honorata z Wiśniowských Zapová, *Nezabudky, dar našim pannám* (Prague: I. L. Kober, 1870).

³³ Pečírka, *Agata*, esp. 43-44.

enter domestic service.³⁴ This suggests that she could possibly imagine that a woman would not necessarily end up married with children.

Attention to Czech language – spreading the knowledge of the language among middle-class Czech nationalists and emphasizing writing and publishing in Czech – was always already decidedly gender-specific. On the one hand, focus on women seems ironic. When it comes to knowing the language, women might have been in a better position than men. At the end of the eighteenth century, the reforms of Holy Roman Emperor and King of Bohemia Josef II (1741 – 1790) made German the language of communication with state authorities and the language of higher education. German was therefore required in order to gain better positions in society and in the job market. Women only studied at the elementary level schools where the language of instruction was the mother tongue, i.e., Czech in mostly Czech regions, and German in mostly German regions.³⁵ In addition, women needed to practice at least some Czech when running the household.³⁶ Nonetheless, nationalists frequently published appeals similar to the one that Václav Jaroslavský wrote in 1842.³⁷ Jaroslavský urged women to foster the Czech language, stating that their “every doing should be conducted in that language, which is delicious, sweet and, especially in your mouths, a loving one - that is in the Czech language.” As he also explained, “hope of our country rests on [women].” In a few

³⁴ Rettigová, *Dobrá rada slovanským venkovankám*, V.

³⁵ Between 1816 and 1821, Czech was the language of instruction at Grammar schools in ethnically Czech and mixed (Czech/German) regions. At some Grammar schools, Czech was later offered as an elective course. See Lněničková, *České země v době předbřeznové 1792-1848*, 404.

³⁶ As Lněničková has stated, “people from the upper classes usually used Czech only when they communicated with their servants.” See Lněničková, *České země v době předbřeznové 1792-1848*, 117. Middle-class women ran households, thus communicated with Czech-speaking servants. See Lněničková, *České země v době předbřeznové 1792-1848*, 263-270, esp. 264-267.

³⁷ Václav Jaroslavský, “Slovo ke šlechtěným a spanilomyslným pannám českoslovanským,” *Vlastimil*, part I, no. 1 (1842): 45-51.

years' time, he stated, women "can become the noble pride of [the] nation."³⁸ But Jaroslavský articulated well the importance and positionality of women in spreading nationalist ideas. If language was considered as one defining criteria of the modern Czech nation, it was imperative that women were familiar with it in order to correctly reproduce the community. Teaching and passing their knowledge on to the next generations, and encouraging women to write clearly meant ensuring the nation's future and advancement.³⁹

In the Czech context, female writers always already served to show national progress. Consider the response to the publication of the first poem, allegedly written by a –Czech – woman in 1798. A male nationalist enthusiastically wrote: "We Czechs, too, already have our Sappho!"⁴⁰ Little did it matter that the woman was not Czech but Slovak.⁴¹ Czechs could now prove that their women were also capable of writing literature.

However, many of the female writers who were supposed to attest to the nation's advancement were invented. As I have noted in the introduction, Macura proposed and summarized the three types of invention of writers that were all common in this phase of the Czech national movement. In the first case, a writer would sign work originally

³⁸ Jaroslavský, "Slovo ke šlechtným a spanilomyslným pannám československým," 48.

³⁹ On this subject, see also Macura, *Znamení zrodu*, 109, František Bačkovský, *Zevrubné dějiny českého písemnictví doby nové, díl I.: období předbřeznové, část II.* (Prague: Frant. A. Urbánek, 1887), 850-860.

⁴⁰ Vojt. Nejedlý, quoted in Václav Jílek, "R- a L-ová v Puchmajerových "Nových básních z r. 1798 je Rebeka Lešková," *Listy filologické* 54 (1927): 267.

⁴¹ Rebeka Lešková, a woman from a Lutheran family, whose Czech-written poem was published in a collection *Nové básně* in Prague in 1798 is claimed by both Czech and Slovak literary historians is well known. However, Norma Rudinsky also notes that Amalia and Rosalia, two - presumably - Slovak female poets who wrote jointly and whose work Rudinsky mentions, appeared in the almanac *Nitra* published by Slovak nationalist Josef Miloslav Hurban in 1842. However, a poem by Rosalie was also published in the all women's collection *Pomněnky na rok 1843*. Furthermore, Slowanka Rymawská, who is identified by Rudinsky as Zuzana Reguli Moravčíková (d. 1861) from Klenovec in Slovakia, may have been identical to Vlastimila Rymavská, a contributor of one poem in *Pomněnky na rok 1843*. See, Norma L. Rudinsky, "Women's Place in the Štúrist Tradition," chap 2 in *Incipient Feminists: Women Writers in the Slovak National Revival* (Columbus, OH: Slavica Publishers, 1991), esp. 42 – 47.

written by another person. For example, the poem “Jablíčka,” written by Jan Alois Sudiprav Rettig and published in the collection *Dobroslav* in 1820, was signed in the name of Magdalena Dobromila Rettigová; Rettig’s wife.⁴² Marie Čacká, whose work appeared in 1838 and 1843, exemplifies a second type of invention. Čacká was a fictive pen/nickname and identity occasionally taken on by Františka Božislava Svobodová, a daughter of a secondary school teacher and a well-known member of the Rajska group. She also published under her own name.⁴³ Čacká as an invented female character adds to the ideal Czech national woman as it was being created by contemporary nationalists.⁴⁴ The name in Czech implies greatness, generosity, and morality as well as physical beauty, and Čacká was presented as an ordinary country woman who skillfully managed her household and family affairs, as well as literary activity in support of the Czech national cause. This invention supports the idea of a national woman whose activities already and consistently had public significance. Žofie Jandová, a completely invented writer, represents the most famous example of the third type of invention. Poetry signed in her name, but actually written by a Czech male nationalist, was featured in the *Cheskian Anthology*, a representative collection of Czech poetry compiled by a British political economist John Bowring and published in 1832 in London.⁴⁵

⁴² Macura, *Znamení zrodu*, 113.

⁴³ For more information about Svobodová (who later married a physician Josef Bojislav Pichl), see, Josef Bojislav Pichl, *Vlastenecké vzpomínky* (Prague: Frant. Borový, 1936), 193, 252-254.

⁴⁴ According to the Czech German dictionary compiled by Josef Jakub Jungmann, the Czech terms “čackost” (adv.) and “čacký” (adj.) that inspired the name of Marie Čacká, refer to “čistota,” “švarnost,” “výbornost,” as well as “šlechtnost,” and “udatnost.” Jungmann also provided corresponding German and Latin translations to explain the Czech term. As he explained, the word could be translated into German as “rein,” “reinigkeit,” “niedlich,” and “hübsch,” and into Latin as “mundities.” In addition, Jungmann specifically translated the meaning of “čacké děvče,” thus applying the term to a girl/young woman, as, in German, “niedliches Mädchen.” See Josef Jakub Jungmann, *Slovník česko-německý*, vol. 1 (Prague: V. Špinka, 1835), 257.

⁴⁵ John Bowring, *Cheskian Anthology: Being a History of the Poetical Literature of Bohemia with Translated Specimens* (London, R. Hunter, 1832).

Changing Contexts

Even in the changing context and the increased participation of the Czech-identified middle class after the mid-1830s, nationalists continued to consider it important to emphasize that women would be capable of undertaking activities of nationalist public significance. Women's participation in nationalist public activities encompassed a variety of venues and projects, including literary activity, gatherings at nationalist salons, going to the theatre, listening to music and attending concerts, and participating in nationalist dance balls. Czech nationalists also started focusing on the importance of women's education.

Theatre going was a popular past time activity in early nineteenth-century Bohemia. People in Prague could visit public German- and Czech-language performances of the professional theatre located in the Estates Theatre.⁴⁶ The popularity that the theatre enjoyed may help to explain why it also became one of the earliest nationalistic activities - as an institution that enabled both men and women to either actively participate or simply attend performances presented in the Czech language. When in 1834 Tyl assembled the amateur Czech theatre ensemble and organized performances in Kajetánský dům, a former Theatine monastery in Prague Lesser Side, Czech nationalists heavily promoted women's participation in the ensemble's Czech-language performances. An article published in 1834 in *Časopis českého museum*, one of the most prestigious nationalist journals at the time, summarized the efforts of the Czech-language theatre, and it was probably not a coincidence that its author devoted substantial attention

⁴⁶ Performances were traditionally held during the winter season on Sundays and during holidays from 4pm until 6pm. During the summer, performances were infrequent and reserved only for special occasions. See Jan Ladislav Turnovský, *Život a doba J.K. Tyla* (Prague: Alois Hynek, 1892), 62.

to female actors and singers.⁴⁷ Ability to perform in the Czech language was considered crucial and Czech nationalists particularly praised female actors for their nationalistic enthusiasm. For example, Tyl's biographer Turnovský specifically mentioned Miss Manětínská, a member of both the professional German-language and the amateur theatre, stating that "although [she was] a 'mere' German [she] was quite willingly learning the Czech parts."⁴⁸

Music also received much attention, indicating that it represented an important site of nationalist efforts. As several feminist musicologists, including Susan McClary, Nadine Hubbs, and Judith A. Peraino have shown, music played a significant role in creating, shaping, and providing meaning to both national and gender identities.⁴⁹ My findings have shown that this was also the case in building the modern Czech nation. Czech publications encouraged members of the Czech community to attend and support Czech concerts, and judged the quality of performances based on the language in which musicians performed their pieces or by the perceived Czechness of the performers. Music not only served to define the rules of membership in the Czech national community, but was also a highly gendered issue. Just as Czech nationalists praised women's theatre

⁴⁷ [Josef Krasoslav] Chmelenský, "Hlavní zpráva o desetiletém účinkování divadla českého v Praze" *Časopis českého museum* 8/II, (1834): 221-232, esp. 226-228.

⁴⁸ Turnovský, *Život a doba J.K. Tyla*, 61.

⁴⁹ Susan McClary, *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1990) was the first book to suggest that music plays role in the larger social and cultural processes and the shaping of identities. Nadine Hubbs's, *The Queer Composition of America's Sound: Gay Modernists, American Music, and National Identity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004) shows the ways music has served to produce, underpin, and connect both the gender and the national identity. Judith A. Peraino's, *Listening to the Sirens: Musical Technologies of Queer Identity from Homer to Hedwig* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005) explores the different categories within which music operates. As Peraino argues, following the French philosopher Michel Foucault's concept of "technologies of self," music could transform oneself – one's identity. Music also outlines a shared system of signs. In other words, both performing and listening to music provides a system of identification by way of creating a shared system of signifiers. This plays into the collective and individual identities that were both produced through music. Finally, Peraino points to exploring the ways music provides a way to break from traditional/set structures and models to create a different system.

activities, they enthusiastically noted whenever female singers performed in Czech. For example, one female singer was acclaimed for “singing [a part from Rossini’s *Barber of Seville*] in our beautiful mother tongue.”⁵⁰ But another singer was criticized for not choosing Czech repertoire and instead performed “Austrian [repertoire] too mindless for Czech stomachs.”⁵¹ Female performers too were often considered as having an almost magic ability to draw others to join (or discourage from joining) Czech national efforts. As one journal editor noted: “The best and unsurpassable Czech singer, our esteemed Ms. Podhorská, initiated the most enthusiastic response from the audience [when] she performed *Kde domov můj*.” As the editor continued, the singer sang the song that eventually became the present-day Czech national anthem “with so much empathy that she had to repeat [it] several more times.”⁵² No such similar reactions were published to encourage or critique men’s performances, language abilities, or significance for nationalist efforts.

Nationalists also encouraged women’s participation in balls and dance parties, another important contemporary social activity of nationalist public significance. The first known ball was held in the winter of 1835 in Kajetánský dům, also the site of the nationalist theatre, and was privately organized and therefore did not require permission of authorities. The first public ball took place five years later. Women’s presence and significance was underscored in both the private and public balls. In his recollections of the first private ball, nineteenth-century nationalist journalist Jakub Malý noted the presence of “the pretty circle of ladies in whose center sparkled more than others the

⁵⁰ “Z dopisů brněnských,” (column entitled “Zrcadlo časů a ducha lidského”), *Květy* (I.) 1, no. 2 (1834): 16.

⁵¹ W. “Koncert,” (column entitled, “Denní zprávy”, *Včela* 17, no. 19 (1850): 82.

⁵² W. “Hudební slavnost,” (column entitled “Denní zprávy”), *Příloha k číslu 24. Včely* 17 (1850): 103.

beautiful eager nationalist by the name of Mária V.”⁵³ Memoirs published by male nationalists later in the nineteenth century implied that men took the leading role in organizing the events while women were the pretty but fragile creatures that needed men’s comfort when their robes caught on fire or clumsy cooks spilled a large kettle of soup and burned themselves.⁵⁴

But this was not entirely true. First, members of the national community could never reduce women simply to their decorative function, perceived clumsiness, and helplessness that could be only saved by men’s presence. According to a contemporary gender-specific joke mentioned in Tyl’s biography published later in the nineteenth century, women who sought admission to the first public Czech ball in 1840 were tested on their knowledge of Czech.⁵⁵ In other words, to be useful, women clearly had to prove that they were capable of serving the purpose of the nation-building movement through their various roles as the crucial reproducers of the Czech national community. Despite this diminishing of women’s positionality, which does not delineate from the above quoted memoirs written by male nationalists later in the nineteenth century, women also took part in organizing balls and similar social activities. As Vlasta Kučerová noted, women from the Rajska group organized a special event in 1842 to celebrate the release of František Ladislav Rieger (1818 – 1903), the nationalist lawyer and renowned Czech politician later involved in the revolutionary events and Národní strana [National Party],

⁵³ For the quotation, see Jakub Malý, *Vzpomínky a úvahy starého vlastence* (Prague: J. S. Skřejšovský, 1872), 95-96. The first public, i.e. permitted by state authorities, nationalist ball took place on February 5, 1840. See Kučerová, *K historii ženského hnutí v Čechách*, 46. This public ball was preceded by a costume ball that Tyl organized in 1835. The costume ball was privately organized and did not need the approval of authorities. However, it is the first documented nationalist activity in this field. See, Turnovský, *Život a doba J.K. Tyla*, 78.

⁵⁴ See Malý, *Vzpomínky a úvahy starého vlastence*, 95-96; and Josef Bojislav Pichl, *Vlastenecké vzpomínky* (Prague: Frant. Borový, 1936), 119 and 147-150.

⁵⁵ Turnovský, *Život a doba J. K. Tyla*, 81.

from prison where he was held for smuggling illegal Polish revolutionary literature into Bohemia.⁵⁶

Women, the Private Sphere, and Blurred Boundaries

From the end of the 1830s, nationalist journals started featuring articles about and for women, and a considerably greater number of texts signed in women's names started appearing in such journals as *Včela*, *Květy*, and *Časopis českého museum*. The most renowned source of information on published work, Josef Jungmann's *Historie literatury české*, listed twenty-two names of women whose work was published between 1836 and 1846.⁵⁷ Many female writers remained hidden under their pen, patriotic nicknames. Some writers' names can be traced and are familiar from the Rajská group.⁵⁸

The best-known Czech female author to date, Božena Němcová (c. 1820 – 1862), began publishing her work in the early 1840s. Among her earliest texts were poems published in nationalist journals; one of her first, entitled “Českým ženám,” was addressed to Czech women.⁵⁹ Němcová collected folk fairytales and ethnographical tales

⁵⁶ Kučerová, *K historii ženského hnutí v Čechách*, 38. František Ladislav Rieger was active in the 1848 revolutionary events, joining the attendees at the constituent assembly meeting in July 1848 in Vienna. Rieger also became one of the leading figures of the first Czech political formation, the Národní strana, founded in 1848, and later its more conservative fraction known as the Old Czech Party.

⁵⁷ Josef Jungmann, *Historie literatury české* (Prague: České museum, 1849), 392-431.

⁵⁸ Some names of the writers are documented and familiar from the Rajská group - among them are (Anna Vlastimila) Růžičková, Marie Čacká, (Františka Božislava) Svobodová, Amalie Aubková, Zdenka Němečková, from 1843 also Božena Němcová (poetry) and H(onorata) z W. Zapová and (Barbora Jaroslava Štětková) Litněnská (short stories). Then there are names of women who were known to be connected with women's activities after 1845- (Mnohoslava or Josefa) Zelinková, for example, is known for her activities especially from the revolutionary year 1848.

⁵⁹ Němcová's biographer Václav Tille stated that Němcová was inspired to write this poem after she spent an evening walking at the park in Petřín – a hill that provides a scenic view of Prague – and discussing ideas with the nationalist poet Václav Bolemlr Nebeský. See Václav Tille, *Božena Němcová* (Prague: Družstevní práce, 1940): 51-52.

that inspired many of her short stories and novels.⁶⁰ Her most famous piece of work, *Babička* (Granny), is a sentimental nationalist novel that tells a story of an old woman who lives her life in accordance with nature and customs, treasures Czech language and traditions, and strives to teach all this to her children and grandchildren.⁶¹

In 1843, a collection of poetry entitled *Pomněnky na rok 1843* was published and announced as composed solely of women's work.⁶² This collection resulted from a practice that originated at Czech nationalist public balls. At the first public ball in 1840, nationalist journalist Karel Sabina recited a poem "Vlastenkám" (To Female Nationalists).⁶³ It became customary afterward, that a special collection of either prose or poems would be sold at public nationalist balls. The collection *Pomněnky na rok 1842* was dedicated to women who also took part in reciting poetry at the ball in 1842.⁶⁴ In 1843, the collection bearing the title *Pomněnky na rok 1843* appeared as the first collection supposedly written by women only, receiving enthusiastic reviews from Czech men.⁶⁵ The actual number of female writers who contributed to the collection was not nearly as significant as some nationalists would have wanted it to be. Even so, nationalists evidently considered the publication to fit with the purpose of the national community. One male nationalist, for example, praised *Pomněnky na rok 1843* as an effort through which women's "minds help men perform their sacred duties."⁶⁶ Similarly,

⁶⁰ Němcová frequently focused on the lives of ordinary people in various locations where she followed her husband, Josef Němec, who was frequently transferred in his job as an officer of the Austrian financial guard.

⁶¹ For an English translation of the book, see Božena Němcová, *Granny. Scenes from Country Life* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1976).

⁶² *Pomněnky na rok 1843* (Prague: Jar. Pospíšil, 1843).

⁶³ Pichl, *Vlastenecké vzpomínky*, 122.

⁶⁴ *Pomněnky na rok 1842* (Prague: J. Spurný, 1842).

⁶⁵ Plaček, "Hlas boleslavský k pěvkyním Pomněnek na r.1843," *Květy* (I.)10, no. 16 (1843): 61; Fr[antišek] D[oucha], "Slovo o spisovatelství vlastenek," *Vlastimil*, part I, 3 (1842): 245-255.

⁶⁶ Plaček, "Hlas boleslavský k pěvkyním Pomněnek na r.1843."

Tyl asserted that women were the “leading stars in the paths of men’s lives” and reminded that wherever women would go, men would follow and cautioned women to “remember that [their] task is great, but also beautiful.”⁶⁷

We can speculate about whether or not women shared these ideas and were willing to limit themselves to being such leading stars in men’s lives. First, women expressed their opinions. The invention of Svobodová’s double literary personality as Marie Čacká, which might have gone unnoticed only a few years before, caused angry reactions. Němcová expressed her resentment in a letter she sent to Rajská-Čelakovská to Wroclav where she lived with her husband in 1846. Němcová stated that she regretted having to “change the pretty picture [of Svobodová] she had created,” stating that “If my heart was not so forgiving, I would never forget what [Svobodová] did.”⁶⁸ Rajská-Čelakovská was more bitter, responding to Němcová that she felt Svobodová had “deceived not just her female friends but also all [good and kind] Czechs.”⁶⁹ We might speculate that the women might have been angered by the deception as such, by not being able to control the invention of Čacká, or perhaps, that they feared that this could cause a lack of credibility of Czech female writers. In any case, by responding, Rajská-Čelakovská and Němcová, and possibly other women who might have been part of the conversation, indicated that they had their own opinions about Czech women’s literature.

Possibly encouraged by the success of *Pomněnky na rok 1843*, or perhaps by Němcová’s literary success and presence in the group, women around Rajská began to

⁶⁷ Josef Kajetán Tyl, “Pan referent o bále společenském dne 8. února,” in Otruba (ed.), *Spisy Josefa Kajetána Tyla II*, 136.

⁶⁸ See Němcová’s letter to Čelakovská, 25 November, 1846 in Marie Gebauerová, *Sebrané spisy Boženy Němcové, svazek XII, Korespondence, díl I* (Prague: Jan Laichter), 1912, 61-62.

⁶⁹ See Čelakovská to Němcová, January 16, 1848 (letter no. XXV), in Marie Gebauerová, *Sebrané spisy Boženy Němcové, svazek XII, Korespondence, díl I* (Prague: Jan Laichter, 1912), 81-82.

plan their own literary activity and intended to publish an almanac composed solely of women's own work. Although it is unclear to what extent they were simply fulfilling a nationalist demand, Rajska's letters to Němcová make evident that they adopted the project and considered it seriously.⁷⁰ The almanac was never published and became a target of harsh criticism from both women and men. Women fought over the concept and editorial board of the almanac, some complaining that the elected editor, Němcová, was much too demanding.⁷¹ The women also harshly criticized Němcová's first book, a collection of folk fairytales published in 1845, stating that she did not write the fairytales herself but with the help of the nationalist physician Jan Čejka.⁷² At the same time, the women refused men's "editorial assistance" with the almanac, which might have caused particularly unfavorable reactions from male nationalists. Vojta Náprstek, a philanthropist and initiator of a nationalist association Americký klub dam (American Ladies' Club) founded in 1865 in support of women's education, well summarized men's critical reactions, suggesting that women's unwillingness to accept men's help might have been among the reasons that caused the almanac never to be published.⁷³

Finally, Němcová provides yet another case where individual nationalists expressed contrasting ideas about the positionality of women. Čejka made an effort to

⁷⁰ In a letter to her future husband Čelakovský from January 1845, Rajska reported that "There were twenty of us, all enthusiastic female nationalists. I can only whisper the purpose of this meeting because it cannot and should not be said out loud. We have agreed to publish an almanac for the year 1846 composed only of Czech women's own work. Mrs Němcová was chosen as an editor and, as we wish, a merciless judge. We have agreed that only the good works will be published and no one should be troubled if her work will not pass." See, Žofie Podlipská (ed.), *Z let probuzení: Listy Fr. Lad. Čelakovského a Bohuslavy Rajske 1844-1845 kniha 2* (Prague: J. Otto, 1872), 124.

⁷¹ As Němcová herself put it: "Some say that it (the book) is not patriotic enough, others that there is too much added to it and the women refused to give me any credit for it, they say I did not even write it myself." See Podlipská, ed., *Z let probuzení: Vzájemné dopisy Antonie Čelakovské (Bohuslavy Rajske) a Boženy Němcové 1844-1849, kniha 3*, 24.

⁷² Tille, *Božena Němcová*, 80.

⁷³ Náprstek's diaries, Vojta Náprstek Collection, Literary Archive of the Museum of Literature in Prague, Czech Republic (Hereafter Náprstek Collection, LAML).

convince Němcová to write a “novel full of daring and brave ideas just like George Sand did,” suggesting the French novelist as a positive model who illustrated the potential for a national literature written by Czech women.⁷⁴ Němcová’s correspondence indicates that she knew Sand’s work⁷⁵ and she evidently did not resist gaining inspiration from the French novelist.⁷⁶ Nevertheless, according to Němcová’s biographer who referred to the observation made by Němcová’s friend Johanna Rottová, Němcová responded that she did not yet feel mature enough, and rejected the path her male advisor had envisioned for her and, consequently, for Czech women’s literature.⁷⁷ Possibly as a consequence of her refusal to simply follow what her male compatriots envisioned for Czech women’s literature, some male nationalists in 1845 heavily criticized Němcová’s book, arguing that it was not nationalist enough.⁷⁸

These three incidents point not only at an interesting breakthrough in the field of women’s literature, but also and more generally at much complexity regarding the ideas on the positionality of women. While a few years earlier, Čacká’s double identity may have gone unnoticed in nationalist circles, now Rajská-Čelakovská and Němcová angrily reacted to the discovery and made clear that this was a practice they did not wish to tolerate. Although other women may have had different opinions on this matter, at least some of them did not want to be misled and mystified by invented personalities and did not wish to be told what and how to write. Němcová’s refusal to follow the path that Čejka envisioned for her and Czech women’s literature, women’s protest against editorial

⁷⁴ Václav Tille, *Božena Němcová: s 35 podobiznami a 2 facsimily*, (Prague: Mánes, 1920), 167.

⁷⁵ See, for instance, Němcová’s letter to Sofie Podlipská in Gebauerová, Marie, ed., *Sebrané spisy Boženy Němcové, svazek XIII. Korespondence, díl II* (Prague: Jan Laichter, 1914), 69.

⁷⁶ See Albert Pražák, “Vztah Boženy Němcové k mladé literatuře let padesátých,” in *Božena Němcová (1820-1862) - sborník statí o jejím životě a díle*, edited by Václav Černý (Prague: Emil Šolc, 1912), 197.

⁷⁷ Tille, *Božena Němcová*, 154.

⁷⁸ Žofie Podlipská (ed.), *Z let probuzení: Vzájemné dopisy Antonie Čelakovské (Bohuslavy Rajské) a Boženy Němcové 1844-1849, kniha 3* (Prague: J. Otto, 1873), 24.

work in the course of the planned almanac, and women's critique of Němcová for getting editorial help only highlighted that this help was not welcome from men or women. But neither this refusal nor Čejka's bold suggestion necessarily pointed at some hidden subtext that would indicate a more liberal context where women would be freer to explore their opportunities outside of domesticity. The ideas on women's education and women's own educational projects exemplify well this matter. Czech nationalists agreed that women needed to be educated. In fact, as Václav Kratochvíl, a teacher in the southern Bohemian town of Blatná, asserted, "it is a basic human right that women receive the same education as men."⁷⁹

The need for (Czech) language instruction, and critique of its lack, was a standard part of the nationalist focus. Another teacher, Petr Mužák, implied that women were responsible for ensuring that their daughters have access to Czech-language instruction, and this task was also considered to be part of women's nationalist obligations.⁸⁰ This left no doubt that women had to be educated: uneducated women were not able to ensure that future generations would receive fitting education and become useful additions to their nation. Uneducated women clearly could not contribute to the nation's success.

But Czechs were not unanimous regarding the extent to which women ought to have been educated. Many were convinced that women's education needed to encompass much more than learning domestic obligations. They claimed that women needed to be educated thoroughly in order to fulfill their duties. For example, Pečírka stated that a

⁷⁹ V[áclav] Kratochvíl, "O vychování dívek," *Posel z Budče* 1, no. 11 (1848): 166.

⁸⁰ Mužák claimed that mothers who were not instructed in educating their daughters in the Czech nationalist way did nothing but harm. He stated that such mothers only spoiled their daughters by sending them off to institutes where the girls were taught impractical and unnecessary things, moreover in a foreign language. See Petr Mužák, "Slečinkám v ústavech Pražských," *Posel z Budče* 1, no. 22 (1848): 356-358. See, also, Petr Světelský, "Slečinkám v ústavech Pražských," *Česká včela* 13, no. 31 (1846): 123.

“mere ability to count and manage household does not suffice.”⁸¹ He was convinced that women were supposed to be educated to become good conversation partners to their husbands. He saw women as wives and mothers, and his text thus marks a significant departure from Rettigová’s propositions in the advice book that she published in 1838. Nonetheless, Pečírka also considered a more practical impact of women’s education, stating that it should enable women to be able to provide for themselves in case they “lose their parents or husbands.”⁸² Other nationalists were seemingly even more liberal and progressive. Kratochvíl, for example, maintained that women’s education should equal men’s education. His vision highlighted language and he also focused on a broad range of skills that he identified as practical and fitting the needs of the Czech national community. Amerling had perhaps the most interesting opinions. Drawing on the ideas of the Czech humanist philosopher Jan Amos Komenský, also known under the Latin version of his name as Comenius, he began to envision a new national system of education that would fit the needs of the nation and that encompassed the education of youth, industrial workers, and women. He began to formulate his visions possibly as early as the late 1830s when he also founded Spolek Stavitelů [Association of Builders], a group to support his plans and build Budeč. He insisted that women should be perceived “first as human beings and only then as women, girls, young women, mothers and grandmothers.”⁸³ He was very critical of social conditions and requirements - poor education as well as exaggerated emphasis on fashion - that wasted women’s potential⁸⁴

⁸¹ Pečírka, *Agata*, 47.

⁸² Ibid. However, Pečírka also encouraged women to learn many useful tasks (singing, drawing, foreign languages, playing the guitar, piano, dancing and “women’s work”) that they could use in case they lost their parents or husbands and needed to provide for themselves. See Pečírka, *Agata*, 43-44.

⁸³ *Promyslný posel: Spis všenaučný pro obecný lid* II, 1,2, section 2 (Prague: Karel Amerling, 1844), 52.

⁸⁴ Kučerová, *K historii ženského hnutí v Čechách*, 18.

and “left women in darkness and a strange dependent state.”⁸⁵ As a way out of the darkness, Amerling proposed a system of education that encompassed a variety of subjects and also focused on training women to become teachers.⁸⁶ Amerling was seemingly the most radical of all the male Czech nationalists who contributed to the ideas on women’s education, and although it would seem that Czech nationalists were supportive of women’s education, Amerling was often heavily criticized. While some of the critiques concerned his concepts of education, particularly women’s education, others focused on Amerling’s chaotic and complex personality as well as his organizational and financial difficulties that also concerned Budeč.⁸⁷

But neither Kratochvíl nor Amerling were as liberal and progressive as it might have seemed. Despite his seemingly liberal vision, Kratochvíl maintained that the reason women must receive more regular education is so that they “become good nationalists and learn their skills as mothers and wives.”⁸⁸ Amerling claimed that women must not try to compete with men – become “mannish” as he called it. In his opinion, education should not make women “disdainful” or “immodest.” Rather, it should help women to become “faithful wives, greatest mothers, educated tutors, (and) good housekeepers.”⁸⁹ Despite his seemingly broadminded and unconventional ideas, which caused much

⁸⁵ *Promyslný posel*, 50-51.

⁸⁶ Kučerová, *K historii ženského hnutí v Čechách*, 29.

⁸⁷ Pichl, for example, credited Amerling for “awakening nationalist thinking among [our] women” (Pichl, *Vlastenecké vzpomínky*, 111), but he otherwise regarded Amerling’s lectures for women as “his greatest raving” (Pichl, *Vlastenecké vzpomínky*, 108). Another nationalist writer, Eduard Bass did not discuss the activities of the Rajska group before first providing a lengthy explanation of Amerling’s chaotic personality (Eduard Bass, *Čtení o roce 1848, díl I* (Prague: Fr. Borový, 1940), 286-298).

⁸⁸ Kratochvíl, “O vychování dívek,” 170.

⁸⁹ *Promyslný posel*, 50.

distress among his fellow male nationalists, Amerling too saw educating of children and caring for the family as women's first and foremost task.⁹⁰

Vincenc Bíba seconded the contention, explaining that since girls need to grow up to be wives and mothers, they must be, starting from the age ten or eleven, educated separately and differently from the boys.⁹¹ Kratochvíl and Amerling might have considered women's education to be identical to that of men, albeit serving a different purpose. Bíba, however, was clearly convinced that women's education should be different because its purpose was different. He was probably not the only Czech nationalist who held this opinion.⁹²

Some women also participated in the debate. Those who attended the Rajská group took active part in envisioning and formulating their own ideas. Like women in other nineteenth-century contexts, Czech women focused on education.⁹³ They translated educational books, as well as novels and short stories.⁹⁴ Before Amerling opened Budeč, they invited him and later other nationalists to lecture.⁹⁵ They also probably had access to

⁹⁰ Kučerová, *K historii ženského hnutí v Čechách*, 20.

⁹¹ Vincenc Bíba, "Něco o vychovávání a vyučování dívek s ohledem na pohlavní rozlišnost," *Posel z Budče* 1, no. 18 (1848a): 289-293 and no. 19 (1848b): 316-320.

⁹² Bíba was clearly not the first or last Czech to express such an opinion. See Antonin Billický, "Rozličnost způsobu vychování mládeže dle povahy, pohlaví a stavu." *Přítel mládeže* 9, no. 1 (1832): 52-56; For texts published later, see, "Listy o vzdělání charakteru ženského," *Škola* 3 (1854): 3-19; "Vychování dívčí nemá zanebáno býti," *Škola* 3 (1854): 336-345; and "Vychování a vyučování dívek," *Škola* 4, 4 (1855): 153-157.

⁹³ See, for example, Blanka Pietrow-Ennker, "Women in Polish Society," chap 1 in *Women in Polish Society*, edited by Rudolf Jaworski and Bianka Pietrow-Ennker, 1-29 (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1992).

⁹⁴ Rajská's letters to Amerling show that women themselves initiated the idea to translate books. In one of her letters, Rajská probably refers to a translation of a French educational novel *Lucie*, undertaken by Františka Božislava Svobodová (Rajská to Amerling, 1841, Čelakovský Collection, LAML). Rajská also mentioned another group member who wanted to translate books. Podlipská (ed.), *Z let probuzení: Paměti a korespondence Bohuslavy Rajské z let 1839-1844, kniha 1*, 41).

⁹⁵ Amerling's project of lectures for women was quite ambitious. As Kučerová mentions, the lectures, held at first held by Amerling himself, encompassed a variety of subjects including natural sciences, chemistry, home economics, anthropology, biology, geology, and Czech history. Later, lectures were given by other male nationalists as well and included, for example, singing, music, painting, religious studies, and medicine. The lectures further included practical field trips to natural areas, which were also an important part of the nationalistic social activities (Kučerová, *K historii ženského hnutí v Čechách*, 29).

a special collection of books that, as it shows from the accounts found in his archival collection, Amerling with their help, put together for the purpose of women's education and possibly for the education in Budeč.⁹⁶ Although, at least to a point, they supported Amerling's educational plans and at least Rajská and Marie Bohdana Vidímská joined Amerling's Spolek Stavitelů, the women also began to initiate their own educational projects. Although Amerling expected that the lectures for women would continue in Budeč, Rajská had already planned to found her own educational institute and was active in helping other women become certified teachers.⁹⁷ Probably inspired by her 1841 visit to educational in Austria, she and another group member, Marie Hošková, enrolled in a teacher's course, which both women successfully completed in 1843.⁹⁸ In 1844, Rajská accepted the first students into her own institute and limited her activities in Amerling's Budeč.⁹⁹ Other female nationalists began teaching in the 1840s. After Rajská's left her institute in 1845, Eleonora Vědoslava Jonáková took over the project.¹⁰⁰ Františka Svatava z Michalovic, a woman who married Amerling, also taught in Budeč.¹⁰¹ Unlike Rajská, she apparently did not mind the combination of her duties. In addition to the

⁹⁶ Women themselves played an important part in setting up this collection. These books were both donated and paid for from donations coming from various fellow nationalists including women - members of the Rajská group. The list of over one hundred volumes of books ranged from science, religion and philosophy to history, magazines, dictionaries and prose. Amerling also kept a detailed list of names of donors who include Marie Vidímská, Bohuslava Rajská, Fanny Svobodová, Anna Růžičková, Marie Pospíšilová and Tereza Laadtová, box 27, Amerling Collection, LAML.

⁹⁷ Rajská to an unknown addressee, 18 February, 1843, Čelakovský Collection, LAML.

⁹⁸ For the letters and diary entries see Podlipská, ed., *Z let probuzení: Paměti a korespondence Bohuslavy Rajské z let 1839-1844 kniha 1*, 88-89, see also note on pages 112-113 and 121. For the information about the course for teachers Kučerová, *K historii ženského hnutí v Čechách*, 31.

⁹⁹ Rajská to Amerling, 3 June, 1844, Čelakovský Collection, LAML. See also Kučerová, *K historii ženského hnutí v Čechách*, 32.

¹⁰⁰ Kučerová, *K historii ženského hnutí v Čechách*, 33.

¹⁰¹ Ibid. 71.

activities in Prague, some sources invite speculations that women intended to build educational institutes outside Prague.¹⁰²

The women also worked on a larger Czech nationalist encyclopedic project for women, modeled on the German *Damen-Conversations-Lexikon* published between 1834 and 1838 in Leipzig.¹⁰³ The Czech project was presented as being compiled solely by women and as an important source of ideas on the characteristics of the ideal woman and women's conduct.¹⁰⁴ Although never published except for a few individual entries that randomly appeared in contemporary journals, the encyclopedia was arguably known to a larger nationalist audience through the Rajska group of women who worked on the Czech adaptation of the project.¹⁰⁵

Along with numerous other nationalist publications, including journal articles, advice books, short stories, and novels, as well as popular medical treatises, the encyclopedia for women strove to offer authoritative opinions on issues of particular

¹⁰² Based on information that Rajska mentioned in her letter to Amerling, 22 September, 1842, Čelakovský Collection, LAML, it is possible that one participant of the women's meetings, Štětková, was trying to establish a women's educational project in the central Bohemian town Kutná hora. Rudinsky has also stated that Rajska also encouraged a Slovak nationalist Johanna Lehocká to found a school for girls. See Rudinsky, *Incipient Feminists*, 32.

¹⁰³ The *Damen-Conversations-Lexikon* was compiled by Carl Herlosssohn. For recent edition of the *Damen-Conversations-Lexikon*, see Carl Herlosssohn; Peter Kaeding, *Damen-Conversations-Lexikon* (Berlin: Union Verlag, 1987).

¹⁰⁴ For an overview of the Czech encyclopedia for women, see Vladimír Macura, "Příběh encyklopedie dam," *Tvar* 9, no. 5, (1998): 3-5. For the contemporary nineteenth-century information on the encyclopedia for women, see Spisovatelstvo všennaučného slovníku, "Zpráva a prosba z ohledu všennaučného slovníku českého," *Noviny z oboru literatury, umění a věd (příloha ke Květům)*, no.15 (1843): 60. Archival fragments of the encyclopedia for women, which also contain several partial indexes, are located in box 25, Karel Slavoj Amerling Collection at the Literary Archive of the Museum of Literature in Prague (hereafter Amerling Collection, LAML). Mutual correspondence between Rajska, who was at the centre of the women's group that compiled, translated and wrote the entries, and Amerling, and Johana Lehocká's letters to Rajska provide further information about the encyclopedia for women. See Rajska's correspondence, Čelakovský Collection, LAML.

¹⁰⁵ My research showed that two entries were published in contemporary nationalistic journals and one text that could have been an entry, even though it was not included in the encyclopedia's index. For the entries also published in journals, see the unsigned encyclopedia entry "Anna Boleynová," also published in *Květy* (I.) 7 (1840), no. 21: 162-164 (where it was signed under the initials B.P.), and the entry "Edgeworthová Maria," also published in *Vlastimil* part I, 1 (1842): 86-87 and signed there in the name of Fr. S-á, [possibly Františka Svobodová]. For the published text that could have been an encyclopedic entry, see Bohuslava, "Slečna Kalamová..." *Vlastimil* part I, 3 (1842): 275-276.

relevance to women and to propose the desirable and undesirable characteristics that the ideal Czech woman was supposed to possess (or not). The encyclopedia's list of positive characteristics included "great and educated," as well as "virtuous and a true symbol of (her) country." A woman was supposed to have "the most sensitive sympathy for the well-being of others," be a gifted artist, or at be least educated in art. She also needed to be supportive of her husband as well as be "brave and courageous."¹⁰⁶ Ideally, a woman would possess all these characteristics and skills. Many entries promoted that the perfect women were "faithful wives, greatest mothers, educated tutors (and) good housekeepers."¹⁰⁷ At the same time, the complexity of the entries' requirements for Czech women further show how women's obligation always had important consequences and public significance.

But not all entries speak to such a complexity or point to the blurring of boundaries. One entry in particular holds that women's primary place and obligation was in their households. The entry explained this succinctly: "the life of European women is divided between social entertainment, and mainly, household." The anonymous author asserted that at home, women "are active keepers of order, morals, child educators, helpers to men, servants' supervisors, monarchs in their own small state." It is only "thanks to [women's care] that the household prospers."¹⁰⁸ Interestingly, this was suggested because women in other (well-established) European contexts were like that. In other words, if Czech women were also like the women from well-advanced European

¹⁰⁶ See entries "Anđelija," and "Dabrovka," (both unsigned), "Agnoulemo, Marie Theresa Karolína, vevodkyne z Exdauphin," (signed in the name of W.B), and "Amboise, Frantiska," signed in the name of Johana Fasterova, all entries located in box 25, Amerling Collection, LAML.

¹⁰⁷ *Promyslný posel: Spis všennaučný pro obecný lid* II, 1,2, section 2 (Prague: Karel Amerling, 1844), 50.

¹⁰⁸ Entry "Domáci paní," unsigned, box 25, Karel Slavoj Amerling Collection, LAML. Emphasis in the original. (Hereafter Amerling Collection, LAML). Cf. Herlosssohn; Kaeding, *Damen-Conversations-Lexikon*. For the entry "Hausfrau" on which the Czech entry "Domáci paní" was modeled, see 113-114.

contexts, they would make Czech households, and in a more general sense, the Czech nation comparable to other well-established European nations. Although there was a difference between the way men formulated the propositions and women envisioned their positionality in the Czech national community, this entry also suggests that women taking their own initiative hardly meant that they would be more liberal or consider a very different path for middle-class Czech women.

Starting in the late 1840s, more women's groups and projects flourished in both the Czech and other European contexts, and it is no surprise that women's activities were particularly abundant in the revolutionary year 1848.¹⁰⁹ Most of the Czech projects focused on education. Beginning with Spolek Slovanek [Association of Slavic Women] founded in 1848, to associations including Dennice and Spolek sv. Ludmily, and other projects later in the nineteenth century, including the Náprstek-initiated Americký klub dam, these groups might have imagined that women's education would help poorer women to provide for themselves.¹¹⁰ However, the main objective of education for middle-class women always was the propagation of domesticity, albeit with public national significance.

It was also a woman, Polish-born Honorata Zapová z Wiśniowských (1812-1856), who most fiercely supported the idea of domesticity as women's most important obligation in the context of the Czech national community.¹¹¹ Zapová, who became part of the Czech national community after she married a journalist Karel Vladislav Zap, left a

¹⁰⁹ See, for example, Mirjam Moravcová, "Die Tschechischen Frauen im Revolutionären Prag 1848/49," in *1848/49 Revolutionen in Ostmitteleuropa*, edited by Rudolf Jaworski and Robert Luft, 75-96 (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1996); Robert Nemes "Women in the 1848-1849 Hungarian Revolution," *Journal of Women's History* 13, no. 3 (Autumn, 2001): 193-207; Herzog, *Intimacy and Exclusion*; Anderson, *Joyous Greetings*.

¹¹⁰ Malečková, "The Emancipation of Women for the Benefit of the Nation."

¹¹¹ On Zapová and education, see also Wilma Iggers, *Women of Prague*.

very interesting trace of evidence in the archives. Zapová was brought up in a poor noble family, learning that her duty was to combine her household obligations with the duties of a citizen, as the term was understood in the early nineteenth-century context. She participated in activities of the Czech national movement, including the Spolek Slovanek, while keeping up to her domestic obligations. Despite complaining that the domestic tasks in her Czech household were much more demanding than in her Polish home, she never objected to them.¹¹²

In an unpublished three-piece manuscript, most likely appropriated from an outside context, Zapová criticized the state of education for women, moved on to explain the differences between the social roles of men and women, and warned against what she called feminism. She also proposed the correct way a woman ought to be, heavily promoting the idea that the place of the proper woman is exclusively in her household. Women's activities, as she proposed, must be limited to domestic obligations and support of the husband's work and endeavors. She vehemently criticized the idea that some women would think that they could "get away from their [domestic] responsibilities because they think they are educated."¹¹³ She argued that "even though it has been proven that there is no difference between a man and a woman, everyone [i.e., both men and women] has their own path that they need to follow."¹¹⁴ In the final part of the manuscript, a section on the ideal gender role of a woman, Zapová argued that a woman must "live for others, rather than for herself; help, rather than act; keep to the familiar

¹¹² Edvard Jelínek, *Honorata z Wiśniowských Zapová: zápisky z rodinné korespondence a vlasteneckých vzpomínek* (Prague: Nakl. J. Otto, 1894); the work of Zofia Tarajlo-Lipowska including "Polský prvek v českém národním obrození v osobě Honoraty z Wisniowskych Zapové;" and a collection of Zapová's letters and diaries located in Honorata Zapová z Wiśniowských Collection, Literary Archive of the Museum of Literature in Prague, Czech Republic (Hereafter Zapová Collection, LAML).

¹¹³ Manuscript entitled "Úvahy zabývající se osvětou žen.....," located in Zapová Collection, LAML.

¹¹⁴ Manuscript entitled "Vysvětlení co jest.....," located in Zapová Collection, LAML.

path and only see the world at home, within her household.”¹¹⁵ As is clear from Zapová’s letter to her female friend Růžena Karafiátová, in her own educational institute, which she opened for a brief period shortly before her death, Zapová clearly envisioned that preparation for the “profession of wife and mother” was the backbone of women’s instruction. Nonetheless, she also anticipated that her students would be free to learn a broader scope of subjects, including music, painting, drawing, and languages. Furthermore, Zapová also intended to provide instruction in pedagogy, which she would teach herself, in case her students wanted to become certified as teachers.¹¹⁶

It is perhaps surprising that the strongest proposition connecting women with the idea of domesticity and the private sphere came from a woman who herself exemplified a perfect national superwoman. But this position is neither unusual nor limited to the nineteenth-century Czech context. Catherine Gallagher has argued that seventeenth-century English female writers who criticized patriarchy and spoke of a woman as a free subject were all connected with the otherwise conservative politics of Toryism.¹¹⁷ Comparably, Kathryn Kish Sklar showed a similar trend in her study on the nineteenth-century American educator Catherine Beecher. Although a very prominent activist in promoting education for women, Beecher – comparable to Zapová - advocated

¹¹⁵ Manuscript entitled “Jaká má žena býti....” located in Zapová Collection, LAML.

¹¹⁶ Zapová to Růžena Karafiátová, 1 September, 1855, located in Zapová Collection, LAML.

¹¹⁷ Catherine Gallagher, “Embracing the Absolute: The Politics of the Female Subject in Seventeenth-Century England.” *Genders* 1 (March 1988): 24-39. In this essay, Gallagher has explained this interesting connection by arguing that the concepts of feminism and Toryism “converge because the ideology of absolute monarchy provides, in particular historical situation, a transition to an ideology of the absolute self.” (for the quotation, see Gallagher, “Embracing the Absolute,” 25). See also, Maureen Quilligan, *The Allegory of Female Authority: Christine de Pizan’s Cité des dames* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 271 - 272.

domesticity as the ultimate obligation and focus for women. Beecher also proposed that nation begins in the household.¹¹⁸

Finally, a nationalist writer František Doucha provided a voice to many Czech nationalist anxieties. In a journal article in which he enthusiastically announced the forthcoming publication of *Pomněnky na rok 1843*, Doucha warned women that their literary activity did not exclude their role of “excellent housekeeper, mother and child educator.”¹¹⁹ No doubt aware of the danger and risks that the profession of a writer could bring, Doucha cautioned women that female writers must not become the “wandering mistresses [who] spend more time away from their countries traveling,” or become “romantic mannish-looking” female writers “disguised in an un-natural half-mannishness à la George Sand.”¹²⁰ Doucha’s opinion differs from Čejka’s interesting usage of George Sand as a positive role model for Němcová. But given Sand’s broader controversial reputation, Doucha’s comment is not at all surprising.¹²¹ As I have shown, his opinion was also not singular. Kratochvíl, the educator who claimed that women’s basic human right was the same education that men were entitled to, wrote in the same breath that the national community does not need “ladies, female poets, and female writers.” He immediately clarified his contention by stating that those ladies, female poets, and female writers were nonetheless “held in great esteem provided that they do not forget their

¹¹⁸ Kathryn Kish Sklar, *Catharine Beecher: A Study in American Domesticity* (New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1973); and Gallagher, “Embracing the Absolute.”

¹¹⁹ D[oucha] “Slovo o spisovatelství vlastenek,” 248.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 249. The term “wandering mistresses” is Doucha’s own.

¹²¹ It is not at all striking, considering the wider European context, that the figure of George Sand was used in such negative implications. Historian Bonnie Smith has also pointed out that Sand did not belong among role models for nineteenth-century European middle-class women. According to Smith, Sand was among women who “broke the social codes governing women’s conduct.” Bonnie Smith, *Changing Lives: Women in European History since 1700* (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath and Co., 1989), 200.

duties of mothers and wives.”¹²² All of these opinions, including Amerling’s proposition in that family was the cornerstone of the nation,¹²³ exemplify well the complexity and tensions in a nation-building middle-class community where its women needed to be connected with the idea of the private sphere but all their activities always had important public nationalist significance.

With regard to the complexity of opinions that existed in the Czech national community between the 1820s and 1850s, Rajska’s suggestion that she, or possibly any woman, should be able to choose between the duties of a woman and the public role of a teacher is interesting. Curiously, even though her letter states that she could not imagine effectively combining both types of obligations, she continuously performed what could be identified as duties of a woman in taking care of her sisters’ children and households. Her decision points rather to her unwillingness to follow whatever plan Amerling may have wanted to suggest for her. This might have been a purely personal decision. But it might also imply that her own ideas and plans were different. I will further explore this notion in chapter 3 in my analysis of Czech nationalist female friendships. But not even this idea points to a radically different vision of positionality of women in the modern Czech nation. Perhaps quite on the contrary, it shows that Rajska, and possibly other women, were well aware of the demands of the rules, requirements, and obligations placed on middle-class women in the Czech national community and their implications that always already had important public significance. Although women’s roles in the national community encompassed and essentially blurred the spheres of the public and private, Czech nationalists nonetheless made quite clear that, however imaginary, the

¹²² Kratochvíl, “O vychování dívek,” 170.

¹²³ Kučerová, *K historii ženského hnutí v Čechách*, 20.

binary was important. If modern liberal contexts are defined by the existence of an own public sphere, a gendered analysis of the Czech nationalist efforts suggests that in a process of constructing a modern nation the private sphere is also important; furthermore, its existence serves as one possible proof of a nation's advancement and modernity. I will continue the exploring the importance of the private sphere and the ways in which women's obligations and roles in the national community effectively effectively blurred the boundaries of public and private in the following chapters.

Chapter 3

“My Dear Only One”: Nationalist Romantic Friendships, the Ideal Czech Woman, and the Boundaries of Public and Private

For a few years in the early 1850s, renowned author Božena Němcová and Sofie Rottová (1833 – 1897), another female Czech nationalist who later became a well-known writer and translator,¹ formed a particularly close friendship.² They attended nationalist events and dance balls together, went to the theatre, discussed literary ideas, and gained inspiration from each other. They also exchanged numerous letters. During Němcová’s three-month stay in Ďarmoty in 1852,³ Rottová wrote to Němcová that what she “wanted was to take you in my arms, press my lips on yours, and hear your words in the depth of your sensitive soul.” She continued by stating: “[m]y dear one! You’re my most passionate, my only love. Without you I feel sad and anxious.”⁴ Němcová wrote to Rottová the following year, “[b]elieve me, sometimes I dream that your eyes are here right in front of me, I am drowning in them, and they have the same sweet expression as they did when they used to ask: ‘Božena, what’s wrong? Božena, I love you.’” Němcová

¹ To Czech audience, Sofie, or, in Czech Žofie, Rottová is better known under her married name, under which she also published, as Podlipská.

² I also discuss friendships between women in the Czech national community in Dáša Frančíková, “‘My Dear Only One’: Rethinking Božena Němcová’s Friendships with Women,” trans. from English to Russian in *Gender History in Eastern Europe*, edited by Elena Gapova, Almira Ousmanova and Andrea Peto, (Minsk: EHU, 2002), 170-176; and Dáša Frančíková, “Female Friends in Nineteenth-Century Bohemia: Troubles with Affectionate Writing and ‘Patriotic Relationships,’” *Journal of Women’s History* 12, no. 3 (Autumn, 2000): 23-28.

³ [Balážské, or Balašské] Ďarmoty (*Balassagyarmat*, in Hungarian) is a town on the borders between the present day Slovak Republic and Hungary where Němcová’s husband was stationed.

⁴ Zdeněk Záhoř (ed.), *Výbor z korespondence Boženy Němcové* (Prague: Nakladatel František Borový, 1917), 158.

continued by telling Rottová: “[o]h, how do I appreciate your faithful love! For sometimes I feel that the disgraced Božena has no right to claim your love...”⁵

Czech historiography and scholarship on women in the past have either completely ignored relationships between women, or dismissed them as marginal or as a pretext for women’s heterosexual relationships. But I have argued that the topic is important.⁶

I propose that female friendships played a role in creating the ideal (middle-class) Czech woman as the crucial imaginary Czech citizen. My reading of contemporary advice texts that discuss the significance of friendships between women implies that some Czech nationalists proposed female friendships both as part of the effort to create the ideal Czech woman and as a way to underscore women’s connection to the private sphere. As I suggested in the previous chapter, some Czech nationalists were convinced that this connection – however imaginary and never completely corresponding with the actual needs of the Czech national movement - would prove that the Czech nation and Czech women were as advanced as women in other well-established middle-class contexts. The idea of female friendship was one way to establish and strengthen the connection.

Juxtaposing the advice-book suggestions with evidence of actual friendships between Czech women, I also show that the actual friendships that Czech nationalist women formed were much more complex than the bonds prescribed for women by the advice literature. The evidence of relationships between Czech nationalist women is an

⁵ Ibid., 181.

⁶ See, Frančíková, “My Dear Only One’: Rethinking Božena Němcová’s Friendships with Women,” and Frančíková, “Female Friends in Nineteenth-Century Bohemia: Troubles with Affectionate Writing and Patriotic Relationships.”

important contribution to the larger scholarship on women's relationships in the past. I read the Czech friendships in the context of romantic friendships, as these intense, supportive and often physically affectionate relationships between late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century (usually white and middle-class) women have come to be known in the Euroamerican context. I explore how Czech friendships fitted the larger phenomenon of romantic friendships, and by showing that female friendships do not need to be bound by the domestic sphere and can also have important public significance also how they differed from it. These Czech female friendships were motivated by women's nationalist affiliations and highlighted the public significance of women's activities for the nation-building effort, supporting and encouraging the women in their nationalist work and in their relationships with nationalist men. Therefore, I suggest that the actual friendships did not place women in the private sphere. Instead, these "nationalist romantic friendships," as I propose to call them in the Czech context, rather help to show that women's participation in the Czech nation-building effort, an activity which often included forming bonds with other nationalist women, effectively blurred the public and private binary and played a role in constructing the modern Czech nation.

I do not intend to imply that romantic friendships were limited to the Czech nationalist context. As the evidence of women's relationships found in other similar contexts indicates, it is quite probable that other women who lived in the Bohemian territory at the time but did not belong in the Czech national community also formed similar friendships. Given my dissertation topic, however, my research has focused only on women in the Czech national community. My evidence, therefore, only represents a

sample of women who all identified as Czech nationalists and were famous enough to leave records in the archives.

Similarly to evidence of women's relationships in other contexts, Czech accounts are often fragmentary, and in some cases there is not enough information about the women who formed friendships between each other. But there is a significant exception represented by Božena Němcová's correspondence. Němcová's letters to her family and friends, including her female friends, is frequently reprinted, published in various edited collections, and interpreted by various scholars of the Czech author's life. Unlike accounts of many female friends in Czech or outside contexts, Němcová's correspondence, which includes the most striking letters of affection between women in the Czech nationalist context, along with her short novels that I will analyze in respect to their portrayal of romantic friendships, are also readily available in academic and public libraries.⁷

An Ideal Czech Woman and Ideal Female Friendships

The excerpt from Rottová's diary entry I quoted at the beginning of the chapter is a good example of the ways a Czech female nationalist learned, appropriated, and possibly internalized various ideas that comprised the ideal woman. Rottová, a daughter of a well-to-do Prague ironmonger, read German, French, and Czech. Her personal correspondence with Němcová suggests that her reading list was quite diverse and ranged from Czech nationalist publications to the works of the German writer Heinrich Heine

⁷ As I will discuss later in the chapter, the account of the readily available Němcová correspondence is especially important as it helps to raise important questions and speculations about the general silence, ignorance, and dismissal of female friendships by the Czech scholarship.

and the French author George Sand.⁸ Rottová was no doubt familiar with the ideas of the French philosopher Jean Jacques Rousseau and other enlightenment and contemporary thinkers including the German philosopher Johann Herder and the eighteenth-century Swiss educational reformer Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi. Rottová grew up and lived in a much more privileged situation than many women in the Czech national community. Although other women, including Němcová, may not have come from such an advantaged background, they all were exposed to similar ideas through reading and sharing nationalist publications and participation in the activities of the national community.⁹ It is therefore very likely that other Czech women envisioned the ideal woman in similar terms as Rottová.

In a diary entry written toward the end of 1855, Rottová explains that friendships were an important part of her idea of being a “good person,” meaning, as she explained, both an ideal woman and member of the Czech national community.¹⁰ This idea also included the “ideal marriage love;” something Rottová discussed in a diary entry several years later.¹¹ She detailed her vision in a diary entry from May 14, 1858. There, she declared that “he (already meaning Josef Podlipský, a nationalist physician who later became her husband) was [her] future, [and] the compass that would prevent [her] from straying.” As she also stated, her goal was to strive to “fulfill [his] will and stand by his

⁸ Rottová also translated one of George Sand’s novels, *Consuelo*, into Czech. See also George Sand’s letter to Podlipská dated 12 February, 1866 in Raphaël Ledos de Beaufort (ed.), *Letters of George Sand* (London: Ward and Downey, 1886), 384.

⁹ They wrote letters and attended nationalist meetings - including those of the Rajská’s women’s group – where they could read, learn, discuss, and exchange their opinions.

¹⁰ A diary entry of Sofie Rottová (Podlipská) entitled “Last day of 1855,” located in Sofie Podlipská Collection, Literary Archive of the Museum of Literature Prague, Czech Republic (Hereafter Podlipská Collection, LAML).

¹¹ A diary entry of Sofie Rottová (Podlipská) “In the evening of May 14, 1858,” Podlipská Collection, LAML.

side.”¹² This notion, which most likely also included a belief in polarized and complementary spheres and relations between man and woman, was well within the nineteenth-century bourgeois world vision. Rebekka Habermas has provided a fitting, geographically and culturally close illustration in her essay on gender relations of the nineteenth-century middle class. Analyzing the relationship of a young middle-class couple from early nineteenth-century Nürnberg, Germany, Habermas shows that the young woman, Käthe Roth, wrote to her husband and thought of marriage love in very similar terms as Rottová.¹³ Rottová’s conception of the ideal marriage love and ideal gender relationships was not only common in the wider nineteenth-century middle-class contexts; such an idea also practically summarized the opinions of many Czech nationalists who, as I suggested in chapter 2, considered the ideal Czech woman to be someone who would become her husband’s companion and mother of the nation’s children. But, as mentioned above, Rottová also thought that part of being an ideal woman included having a close female friend. Her 1855 diary entry describes friendship with Kati (Kateřina) Hemerková. The two women discussed nationalist activities and events and Rottová declared that she wanted to help to “educate” Hemerková in nationalist matters. This indicates that being a “good [and] an ideal friend” was no less important than ideal marriage love.¹⁴

¹² “In the evening of May 14, 1858.” An excerpt from the diary of Sofie Rottová located in Podlipská Collection, LAML.

¹³ Rebekka Habermas, “Master and Subject, or Inequality and Felicitous Opportunity: Gender Relations of the Nineteenth-Century Middle Class,” in *Gender in Transition: Discourse and Practice in German-Speaking Europe, 1750-1830*, edited by Ulrike Gleixner and Marion W. Gray, 114 – 133 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006).

¹⁴ A substantial evidence of letters that Rottová (Podlipská) wrote to Hemerková are located in the Augustin Hemerka ze Stanimíru Collection (Hemerková’s brother), in Literary Archive of the Museum of Literature Prague, Czech Republic (Hereafter Hemerka ze Stanimíru Collection, LAML). Unfortunately, I was not able to locate Hemerková’s letters addressed to Rottová. Podlipská’s diaries are located in Podlipská Collection, LAML.

Contemporary prescriptive literature promoted a similar idea. Pečírka's translation of the prescriptive book *Agata* and Zapová's *Nezabudky* were two advice texts published in the 1840s and the 1850s that detailed every step and phase in a woman's life.¹⁵ These two advice books also focused on female friendships and introduced them as a standard part of every woman's life. Both writers prescribed the ways in which girls and young women should establish friendships with other women. They also suggested the pattern that these friendships should follow. Although published ten years apart, these two prescriptive texts were strikingly similar in many of their assessments and recommendations regarding the friendships that (middle-class) Czech women should form between each other.

Pečírka first focused on the importance of choosing the "correct company" as part of the proper upbringing of a young unmarried woman. In a gender-neutral way, he asserted that the young woman "benefits tremendously" from a company of "good, kind, and educated people."¹⁶ Keeping "bad company," he stated, is "much more dangerous" for a woman than for a man. Importantly, he claimed that a "woman led astray turns into being a bad influence."¹⁷ According to Pečírka, "every young woman [has] a female friend."¹⁸ In his opinion, female friendships represented an opportunity to sharpen a young woman's abilities, both as a preparation for the future marriage and as a test of the young woman's social skills. It is appropriate, Pečírka recommended, that women "visit each other, share their joys, read [together],...,as well as sing and play the piano

¹⁵ Pečírka, *Agata*; Zapová, *Nezabudky*.

¹⁶ Pečírka, *Agata*, 49.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 78.

together.”¹⁹ Pečírka suggested that through their conversations, women will learn from each other and become “better, kinder, smarter,” and to “enjoy life more.” He proposed that female friends helped each other achieve all the desirable virtues that a woman should possess.²⁰

Although he described friendships between women as being “most devoted and affectionate,” he also makes it clear that female friendships are not as important as heterosexual marriage and children.²¹ Pečírka acknowledged the “joy that arises from female friendships” but hastened to say that friendships between women “bring no great achievements, and it is highly unlikely that female friends would give up their lives for each other.”²² He did not regard attachments between female friends as being particularly strong, acknowledging them “perhaps as support in times of illness.”²³ Referring to the Bible, he maintained that female friendships come only second or third after heterosexual marriage and children. Though female friendships may be an essential part of a woman’s life, Pečírka also implied that female friendships are short-lived nature, unstable, and can not compete with the institution of marriage, all arguments that served Pečírka to argue that a woman is only capable of heterosexual love and love for children.²⁴

Zapová, who modeled her advice book on the work of early nineteenth-century Polish writer, Klementina z Tańskich Hoffmanova, was not completely certain whether women – unlike men - were capable of forming “true” friendships, citing vanity as a

¹⁹ Ibid., 80.

²⁰ For the quotation, see Ibid. For more discussion of the benefits of female friendships, see also Ibid., 81.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid., 79.

frequent obstruction to female friendships.²⁵ In *Nezabudky*, Zapová suggested that the one natural type of friendship is the bond between a sister and a brother – a bond on which Rottová also focused on in her New Year’s Eve diary entry. Nevertheless, Zapová considered female friendships to be an essential part of a woman’s life. Their advantages outweighed her skepticism that a woman would not be able to enter into friendship with another woman to the point that she devoted them an entire chapter of her advice book.

In order for a woman to form a useful friendship with another woman, Zapová recommended that several important things be observed. First, it was imperative that a woman have only one friend. She argued that a “true friend” cannot truly commit to more than one person/female friend. If a woman had more than one friend, her attention would be diffused by having too many female friends. Such a woman could find herself in danger of becoming only a “so-called friend;” not a real friend and confidant. Pečírka, too, used the term “so-called friend,” maintaining that this is a bad kind of friend who can bring on “negative consequences...like the worst sin.”²⁶ Zapová offered the same advice and cautioned women against choosing friends from among bad people. In particular, she warned against women who live in large cities. She believed that these women, whom she describes as being overtly friendly and having many friends, were not capable of friendships.²⁷ Zapová also claimed – in a way that underscores the imaginary public and

²⁵ Zapová, *Nezabudky*, 112. For correspondence among male friends in nineteenth-century Bohemia, see the letters of František Ladislav Čelakovský to Vlastimil Kamarýt, 1818–1832, or Čelakovský to Josef Kraroslav Chmelenský, 1824–1838, in František Ladislav Čelakovský, *Sebrané spisy* (Prague: Dr. Ed. Grégr, 1869); and letters in Dušan Jeřábek, *F. M. Klácel a obrozenecká Morava* (Prague: Státní nakladatelství krásné literatury a umění, 1964).

²⁶ Pečírka, *Agata*, 81.

²⁷ Zapová, *Nezabudky*, 114.

private binary - that a bad female friend is much more dangerous to a woman because unlike a bad male influence, a woman can get much closer to another woman.²⁸

Zapová advised that young women look for older friends who are “well-mannered and kinder [than the young women]” and who would help the younger friends get oriented in life.²⁹ Zapová’s presumption was that the female friends would trust each other completely. As she proposed, they should have “one soul, one heart” and share things with each other “unless [their] parents, husband, or [their] own wisdom prevents [them] from that.”³⁰ They should be careful not to form friendships too fast, in which case a friend could likely turn into an enemy,³¹ but if they observe all the necessary criteria, they are capable of forming a permanent life-long, and beneficial female friendships.³² Unlike Pečírka, Zapová was convinced that adult (and presumably married) women could also form friendships, meaning that marriage did not preclude the possibility of female friendships. However, she too saw friendships between women as clearly separated from heterosexual love, which she defined only in respect to heterosexual marriage.³³

But not all advice book opinions on female friendships were the same. The German *Damen-Conversations-Lexikon*, a publication that served a model for the prepared Czech encyclopedia for women,³⁴ made a sharp distinction between

²⁸ Ibid., 116.

²⁹ For the quotation, see Ibid., 113. For the role of the older friend, see Ibid., 114-115.

³⁰ Ibid., 113.

³¹ Ibid., 115.

³² Ibid.

³³ Zapová, *Nezabudky*, esp. 116. See also the next chapter of *Nezabudky* entitled “O Lásce” [Love].

³⁴ Unlike the two advice books I discuss in this chapter, neither the *Lexikon* nor the Czech encyclopedia for women intended to provide advice on each phase or situation in a woman’s life. Both encyclopedias, however, strove to offer authoritative opinions on issues of particular relevance to women. Although the archival fragments of the Czech encyclopedia for women did not include an entry on friendship, the definition of friendship is part of the German *Lexikon*; an important source to consult as it was known to

(heterosexual) love and friendship, but this is the only similarity with *Nezabudky* and *Agata*. Unlike these two texts, the *Lexikon* maintained that “friendship is first of all a woman’s virtue,” which, “occurs much more rarely between men [than between women].”³⁵ The *Lexikon*’s definition proposed that women were much more capable of friendships than men because they were not as passionate as men. As an example, the *Lexikon* pointed to Spanish, Italian, and French women who have “hotter blood” and thus act more like men. For this reason, the *Lexikon* states that “women from the South are - like men - fit for love, but seldom for friendship.”³⁶ As the author of the entry further noted, friendship requires “moderate climate” that is available to German and other women living in similar climates. The *Lexikon* entry concluded with an assertion that “friendship fits well with the passionless [woman’s heart]; it is a “particular virtue of every unspoiled womanhood.”³⁷

We can only speculate why the Czech advice texts were so strikingly different from the *Lexikon* entry and what the Czech version of the entry might have said about female friendships. Even so, in comparing these three prescriptive texts, we can get a sense of how the idea of female friendship was portrayed and communicated to Czech audience. Despite a certain degree of doubt in women’s abilities to form friendships - an opinion which the *Lexikon* did not share - Pečírka and Zapová both agreed that female friendships were a wide-spread phenomenon. Both writers also agreed, and the *Lexikon* entry could be similarly interpreted, that friendships contributed to women’s happiness

the circle of women who worked on the Czech adaptation. In this way, the opinions were also available to some of the Czech women whose correspondence I will analyze in a latter part of this chapter. For the German text, see Herlosssohn; Kaeding, *Damen-Conversations-Lexikon*.

³⁵ Herlosssohn; Kaeding, *Damen-Conversations-Lexikon*, 92.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid., 93.

and provided them with a space to share their emotions, something that men supposedly did not need. According to Pečírka and Zapová, female friendships constituted a kind of a coming of age ritual. They provided an important way to prepare young women for their future life. This is probably the reason that both authors aimed their instructions at young women, never discussing how exactly the older friend should provide her advice to the younger one. Although Zapová acknowledged the existence and importance of friendships between adult women, an opinion that Pečírka, who seemed to imply that female friendships end with heterosexual marriage, did not share, neither author considered female friendships to be as important as the relationships that women would have with their husbands and children. All three texts defined female friendships in opposition to (heterosexual) love. Female friendships were supposed to be emotional and passionless relationships between women: the “accepted” bonds that the ideal woman could form with another woman. Love was not what female friends were supposed to feel for each other. Even if the *Lexikon* suggested that some women were like men in their capacity to express passion and love (whether this might suggest extramarital affairs or potential same-sex love and desire), love was otherwise defined solely in terms of heterosexual marriage and the bond between the mother and the child. It is unclear where friendships between men or siblings of opposite sexes stood, or whether “Southern women” might have been justified in case they fell in love with other women. Nonetheless, the distinction between friendship and (heterosexual) love evidently served to promote the idea of separation of the female and male worlds.

Romantic Friendships and Czech Women

The correspondence between Rottová and Němcová I quoted at the beginning of the chapter provides one example of an actual friendship between women who participated in the activities of the Czech national movement. Another letter that Němcová sent to Rottová began with a quoted poem in Serbian: “Oh what to do! I can’t sleep at night, my heart is burning, [and] sorrow is tormenting me. I want to die from [desire] for you.”³⁸ In this particular letter, to which Němcová attached a German love poem by Heinrich Heine, the older friend regretted that she would not be able to join Rottová at a dance ball that evening and that they wouldn’t be able to see each other prior to that. Nonetheless, she assured Rottová that “[i]t is you, especially, I long for, my darling,”³⁹ and ended her letter with “I kiss your eyes, you dear soul.”⁴⁰ In yet another letter, Němcová admired her younger friend’s, “big, bold, masculine handwriting” that so well depicted her friend’s personality.⁴¹ She also shared a recent dream in which Rottová was getting married and (despite the fact that Němcová herself had been married) both women were devastated that her marriage caused her to leave Němcová.⁴² Their friendship did not last a lifetime but the correspondence indicates an important relationship, meaningful to both women.

But this is not the only example of a female friendship in the Czech national community. Němcová also corresponded with Rajská whom she knew from the women’s meetings, and their relationship had a very different character than that Němcová formed with Rottová. Němcová and Rajská became especially close in 1844 when Němcová provided her friend with advice regarding a difficult decision which led Rajská to accept

³⁸ Záhorský (ed.), *Výbor z korespondence Boženy Němcové*, 152.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 153.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 173.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 177.

František Ladislav Čelakovský's marriage offer. While Rajská was unsure whether to accept, Němcová suggested that if she did, she "could be of great use to our [nationalist] cause, for a man, regardless of how great he may be, cannot do as much as a smart woman."⁴³ In response, Rajská wrote that she was grateful to her for being a "guardian angel in this stormy night when I stood alone without friends, without support; then the merciful God sent you, and your friendly words solved the riddle of my heart."⁴⁴

Marie Bohdana Vidímská, a member of the Rajská group and Amerling's Association of Builders who lived in the Central Bohemian town of Mělník, about fifty kilometers from Prague also left fragmentary evidence in the archives. In one of the two preserved letters located in the Rajská file in the Museum of Literature in Prague, Vidímská wrote to Rajská and another woman whom she identified as Josefka, asking them to visit her as soon as they could.⁴⁵ Vidímská repeated her wish several times throughout her letter stating that she was "passionately awaiting [their] arrival," and sent both of them "10, 000 kisses for wanting to come."⁴⁶

There are also the letters that a Slovak woman Johanna Lehocká wrote Rajská as they corresponded regarding possible entries to the encyclopedia for women. Even though the two women never met in person, Lehocká imagined "traces of [Rajská's] kisses upon [her] face."⁴⁷ The account of Rottová's friendship with Hemerková that

⁴³ Marie Gebauerová (ed.), *Sebrané spisy Boženy Němcové, svazek XIII. Korespondence, díl I.* (Prague: Jan Laichter, 1914), 4.

⁴⁴ Gebauerová, (ed.), *Sebrané spisy Boženy Němcové, svazek XIII. Korespondence, díl I.*, 6.

⁴⁵ The other addressee identified as "Josefka" might have been Josefa Machotková: another member of the Rajská women's group, and active participant in other nationalist endeavors.

⁴⁶ This letter identified as written by "Bohdana Amerlingova;" literary "Amerling's Bohdana." This leads me to speculate, as the note in the margin of the letter, added probably added by an archivist, also suggests, that the letter was written by (Marie) Bohdana Vidímská. See "Amerlingova Bohdana" to Rajská, 1842, Čelakovský Collection, LAML.

⁴⁷ Johanna Lehocká to Rajská, [20 October, 1844], Čelakovský Collection, LAML.

lasted from the mid 1850s till her death in 1897 also suggests that relationship was very much significant to both the women.⁴⁸

In some ways, this brief sample of friendships between women who were part of the Czech national community supports Pečírka and Zapová's assertions regarding female friendships. Women's personal correspondence makes evident that Czech nationalist women commonly formed friendships with each other. Following the advice-book blue print, the available evidence shows that the actual friendships played a role in women's socialization and contributed to women's happiness. Actual Czech female friends also took up many of the activities mentioned in the advice books.

But even a handful of examples suggest that the very underpinning of the actual friendships was different. The actual friendships that Czech nationalist women formed substantially complicate and challenge the advice-book definition and outline. Most importantly, the evidence we have available does not indicate that women were not capable of forming strong and meaningful friendships. The letters also do not suggest that the women considered the female friendships as being less important and inferior to their relationships with husbands and children. That might have been the ideal idea which the conduct literature strove to promote, but actual women's lives point to a different picture.

Evidence of Czech female friendships seems to resemble the phenomenon of romantic friendship as various scholars have described it in the larger Euroamerican context. Some of the letters that Czech female friends exchanged share many similarities with the loving, supportive, and physically affectionate bonds that Carroll Smith-Rosenberg found in correspondences of white middle-class women in the late eighteenth-

⁴⁸ See Rottová (Podlipská's) letters to Hemerková in Hemerka ze Stanimíru Collection, LAML.

and nineteenth-century America.⁴⁹ In *Surpassing the Love of Men*, published only a few years after Smith-Rosenberg's pioneering study, Lillian Faderman argued that friendships between women frequently formed an accepted and welcome alternative to heterosexual relationships and provided women with support and nurturance. According to Faderman, "romantic friendship" described such similar friendships where "two women were everything to each other and had little connection with men who were so alienatingly and totally different."⁵⁰

Scholarship on romantic friendships and women's relationships in the past has since expanded and responded to different issues, many of them relevant to the Czech context.⁵¹ Various feminist historians, literary historians, and sociologists have shown that romantic friendships were not limited to American, British, and French women.⁵² Women beyond the Euroamerican world also formed close bonds with each other, even though the relationships would not necessarily be labeled romantic friendships.⁵³ In addition, scholars have also focused on romantic friendships between men.⁵⁴

⁴⁹ Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations between Women in Nineteenth-Century America."

⁵⁰ Faderman, *Surpassing the Love of Men*, 20.

⁵¹ See, also, McGarry Molly, Kanchana Natarajan, Dáša Frančíková, Tania Navarro Swain, and Karin Lützen, "Women's History in the New Millennium: Carroll Smith-Rosenberg's 'The Female World of Love and Ritual' after Twenty-Five Years," *Journal of Women's History* 12, no. 3 (Autumn 2000): 9-38.

⁵² Hanna Hacker, *Frauen und Freundinnen: Studien zur "weiblichen Homosexualität" am Beispiel Österreich 1870-1938* (Weinheim: Beltz, 1987); Tuula Juvonen, "Trapped in Reality - and Other Ways of Knowing," *Thamyris* 3, no. 1 (1996): 138-146; Karin Lützen, *Was das Herz begehrt: Liebe und Freundschaft zwischen Frauen* (Hamburg: Ernst Knabel Verlag, 1990); and Laura Engelstein, *The Keys to Happiness: Sex and the Search for Modernity in Fin-De-Siecle Russia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994).

⁵³ Rupp, *Sapphistries*.

⁵⁴ Jonathan Katz, *Gay American History: Lesbians and Gay Men in the U.S.A.: A Documentary* (New York: Crowell, 1976), 445-562; Jonathan Ned Katz, *Love Stories: Sex between Men before Homosexuality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001); Anthony Rotundo, "Romantic Friendship," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 23 (1985) 1-25; and Leila J. Rupp, *A Desired Past: A Short History of Same-Sex Love in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999): 46-50, esp. 47-48.

The definition of romantic friendships has also expanded. For example, the account of Addie Brown, an African-American domestic worker, and Rebecca Brown, an African American school teacher, who formed a friendship in the second half of the nineteenth-century United States has not only broadened the definition of middle-class women who formed romantic friendships, but along with Erica Armstrong's essay on African American women in nineteenth-century Philadelphia also helped show that the phenomenon of romantic friendships was not an exclusive domain of white women.⁵⁵

Neither Smith-Rosenberg nor Faderman were convinced that romantic friendships were readily acceptable and common. They were also convinced that the relationships did not necessarily involved genital sexuality. But the case of Marianne Woods and Jane Pirie, two Scottish women who ran a boarding school together in the early nineteenth century and were accused of having sex together, and the coded diaries in which the Yorkshire noble woman Anne Lister recorded her sexual relationships with other women have helped to raise questions about the seemingly asexual character and seamless social acceptance and pervasiveness of romantic friendships.⁵⁶ But as Leila Rupp has pointed out, noting the case of Lister, social acceptability of romantic friendships was not based

⁵⁵ Karen V. Hansen, "No Kisses Is Like Youres': An Erotic Friendship between Two African-American Women during the Mid-Nineteenth Century" *Gender and History* 7, no. 2 (1995): 153-182; Farah Jasmine Griffin (ed.), *Beloved sisters and loving friends: letters from Rebecca Primus of Royal Oak, Maryland and Addie Brown of Hartford, Connecticut, 1854-1868* (New York: Knopf : Distributed by Random House, 1999); Erica R. Armstrong, "A Mental and Moral Feast: Reading, Writing, and Sentimentality in Black Philadelphia," *Journal of Women's History* 16, no. 1 (Spring 2004): 78-102.

⁵⁶ Lillian Faderman, *Scotch Verdict: Miss Pirie and Miss Woods v. Dame Cumming Gordon* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993); Leila J. Rupp, "Foreword to the Morningside Edition," in Faderman, *Scotch Verdict*, xi-xiii. For the diaries of Anne Lister, see, Jill Liddington, *Nature's Domain: Anne Lister and the Landscape of Desire* (Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire: Pennine Pens, 2003); and Jill Liddington (ed.), *Female Fortune: Land, Gender, and Authority: The Anne Lister Diaries and Other Writings, 1833-36* (London: Rivers Oram Press, 1998). For discussion of social acceptability, see also Martha Vicinus, "'They Wonder to Which Sex I Belong': The Historical Roots of The Modern Lesbian Identity," *Feminist Studies* 18 (1992): 467-497; Lisa Moore, "'Something More Tender Still than Friendship': Romantic Friendships in Early-Nineteenth-Century England," *Feminist Studies* 18 (1992): 499-520; Emma Donoghue, *Passions between Women, British Lesbian Culture, 1668-1801* (London: Scarlet Press, 1993).

on asexuality: “[s]ome women pursued openly sexual relationships under the guise of acceptable romantic friendships. And some women got away with it.” According to Rupp, however, “the key to acceptance was respectability, which was not a permanent status but rather one that could be easily shattered.” As she has stated, “[a]ny hint of gender deviance or overt sexuality, or perhaps, a dismissal of men was enough to push romantic friends across the line.”⁵⁷ Despite the ongoing debates, all the scholars who have studied relationships between women in the past have asserted that women’s relationships constitute serious and important subject.⁵⁸ As they have made clear, relationships between women were significant to women personally, often played a central role in the women’s work, and helped build women’s networks and organizations. Sharon Marcus has even argued that relationships between women need to be considered on a par with heterosexual marriages.⁵⁹

Friendships between Czech nationalist women seem in many ways identical to the phenomenon of romantic friendship as it is described in other contexts. Being always already bound by their domestic duties, Czech women, similarly to romantic friends elsewhere, also discussed domestic and household affairs. For example, Zapová

⁵⁷ Leila J. Rupp, “Romantic Friendships,” *Modern American Queer History*, ed. Allida M. Black (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2001), 19.

⁵⁸ For a discussion of ignoring, interpreting, and misinterpreting evidence of women’s relationships in the past, see, Blanche Wiesen Cook, “Female Support Networks and Political Activism,” *Chrysalis* III (1977): 43-61; Leila J. Rupp, “‘Imagine My Surprise’: Women’s Relationships in Historical Perspective,” *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 5 (Fall 1980): 61-70; Lillian Faderman, “Who Hid Lesbian History,” in *The New Lesbian Studies: Into the Twenty-First Century*, edited by Bonnie Zimmerman and Toni A. H. McNaron, 41-47, (New York: The Feminist Press, 1996).

⁵⁹ Sharon Marcus, *Between Women: Friendship, Desire, and Marriage in Victorian England* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007).

frequently wrote to her younger friend Růžena Karafiátová about domestic obligations and asked her to compare prices of various goods.⁶⁰

Czech friends also often expressed concern in times of illness – whether potential or real – or deaths in family. Zapová’s writings are often concerned about Karafiátová’s depressed state, afraid that Karafiátová was ill.⁶¹ Another letter located in Němcová’s archival collection shows that Zapová also worried about Němcová’s health.⁶² Johanna Fričová frequently expressed concerns about the health of her sister, Rajská (Čelakovská).⁶³ The letters also included news of deaths in the women’s families.

Czech women also gave each other presents. In a letter from July 7, 1852, Zapová thanked Karafiátová “whole-heartedly” for a scarf that she had made for her: “I feel sad every time I put it on because I know that your poor hands did all the stitching and that for many days you could not even go out for a walk.”⁶⁴ Němcová’s thank you note to Kateřina Lauermannová, a friend she met at the women’s group meetings, is much more upbeat: “I kiss you passionately and thank you for your present [...] I will always keep it as a fond souvenir for it is handiwork.”⁶⁵

And, women also looked forward to visits, especially when they lived far from each other or when circumstances forced them apart.⁶⁶ This is not only the case of Rottová writing Němcová in far away Ďarmoty. Zapová also repeatedly invited

⁶⁰ See, for example, Zapová to Růžena Karafiátová, 7 July, 1852; 13 August, 1854; and 28 February, 1855, all located in Zapová Collection, LAML.

⁶¹ Zapová to Karafiátová, 18 February, 1853. Zapová Collection, LAML.

⁶² Zapová to Němcová, 6 December, 1845. Božena Němcová Collection, Literary Archive of the Museum of Literature in Prague, Czech Republic. (Hereafter Němcová Collection, LAML).

⁶³ See, for example, Johanna Fričová to Rajská, 19 February, 1846; 3 May 1847, both in Čelakovský Collection, LAML.

⁶⁴ Zapová to Karafiátová, 7 July, 1852, Zapová Collection, LAML.

⁶⁵ Miloslav Novotný, *Spisy Boženy Němcové, svazek XX. Listy I.* (Prague: Čes. spisovatel, 1951), 119.

⁶⁶ See, for example, Němcová to Vrbíková, 7 September 1851; Němcová to Čelakovská, 10 September, 1849, both in Němcová Collection, LAML; “Amerlingova Bohdana” to Rajská, 1842, Čelakovský Collection, LAML.

Karafiátová to visit and stay with her, and these invitations included a note that Karafiátová would help her with the household chores.⁶⁷ At least on one occasion, Zapová visited Karafiátová in Telecí, a small Eastern Bohemian village where Karafiátová lived at the time. Zapová's letters reveal how anxiously she was preparing for the journey and that she also feared that her stay would put an unnecessary burden on Karafiátová's parents who hosted her.⁶⁸ Němcová and Rajská kept in touch even after Rajská married and both women moved several times. In one of the last letters they exchanged, Němcová informed her friend that she hoped to come to Prague to arrange accommodation for her son Hynek: "if I come to Prague," she wrote to Rajská-Čelakovská, "I will certainly first come to visit you and if I am able to stay a few days I will take advantage of your and your dear husband's pleasant company every day. For I so desired to be with you..."⁶⁹ Rajská-Čelakovská replied: "How do I look forward to seeing you again, my dear [...] I very much look forward to seeing you soon, ask your husband to send you here in my name [...]"Rajská-Čelakovská then ended her letter by stating, "[k]issing you, I remain your passionately loving." She also added a note asking Němcová to "come to your [Antonie...who is] passionately expecting you."⁷⁰

Many Czech letters resemble romantic friendships in expressing a very strong emotional and physical affection. Němcová comforted Vrbíková in the loss of her sister and hoped that she would "compensate for your dead sister in every respect and you, too,

⁶⁷ Zapová to Karafiátová, 18 February, 1853; and 13 August, 1854. Both letters located in Zapová Collection, LAML.

⁶⁸ For details of Zapová visit to Karafiátová see, Zapová to Karafiátová, 30 July; 18 August; 24 August, 1853; and an undated letter. All letters in Zapová Collection, LAML.

⁶⁹ Miloslav Novotný (ed.), *Spisy Boženy Němcové, svazek XX. Listy I.* (Prague: Čes. spisovatel, 1951), 116.

⁷⁰ Miloslav Novotný (ed.), *Život Boženy Němcové, Dopisy a Dokumenty II.* (Prague: Čes. spisovatel, 1951), 178, 179.

would compensate for my distant sister.”⁷¹ Trying to console her friend, Němcová wrote that “[e]verything would be very different if we were close to each other [and] you could seek solace on my heart.”⁷² Zapová called Karafiátová an “angel,” the “lover of [her] soul,⁷³ longing to “rest in [Karafiátová’s] arms,⁷⁴ and in a letter prior to visiting Karafiátová in August 1853, she promised Karafiátová “caressing and tickling.”⁷⁵ These two women frequently ended their letters with “kisses” and “embraces,” and Zapová sometimes finished her letters asking Karafiátová to “love [her].”⁷⁶

How can we interpret these sometimes very affectionate letters exchanged by women who addressed each other as “sister,” or, in the case of the correspondence addressed to Karafiátová, even “daughter”? As Martha Vicinus has argued in *Intimate Friends*, the family and sister metaphor that is also present in the relationship between Němcová and Vrbíková suggests the complexity and significance of sisterly relationships between women who were not blood-related or sisters-in-law.⁷⁷ The family metaphor is most likely one of the major reasons that a substantial number of Zapová’s letters to Karafiátová remained preserved in the archives.⁷⁸ Zapová considered her relationship with the younger Karafiátová as a sort of bond between mother and daughter, writing Karafiátová that she “loved [her] as [her] own child [and] sister that I wish to see from all

⁷¹ Novotný, (ed.), *Spisy Boženy Němcové, svazek XX. Listy I.*, 151-152.

⁷² Němcová to Veronika Vrbíková, 22 January, 1851, Němcová Collection, LAML

⁷³ Zapová to Karafiátová, 18 February, 1853. Zapová Collection, LAML.

⁷⁴ Zapová to Karafiátová, 18 August, 1853, Zapová Collection, LAML.

⁷⁵ Zapová to Karafiátová, 24 August, 1853, Zapová Collection, LAML.

⁷⁶ Zapová to Karafiátová, 28 February, 1855; and 1 September, 1855. Both letters located in Zapová Collection, LAML

⁷⁷ See Martha Vicinus’s discussion of the usage of “sister-” and “family metaphors” among romantic friends in Martha Vicinus, *Intimate Friends: Women Who Loved Women, 1778-1928* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), xxv, xxvi, xxix, 3, 187, 229, and 230.

⁷⁸ Zapová asked Karafiátová to return the “copies or originals” of the letters to her children because she “was not certain whether [she] would live long enough to open [her] heart to her [own daughter]. Zapová to Karafiátová, 28 February, 1855. Zapová Collection, LAML. In 1862, six years after Zapová’s death, Karafiátová (married Totůšková) wrote and offered to return the letters to Zapová’s husband. See Růžena Karafiátová-Totůšková to Karel V. Zap, 24 October, 1862, Zap Collection, LAML.

my heart.”⁷⁹ The relationship between these two women is also interesting as the women formed it despite differences in religious confession, an issue that Vicinus discussed in her book as possibly having an impact on women’s relationships.⁸⁰ But despite the fact that Zapová was a Catholic and Karafiátová’s name suggest that she was part of a well-known family of Czech Protestants; religion did not seem to have an impact on the character, intensity and intimacy of the friendship that the two women formed.⁸¹

But their friendship was not a one-sided relationship which served Zapová only as a means of providing Karafiátová with motherly advice, perhaps following some of the advice she herself wrote in *Nezabudky*. Similarly to friendships in other contexts, Czech female friendships were neither as homogenous nor one-sided as the advice books might have suggested the friendships should be. Instead, the available evidence points at different types and structural patterns. Zapová also confided in Karafiátová, shared difficult personal news with her younger friend, and clearly hoped and expected Karafiátová’s emotional support. Particularly interesting is also the letter where Němcová admires Rottová’s masculine writing, thus giving a particular dynamic to the relationship.⁸²

Finally, some women clearly occupied a more prominent position. The correspondences addressed to Němcová and Rajská, in particular, reflects this. Letters to these two women show that Czech nationalist women, not unlike women who were part of the international women’s organizations in the late nineteenth and twentieth century or

⁷⁹ Zapová to Karafiátová, 18 February, 1853. Zapová Collection, LAML.

⁸⁰ Vicinus, *Intimate Friends*, 85-108.

⁸¹ Karafiátová’s name suggests that she came from a renowned family of pastors of the Czech Evangelical Church (and that she was related to Jan Karafiát who is best known to the Czech audience as the author of the renowned children’s book *Broučci, pro malé i velké děti* (Prague: Albatros, 2009).

⁸² Zdeněk Záhoř (ed.), *Výbor z korespondence Boženy Němcové* (Prague: Nakladatelství Zdeněk Minařík, 1917), 173.

South Asian and European friends at the turn of the nineteenth century who formed bonds in the context of anticolonialism and anti-imperialism, looked up to prominent female figures of the Czech national movement.⁸³ For example, in one letter Němcová asks Vrbíková not to “think of me as an ideal so that you are not disappointed later.” This excerpt demonstrates that Němcová was aware of her status – both as an older friend/“sister” and renowned figure in the national community.⁸⁴ This is somewhat reminiscent of the bonds female student and teachers formed in women’s educational institutions.

Nationalist Romantic Friendships: Relationships between Czech Women

But Czech friendships were not the romantic friendships described for other nineteenth-century contexts. The different historical, geographical, social, cultural, and most specifically, the nation-building context with its requirement of participation in activities of public significance played a crucial role in the way Czech nationalist women formed friendships with each other.⁸⁵ Even the choice of the language, like writing letters in Czech, is important and differentiates Czech friendships from other romantic friendships in which language did not seem to play a role. The evidence of Czech-written letters that the women sent is especially significant given that the women often included

⁸³ Jacobs, Bosch, Kloosterman, *Politics and Friendship*; Rupp, *Worlds of Women*; and Gandhi, *Affective Communities*.

⁸⁴ Němcová to Vrbíková, 22 January, 1851, Němcová Collection, LAML.

⁸⁵ Other nineteenth-century women could arguably possess this kind of relationship, if they were also involved in a similar effort, perhaps in women in the context of the American civil war, or nineteenth-century African American women who were involved in projects to end slavery. See, Erica R. Armstrong, “A Mental and Moral Feast: Reading, Writing, and Sentimentality in Black Philadelphia,” *Journal of Women’s History* 16, no. 1 (Spring 2004): 78-102. Nonetheless, it is always important to account for differences in the social, cultural, historical etc. contexts.

references to other family members or friends, and that the letters were often shared or at least read out loud.⁸⁶ When the women wrote and read in Czech, they adopted the general nationalist appeal to promote and reproduce the national language. The preserved letters show that women most often corresponded in Czech. There are, however, a few German letters sent or addressed to those women who did not have good command of Czech, and the occasional notes written into letters by other friends, family members and even husbands would sometimes be also written in German.⁸⁷

Czech female friends met through their nationalist activities, and affiliation with the national community was the shared common platform from which their relationships sprung. As I have shown, the women discussed their domestic and household obligations. But they also paid close attention to nationalist activities and political situation, avidly following and informing each other of events of interest to the national community. This is also apparent during the Revolutionary upheaval of 1848 when women exchanged news and informed each other of various events.⁸⁸ It is unlikely that all women were equally interested in politics, but the news they exchanged with their female friends were never limited to information about their families. Němcová's letter to her friend Kateřina Lauermannová-Petrovičová in which she offers condolences on the death of her father and renowned nationalist linguist and author Josef Jungmann, exemplifies that the letters

⁸⁶ Kateřina Lauermannová to Němcová, 3 November, 1845, Němcová Collection, LAML.

⁸⁷ Although, as I mentioned in chapter 1, the preferred language of communication among Czech nationalists was Czech, not everyone mastered the language enough to speak or even write it. However, the choice of language, particularly perhaps in the notes written to the letters, might simply signify that the author did not intend the note to be available to all –or some – readers.

⁸⁸ Women met friends and colleagues at various nationalist events and often wrote to others about their experiences. See, for example, Němcová to Eliška Lamblová, 13 July 1856, Němcová Collection, LAML. This letter describes Němcová's visit to a theater with another female friend and a Sunday trip to a that a group of nationalists organized to Chuchle, a popular location just outside of Prague; and Němcová to Sofie and Johanna Rottovás, 10 September 1851, regarding Němcová's vacation (See Gebauerová (ed.), *Sebrané Spisy Boženy Němcové*, 14–16). In a letter to Čelakovská written on 28 October 1848, located in Němcová Collection, LAML, Němcová paid attention to ongoing revolutionary events.

often had important public nationalist significance.⁸⁹ Czech female friends also discussed their participation in the activities of the national movement and their own nationalist projects. For example, even after Rajská married, followed her husband Čelakovský to Wroclaw, and no longer led the women's group she had organized, she continued to express interest in Czech women's nationalist activities. In the letters she exchanged with Němcová, the two women talked about personal issues, but they never forgot to discuss women's nationalist activities including a women's almanac, the literary project I discussed in chapter 1.⁹⁰ Němcová and Rajská were not the only ones. Several years later, Zapová wrote to Karafiátová describing her own project of opening a nationalist educational institute for young girls and women and shared with her the many difficulties and obstacles she faced trying to carry out the project.⁹¹

The relationship between Němcová and Vrbíková fits with the arguments made by Vicinus. But the Czech nationalist context offers an additional layer of complexity to the sisterly-like relationships. The sources I have found suggest that sometimes, the term “sister” might also simply refer to the women's affiliation with the national movement. Furthermore, in this particular case, both Němcová and Vrbíková also belonged in a nationalist association known as Českomoravské bratrstvo (Czech-Moravian Brotherhood). This group, organized between 1848 and 1851 by several Czech nationalists including philosopher František Matouš Klácel (1808 – 1882) and physician Jan Helcelet (1812 – 1876) and in which women including Němcová and Rajská also participated, discussed various issues including communism, socialism, and humanism as

⁸⁹ Němcová to Kateřina Lauermannová-Petrovičová, 25 February, 1848, Němcová Collection, LAML.

⁹⁰ For an extensive collection of letters, see Podlipská (ed.), *Z let probuzení: Vzájemné dopisy Antonie Čelakovské (Bohuslavy Rajské) a Boženy Němcové 1844-1849, kniha 3* (Prague: J. Otto, 1873).

⁹¹ Zapová to Karafiátová, 4 November, 1853; 28 February, 1855; and 1 September, 1855. All letters in Zapová Collection, LAML.

a way to build a community based on similar principles. The members commonly addressed one another as “brother” and “sister.”⁹² In this context, the term and implication of addressing each other as “sister” was not solely an expression of familial ties among non blood related sisters, life-long commitment between the two women, or a simple affiliation with the Czech national movement. It was also a way of expressing the egalitarian ideas the members of the Czech-Moravian Brotherhood discussed.

It would seem that women’s participation in nationalist activities of public significance simply takes female friendships outside the private sphere. The evidence certainly shows that despite the advice-book attempts to suggest the contrary, Czech women were not bound solely by the world of domesticity and the private sphere. But the actual relationships blur the binary in a much more complex way. The nationalistic romantic friendships can also be interpreted as an expression of a wish for a separate, women-only space. This is particularly interesting considering that they originated in a context that supposedly welcomed, encouraged, and enabled women’s nationalist activities. But consider the letter that Němcová wrote to Vrbíková: “[f]or although I have a husband, at times we need a woman’s compassion and men seldom understand us. And even though I tell and confide in Klácel everything, I could confide in you even more.”⁹³ And then, there is the letter in which Němcová wished that she and Rottová “could [be] all alone someplace far, far away where we would not be bothered by everyday duties and where we would not be troubled by our desires, where we would be all alone with

⁹² Němcová, for example, addressed Helcelet as “brother,” see, Miloslav Novotný (ed.), *Spisy Boženy Němcové, svazek XX. Listy I.* (Prague: Čes. spisovatel, 1951), 163. Comparably, she called Vrbíková “sister.” See, for example, Němcová to Vrbíková, 25 November 1850; 13 May, 1851; 7 September 1851; and winter 1851. All letters in Němcová Collection, LAML.

⁹³ Novotný, (ed.), *Spisy Boženy Němcové, svazek XX. Listy I.*, 151,152.

our love in the great universe...?”⁹⁴ This did not mean that women highlighted the private sphere and domesticity. But it might have meant that women wished their own space to carry out their own ideas and plans regarding their vision of the national future.

Reflection of Romantic Friendships in Czech Literature

Němcová’s literary activity provides yet another way to argue that relationships between women were meaningful and important not only to the women personally, but also in respect to the ideas and visions that women expressed.⁹⁵ Put differently, a perspective of Němcová’s relationships with women enables us to see her literary work from yet another angle. Němcová’s personal experience with nationalist romantic friendships hints at why she was able to write the short stories in which she described in detail close friendships between women as well as portraying strong female personalities. One such novel, *Sestry*, was even rejected, being regarded as scandalous and shocking. It was probably not, however, because Němcová described close and devoted friendship between two sisters, but more importantly because she raised the topic of extramarital relationship and pregnancy without condemning it.⁹⁶ In this section, I consider two of Němcová’s short novels, *Karla* and *Divá Bára*, both published in 1855. Only *Divá Bára* has received any attention from historians and literature scholars. Alfred Thomas has suggested that *Divá Bára* as a story “embod[ies] the defiant [Czech] nation during the

⁹⁴ Gebauerová (ed.), *Sebrané spisy Boženy Němcové, svazek XIII. Korespondence, díl II.*, 74.

⁹⁵ I also discuss this topic in Frančíková, “‘My Dear Only One’: Rethinking Božena Němcová’s Friendships with Women.”

⁹⁶ Vladimír Macura, *Sen o rozkoši in Český sen*, 168-182 (Prague: Nakladatelství Lidové noviny, 1998), for Macura’s assessment of Němcová’s novel “*Sestry*,” see 173.

period of political oppression in the 1850s.”⁹⁷ Thomas has also pointed to a twentieth-century Czech scholar Věra Linhartová, who discussed the story “as a double allegory of female subordination to male power and Czech subjugation to an oppressive foreign regime.”⁹⁸ He has also suggested that the story depicts “the two halves of the writer’s own identity,” and “[t]he close relationship between two characters can be read as a feminist desire to reconcile these separate elements in the author’s character.”⁹⁹ My reading is different. I suggest what Thomas has not paid attention and others have completely ignored – I propose that *Karla* and *Divá Bára* portray romantic friendships between women and can serve as a good example of the reflection of romantic friendships in Němcová’s work.

The first story reminds of many similar folk tales from other contexts.¹⁰⁰ The main protagonist, Karla is a skilled and rather independent young girl raised by her mother, who was the widow of a soldier. We are told that Karla is a skilled and rather independent young girl raised by her mother, who was the widow of a soldier. When she falls in love with her friend Hana and shows absolutely no interest in boys, the neighbors begin to speculate that Karla has to have some fault, some “terrible ugly sign.”¹⁰¹ Hana pays no attention to the gossip and asserts that “[we] will stay together.”¹⁰² When boys present gifts to girls they like, Karla makes the best one and gives it to Hana and “people knew for certain that Hana didn’t want any [boy] for she was not allowed to [want

⁹⁷ Thomas, *The Bohemian Body*, 206.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 215.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 69.

¹⁰⁰ Dianne Dugaw, *Warrior Women and Popular Balladry, 1650-1850* (Cambridge [England]: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

¹⁰¹ Božena Němcová, *Povídky* (Prague: Státní nakladatelství dětské knihy, 1956), 29.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 30.

one].”¹⁰³ That night they stay up late and Hana confesses that she doesn’t want to marry anybody she doesn’t love. Karla promises that she would rather kill them.¹⁰⁴ When one evening Karla comes to a dance dressed up as a soldier, “people say it looks on [Karla] better”¹⁰⁵ and Hana is genuinely shocked: “I felt enchanted from the moment I saw you dressed like that. The world is spinning around me. We've been bewitched!”¹⁰⁶ They kiss and Karla makes Hana promise that she would marry her if Karla were a boy. Then Karla disappears. Even though it later turns out that Karla was in fact a boy raised by his mother as a girl in order to protect him from compulsory military service, the story nevertheless illustrates a few interesting issues. Němcová documents the closeness and intimacy of the girls’ friendship as well as the reaction of neighbors who, amused by Karla’s cross-dressing, do not take her role playing seriously but, at the same time, were able to tolerate same-sex friendship only if it didn’t interfere with a woman’s natural role in that, “what else is a girl for [than to marry]...”¹⁰⁷ The main character of *Divá Bára* is also a strong, skilled and independent girl, Bára, who is not intimidated by boys or folk superstitions, and is therefore thought of as rather peculiar. The whole village despises her for being the way she is and Bára has only one rather close friend, Elška. Unlike the villagers, Elška admires her strong friend and tells her repeatedly that she “loves her dearly.”¹⁰⁸ Bára is grateful for Elška’s friendship and “in her heart she embraced and kissed Elška for being so kind to her, but in fact she was too shy to express her deep affection.”¹⁰⁹ Early in their friendship Elška promises Bára “that we will stay together

¹⁰³ Ibid., 35.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 36.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 43.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 45.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 28.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 67.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 67.

and if you never marry, I will not either.”¹¹⁰ Elška is later sent to the city to be educated but they nevertheless stay close friends when she returns to the village. Elška confesses that she fell in love with a boy in the city while maintaining that Bára didn’t want to marry - “why would I spoil my mind and why would I compromise my cherished freedom?”¹¹¹ But she helps protect Elška from a marriage to a man that Elška’s aunt has found for her by dressing as a ghost and scaring him to death. When the villagers find out they are angry with her because she does not believe in superstitions and sentence her to spend a night in a morgue at the village’s cemetery, thinking that this will certainly teach her. Even this story concludes with a happy heterosexual ending when a nice young man comes to rescue Bára from the morgue the following morning, and they marry and live a respectable life ever after. Although their friendships never crossed the prescribed framework of respectability and the women remained in the heterosexual setting, Elška and Bára were – like other Czech women - at least for some time closer to each other than they were to men - confiding in, supporting and nourishing each other, and their love allowed Bára to help Elška marry the boy she fell in love with.

Němcová too had a husband and quite possibly affairs with men. Yet she wrote to Rottová in December 1852 that “[t]he love we have for each other cannot offend - Nothing can stand in our way, nor love!” She tried to advise her younger friend regarding a man with whom Rottová had fallen in love, worried about her, and urged her to think about her decision.¹¹² In fact, Němcová’s close relationship with Rajská-Čelakovská was established by Němcová’s advice regarding Rajská’s marriage. Nationalist romantic

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 78-79.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 79.

¹¹² Marie Gebauerová (ed.), *Sebrané spisy Boženy Němcové, svazek XIII. Korespondence, díl II* (Prague: Jan Laichter, 1914), 73-75.

friendships in both Němcová's life and work thus never crossed the prescribed framework of respectability and the women remained in the heterosexual setting. Nevertheless, it is apparent that friendships between women played a significant role in Němcová's life and nationalist activities including her writing, and were of great importance to her.

Conclusion

There are only few cases where Czech scholars have mentioned friendships between Czech women in the past. None of them attribute the friendships much significance, at least not in respect to women's own lives. In trying to explain why the correspondence between Němcová and Rottová and their personal contact practically vanished after October 1853, one editor of Němcová's selected correspondence suggested that their affectionate correspondence was only a pretense for Němcová's strong attachment to physician Dušan Lambl, a mutual friend of Němcová and the Rott sisters. Similarly, literary historian Karel Polák explained in 1946 that the affectionate correspondence between Němcová and Rottová was motivated by Němcová's need to assert herself against Rottová's sister Johanna, completely ignoring the significance that the relationship could have for the two women. As I have already mentioned, scholars also frequently evoke Němcová's friendship with Rajská, though only in relation to Němcová's advice that Rajská Čelakovský.¹¹³

¹¹³ On the subject of Němcová's relationships with men, see Jaroslava Janáčková (ed.), *Božena Němcová: Lamentace/Dopisy mužům* (Prague: Čs. spisovatel, 1995).

The only other instance when Czech scholarship directly acknowledged women's relationships concerns Zapová's friendship with Karafiátová, which earned a brief note by Zapová's biographer Edvard Jelínek in 1894 who stated that the friendship was "especially affectionate and devoted."¹¹⁴ Interestingly, a present-day scholar Zofia Tarajlo-Lipowska who in her analysis of Zapová's marriage, which she described as a source of Zapová's unhappiness, also drew on Zapová's correspondence to Karafiátová, completely ignored the evidence of female friendship between the two women and significance of their relationship.¹¹⁵

The ignorance, dismissal, and marginalization of female friendships in the Czech context may be striking, but it is not surprising considering the way evidence of women's relationships can be silenced and misinterpreted in other contexts. Like elsewhere, the Czech reaction could be motivated by a concern about women's respectability or unusual sexual behavior. I have not found any coded diaries similar to those that Lister wrote that would describe women's sexual behavior with other women, no accusations and trials comparable to the case of the two early-nineteenth-century Scottish teachers, no letters that speak directly to women's sexual activities. Even so, it is possible that the silence that surrounds the topic could be motivated by fears of discovering unwanted evidence of female same sex-sexuality. This might particularly concern Němcová and resemble the ways biographers elsewhere have attempted to protect lives of famous women.¹¹⁶

Although Czech scholars frequently enjoy speculating about the number of extramarital

¹¹⁴ Edvard Jelínek, *Honorata z Wiśniowských Zapová: zápisky z rodinné korespondence a vlasteneckých vzpomínek* (Prague: Nakl. J. Otto, 1894), 76.

¹¹⁵ See Zofia Tarajlo-Lipowska, "Pod rouškou spořádaného manželství aneb smutný případ Honoraty Zapové," in *Sex a tabu v české kultuře 19. století*, 104 – 113.

¹¹⁶ See Cook, "Female Support Networks and Political Activism;" Rupp, "Imagine My Surprise;" Faderman, "Who Hid Lesbian History."

heterosexual affairs that this legendary Czech author had, it is possible that her same-sex sexual relationships and desires might potentially be an issue that could seriously endanger the carefully crafted image of the “pledge and shield of this country.”¹¹⁷ It is possible that Czech scholars have tried to save women’s (heterosexual) reputation and preserve the idea of heteronormativity.

Furthermore, only a handful of studies (past and present) about women in Czech history have focused on women’s agency rather than on the ways men contributed to the launching of women’s projects. Czechs have also succeeded in establishing the illusion of harmonious gender relationships through which men and women seamlessly cooperated on building the modern nation. Quite simply, it is possible that acknowledging women’s relationships for the importance, significance, and possibility that having their own ideas and visions regarding the national future could endanger the liberal progressive image of the Czech national movement; what Malečková called the “myth of gender harmony.”¹¹⁸

The topic of female friendships is important. If we insert women’s relationships in our analysis of the Czech nation-building movement and examine the process of making a new nation, class, and gender categories and roles through the lenses of female friendships, the shifted dynamics of the public and private provides a more nuanced and complex perspective and understanding of the Czech national history, history and positionality of women, gender relationships and even Czech literature. At the same time, evidence of friendships between women in the Czech national community significantly enriches the larger phenomenon of romantic friendships in nineteenth-century. By

¹¹⁷ Jarmila Lormanová, Jan Korec (eds.), *Božena Němcová: paní našeho času* (Prague: Panorama, 1986), 14.

¹¹⁸ Malečková, “Nationalizing Women and Engendering the Nation: The Czech National Movement.” For the term “myth of gender harmony,” 294.

providing important examples of women's relationships that were not bound solely by women's domestic or familial ties, but rather stemmed from women's nationalist affiliations, these Czech female friendships relationships further contribute to blurring the public and private binary. But even the seeming similarities of the Czech nationalist romantic friendships to other romantic friendships are important. It is possible to analyze these seeming similarities in the sense of what Rupp - drawing on Carole Vance's argument about social construction of sexuality and Valerie Traub's notion of "cycles of salience" – identified as recurring patterns present across time and geographical contexts.¹¹⁹ This allows us to study the relationships between nineteenth-century Czech women as part of the larger phenomenon of romantic friendship, place the Czech relationships in a transnational and even global perspective, while at the same time accounting for geographical and temporal differences. In this way, nationalist romantic friendships substantially enrich both the Czech perspective and the larger scholarship on women's relationships in the past. At the same time, acknowledging the spaces and venues that these nationalist romantic friendships created, the contacts and connections they provided, and the possibilities they enabled offer an important perspective on modern national processes and women's positionality in modern national communities.

¹¹⁹ Rupp, *Sapphistries*, 6. For Traub's discussion of the concept, see Valerie Traub, "The Present Future of Lesbian Historiography," in *A Companion to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Studies*, eds. George E. Haggerty and Molly McGarry, 124-145 (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2007).

Chapter 4

Kateřina Maršalová: The Female Soldier, the Ideal Czech Woman, and the Boundaries of Public and Private

The journal *Květy*, one of the most popular communication channels available to Czech nationalists, typically featured popular short stories, poetry, and various news of interest to members of the Czech community. But one article in the 1845 volume stood out from the usual texts. This curious piece, entitled “The Czech Amazon,” told the story of Kateřina Maršalová, an ordinary woman who, around the mid-eighteenth century, supposedly enlisted in the Austrian army and joined a regiment of Dragoons dressed as a man.¹ She enjoyed a successful career in the military, and after it was accidentally discovered that she was a woman, Maršalová was summoned before the Austrian empress Maria Theresa, who publicly praised her and rewarded her bravery.

Compared with other known instances of female soldiers - women who cross-dressed to enlist in the army – such a positive treatment is extremely rare and limited to aristocratic women.² But the exceptional reception by the empress is not the only aspect that makes this story so intriguing. The crucial point of the story is that the anonymous

¹ M.F. “Kateřina Maršalová, amazonka česká,” *Květy* (I.) 12, no. 92 (1845): 367-368.

² As several scholars of sexuality have shown, female soldiers typically received severe punishment or ridicule rather than royal praise and gifts. See, for example, Faderman, *Surpassing the Love of Men*; Rudolf Dekker and Lotte van de Pol, *The Tradition of Female Transvestism in Early Modern Europe* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1989); Donoghue, *Passions between Women*; Julie Wheelwright, *Amazons and Military Maids* (London, Boston: Pandora, 1989); Nadezhda Durova, *The Cavalry Maid*, trans. John Mersereau, Jr (Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1988); Vern L. Bullough and Bonnie Bullough, *Cross Dressing, Sex, and Gender* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993); and Maria Bucur, “Between the Mother of the Wounded and the Virgin from Jiu.”

author presented Maršalová as a role model for Czech women, while maintaining that Maršalová joined the army because she became “bored with her duties as a nanny and disliked caring for children.”³ After she left the army, Maršalová married another soldier and had three children who all died at a very young age. But even with the heterosexual sop that followed her discharge from the military, Maršalová does not quite seem to fit the exemplary ideal national woman who would guarantee that the Czech nation would be prosperous, advanced, and generally on a par with other well established modern nations. As I have shown in the previous chapters, Czech nationalists expected and urged women to participate in the activities of the national community. In no way, however, were women allowed to forget their duties as housekeepers, mothers, and child educators. The early death of Maršalová’s children and husband, as well as the grave poverty in which she suffered toward the end of her life, seem to echo this breach of womanly duties. Surprisingly, the author did not condemn Maršalová, but rather proclaimed her to be a “Czech [woman] who showed exemplary fervor, unselfish love, and determination [and could] carry out great efforts [on behalf of the Czech nation].”⁴

This chapter explores the possible meanings and implications of this curious story, in which the author glorified Maršalová both as an Amazon and woman who embodied the desirable characteristics that all other Czech women should possess and utilize to ensure their nation’s prosperity. My goal is not to investigate whether Maršalová was an actual person and female soldier, or whether the author told an accurate story. Even with elements that make the story unlikely, it does not matter whether it was a description of an actual female soldier’s life. Placing the story of

³ M.F. “Kateřina Maršalová,” 367.

⁴ Ibid., 368.

Maršalová in the broader context of the history of sexuality, nationalisms, women, and gender, I argue that the tale is important for what it conveys and brings in. As a story published in the mid-nineteenth century, Maršalová significantly enriches and challenges the conventional female soldier genre and the notion of a national crisis that demanded women's involvement and evoked images of women fighting for their nations and countries during revolutions, wars, and national uprisings. It is also an important story of representations, whose significance lies in the message that it attempted to communicate to the nineteenth-century Czechs, and particularly women. This story provides yet another example of how in the process of constructing a modern nation, women's roles and responsibilities encompassed and blurred boundaries of the private and public spheres. At the same time, the Maršalová tale is a cautionary story, implying that at least some Czech nationalists felt compelled to warn women that their participation in the nationalist public sphere, albeit motivated by their affiliation with the national movement, might prove to be a risky terrain.

The Maršalová tale is – like Němcová's story of Karla I discussed in the previous chapter – part of a long tradition of disguised gender that provide us with a different way to consider what it means to cross gender and social categories.⁵ In her essay "Tancredi Continues," Hélène Cixous suggested that woman first needs to become a man to become a woman again to be able to accomplish what would have been impossible in her original body. Borrowing from Cixous, I explore the story of Maršalová as a sequence of individual transformative steps that a woman must go through to become capable of

⁵ Dugaw, *Warrior Women and Popular Balladry*.

working on behalf of the nation.⁶ I argue that the story suggests that women needed to transform in order to become the critical imaginary citizens; useful and fitting members of the Czech national community. As I showed in previous chapters, an integral part of joining the national community was to learn the rules and requirements thereof. Although the act of becoming Czech concerned men and women alike, Maršalová's story well demonstrates how important it was to change and make women fit for the national purpose. Engaging with Malečková's arguments in "Nationalizing Women and Engendering the Nation: The Czech National Movement," I show not only that women's images had to be appropriated to fit into the grid of the critical imaginary citizen and ideal woman, but also that women had to be completely re-invented and made anew.⁷ I suggest that all these transformative steps underscore Maršalová's affiliation with the modern Czech nation and had particular resonance to the mid-nineteenth-century members of the Czech national community.⁸

I examine the issues connected with these transformative steps - including the complex representations of the recurring themes of Amazons and female warriors, female masculinity, bravery, and patriotism - as ways through which women were supposed to prove their readiness to be part of the national community. I argue that it was not until Maršalová completed all these steps that she became the ideal Czech woman. Finally, I suggest that her hatred of children - one of Maršalová's motivations for joining the

⁶ Hélène Cixous, "Tancredi Continues," chap 3 in *Coming to Writing" And Other Essays*, 78-103 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991), see esp. 96.

⁷ Jitka Malečková, "Nationalizing Women and Engendering the Nation."

⁸ Maršalová's Czechness was obviously an identity invented for the purpose of the nineteenth-century national audience. The Czech national audience, at which the text was aimed, would understand Maršalová to be Czech in the modern sense of the word, but of course this was far from the eighteenth century context. On the ways in which eighteenth-century inhabitants of the Czech Lands understood and claimed their identity, see also Pavel Himl, *Zrození vagabunda: neusedlí lidé v Čechách v 17. a 18. století* (Prague: Argo, 2007).

military - was, if read in light of the Kristevian notion of abjection, a necessary prerequisite to constructing a new, completely different identity and towards becoming the ideal woman. At the same time, I propose that the Maršalová story needs to be understood in the context of symbolic inversion, as a way to bounce off the idea of the ideal middle-class woman and simultaneously a cautionary tale to remind Czechs that women must not breach their domestic duties. The story offers another compelling illustration of the complexity of women's positionality in the construction of the modern Czech nation, and of the tensions connected with women's participation in public activities.

The Ideal Czech Woman: between the Amazons, Female Soldiers, and Female Masculinity

The story's title and opening paragraphs associate Maršalová with the Amazons. The author of the article praised Maršalová as a "true and dignified descendant of [our] warlike [mythical Czech female warriors] Vlasta and Šárka,"⁹ and glorified the life and efforts of the female soldier as a "Czech [woman] who proved that she could carry out great efforts [on behalf of the Czech nation]."¹⁰ But statements such as these – even if, or precisely if, they were to be read as an attempt at recreating a lost (Czech) past - do not come across easily – even if, or precisely if, they were to be read as an attempt to recreate a lost (Czech) past. The larger scholarship on the women's and gender history, as well as history of sexuality, makes clear that the Amazons were hardly ever perceived as role models or positive figures. This was no different in the Czech context.

⁹ M.F. "Kateřina Maršalová," 367.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 368.

An entry from the Czech encyclopedia for women exemplifies the point. It describes the story of the Amazons as it is well-known in the global, transnational context¹¹ The Amazons are warlike and brave mannish women, “no men women” who only had intercourse with men once a year, mutilated children of the male sex so that they could not hold a weapon in adulthood, and cut off their daughters’ right breast so that it would not present an obstacle when handling a bow. This text tells us that there is also a Czech dimension to the story, or rather, a Czech branch of the Amazons. With allusion to a tale from the Czech mythology about the so called Women’s Revolt,¹² the entry explains that “the Amazons could be found also in Bohemia [and] that there they, too, wore iron armor and many weapons, and constantly fought and persecuted men.” As the author of the story noted, “although they had seemed undefeatable, men eventually overran them, taking over their castle and disciplined nearly all [of them].” As Malečková has pointed out, nineteenth-century Czech nationalists had particular problem with Vlasta, the mythical leader of the Czech Women’s Revolt with whom Maršalová was also compared.¹³ Malečková has suggested that Vlasta’s fight against and resistance to men often made her “subject to ridicule,” although, as she has also shown, different sources published in the same time period could portray Vlasta in quite a positive light.¹⁴ Even so, Malečková has noted that “as late as 1890, [the nationalist female writer Sofie] Podlipská compared [Vlasta] to a monster,” portraying her as “brave, and sometimes

¹¹ Rupp, *Sapphistries*, 15-21.

¹² Women’s Revolt (*Dívčí válka*) is a tale from the Czech mythology. It describes the events after the death of the prophetess Libuše who ruled the land but was eventually made to surrender the reign to Přemysl, the founder of the first Czech royal dynasty. After Libuše’s death, women –who had enjoyed freedom under her rule – revolted against men and fought under the leadership of a woman named Vlasta. According to the legend, the revolt was powerful and it took men a long time to defeat it.

¹³ M.F. “Kateřina Maršalová,” 367.

¹⁴ Malečková, “Nationalizing Women and Engendering the Nation: The Czech National Movement,” esp. 298 – 303.

well-intentioned, but in her struggle against men, as absolutely unfeminine.”¹⁵ It does not come as a great surprise, then, that the author of the entry on the Amazons in the prepared encyclopedia for women remarked on the “oddity” of the Women’s Revolt and noted that she would leave it up to “true womanhood” to judge just how much the Amazons “forgot themselves, denied their sex and left their calm households” to take up “sordid fighting.”¹⁶

As I showed in the first chapter, other Czech nationalists, including Doucha, Amerling, and Zapová, also described “mannishness,” - women trying to assume men’s duties and obligations - in quite a negative manner. Those who read of Maršalová in *Květy* were - like aspiring members of the middle class in other nineteenth-century contexts – busy constructing the parameters of a separate (middle-) class, distinctly different from other “classes of people.” This was, as I have shown, an effort that encompassed a whole spectrum of conduct rules and lifestyle practices, positioning the desirable characteristics in clear opposition to the undesirable ones.¹⁷ Men and women who wanted to belong in modern middle-class communities were urged to abandon the characteristics and practices considered to endanger the resilience, prosperity, and

¹⁵ Ibid., 305.

¹⁶ Entry “Amazonky,” signed in the name of Emilie Frišová, box 25, Amerling Collection, LAML.

¹⁷ There is a substantial advice literature in various nineteenth-century middle-class contexts, aiming to teach people how to improve themselves and lead a “healthy lifestyle.” It frequently focused on women, and included a whole range of everyday activities: from hygiene and clothing, to eating and socializing. For early examples of such literature that played an important role throughout the nineteenth century, see, Christoph Wilhelm Hufeland, *Die Kunst das menschliche Leben zu verlängern* (Jena: Akademische Verlagsbuchhandlung 1797). Heinrich Felix Paulizky, *Anleitung für Landleute zu einer vernünftigen Gesundheitspflege...* (Frankfurt am Main: Andreä, 1791). Hufeland’s work, especially, was very popular in the nineteenth century and frequently translated into various different languages including Czech and English. For the English translation available to American readers, see Erasmus Wilson (ed.), *Hufeland’s Art of Prolonging Life* (Boston: Ticknor, Reed and Fields, 1854). Other texts on improving the quality of life include Joel Shew, *Hydropathic Family Physician; A Ready Prescriber and Hygienic Adviser* (New York : Fowlers and Wells, 1854); James M. Gully, *Water Cure in Chronic Disease* (London: Churchill, 1846); and Joel H. Ross, *Golden Rules of Health* (New York, publ. by the author, 1849).

advancement of the modern new class and community.¹⁸ The story goes beyond the entertaining moralizing mockery of the broadside balladry, a genre that also popularized female soldier stories.¹⁹ Those who read or heard the story of Maršalová should not have been merely amused, but rather completely appalled. Why, then, would Maršalová be depicted as a positive figure, and even a role model?

Maršalová's positionality as a female soldier is equally paradoxical. As the larger scholarship on the history of sexuality, nationalism, and women and gender makes clear, it is quite unusual for a female soldier, especially of the early modern period and coming from a lower class, to be as unconditionally glorified, even presented as the ideal woman, as the journal account suggests. Not all women who lived disguised as men were punished²⁰ or ridiculed, however.²¹ Like other passing women, female soldiers were not always perceived in an entirely negative light.²² In addition to aristocratic and upper-class women who often escaped any kind of categorization, theatre was another venue where cross-dressing generally did not raise alarms.²³ And even lower-class women who managed to pass did not necessarily earn negative judgment if they were perceived as

¹⁸ The scholarship that has explored the ways in which members of modern national communities were trained to discipline and police themselves, and one another, in order to guarantee their success is extensive and includes studies such as Michele Mitchell, *Righteous Propagation: African Americans and the Politics of Racial Destiny after Reconstruction* (Chapel Hill & London: University of North Carolina Press, 2004) and Alison Bashford, *Imperial Hygiene: A Critical History of Colonialism, Nationalism and Public Health* (Houndsmills and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004).

¹⁹ Dugaw, *Warrior Women and Popular Balladry*.

²⁰ Dekker and van de Pol, *The Tradition of Female Transvestism in Early Modern Europe*; Bullough and Bullough, *Cross Dressing, Sex, and Gender*; Donoghue, *Passions between Women*, esp. 59-86; Faderman, *Surpassing the Love of Men*, esp. 47-61.

²¹ See Donoghue, *Passions between Women*, esp. 59-86; Faderman, *Surpassing the Love of Men*, esp. 47-61; and Helmut Puff, "Female Sodomy: The Trial of Katherina Hetzeldorfer (1477)," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 30 no. 1 (Winter 2000): 41-61.

²² Both Dekker and van de Pol and Bullough and Bullough have shown that even in the early modern times, female soldiers were not always treated negatively (see the case of Trijntje Simons/Simon Poort in Dekker and van de Pol, *The Tradition of Female Transvestism in Early Modern Europe*, 73 and the case of Catalina de Erauso discussed in Bullough and Bullough, *Cross Dressing, Sex, and Gender*, 96-97).

²³ As Faderman has pointed out, however, even Queen Christina of Sweden had to resign from the throne in order to live the way she wanted. See Faderman, *Surpassing the Love of Men*, 61.

virgins, saints, or maidens, meaning unmarried women. References to Joan of Arc as a way to denote positive characteristics extended across time and geographical contexts, just as references to the Amazons very often pointed to the opposite judgment. Julie Wheelwright has noted that contemporaries compared several nineteenth- and twentieth-century female soldiers, including Flora Sanders, a British female soldier who fought in Serbia during World War I, to Joan of Arc in the sense of being “above sex,” i.e. asexual, and, therefore, not threatening.²⁴ As Wheelwright has also argued, the Amazons, similarly to female warriors, were traditionally socially accepted if they were portrayed as sexless or as virgins.²⁵

But women who passed and lived as men always represented the possibility of same-sex desire and often required at least the appearance of sexual interest in and behavior with women. The excuse that unmarried women were allowed to cross-dress did not always work to avoid punishment. The eighteenth-century female soldier Catherina Margaretha Linck, who was executed approximately twenty years before Maršalová would have been born, used the argument. However, even with this excuse she did not avoid the death penalty, although not for cross-dressing but on sodomy charges after it was discovered that she married another woman and had a sexual relationship with her using a dildo.²⁶

²⁴ Wheelwright has quoted the term “above sex,” from a nineteenth-century treatise of Joan of Arc written by Frank Mundell in *Heroines of History*. Mundell stated that “[Joan of Arc] was above sex and yielded to no one in courage or military virtues.” Frank Mundell, *Heroines of History* (London: The Sunday School Union, 1898), 40, quoted in Wheelwright, *Amazons and Military Maids*, 77.

²⁵ Wheelwright, *Amazons and Military Maids*, 12.

²⁶ See Dekker and van de Pol, *The Tradition of Female Transvestism*, 44. For a detailed account of the case of Linck, see Brigitte Eriksson, “Lesbian Execution in Germany, 1721” *Journal of Homosexuality* 6, no. 1 and 2 (1981): 27-40.

Approximately from the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars, female soldiers started to be considered in an increasingly more positive light.²⁷ The case of the Russian noblewoman Nadezhda Durova, who acquired the Tsar's permission to fight in a male uniform in the Napoleonic Wars, is a good case in point that bridges the early modern phenomenon of a female soldier with the modern trope of a courageous woman who participates in a "national" struggle.²⁸ The idea – and image – of a brave woman (although usually not a female soldier in the early modern sense, but rather a woman who embodies certain specific ideas of "womanhood" and "femininity" while engaging in a temporal brave fight for her country) was especially strong in contexts of modern national movements. Moments of national crisis called for patriotic, national - and beautiful - Mariannes who were ready to prove that they could temporarily stand on the barricades to help protect and save their nations.²⁹ But even women who participated in these national and patriotic wars and fought on barricades at times of national crises were expected to return to their domestic roles as soon as the crises were over.

²⁷ Although Dekker and van de Pol have shown that patriotism was as a reason for women to enlist in the army disguised as a man even in the early modern era (Dekker and van de Pol, *The Tradition of Female Transvestism in Early Modern Europe*, 30 – 32), most scholars have focused on the "more modern" trend of women fighting on behalf of their nations and countries. See, for example, Durova, *The cavalry maid*; Wheelwright, *Amazons and Military Maids*; Bucur, "Between the Mother of the Wounded and the Virgin from Jiu. Romanian Women and the Gender of Heroism during the Great War." Other texts that discuss this more modern phenomenon include Karen Hagemann, "'Heroic Virgins' and 'Bellicose Amazons': Armed Women, the Gender Order and the German Public during and after the Anti-Napoleonic Wars" *European History Quarterly* 37 (Oct 2007): 507 – 527; Karen Hagemann u. Ralf Pröve (Hg.), *Landsknechte, Soldatenfrauen und Nationalkrieger - Militär, Krieg und Geschlechterordnung im historischen Wandel* (New York: Campus Verlag, 1998); and Karen Hagemann, Alan Forrest, and Jane Rendall (eds.), *Soldiers, Citizens and Civilians: Experiences and Perceptions of the French Wars, 1790-1820 (War, Culture and Society, 1750-1850)* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009);

²⁸ Durova, *The cavalry maid*.

²⁹ See, for example, George L. Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality: Middle-Class Morality and Sexual Norms in Modern Europe* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988); Blom, Hagemann and Hall (eds.), *Gendered Nations*. For the Czech context, see Macura, "Sen o Amazonce," in *Český sen*; and Jitka Malečková, "Nationalizing Women and Engendering the Nation."

Even with the images of courageous women who took a break from their domestic duties to fight on behalf of their nations, however, scholars have shown that women who disguised as men always posed a problem as they were considered as appropriating masculinity, threatening to assume male privileges, and seeking too much independence from men. Judith Halberstam, who has focused on analyzing “female masculinity,” has echoed many feminist scholars when she pointed out that, “Masculinity in this society inevitably conjures up notions of power and legitimacy and privilege.” However, as she has also argued, “what we understand as ‘heroic masculinity’ has been produced by and across both male and female bodies.”³⁰ Scholars have shown that women’s masculinity or behavior generally perceived as masculine could be socially permissible, accepted, and at times even demanded, but it always had to be strictly regulated. Vern and Bonnie Bullough have argued that “[I]n crises, women were supposed to act “manly” and not show any “womanly and cowardly feeling.”³¹ As they summarized, “manliness in women, if not carried too far was much admired... Only when women threatened the male establishment by taking too overtly masculine role have they been ostracized in the past.”³² Similarly, in her study of Albanian “sworn virgins,” women who take on identities of men and become heads of households, Antonia Young has shown that under certain socially and culturally accepted conditions, some women may take on “traditional” roles of men without compromising their social status and respectability.³³ Unless firmly placed in the scheme of compulsory heterosexuality/the heterosexual matrix, women who lived and occasionally fought as men have always been

³⁰ Judith Halberstam, *Female Masculinity* (Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press, 1998), 2.

³¹ Bullough and Bullough, *Cross Dressing, Sex, and Gender*, 67.

³² *Ibid.*, 68.

³³ Antonia Young, *Women Who Become Men: Albanian Sworn Virgins* (Oxford; New York: Berg, 2000).

presented and analyzed as transgressing and deviating from the gender and social, norm.³⁴ In spite of that, Maršalová ends up glorified as a female soldier, seamlessly blending the aspects typical for the early modern female soldier with the modern phenomenon of the patriotic, nationalist struggle, not fitting either perfectly. Moreover, she is proclaimed a role model for other Czech women.

Becoming the Ideal Imaginary Citizen and Ideal Czech Woman

From the very beginning of the story, it is clear that Maršalová has the strong potential to become the ideal imaginary citizen, ideal woman, and a role model for other Czech women. But to achieve that, she must go through a series of transformations. The tale of Maršalová's becoming the ideal Czech woman, then, can be read as a parable for the transformations that other women needed to undergo in order to become part of the Czech national community.

Like many other documented cases of female soldiers, Maršalová came from a lower-class background.³⁵ Born outside the Eastern Bohemian town of Hradec Králové, Maršalová's father was a military invalid who had died when Maršalová was still young. She was raised by her mother, and eventually entered service as a nanny for her uncle in Prague.³⁶ Like the American female soldier Deborah Sampson, who served during the American War of Independence, one of the prominent characteristics that motivated Maršalová to join the military was her courageous nature, which the author presented as

³⁴ Leila Rupp has also discussed this in *Sapphistries*.

³⁵ Dekker and van de Pol, *The Tradition of Female Transvestism in Early Modern Europe*, 11.

³⁶ M.F. "Kateřina Maršalová," 367.

one of the essential Czech virtues.³⁷ But in addition, “[Maršalová] was a young and agile girl [who] possessed a true Czech adventurous nature and desire to get to know the world and people.”³⁸ In other words, the author of the story presented Maršalová with the perfect nationalist credentials. Although the eighteenth-century ordinary female soldier had very little to do with the nineteenth-century Czech nationalists, Maršalová was constructed as a Czech nationalistic, patriotic heroine. She was clearly intended to be a representative Czech woman.

When her younger brother Jan Maršal was drafted and confided in her that he would rather drown himself in Vltava, the river that runs through Prague, than serve in the military, Maršalová did not hesitate to help. She convinced him to swap clothes with her, and her brother, dressed in female attire, returned to his mother claiming that he had been discharged for physical disability. The author did not indicate whether the brother had arrived home wearing women’s clothes, and if so, how his neighbors and mother reacted. Even more surprisingly, the author did not say that the mother inquired about her daughter. These are some of the unlikely elements of the story.

First Transformation

Maršalová remained in Prague and joined the Dragoons, adopting the personality of Jan Maršal. The Bohemian-recruited Dragoon Regiment where she served, supposedly under the command of Wáclav hrabě [Count] Kolowrat-Krakowsky, a name signifying another old Czech aristocratic family that also participated in the Czech national

³⁷ Wheelwright, *Amazons and Military Maids*, 93.

³⁸ M.F. “Kateřina Maršalová,” 367.

movement, further contributes to her construction as a representative Czech woman.³⁹ We learn that Maršalová had no trouble fitting in the unit.⁴⁰ Her brother's shyness and introverted lifestyle apparently gained Maršalová enough time to get herself acquainted with life in the army. It is doubtful that she would have been as withdrawn as her brother: it was she, after all, who took charge, convinced her brother to do the switch, and seemed more than eager to join the military. But the story depicted her as being "eager to learn, orderly, and continuously bashful," and she "soon gained friendship of her fellow soldiers and trust of her commanding officers."⁴¹

The author only mentioned one armed conflict in which the female soldier was involved: a clash with a Bavarian border guard who stole sheep from a Czech herdsman. During this fight, Maršalová received a head wound that caused her to lose consciousness. However, she managed to avoid hospitalization, and, therefore, succeeded in concealing her "true sex."⁴² This, too, is not at all surprising and fits easily into the genre of early modern female soldiers who often miraculously prevented discovery, even after being severely wounded in battle.⁴³ Moreover, this allowed the author to praise

³⁹ According to the story, Maršalová joined the Dragoon Regiment Nr. 6 Wáclav hrabě [Count] Kolowrat-Krakowsky (M.F. "Kateřina Maršalová," 367). Wáclav Count Kolowrat-Krakowsky [full name, in German, Emanuel Wenzel Graf Kolowrat-Krakowsky] served as the Colonel-in-Chief of the Bohemian Dragoon Regiment Nr.6 [Böhmisches Dragoner-Regiment Nr. 6] from 1753 to 1769. See Alphons Wrede, Anton Semek, *Geschichte der k. u. k. Wehrmacht; die Regimenten, Corps, Branchen und Anstalten von 1618 bis Ende des XIX Jahrhunderts, III. Band, 2. Hälfte* (Wien: L. W. Seidel, 1901), 689-692. Maršalová's association with the Dragoons – units that the mid-nineteenth-century audience would have held in high esteem for their role during the Napoleonic Wars – further underscored the female soldier's prestige, fame, and positive portrayal. On the role of aristocracy in the Czech national movement, see also Krueger, *Czech, German, and Noble*; Glassheim, *Noble Nationalists*; and Polišínský, *Aristocrats and the Crowd in the Revolutionary Year 1848*.

⁴⁰ For a discussion of the ways in which female soldiers handled practical and everyday issues that a woman would have to deal with in the military including menstruation and bathing, and the ways in which female soldiers tried to fit in and prevent discovery, see Dekker and van de Pol, *The Tradition of Female Transvestism in Early Modern Europe*, 15-16.

⁴¹ M.F. "Kateřina Maršalová," 367.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ As Dekker and van de Pol point out, the stress of being discovered was very much present in early female soldiers who would have to be continuously alert. They have suggested that friendliness,

Maršalová as “smart for being able to hide her identity despite the ever present danger of being discovered.”⁴⁴ For nineteenth-century Czech readers, specifically, Maršalová’s patriotic fervor when protecting the Czech herdsman--along with her bravery, courage, and miraculous recovery--must have earned her much approval and served as yet further proof of her work for the benefit of the nation.

Second Transformation

The story shifts its course after the author tells us that “after six years in the military ... Maršalová is transferred to Prague.”⁴⁵ Not long after her return to the symbolic Czech center, we are told that the Czech Amazon “started missing her previous life, mother, and her brother terribly, as she heard nothing of them for the past six years.”⁴⁶ It is difficult to separate homesickness from longing for her mother, especially as both are clearly presented as part of the picture of the ideal Czech woman. According to the logic of the article, it is perfectly appropriate and necessary for the ideal woman to eventually - after having fought for the nation - display such emotions and demonstrate her nationalist and feminine sentiments. But as the figure of her brother demonstrates, it is completely inappropriate for a man to give into the same sentiments if this serves as a way to avoid his responsibilities.

The symbolism of homesickness is also what makes the story work. Not only is homesickness – along with kindness and obligation to her brother in the case of the first

helpfulness and having a regular comrade were ways to protect oneself from being discovered. As they have also shown, sickness (and, therefore, a fight-related injury), was a major issue. See Dekker and van de Pol, *The Tradition of Female Transvestism in Early Modern Europe.*, 18-21.

⁴⁴ M.F. “Kateřina Maršalová,” 367.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 367 – 368.

transformation – the tool that enables Maršalová to transform between sex/gender identities, but Maršalová’s homesickness serves an important purpose in a couple of different ways. First, it helps demonstrate that Maršalová is a true Czech. Following the logic of many nineteenth-century Czech texts, one intended message was that Czechs belong to the Czech Lands. As the lyrics of the present day Czech national anthem—which originated as part of an 1843 theatrical play written by Tyl--so well describe, Czechs should be captivated by the beautiful countryside and bound by the Czech country to the point that they should never want to leave.⁴⁷ Simply put, it is only in the Czech Lands that a Czech feels at home. Interpreted along these lines, homesickness is an innate quality and appears in all those who left their land.

Unlike in the case of her brother, Maršalová’s homesickness does not make her weak, but serves as the mechanism that eventually enables her journey towards becoming the ideal Czech woman. Curiously, Maršalová only becomes homesick after she returns to Prague. This does not merely underscore the symbolic significance of Prague. She clearly could not have been homesick while bravely fighting on behalf of her nation; this would link the emotion to cowardice and undesirable qualities. Maršalová needed to be a female warrior to rescue and save the imagined, constructed, and invented Czech nation. She needed to prove bravery and courage and - unlike her brother - help her nation in a time of crisis. Homesickness and the symbolism of home helps to transpose Maršalová back to womanhood and femininity, her “natural womanly duties.”

⁴⁷ Another Tyl’s play, “Lesní panna aneb cesta do Ameriky,” which describes a young man who immigrates to America but does not find his fortune there and returns as soon as possible also well exemplifies this point. See Josef Kajetán Tyl, “Lesní panna aneb cesta do Ameriky” in *Sebrané spisy Jos. Kaj. Tyla* (Prague: B. Kočí, 1907), 329-349.

However, it is this symbolic homesickness that ended her successful career as a female soldier. Maršalová was illiterate, so she asked a fellow soldier to write a letter on her behalf. The soldier wrote the letter, signing it in the name of her brother. Upon receiving the letter, her mother questioned her brother, learned about the deception, and went to Prague where, “despite Maršalová’s pleas, she publicly revealed her daughter’s true identity.”⁴⁸

When the news reached the Imperial Court, the empress Maria Theresa ordered Maršalová to travel to Vienna, where she praised her and rewarded her for bravery. This is where the story shifts its course.⁴⁹ This is perhaps the first story of an ordinary female soldier who was honored by a high ranking state official, no less the empress, who at around the same time signed the *Constitutio Criminalis Theresiana*, a short-lived but particularly harsh criminal code that recognized and punished female same-sex sexuality. Although nothing in the story connects Maršalová with same-sex sexuality, we might speculate that a case of a cross-dressing female soldier might have triggered charges that could fall in a category for which the criminal code imposed severe punishment.⁵⁰

After her positive audience before the empress, Maršalová was requested to show off her martial skills in front of Maria Theresa and her son, presumably, given the story’s

⁴⁸ M.F. “Kateřina Maršalová,” 368.

⁴⁹ According to the story, the empress was informed first by the Bohemian and later the Imperial command. Dekker and van de Poll have argued that – unlike judges who might have been willing to overlook acts of cross-dressing between women - military officials had to act on each case of a discovered female soldier. They have also point out, however, that although female soldiers could have been a “source of annoyance to them, (...) she was also a possible means of propaganda.” See Dekker and van de Pol, *The Tradition of Female Transvestism in Early Modern Europe*, 74.

⁵⁰ As Helmut Graupner has discussed, *Constitutio Criminalis Theresiana*, promulgated in 1768, also included sexual acts between women into the definition of sodomy. Other sexual offences beyond sodomy were also punished. See Helmut Graupner, “Austria: Against the Order of Nature – A History of Persecution,” in *Sociolegal Control of Homosexuality: A Multi-Nation Comparison*, 269-288, edited by Donald J. West and Richard Green (New York: Plenum Press, 1997). For the discussion of *Constitutio Criminalis Theresiana*, see 270.

significance to the nineteenth-century Czech audience, the future emperor Josef II.⁵¹ Like many other nineteenth- and twentieth-century female soldiers, Maršalová enjoyed great popularity and much admiration.⁵² Even if only financially, which might have been a concern after her discharge from the military, Maršalová must have been better off in Vienna.⁵³ But Maršalová needed to become the ideal Czech, so she, therefore, had to become homesick again. We are told that “Maršalová’s heart longed for her home and her mother,” and so she “chose to return.”⁵⁴ The empress discharged her with honors and sent her on her way, with a substantial sum of money and a letter of admittance to Vlašský špitál, one of the most important pre-Josephinian institutions, which combined the functions of hospital and poorhouse in Prague, “in case she became impoverished either due to old age or ill health.”⁵⁵

Third Transformation

The remainder of the story is brief, but no less important. Although this part has seemingly little to do with Maršalová’s former courageous deeds in the military, it is the most crucial phase to complete her transformations into the ideal Czech woman. It is in

⁵¹ The eldest son of Maria Theresa, Holy Roman Emperor Josef II (1741-1790), was also the King of Bohemia from 1780 to 1790. He followed in his mother’s footsteps and introduced several important reforms, which had particular significance for the initial phase of the Czech national movement in the late eighteenth-century. Some of the important reforms included granting full legal freedom to serfs, issuing the Edict of Tolerance, abolishing contemplative monasteries, and establishing German as the compulsory language of administration.

⁵² Wheelwright has documented several cases of nineteenth- and twentieth- century female soldiers who spoke in front of audiences, toured, and received public attention. As she has noted, however, this kind of attention was not solely admiring and positive. See Wheelwright, *Amazons and Military Maids*, 132 – 160. Maršalová, like other female soldiers, would undoubtedly have presented a similar spectacle.

⁵³ Wheelwright has shown that Deborah Sampson (Gannett) had pressing financial concerns after her discharge from the military. See Wheelwright, *Amazons and Military Maids*, 132 – 135.

⁵⁴ M.F. “Kateřina Maršalová,” 368.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

this part of the story that Maršalová transforms one last time, in order to prove that she is not only a true Czech but also a real woman, and, finally, a role model for other Czech women.

We are told that several years after her discharge from the military, Maršalová decided to marry. Even though readers learn nothing more than the name of her husband, this is sufficient information from which to deduce that – at least according to his name – her husband was Czech. Marriage itself would not be enough to allow her to reinvent, and perhaps finally achieve, her “womanhood.” For this reason, she also gave birth to three children.

This final phase of the tale very much corresponds with another entry that was included in the Czech version of the encyclopedia for women. The entry describes the activities and life of Antonia Tomaszewska, a female revolutionary who fought at the Polish Uprising of 1830. Although Tomaszewska was also compared with the Amazons, her association with the Maid of Orleans and fighting Vesta, the Roman virgin goddess of home, heart, and family, clearly helped to present the Polish Revolutionary in a good light. The entry explains that Tomaszewska was sixteen when she joined the Polish uprising and fought on her nation’s behalf. Having ignored pleas of her family, she acquired armor and a horse, and quickly learned to fight as well as her male compatriots. Tomaszewska was praised by her fellow soldiers and knew how to “preserve women’s dignity in the military camp.” After the defeat of the Poles, Tomaszewska married a Polish officer and “the love of a wife and mother surely put a healing balm on the wound

her heart suffered from her country's unhappiness."⁵⁶ It was Tomaszewska's role as a wife and mother, then, that put her firmly in the proper category of woman.

But Maršalová's story is different. In spite of her marriage to a (presumably) Czech man and giving birth to Czech children, completing the full circle of transformations and becoming the ideal and a role model to other Czech women, the transformations come not without a warning. Where other stories of patriotic, national heroines, including Tomaszewska, ended, Maršalová's story continued. We are told that after the marriage, "[Maršalová's] children all died at a very young age [and] her husband succumbed to a disease while in a military campaign in Hungary."⁵⁷ Moreover, in the turmoil of military life, Maršalová lost the letter that the Austrian empress had issued, admitting her to Vlašský špitál.⁵⁸ Maršalová thus spent the rest of her life alone and poor, "supporting herself only by peddling and selling flowers." As we are told, "she would not have been able to survive without soldiers from the Prague garrisons, particularly the older and higher ranking officers, who supported her, called her an old dragoon, and eagerly listened to her stories."⁵⁹ This hardly makes for a winning tale.

Maršalová as the Ideal Czech Woman...

⁵⁶ Entry "Antonie Tomaszewska," signed in the name of Vlastimila Růžičková, box 25, Amerling Collection, LAML. Antonia Tomaszewska was an actual woman who participated at the Polish November Uprising of 1830 - 1831. Perhaps not as famous as Emilia Plater, the most renowned female soldier at the Uprising, Tomaszewska has also received attention, namely from Polish scholars. See Dioniza Wawrzykowska-Wierciochowa, *Sercem i orezem Ojczyźnie służyły: Emilia Plater i inne uczestniczki powstania listopadowego, 1830-1831* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Ministerstwa Obrony Narodowej, 1982).

⁵⁷ M.F. "Kateřina Maršalová," 368.

⁵⁸ Ibid. She probably would not have had use for the letter regardless, as the hospital was closed in 1789 due to the Josephinian reforms.

⁵⁹ M.F. "Kateřina Maršalová," 367.

The point of Maršalová's transformations was to create a new person: a true Czech woman capable of encompassing all the duties and obligations required of her. Several series of transformations and the act of cross-dressing were the only pathways through which she could accomplish this task, become who she needed to be, and fulfill this role. As such, Maršalová's cross-dressing fits in the kind of space that Marjorie Garber has described as a "borderline that becomes permeable, that permits border crossing from one (apparently distinct) category to another."⁶⁰ For Garber, "*transvestism* [or cross-dressing] *is a space of possibility structuring and confounding culture,*" meaning that cross-dressing/transvestism signifies that the categories male and female are themselves "in crisis."⁶¹ In other words, cross-dressing (whether a temporary or more permanent situation) is an act of disruption that allows for new opportunities and spaces in an otherwise stable and given order. Maršalová moved through these spaces and opportunities in order to become new, to become Czech. At the same time, Maršalová as a story disrupted the given social and gender order in a way that might have resonated for nationalists in the 1845 Czech context and only intensified the need for women to be ready to change for the benefit and future existence of their national community.

...and Cautionary Tale

But even with the transformative motif, Maršalová's story overall provides very little to glorify the female soldier's life in its entirety. Admitting to disliking children as well as that none of the children survived represented a clear breach of womanly duties.

⁶⁰ Marjorie Garber, *Vested interests: Cross-dressing & Cultural Anxiety* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1993), 16.

⁶¹ Garber, *Vested Interests*, 17. Emphasis in the original.

As I have shown, motherhood was universally promoted as part of the modern middle-class characteristics of the ideal woman, something that women were supposed to live up to and embrace. Nineteenth-century Czechs did not consider women's adventurous nature, excessive independence, and "mannishness" to be positive characteristics. Imagine the horror, shock, and dismay parts of the tale must have caused among readers, particularly if they could compare Maršalová with stories of the Amazons and the Polish Revolutionary.

One possible way to explain this further underscores the transformative motif of the Maršalová parable, as well as the story's overall significance for the Czech national community. It is possible that being annoyed by children and refusing their care was another necessary step, a prerequisite, in becoming a role model and the proper Czech woman. In this sense, the story can also be read in terms of Julia Kristeva's notion of abjection: an act of complete rejection of what is outside the symbolic order and poses a threat to the given social order. According to Kristeva, the act of abjecting what she calls "familiar but foreign" is the necessary prerequisite for constructing a new, completely different identity.⁶² In this case, abjection would concern the unwomanly and unmotherly acts described in the Maršalová story. In reading about the brave but unfortunate and pitiful Maršalová, women were encouraged to completely reject the activities that ultimately caused the female soldier's less-than-ideal end, and were, therefore, clearly not part of the ideal, modern Czech woman.

At the same time, the story's depiction of Maršalová's breach of womanly duties could serve as an especially powerful way of bouncing off this ideal. In this sense, the story of the Czech Amazon can be interpreted as an attempt to clarify exactly what was

⁶² Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982).

supposed to be part of and what was to be rejected from the gender category of the ideal modern woman. The story was, simultaneously, a cautionary tale for other women, as well as an explanation of Maršalová's eventual outcome, due to her initially reluctance to perform her womanly duties.⁶³ In this way, it is perhaps useful to think of the story as a symbolic inversion in which the world order is reversed in order to show and highlight precisely how things must not be and how people must not act.⁶⁴

Conclusion

Even without trying to verify its accuracy, the 1845 article published in *Květy* tells an important story. The story of the eighteenth-century Czech female soldier is much more than the curious tale of a female soldier, which does not quite fit either early modern or modern genre conventions. The story of Maršalová indicates that nineteenth-century Czechs felt compelled to demonstrate that the nation had its woman capable of fighting (if necessary, and if only figuratively) for the nation. The text simultaneously points to the complexity of women's positionality in the Czech nation-building process. The story provides another example that the ideal woman needed to take up various roles in the nation-building process, encompassing both private and public, but that - as documented by the end of the female soldier's life - women's participation in public

⁶³ Deborah Cowen has argued that soldiers constitute the category of exceptional citizens, whose significance is prioritized in times of war but become a problem when soldiers are no longer needed. Although Cowen's work concerns twentieth-century Canada and she does not discuss the phenomenon of female soldiers in the past, her insights contribute to our understanding of the way Maršalová's life turned out after she left the army. See Deborah E. Cowen, *Military Workfare: The Soldier and Social Citizenship in Canada* (Toronto; Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 2008).

⁶⁴ See Babcock (ed.), *The Reversible World: Symbolic Inversion in Art and Society* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978). See also Peter Stallybrass and Allon White, *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1986); and Robert Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (New York: Vintage Books, 1985).

nationalist activities could be highly controversial. In other words, Maršalová joined the military for a private reason. She wanted to assist her brother. She then demonstrated that she understood her proper role when she returned home. Finally, she married and had children, and although both her husband and children soon died, this is a clear indicator that Maršalová took up the proper duties of a woman. She also performed a very public service to her country and is publicly recognized. In this way, Maršalová helps to build the nation by making a private matter public, and by carrying out the public goal of building the nation in the private sphere. At the same time, Maršalová stands as a warning or cautionary tale. She represents a very far-fetched illustration of female bravery and courage, but not a figure whom other Czech women should have followed. The story makes clear that women were not allowed to fight men, abandon their domestic duties, or, become “mannish,” as noted in the Doucha’s article I discussed in the first chapter. Maršalová shows that masculinity and masculine endeavors harm rather than benefit a woman. This warning was clearly intended for other masculine endeavors, such as writing and public activities that Czech nationalists urged women to participate on behalf of the nation. In this sense, Maršalová, who proves readiness to fight on behalf of her (invented) nation, needed to die alone, poor and forgotten, as a punishment for her breach of womanly duties. The story, then, points to tensions between women’s public activities and not keeping to their domestic duties, tying into nationalist efforts to underscore and establish the connection between women and the private sphere. As I have discussed in previous chapters, although this division of spheres may not have fully corresponded to the reality and needs of the Czech nation-building effort, some Czech

nationalists clearly considered it a sign of the Czech nation's modernity and advancement, as well as an integral part of building its own, distinct middle-class.

Chapter 5

Marrying Czech Men and Ensuring the Proper Czech Lifestyle: Women as the Critical Reproducers of the Czech National Community

“Can a [Czech] woman marry a stranger?” This question introduced a substantial part of the chapter that the advice book *Agata* devoted to young women in the pre marriage age. In response, however, Josef Pečírka, the translator and author of the Czech version of the book, asserted that “for a woman, a stranger is only the one whom she does not like.”¹ After discussing who did and did not qualify as a stranger and identifying those that a woman should and should not marry, the following two chapters discussed a woman’s obligations. Along with other prescriptive texts published in the Czech nationalist context, *Agata* stressed women’s responsibilities as a wife, housekeeper, and mother. Like texts in many other nineteenth-century contexts, Czech prescriptive literature made it clear that women were especially responsible for ensuring, maintaining and educating themselves and others on how to lead the proper lifestyle. All of these obligations were, as I mentioned in Chapter 2, presented as a woman’s natural duties. The nationalist context made it clear that these obligations made women particularly accountable for the future existence, resilience, and prosperity of the modern Czech nation.

¹ Pečírka, *Agata*, 122.

Following assertions made by a number of feminist scholars regarding women's centrality in national processes,² I examine the ways in which Czech nationalists proposed to ensure the proper reproduction of their national community and trained women so that they become the crucial agents responsible for the proper reproduction of the national community. Expanding on Michel Foucault's concept, I show how these Czech ideas worked as a form of biopolitics/biopower, even though they were proposed and established in the absence of a nation state where other authority figures regulated and disciplined people's lives and bodies instead of the state government.³ I show how in its focus on health and fitness education worked as a system of disciplining people who are able to make their choices, and at the same time made responsible for the prosperity of their community. The framework of biopolitics, thus, allows us to focus on the need to create and sustain a population that would best serve the needs and interests of the Czech community. Although biopolitics and reproduction encompass and intertwine the realms of physical, physiological, social, and moral fitness, this chapter will focus on the aspect of social and moral fitness. The following chapter will consider the physical and physiological health, particularly the issues of heredity and women's reproductive fitness, which were identified as particularly important in the task of properly reproducing the national community in the biological sense.

The first part of this chapter examines the responsibility placed on women in choosing the ideologically fit marriage partner. Drawing on the Kristevian notion of "stranger," I also explore some Czech nationalists' fears that women could gain or lose membership in the national community solely through marrying wrong men. I argue that

² See, for example, Jayawardena, *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World*; Walby, "Woman and Nation," Yuval-Davis, *Gender and Nation*; and Yuval-Davis and Anthias (eds.), *Woman, nation, state*.

³ Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, vol. 1.

this extends and suggests rethinking the traditional definition of the Czech nation as a community based on place of birth and language.

In the second part of the chapter, I explore some of the propositions that concerned leading what contemporary nineteenth-century thinkers identified as the parameters of the proper lifestyle, and I specifically focus on the gendered dimension of these ideas. In order to do this, I read contemporary journal articles, advice books and popular medical treatises, including texts written by physicians and medical practitioners. I pay detailed attention to the ideas of those who were – in both the Czech and the larger context - interested in water-cure, a nineteenth-century alternative curative method that particularly linked lifestyle, environment, and gender roles.⁴ I suggest that the lifestyle advice exceeded simple concerns with health and fitness. While health and longevity were always implicit to these guidelines, the link between lifestyle, morality, and responsibility, also served as a way to determine one's belonging, or exclusion, from a class, group, or community of people. By proposing a specific lifestyle, people in many nineteenth-century contexts, including Czech nationalists strove to build their own, distinctly different – middle – class and suggested parameters of belonging in the modern national and other communities. These ideas, which drew on classical liberalism and have important echoes in modern neoliberalism in the sense of the formation of the self, made individual people accountable for the choices they make.⁵ To paraphrase the title of Arthur Kleinman's book that explores how to live responsible and meaningful lives, people were urged and made accountable for living a moral life that really mattered,

⁴ See, for example, Hilary Marland and Jane Adams, "Hydropathy at Home," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* (Fall 2009): 499-529.

⁵ Nikolas Rose, *The Politics of Life Itself: Biomedicine, Power and Subjectivity in the Twenty-First Century* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2007).

meaning helping to guarantee the national future.⁶ At the same time, the concept of health and healthy lifestyle as discussed in the Czech publications I studied was not specific to the nineteenth-century Czech national community. The Czech texts did not indicate that Czechs formulated the parameters of health in uniquely Czech terms. Unlike Shew who implied that a healthy lifestyle makes American women healthier than their English and European counterparts, the Czech texts I studied did not discuss health in such nationalistic terms. Nonetheless, it was clear that in order to be Czech, one needed to subscribe and adhere to the proper lifestyle advice.

Attention to women is not surprising. Nira Yuval-Davis has argued that women are “constructed as the symbolic bearers of collectivity’s identity and honour, both personally and collectively.”⁷ Along with Floya Anthias, she has identified women as “signifiers of ethnic/national differences [that] constitute (...) actual symbolic figuration [of ethnic and national groups].”⁸ Furthermore, Faye Ginsburg and Rayna Rapp have argued that reproduction is central to the production of culture, imagining new culture and cultural transformations. As they have also pointed out, reproduction is a powerful tool capable to decide who (should) belong to the body of the nation; who should (or should not) have children.⁹ Margaret Lock and Patricia Kaufert have made similar arguments in *Pragmatic Women and Body Politics*, offering wide, encompassing discussions of the ways in which women respond to medical reproductive technologies.¹⁰

Aihwa Ong’s *Buddha Is Hiding*, a study that examines the ways in which the Cambodian

⁶ Arthur Kleinman, *What Really Matters: Living a Moral Life Amidst Uncertainty and Danger* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).

⁷ Yuval-Davis, *Gender and Nation*, 45.

⁸ Yuval-Davis and Anthias (eds.), *Woman, Nation, State*, 9.

⁹ Faye D. Ginsburg, Rayna Rapp (eds.), *Conceiving the New World Order: The Global Politics of Reproduction* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1995).

¹⁰ Margaret Lock and Patricia Alice Kaufert (eds.), *Pragmatic Women and Body Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

immigrant community in the U.S. has negotiated American citizenship, is particularly helpful in that it shows women's positionality as the critical agents recreating communities. As she has pointed out, women are crucial in reinventing and reestablishing a collectivity that strives to come to terms with a different, new identity/citizenship. Ong's assertion that "women's bodies become the site and the female gender the form, in a biopolitics of citizenship" summarizes and highlights the crucial role of women in processes of building national, and other, communities and ensuring their survival. Furthermore, the statement suggests that even in non nation-state settings, contestation and continuation of membership in a national community, perhaps alongside citizenship in a nation-state community, is crucial.¹¹

Identifying Strangers and Marrying Only Those Who Belong in the National Community

Pečírka's explanation that "stranger is only the one whom a woman does not like" suggests not only that the definition of stranger was a complex issue but also points at women's foremost responsibility in the matter. This implies that women were supposed to make a decision that had not only personal, but public implications. In the absence of a nation-state, government, and laws that regulated the matters, the definition of who belongs, how one belongs, and who gets to decide had implicit consequence for the makeup of a national community. Therefore, women's sense of liking or disliking someone that related to choosing marriage partner had important consequences for the community at large. But given that this was discussed in a prescriptive text, it also

¹¹ Aihwa Ong, *Buddha Is Hiding: Refugees, Citizenship, the New America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 13.

suggests that this was not innate and that women either needed to be reminded of their abilities or learn the skill and use it for the nation's benefit.

The concern with women marrying strangers suggests anxiety over belonging and membership in the Czech national community as the nationalists strove to ensure the nation's future existence.¹² It also provides an important new perspective on the issues – and the definition of the modern Czech nation (national community) – from the perspective of women and gender. Contemporary scholarship typically defines the Czech nation as an ethnic-based community. But with the exception of literary historians such as Vladimír Macura and Robert Pynsent,¹³ most scholars who have explored the process of making an independent Czech national culture have only focused on language, common origin, and – typically – the Czech and German, or Czech, German, and Jewish relations. Additionally, the majority of the studies also predominantly aim at the period after 1848, particularly the period after 1860.¹⁴ Pečírka's *Agata* is a reminder of how important it is

¹² It is also important to note that even in the nineteenth century, when a woman married, she typically acquired her husband's nationality (citizenship) and lost that of her own. For an overview of the development of the Austrian laws/patents/decrees pertaining to nationality of married women since 1784, see Richard W. Flournoy and Manley O. Hudson (eds.), *A Collection of Nationality Laws of Various Countries as Contained in Constitutions, Statutes and Treaties* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1929), 14-26. As stated on page 14 of the book, starting in 1832, "Austrian woman marrying an alien loses her nationality." Beginning in 1833 "an alien woman who married an Austrian acquired his nationality." For a detailed discussion see pages 18-19. Note that 19th century texts refer to "nationality," whereas the post 1918 laws use the term provincial "provincial citizenship." Nineteenth-century Czech nationalists, who were citizens of Austria, were probably familiar with the laws. Therefore, their discussions of women marrying strangers could have reflected concerns over membership in the Czech national community. For other texts on married women and nationality (citizenship), see, also, Waldo Emerson Waltz, *The Nationality of Married Women* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1937); United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *Convention on the Nationality of Married Women; Historical Background and Commentary* (United Nations: New York, 1962); and Rupp, *Worlds of Women*, esp. 146-150.

¹³ Macura, *Znamení zrodu*; Macura, *Český sen*; and Pynsent, *Questions of identity*.

¹⁴ Jitka Lněničková, Hugh LeCain Agnew, and Jiří Štaif are among those few historians who have, along with literary historians and scholars, focused on the pre-1848 phase of the Czech national history, although they did not specifically focus on the issue of ethnicity. See Lněničková, *České země v době předbřeznové 1792-1848*; Agnew, *Origins of the Czech National Renaissance*; and Štaif, *Obezřetná elita*. In addition, Jiří Kořalka has examined the positionality of Czechs in the Habsburg Empire between 1815 and 1914 and Jan Křen has analyzed the relationship between Czechs and Germans in the period from 1780s to 1918. See Kořalka, *Češi v habsburské říši a v Evropě 1815-1914*; Jan Křen, *Konfliktní společenství: Češi a*

to explore these issues in this important time of the nation-building effort, particularly from the perspective of women and gender. The question makes clear that the issue of belonging, even at a time when some still understood the nation primarily in the post-Enlightenment romantic Herderian terms as a universal entity defined by language and culture, was also much more complicated than place of birth and language.¹⁵

Determining who belonged and who was a stranger to the Czech national community was not a simple matter. The Czech term “cizinec” that Pečírka used to talk about the men Czech women should avoid can refer to both “stranger” and “foreigner.” Kristeva’s *Strangers to Ourselves* offers a helpful way to see the complexity of the issue.¹⁶ In this study of various cultural, social, political, linguistic, and psychological concepts of the “stranger,” Kristeva proposed that “stranger” is one who does not fit, whether from the inside or outside a system. Applying this notion to the Czech national community, the stranger was one who was not able or willing to be part of the community. As I have pointed out, in the case of the Czech nation that fitted the definition of the Andersonian “imagined community,”¹⁷ the most decisive factor in

Němci 1780-1918 (Prague: Academia, 1990); and Jan Křen and Eva Broklová (eds), *Obraz Němců, Rakouska a Německa v české společnosti 19. a 20. století* (Prague: Karolinum, 1998). Many more scholars, however, have focused on the period after 1848. See, Gary B. Cohen, *The Politics of Ethnic Survival: Germans in Prague, 1861-1914* (West Lafayette, Ind.: Purdue University Press, 2006); Wilma Iggers, “The Flexible National Identities of Bohemian Jewry,” *East Central Europe*, VII/1 (1980): 39-48; Rudolf Jaworski, *Deutsche und tschechische Ansichten: Kollektive Identifikationsangebote auf Bildpostkarten in der späten Habsburgermonarchie* (Vienna: StudienVerlag, 2006); and Pieter Judson, “Frontiers, Islands, Forests, Stones: Mapping the Geography of a German Identity in the Habsburg Monarchy, 1848-1900” in *The Geography of Identity*, edited by Patricia Yaeger, 382 - 406 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996). See also Denés (ed.), *Liberty and the Search for Identity*; Judson, *Exclusive Revolutionaries*; Judson and Rozenblit (eds.), *Constructing Nationalities in East Central Europe*; King, *Budweiser into Czechs and Germans 1848-1948*; Judson, *Guardians of the Nation*; Wingfield (ed.), *Creating the Other*; Wingfield, *Flag Wars and Stone Saints*; Kieval, *Languages of Community*; Iggers, *Women of Prague*; and Zahra, *Kidnapped Souls*.

¹⁵ German philosopher Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744-1803), who coined the term nationalism, envisioned nation as encompassing various aspects of culture. Herder was quite popular among Czech nationalists for his positive view of Slavic nations.

¹⁶ Julia Kristeva, *Strangers to Ourselves* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991).

¹⁷ Anderson, *Imagined Community*.

determining the criteria of belonging was a commitment to the idea of the Czech nation and the ideology of the Czech national movement.¹⁸ One did not have to be born Czech, or be brought up in the Czech language and cultural environment. But one had to become Czech, and this was a conscious act required of both men and women. Rajska provides a good example of the various ways in which women joined the community. Rajska's parents came from the Rheinland and she was brought up in a German-speaking environment. She learned Czech and, as I mentioned in Chapter 2, assumed a patriotic name Bohdana, and appropriated her originally too German-sounding last name to be more Czech like. Most importantly, however, she made a commitment to the national community.

Pečírka's lengthy discussion of the types of men that Czech women should marry also suggests that belonging and adherence to the rules was a gender-specific issue. Marriage had different consequences for women than men. Although Rajska made a commitment to the Czech community by engaging in a project of nationalist public significance, most contemporary Czechs regarded her marriage to the Czech nationalist writer, journalist, and professor of Czech language and Slavic literatures Čelakovský as her greatest commitment. Zapová is even better example of a woman whose marriage had an impact on her belonging. Raised in Poland, and influenced by the post-enlightenment romantic national ideals, Zapová became part of the Czech national community, and changed her name, solely through her marriage, which caused her to abandon her Polish home, and possibly, the Polish nationalist activities. These two examples show that women were in a much greater danger of losing membership in a community simply by

¹⁸ Hobsbawm and Ranger (eds.) *The Invention of Tradition*; Pynsent, *Questions of identity*; Macura, *Znamení zrodu*, esp. 102-117.

marrying the right, or wrong, men. Women, unlike men, could become Czech, or non-Czech, not by a conscious choice of their own, but solely by marriage. Such gender-specific consequences that marriage had for women, made them the greatest variables in relation to the national community and most vulnerable to becoming strangers.

The following story published in the journal *Vlastimil* in 1841 exemplifies the attention that Czech nationalists paid to women choosing the proper marriage partner. The emphasis was on reminding Czechs of the consequences women's choice had for the community at large. The story, entitled "Z deníku mladé vlastenky," [From a Diary of a Young Female Nationalist] depicts a young woman choosing between two men.¹⁹ In the beginning, the woman, Adéla, presented as a wise young woman who sympathizes with the ideas of the Czech national movement, dates Ferdinand, a man with a decidedly German name. Ferdinand laughs at the Czech language and mocks the activities of the Czech national community, and Adéla eventually breaks up with him over his lack of affiliation with the Czech national movement. The other man, Jarolím, is a seemingly perfect Czech male nationalist. A man with a Czech-sounding name who is not afraid to speak Czech, Jarolím is willing to fight for the national community and promote Czech national values. However, Jarolím too is a stranger. This becomes clear as he decides to marry a wealthy aristocratic – and presumably non Czech – widow. Although he claims that his decision is motivated by wanting to put more effort into his work on behalf of the Czech community, i.e. by marrying the wealthy woman he could financially support the efforts of the national movement, this clearly constitutes an act of national betrayal. The point of the story is that neither Ferdinand nor Jarolím belonged in the Czech national community. Both men were strangers and Czech female nationalist were supposed to

¹⁹ Josef Kajetán Tyl, "Z deníku mladé vlastenky" *Vlastimil*, part I, 3 (1841): 261-278.

follow Adéla's example and avoid such men in order to ensure the future existence and prosperity of the national community.

Czech nationalists advised men to choose inspiring, young, and beautiful women as partners. A woman's national affiliation was not important because it was assumed that the husband educated his wife in nationalist matters and "gained" them for the Czech national community. But for women, the rules were very different. It was essential that they marry Czech-identified men. By choosing a non Czech husband, a woman not only lost her place in the Czech community, she also gave birth to non Czech children. For this reason, it was important that women, following Adéla's example, be able to recognize strangers, however disguised they may be. Marrying strangers such as Ferdinand or Jarolím could pose a threat to the national community.

Teaching and Ensuring the Proper Czech Lifestyle and Reproducing the Czech National Community

As in many other early to mid nineteenth-century contexts, various Czech nationalist publications paid attention to the principles of proper lifestyle. Some of the advice was seemingly gender-neutral, presented as being motivated by the efforts to ensure health and longevity. The popular medical treatise *Die Kunst das menschliche Leben zu verlängern* [The Art of Prolonging Life] exemplifies one such study that originated in Central Europe and whose popularity spanned many nineteenth-century contexts. It was also one of the earliest outside texts on which Czech nationalists drew. Written by eighteenth-century German physician Christoph Wilhelm Hufeland (1762 – 1836), this book provided a system of lifestyle propositions that Hufeland called "Makrobiotik," a term that also began to be used in the title of the book starting from its

third German edition in 1805.²⁰ Hufeland's makrobiotik, however, was not limited to diet, as the contemporary usage of the term would imply. Rather, Hufeland provided a broad range of advice that included moderate physical and mental activity, temperance, and hygiene. He warned against premature and overt sexual activity, especially that which did not lead to reproduction, as well as excess in mental and physical activity. Like others, Hufeland maintained that adherence to this kind of lifestyle helped to ensure longevity and continuous health.²¹

Hufeland's *Art of Prolonging Life* was first published in Czech in 1814, and at least two Czech nationalist texts directly pointed to Hufeland in their journal treatises.²² An article published in the 1834 volume of the Catholic journal *Přítel mládeže* provided a succinct summary of Hufeland's treatise. The Czech "Prostředkové k prodloužení života ve stálém zdraví," [Means of Prolonging Life in Continuous Health], as the article was also called, suggested that proper hygiene, a diet with little meat, light clothing, and enough physical activity were important criteria needed to ensure one's health, fitness, and prosperity. The article also warned against premature sexual activity and masturbation, and highlighted the importance of balanced life, peace of mind, satisfaction in life and work, which were promoted as the key ingredients to a happy [meaning balanced], long, and quality life.²³ Another writer who directly referred to Hufeland's

²⁰ The book was originally published under the title *Die Kunst, das menschliche Leben zu verlängern* in 1797. For the change in title starting from the book's third German edition, see Christopher Hoolihan (ed.), *An Annotated Catalogue of the Edward C. Atwater Collection of American Popular Medicine and Health Reform* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2001), 497-498.

²¹ The book was translated into several other languages including English and Czech. For the English translation see Wilson (ed.), *Hufeland's Art of Prolonging Life*.

²² For the Czech translation of Hufeland's book, see, *Dva zkušeni výborní prostředkové, předně, kterak člověk v stálém zdraví život svůj prodloužiti, a za druhé, nejjistěji zbohatnuti, může...* (Prague: Fetterle z Wildenbrunu, 1816). See, also, *Hufelandovo umění o prodloužení života lidského* (Banská Bystrica: Kampelík, 1838).

²³ "Prostředkové k prodloužení života ve stálém zdraví," *Přítel mládeže* 11 (1834), sv. 2: 102-112.

work was Patrčka. In his article, “Rozjímání o cvičení,” [Exercise], this Czech nationalist predominantly focused on the importance of physical exercise for one’s physical, mental, and moral well-being, health, and fitness, a proposition that the German physician also made.²⁴

Although not all Czech texts referenced Hufeland, many other texts complement the picture of the lifestyle propositions by offering similar advice. These texts include the suggestions for girls and young women and moral tales offered in advice books such as *Agata* and *Nezabudky*. Even the earlier work of Rettigová that concern household suggestions discussed issues relevant to health and hygiene. Several nationalist journals including *Časopis Českého Museum*, *Krok*, and *Květy* published popular medical treatises and articles targeted at both the general and specialized expert audience. They also included news reports from other contexts, such as the articles about Quakers in London and temperance groups in the United States.²⁵

²⁴ Michal Colorad Patrčka, “Rozjímání o cvičení,” *Přítel mládeže* 1, sv. 2 (1823a): 23-28; sv. 3 (1823b): 16-25. Like those in other nineteenth-century contexts, Czech nationalists considered physical exercise to be a crucial component of one’s fitness. See also Josef V. Žák, “Slovíčko o tělesném vychování dítek,” *Škola* 3/2 (1854): 127-131; and “Tělocvik v obecných školách,” *Škola* 3/1 (1854): 37-41; and Fr[antišek] Slav. Štěpánek and Jan Špott, “O prostocviku,” *Škola a život*, no. 5 (1855a): 221-228; *Škola a život*, no. 6 (1855b): 257-265. For a comparison to other contexts see, also, Russel Thacher Trall, *Illustrated Family Gymnasium* (New York: Fowler and Wells, 1857). See, also, See also Ann Chisholm, “Nineteenth-Century Gymnastics for U.S. Women and Incorporations of Buoyancy: Contouring Femininity, Shaping Sex, and Regulating Middle-Class Consumption,” *Journal of Women's History* 20, no. 3 (Fall 2008): 84-112.

²⁵ See, for example, “Prostředkové k prodloužení života ve stálém zdraví;” “Učení o zdraví pro mládež,” *Přítel mládeže* 21, no. 1 (1846a): 54-63; no. 2 (1846b): 197-204; no. 3 (1846c): 309-319; no. 1 (1846d): 401-413; Karel Bořislav Presl, “Přídavek k dokonalejšímu znání lázně libničské,” *Krok* 1, part 1 (1823): 85-110; Antonín Jungmann “České vody minerální a lázně,” *Časopis českého museum* 5 (1831): 80-115; Josef Jan Jungmann, “Spolky střidmosti,” *Časopis českého museum* 19 (1845): 640-648; Josef Čejka, “Několik slov před vyjitím “Domáciho lékaře” od Paulického” *Časopis českého museum* 24 (1850): 269-285; “Několik slov o nynějším stavu na mysli chorých,” *Časopis českého museum* 33/1 (1859): 58-73; “Zpráva o ústavu propomatené,” *Časopis českého museum* 3/4 (1829): 109-122; [Dušan] Lambl, “Paběrky obsahu lékařského z Jihoslovan,” *Časopis českého museum* 25/ 2 (1851): 18-58; Pavel Cartellieri, “O léčivosti zdrojů chebských čili Františkových lázní od Dra. Cartellieri,” *Květy* (I.) 14, no. 53 (1847): 209-210; “Minerální lázně v městě Roudnici nad Labem,” *Květy* (I.) 14, no. 70 (1847): 278-279; B. N. (?); B. N., “Zařikací formule mezi lidem českým, a jak se od nemoci pomáhá,” *Květy* (I.) 14, no. 37 (1847a): 146-147; and no. 38 (1847b): 150-151. See, also, “Nové zjevení se cholery,” *Květy a Plody* (1848): 172-174; “Ještě něco o choleře,” *Květy a Plody* (1848): 276-279; Jan Sulek, *Vodolékař, aneb poučení kterak studená*

Focus on what was proposed as the proper lifestyle needs be understood in the the broader context of early nineteenth-century ideas. As Charles Rosenberg has discussed, disease, including behavior medicalized as disease, could not be understood only in “simple pathophysiological terms.” Instead, disease also had important moral connotations, as understood in the early nineteenth-century sense.²⁶ If the way one lived had an impact on their health and, consequently, the health of the community at large, then it was necessary to make sure that people lived a moral life.

To illustrate this point, consider this example of the way a particular lifestyle could result in disease and affect one’s morality. The author of a popular American medical treatise published in 1849 offered an especially drastic example of the connection between the lifestyle of the prostitute and the cholera epidemics. The author firmly connected lifestyle, disease, and morality, stating that: “[i]n a single street of Paris where resided 1,300 of this class of persons [i.e. female prostitutes] we are told, on good authority that in a very short period 1,200 PERISHED WITH CHOLERA!” To make sure that nobody could doubt the disastrous effects, the author noted that the situation was even worse in another Parisian street, “containing sixty persons [where] EVERYONE DIED!”²⁷ As the author expressively stated, “[w]hen cholera rages in a great city, and comes upon persons of this class, it is sad to think how soon often the husky, hollow,

studniční voda proti mnohým těla nemocem lidí i dobytka s prospěchem se užívati může (Trnava, Slovak Republic: Felix Wachter, 1838); Antonín Jungmann, *Dr. Gind. Felix Paulického Domáci Lékař...* (Prague: České museum, 1833); Antonín Jungmann, *Umění babické k užítku ženám při porodu obsluhujícím vydané* (Prague: Jan Herl, 1814).

²⁶ Charles E. Rosenberg, “Disease in History: Frames and Framers,” *Millbank Quarterly* 67, supplement 1 (1989): 1-15; and Charles E. Rosenberg, “The Bitter Fruit: Heredity, Disease, and Social Thought,” in *No Other Gods: On Science and American Social Thought*, edited by Charles E. Rosenberg (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), 25-53.

²⁷ Joel Shew, *Cholera Its Causes, Prevention and Cure* (New York, 1849), 25. Emphasis in the original.

unearthly voice of the prostitute becomes stilled in death!”²⁸ While this statement may have elicited pity of the prostitute, the author also pointed to the impact that the lifestyle had on the prostitute’s family. As he stated: “[c]ould the most abandoned, God-forsaken mother on earth know upon her death-bed that her daughter should come to such an end, how would it add to the death-agonies even of a harlot!”²⁹ Other examples that the author of the book listed as having an impact on spreading the disease were intemperance and drinking, a reason the author contributed to the occurrence of cholera in the American South, particularly New Orleans.³⁰ The implication was that if a person changed their lifestyle, their health would be restored and they would live a moral life again. This also meant that a person and person’s social standing were, at least to a point, defined by the lifestyle one lead. Lifestyle affected one’s social status and standing and signified one’s belonging in a specific class of people, whether the prostitutes or the middle class.

Furthermore, early nineteenth-century ideas on heredity radically differed from those proposed later by Gregor Mendel, Auguste Weismann, and Charles Darwin, as well as by the Darwinists and social Darwinists who drew on his work.³¹ According to the then prevailing and popular theories formulated by Jean Baptiste de Lamarck (1744 – 1829), organisms gain or lose characteristics that they (do not) use, and they then pass the

²⁸ Shew, *Cholera, its causes, prevention and cure*, 25. Shew practically copied lectures of the French physician and professor of general pathology in the academy of medicine in Paris, Francois-Joseph Broussais (1772-1838) published in the U.S. under the title *Cholera, Two Clinical Lectures Upon the Nature, Treatment and Symptoms of Spasmodic Cholera* (New York: Stodart, 1832). The French physician delivered his lectures on cholera during the disease’s outbreak in Paris. According to Hohn S. Bartlett, M.D., the author of the preface to the U.S. version, the lectures were translated from French as Broussais, expecting that the epidemics of cholera will hit the US as well and follow the same course as the epidemics in Paris, wanted to share his knowledge and opinion on the disease (Broussais, *Cholera*, preface, no pg #). For the passage on in question, see Broussais, *Cholera*, 9.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Shew, *Cholera Its Causes, Prevention and Cure*, 11-24.

³¹ It should be noted, however, that Darwin did not disagree with Lamarck. See also Adrian J. Desmond, *The Politics of Evolution: Morphology, Medicine, and Reform in Radical London* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press) for a useful discussion of evolution earlier in the nineteenth century.

useful attributes on to offspring; in other words, heredity is changeable.³² Adhering to the principles of the proper lifestyle was understood as an important way to change bodily imbalance, which was considered to result in sickness and disease. The proper lifestyle could prevent, suppress, or at least reduce an occurrence of a disease. Lifestyle was linked not only to one's health, but also – as I will discuss in detail in the following chapter - to one's reproductive potential and hereditary prospects as well.

Implicit to morality, as discussed in the early nineteenth-century sense, the proper lifestyle could make one belong in a specific class, group or community of people while simultaneously guaranteeing their health and fitness was also a matter of one's responsibility toward their national, or other, community. Alison Bashford's discussion of tuberculosis asylums in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Australia exemplifies how the social and biological fitness merged.³³ Bashford has described how consumptive patients in tuberculosis sanatoriums were instructed and “trained in precise new bodily habits,” and that bodily contact of consumptives “was all considered reformable in the interest of the patient, and governable in the interest of the public.”³⁴ Consumptive patients, according to Bashford, were trained in “civic responsibility” and “were to think of themselves as always potentially infective.”³⁵ Having been thus trained, they could identify and discipline the deficiencies of other people.

³²These theories and ideas are known as “inheritance of acquired characters.” For an overview of Lamarck's theories, see, Ludmilla J. Jordanova, *Lamarck* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1984). For other overviews of the differences between Darwin, others who drew on Darwin's work, and social Darwinists, and thus their differences from Lamarck, see, Mike Hawkins, *Social Darwinism in European and American Thought, 1860-1945: Nature as Model and Nature as Threat* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 3-81; and Carl N. Degler, *In Search of Human Nature: The Decline and Revival of Darwinism in American Social Thought* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 3-31.

³³ Alison Bashford, *Imperial Hygiene*.

³⁴ See *Ibid.*, 70-77. For the quotations see 72.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 77.

There were many different healing systems in the nineteenth century, but most agreed in linking personal habits, environments and gender roles to health. Water-cure healers were among the strongest supporters of this linkage. This natural curative method was also known as hydropathy.³⁶ Water-Cure constituted the most significant of alternative curative practices, techniques that also included electro and light therapy, medical gymnastics, and various techniques focused on diet such as vegetarianism, grahamism, and hunger cure. As Susan Cayleff has argued in her book on women and hydropathy, the method represented “a high point in its comprehensive world view and its extreme emphasis on self sufficiency.”³⁷

Modern water-cure was founded by Vincentz Priessnitz (1799 – 1851), a barely educated Silesian peasant, and quickly gained popularity in Central Europe, England, and the United States.³⁸ Although a lot of medical practitioners, including some water-cure healers, criticized Priessnitz,³⁹ many hydropaths nevertheless followed, and built on, his propositions. They maintained that “health is the true and natural condition of the body,” and that curative treatments must strive to return the body to its natural, healthy state.⁴⁰ In general, hydropaths advocated natural healing methods and proposed a change of

³⁶ See Joel Shew, *Water-cure Manual* (New York: Cady and Bugess, 1847), 1 (note). See, also, the journal *Prager Monatschrift für theoretische und praktische Homöopathie, Balneotherapie und Hydrotherapie*.

³⁷ Susan E. Cayleff, *Wash and Be Healed: The Water-Cure Movement and Women's Health* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987), 15.

³⁸ Nineteenth-century hydropaths differentiated between a simple (and ever present) utilization of water for healing purposes and a complex system of “modern” water-cure, which included comprehensive lifestyle propositions.

³⁹ On Priessnitz see, Friedhelm Kirchfeld and Wade Boyle, *Nature Doctors: Pioneers in Naturopathic Medicine* (Portland, OR: Buckeye Naturopathic Press, 1994), 13-29, and Jürgen Helfricht, *Vincenz Prießnitz (1799–1851) und die Rezeption seiner Hydrotherapie bis 1918. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Naturheilbewegung* (Matthiesen Verlag, Husum 2006).

⁴⁰ For the quotations see Vincent Priessnitz, *The Cold Water Cure: Its Principles, Theory, and Practice: With Ample Directions for Its Self-Application and a Full Account of the Wonderful Cures Performed with It on 7,000 Patients of All Nations* (London: W. Strange, 1843), 16.

personal habits and lifestyles.⁴¹ They also emphasized spreading knowledge of the sources of diseases and their treatment among patients and encouraged the notion of “self-doctoring.” This further underscored the connection between lifestyle, morality, and responsibility.⁴² An American hydropath J. B. F. Walker expressed the point. As he stated, “[e]ven if you were brought into the world unhealthy, you have no right, either in the sight of God or intelligent man, to remain so.” Instead, Walker asserted that “[y]ou should at once set about renovating, cleansing, or building up anew your physical nature, and become healthy.”⁴³ Echoing Walker, another American water-cure practitioner, Joel Russ exclaimed: “[h]ealth protects...from *Crime*.”⁴⁴ Russ further stated that “[e]very man ought to remember that his own health and comfort depend immeasurably more upon his own acts than upon the skill and prescriptions of doctors.”⁴⁵ In other words, one’s lifestyle had an impact on the health and fitness, and, in broader sense, the resilience and existence of a community at large.

Most importantly, however, hydropaths specifically underlined the significance of women in the process of maintaining or reestablishing health and proper lifestyle and accounting for the proper reproduction. Cayleff has explained that water-cure healers particularly underscored the significance, role, and responsibility of women in the process of maintaining and restoring the health of their own as well as that of their

⁴¹ Cayleff, *Wash and Be Healed*, esp. 15-16; Jane B. Donegan, *Hydropathic Highway to Health: Women and Water-Cure in Antebellum America* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986); Regina Markell Morantz-Sanchez, *Sympathy and Science: Women Physicians in American Medicine* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985). See also Priessnitz, *The Cold Water Cure*; and R. T. Claridge, *Abstract of Hydropathy, or, the Cold Water Cure, as Practised by Vincent Priessnitz, at Graefenberg, Silesia, Austria* (London: J. Madden, 1842).

⁴² For a general overview of hydropathic practice and “self-doctoring,” see Cayleff, *Wash and Be Healed*, esp. 44-48.

⁴³ J. B. F. Walker, “Is it Wicked to Be Sick?” *The Water-Cure Journal* (1861): 60.

⁴⁴ Ross, *Golden Rules of Health*, 9. Emphasis in the original.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 10.

families and communities. First, hydropaths did not consider women to be impaired by their physiology and did not treat women differently from men. Instead, they maintained that physiology was “neither the cause nor the justification for women’s social status.” They paid special attention to women’s health and were convinced that “all aspects of women’s health could benefit from the water-cure system.”⁴⁶ Hydropaths also attributed women a substantial amount of agency in overseeing, maintaining, and changing their health condition. They considered women and their role at home to be crucial in the efforts to improve people’s health. They argued that to play an effective role in this project, women had the responsibility to know about health issues and maintain their own high standards of health.⁴⁷

In the Czech nationalist context, texts discussing healing powers of water started to be published in the early 1820s. Interest in water-cure and the texts published in Czech journals does not seem surprising, given the geological makeup and abundance of mineral and healing springs in the Bohemian territory. But even the texts that described the geographical and scientific/healing properties of springs also frequently focused on the ways the water could improve one’s health and become part of one’s (Czech nationalist) lifestyle.⁴⁸ Slovak evangelical pastor Jan Sulek claimed in 1838 to have published the first substantial treatise on water cure in the Czech language.⁴⁹ His *Vodolékař* [Water-Cure Manual], as the book was entitled, summarized the history of the curative method, mentioned prominent physicians and practitioners, including Hufeland

⁴⁶ Cayleff, *Wash and Be Healed*, 54.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 17-18; see also chap 2 for a more detailed discussion.

⁴⁸ See Karel Bořislav Presl, “Přídavek k dokonalejšímu znání lázně libničské,” *Krok* 1, part 1 (1823): 85-110; for lifestyle advice, see esp. 102-104; Antonín Jungman, “České vody minerální a lázně,” *Časopis českého museum* 5 (1831): 80-115.

⁴⁹ Sulek, *Vodolékař*.

and Priessnitz, and offered a set of ideas on curing various diseases and leading the proper lifestyle with the aid of water cure. All this was motivated, as Sulek explained in the introduction, by the need to make the Slavic literature on a par with the abundant German literature on the subject.⁵⁰

The modern practice of water-cure was especially promoted by Jan Špott (1813-1888), a physician trained at universities in Prague and Vienna whose interests included other alternative curative practices, namely orthopedics, and electrotherapy.⁵¹ He learned about medical gymnastics from the Swedish practitioner Pehr Henrik Ling (1776 - 1839), explored the method of hunger cure practiced by Johann Schrott (1798 – 1856), and trained with Priessnitz at his water cure institute in Grafenberg [Lázně Jeseník].⁵² Špott briefly joined Amerling in his educational institute Budeč, helping him to run the medical ward. A few years later he and his brother, Karel Špott, also a conventionally trained physician who specialized in veterinary medicine, founded their own, also Prague-based, Přírodnická nemocnice [Natural Hospital], which also served as an important meeting place for Czech nationalists.⁵³ Špott also joined those practitioners of water-cure who critiqued some of Priessnitz's methods. This was quite likely an attempt to assert his authority as a conventionally trained physician and differentiate his institute from the practice of his Silesian peasant-teacher. Špott's report on the activities of his hospital that included the critique of Priessnitz was written in Czech, the choice of the language

⁵⁰ Ibid., see, esp., the introduction.

⁵¹ See also article, "O prostocviku," published in *Škola a život*, no. 5 (1855a): 221-228; *Škola a život*, no. 6 (1855b): 257-265 for which Špott served as an expert consultant.

⁵² K. Špott, "130. výročí prvního "přirodoléčitel'ského" ústavu v Praze," unpublished manuscript located in Jan Špott Collection, Literary Archive of the Museum of Literature in Prague, Czech Republic (hereafter Špott Collection, LAML). See, also, Otakar Matoušek's discussion of Špott's medical training and practice, "Současníci a předchůdci doby Purkyňovi – Dr. Jan Špott, soukromý docent, zakladatel a dirigent přirodoléčitel'ského ústavu" *Časopis lékařů českých* no. 49 (1953): 1007-1009. The article is located in Špott Collection in LAML. On Johann Schrott, see Kirchfeld and Boyle, *Nature Doctors*, 31-39.

⁵³ Michal Navrátil, *Almanach českých lékařů* (Prague: Nákl. spisovatelovým, 1913), 319.

indicating that he expected members of the Czech community to read the statement.⁵⁴

The report, however, was presented as being intended for the Austrian authorities. This suggests another reason for his critique of Priessnitz who was “[i]n the early years [...] frequently arrested and tried for illegal practice of medicine.”⁵⁵ Although that was no longer the case in the 1840s, it is still possible that Špott, who otherwise showed his association with the Czech national movement, wanted to steer clear of any accusation that might compromise his professional standing, discredit him as a physician, and put him in trouble with the authorities.

But even those nineteenth-century physicians and medical practitioners who opposed water-cure linked gender behavior and health. Consider the conventionally-trained physician Čejka, the one who, as I mentioned in Chapter 2, advised Němcová to become the Czech George Sand. In a barely comprehensible review of the latest Czech edition of *Domáci lékař* [Home Physician], a popular medical treatise translated according to the work of another eighteenth-century German physician Heinrich Felix Paulizky, Čejka explicitly stated his disagreement with alternative curative practices. He was opposed to people diagnosing and curing themselves, and – perhaps most importantly - seeking treatment from uneducated practitioners. Čejka argued, among other things, that curative practices needed to be managed by experts.⁵⁶ Although Čejka’s text can be understood as a somewhat haphazardly formulated attempt to propose a Czech system of nationalized medicine, the major argument of his article was to make all

⁵⁴ Especially as this critique was part of his report, allegedly for the Austrian authorities though he published as a book in Czech, clearly intending for it to be read by members of the wider national community. For the report, see, Jan Špott, *Zpráva o nemocnici pro přírodnické léčení v Praze v čísle domu 981-II nejvyšším dvorským dovolením zřízené*, (Prague: Karl Vetterl, 1847), 27.

⁵⁵ Kirchfeld and Boyle, *Nature Doctors*, 15.

⁵⁶ Čejka, “Několik slov před vyjitím “Domáciho lékaře” od Paulického.”

those who wanted to belong in the Czech community aware of the necessity to live properly and healthfully.

Čejka did not agree with the idea of self-doctoring but he nevertheless maintained that the key to health and both the social and physical fitness was the determination to lead the proper lifestyle. In spite of his critique of the “blind and senseless” prescribing of water treatment to cure ills, he too prescribed Němcová’s water-cure treatment.⁵⁷ His article called on all who could help instill and ensure the proper way of life, simultaneously underscoring the sense of individual responsibility in changing one’s lifestyle for the benefit of the national community at large. Despite the critique, Čejka stressed some of the issues that alternative practitioners highlighted. He too connected lifestyle with a sense of morality and responsibility toward one’s own national community, suggesting that national belonging is also a matter of lifestyle. Although Čejka’s article did not explicitly address women, there is no doubt, particularly given his other nationalist activities and positions that he was in accordance with many other Czech nationalists who, regardless of whether or not they would agree with alternative medical practitioners, also particularly stressed the positionality of women.

Focus on women and women’s responsibilities in instilling, teaching and maintaining the proper lifestyle of their own, their families, and consequently the community at large, was undisputable. In both the larger and the Czech context, many writers placed a special emphasis on women’s lifestyle, which they typically connected to the health of offspring. Consider this example from a book written by another nineteenth-century American natural curative practitioner, Mrs. Hester Pendleton, whose several

⁵⁷ Němcová’s letter to her female friend Eliška Lamblová from her stay at the Sliač spa provides an interesting description of the water-cure treatment that Němcová underwent. See Němcová to Lamblová, 9 September, 1855, Němcová Collection, LAML.

published texts cautioned people on how to select their marriage partners and ensure the health and good hereditary prospects of their children. Discussing the causes of diseases in her book *Husband and Wife*, Pendleton offered this frightening moralizing illustration of the reason why a girl was born “sensitive and deaf.” According to Pendleton, the girl’s mother, “a gentle, tender-hearted girl, soon after her marriage accompanied her husband [on a business trip] to New Orleans.”⁵⁸ As the author stated, there “[t]hey resided in the immediate neighborhood of a French Creole woman who was in the habit of periodically whipping her female slaves almost daily.”⁵⁹ Pendleton tells us that “[t]he wife was so agonized by this barbarous cruelty that she used frequently to stop her ears with her fingers, in order to shut out the screams.” The child – a girl – was born “bright and sensitive,” and deaf. Pendleton concludes her tale by describing the horror the wife who “at once recognized the cause.” As Pendleton concluded her moralizing story, “the poor stricken mother went almost frantic with grief when the affliction of her child was forced upon her conviction.”⁶⁰

Although not all Czech texts focused specifically on women, they were never gender-neutral as they all concerned the realm of life, for which Czechs, as did others in different contexts, strove to make women responsible. First of all, women themselves needed to lead the proper lifestyle, and some texts, as I will discuss in greater detail in the following chapter, provided specific discussion of women’s biological and reproductive health. Advice books for women typically did not focus on medical advice, but they complemented the lifestyle advice in an interesting way. Zapová’s *Nezabudky*, for

⁵⁸ Hester Pendleton, *Husband and Wife, or the Science of Human Development through Inherited Tendencies* (New York: Carleton, 1863), 55.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* 55-56.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.* 56.

example, included a full chapter specifically discussing women's lifestyle, predominantly focusing on hygiene. The chapter also included a frightening moralizing tale of the dangers resulting from excessive dancing.⁶¹ Špott's article "Těhotnost," [Pregnancy] published with a disclaimer identifying the touchy subject of the text and explaining this as a reason for the text's being published in a specialized journal for educators, seemed to follow the trend. Although Špott did not offer any moralizing horror tales, he provided ample advice to pregnant women.⁶²

Even those seemingly gender-neutral publications that provided lifestyle advice and guidelines to improve one's health and lifestyle, and make one a fitting member of the Czech community, particularly focused on women's responsibilities toward the members of their household and their families. Consider the preface to the Czech edition to Paulitzky's medical treatise written by the physician Antonín Jan Jungmann (1775 – 1854), in 1832. This Czech physician, brother of the linguist and author Josef Jakub Jungmann, stated very clearly that it is the role of the experts to cure the sick. Statements such as these are not surprising, particularly as it came from a renowned physician of the time. However, he considered it automatic that it was "mainly and nearly exclusively" the woman who cared for, oversaw, and preserved (or restored) the health of the entire household. The physician Jungmann stated that woman's role in this endeavor was crucial. He also suggested that every woman familiarizes herself with advice such as that provided by Paulitzky's treatise before she begins to care for the sick.⁶³

⁶¹ Jan Špott, "Těhotnost," *Posel z Budče* 3, no. 12 (1850a): 177-184; no. 14 (1850b): 220-221; and no. 16 (1850c): 247-250.

⁶² Zapová, *Nezabudky*, 9-14; for the story detailing the dangers of dancing, see 12-13.

⁶³ Antonín Jan Jungmann, "Připomenutí," (preface) in Jindřich Felix Paulitzký's *Domácí lékař aneb kniha o šetření zdraví zvláště pro lid venkovský, v níž se ukazuje, jak obyčejné nemoci snadně a lehkými léky, především pak dobrým chováním odvráceny a léčeny býti mohou*, trans. Ant[onín] Jan Jungmann (Prague: Pospíšil, 1850).

But this obligation, precisely because it concerned caring for members of women's household, families, husbands, and, particularly children, was clearly not limited to the domestic space. It was also clearly a matter of nationalist institutions. Amerling included education on these matters in his curricula of both women's and general education, and many Czech texts including those that specifically focused on nationalist education and educating Czech teachers discussed requirements and parameters of the proper lifestyle.⁶⁴ The Budeč institute, which also welcomed women, included a medical ward where he, briefly along with Špott, practiced alternative medicine.⁶⁵ It is therefore very likely that the women who attended Budeč also learned about alternative curative practices.

Many journals, including those that focused on the national concept of education such as *Přítel mládeže*, *Posel z Budče*, *Škola* and *Škola a život* especially highlighted care of children and focused on teaching children and youth the proper lifestyle. As scholars who focus on other eighteenth- and nineteenth-century contexts have made clear, attention to women and the importance of child-rearing practices was not a Czech specificity.⁶⁶ The texts provided lifestyle advice and discussed topics including hygiene, diet, and physical exercise. One particularly interesting discussion concerned music.⁶⁷

Two Czech nationalist writers disputed whether the lack of music makes people [meaning

⁶⁴ Kučerová, *K historii ženského hnutí v Čechách*, 29 (See also my discussion in chap 2).

⁶⁵ See correspondence located in Špott Collection, LAML.

⁶⁶ See, for example, Ludmilla Jordanova, "Reproduction in the Eighteenth Century," in *Conceiving the New World Order: the Global Politics of Reproduction*, 369 - 386; Bernard W. Wishy, *The Child and the Republic: The Dawn of Modern American Child Nurture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1967); Anne L. Kuhn, *The Mother's Role in Childhood Education: New England Concepts, 1830-1860* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1947); and Sklar, *Catharine Beecher*.

⁶⁷ R.S., "Také slovo proti muzice," *Škola a život*, no. 3 (1855): 113-121; J. V. "Zase něco k zastání muziky," (alt. title, listed in the journal's index, "Něco k zastání muziky,") *Škola a život*, no. 6 (1855): 265-268; and R.S., "Ještě slovo o muzice a cvičení zraku," *Škola a život*, no. 1 (1856): 17-26.

nation] uncivilized like Americans – this negative remark was a clear objection to slavery - or whether listening to music weakens people and harms the nation.⁶⁸

The text also points at the ways education and the proper lifestyle were connected to not only health and resilience, but also morality and social standing.⁶⁹ Špott's article "Krtice a národní učitel" [King's Evil and National Education] published in *Posel z Budče* in 1848 formulated propositions regarding the need for educators to teach children (and, arguably at least remind their mothers) the proper lifestyle to prevent scrofula. Adding to Špott's article, Joel Shew's book *Children* offers a particularly moving example of the need to educate children in the proper lifestyle. In one of the chapters, Shew tells the story of two brothers, both predisposed to scrofula, discussing whether those who are predisposed or suffer from a disease should have children. But much more important than a discussion of diseases, this was a tale that underscored the importance of the proper lifestyle. One of the brothers had a child, a son who as a result of his father's predisposition, "had had at different times symptoms of scrofula and he had also been severely attacked with certain forms of acute disease." But as Shew pointed out, "[b]y great care, however, in diet, bathing and other hygienic habits he had been kept more free [sic] from the outbreaks of disease." Furthermore, the child's lifestyle was not simply a matter of health and disease, but also moral and social qualities. Shew stated that the child was "a great help to his mother," and concluded that "[h]e was in short a most lovely an excellent boy."⁷⁰

⁶⁸ For the remark about Americans, see J. V. "Zase něco k zastání muziky," 265.

⁶⁹ [Karel Slavoj] Am[er]ling, "Krtice a národní učitel," *Posel z Budče* 1, no. 17 (1848): 273-283.

⁷⁰ Joel Shew, *Children: Their Hydropathic Management in Health and Disease, A Descriptive and Practical Work Designed as a Guide for Families and Physicians* (New York: Fowlers and Wells, 1852), 30.

Although some texts seemingly focused only on teachers and educators, clearly trying to distinguish between ordinary people and experts, they always concerned even those women who did not teach. One article specifically advised that male teachers only marry those women who are capable of properly educating children, thus clearly implying that these women will participate in the school education practice. Most importantly, however, women were always already primarily responsible as the first educators of children.

Finally, issues of physical and social fitness and women's primary responsibility in this matter appeared in the nationalist ideas about the ideal member of the community. As early as the 1820s, the Prague-born philosopher Bernard Bolzano (1781–1848) began formulating his ideas about the “ideal state;” still largely in the enlightened humanist, and cosmopolitan, framework.⁷¹ Although Bolzano was not a Czech nationalist in the sense of the generation that began to participate in the Czech nationalist activities in the 1830s and the 1840s, his ideas spread among his students who evidently drew on them. Particularly reminiscent of Bolzano's ideas is a text published in *Posel z Budče* in 1850 that discusses the difference between “občan” [citizen] and “opravdový člověk” [real human being], i.e. which of the two belongs in, as it was clearly implied, the Czech nation. According to the author, the proper member of the community had to be educated and trained to fit and be fit for the national purpose. However, the nineteenth-century Czech author maintained that the ideal member of a community was not a citizen but rather a real human being. This is not surprising. Czech nationalists did not use the terms uniformly and their ideas

⁷¹ Bernard Bolzano, *O nejlepší státě* (Prague: Mladá Fronta, 1981). See also Arnold Kowalewski (ed.), *Von dem besten Staate* (Prague: Royal Bohemian Society of Sciences [Series: *Spisy Bernarda Bolzana / Bernard Bolzano's Schriften*, Vol.3]), 1932.

crystallized on a backdrop of larger philosophical discussions.⁷² Furthermore, the term citizen could also imply a connection to the Austrian state, from which Czechs strove to differentiate, as well as petty bourgeoisie and civil society. In this sense, the concept would not have had the most positive connotations in the aftermath of the 1848 Revolution when Czech nationalists' demands for civil liberties were suppressed by the Austrian state. The "real human being," then, by becoming socially, physically, physiologically, and morally fit becomes the ideal member of the community and its imaginary citizen. Moreover, as the early nineteenth-century Czech writer made clear, becoming a "real human being" had gender-specific consequence and the positionality of women was critical in the process.

None of this is all that different from Bolzano's propositions earlier in the nineteenth century. For example, in sections entitled "[c]are of one's health and life;" "diet;" "clothing;" and "housing," Bolzano, much in the manner of popular medical treatises, asserted that life, health, and fitness was one of the most essential pillars of a resilient and prosperous state.⁷³ He asserted that food must not be harmful to a citizen's life and health.⁷⁴ Similarly, he argued, clothes should first of all serve as a "protection against cold, humidity, and heat," although he in fact spent most of the section discussing

⁷² Czech nationalists drew on concepts that ranged from enlightened humanism to Hegelianism to the ideas of the French utopian socialism. For example, during the 1820s, the Prague-born philosopher Bernard Bolzano (1781–1848) began formulating his ideas about the ideal state that were largely framed by the enlightened humanist framework. The subsequent generation of Czech nationalists was significantly influenced not only by Herder's ideas about nationalism and Slavism but also by Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel whose ideas they alternately accepted and rejected. As another example, František Matouš Klácel (1808 – 1882), a Catholic priest, philosopher, and journalist was particularly interested in French socialism and communism. His overview of the ideas was published in an epistolary form addressed to a Czech woman, adds to the literature that underscored the importance of women's educating and responsibility for the prosperity of the Czech national community. Klácel attempted to put his ideas into practice in *Českomoravské bratrstvo*, an association I also mentioned in chapter 3, in my analysis of Němcová's correspondence with Vrbíková.

⁷³ Bolzano, *O nejlepším státě*, 56-57 (Péče o zdraví a život); 89-91 (O výživě); 91-92 (O oděvu); and 92-93 (O obydlí).

⁷⁴ *Ibid*, 89.

the ways clothing should adhere to the gender-specific differences between men and women.⁷⁵ In a section on housing, Bolzano proposed that “living quarters be always dry and well-lit, adhering to hygiene rules.”⁷⁶ Bolzano’s ideas also substantially focused on the connection between fitness and education. In a section entitled “[u]pbringing and education” Bolzano argued that physical education, and education on health, hygiene and practical medicine were integral parts of education of children on the elementary school level.⁷⁷ He also asserted that even private houses should include an educational component – display signs, advice, and pictures offering instructions on the “most essential ideas and useful knowledge.”⁷⁸

Bolzano also held very gender-specific ideas of responsibilities within the ideal state. His ideas, therefore, serve as an example of the way gender-specific parameters of national fitness and education might be expanded to the organization of the whole – ideal/state - community. Although Bolzano’s concerns with the necessity to establish and institutionalize gender-specific differences appear throughout the book, he specifically discusses the issues in a section entitled “O opatřeních týkajících se rozdílu pohlaví” [Measures Concerning the Differences between the Sexes].⁷⁹ At the end of this section, where the philosopher discusses gender-specific differences that should serve to further improve and cultivate a human being, Bolzano made an interesting proposition.⁸⁰ Asserting that women frequently had much greater role in ensuring children’s health and fitness, Bolzano critiqued the practice through which children only take on their fathers’

⁷⁵ Ibid, 91.

⁷⁶ Ibid, 92.

⁷⁷ Ibid, 50.

⁷⁸ Ibid, 93.

⁷⁹ Ibid, 93-95.

⁸⁰ Ibid, 93.

names. Instead, he proposed that sons take on their fathers' names and daughters be named after their mothers.

Ranging from Bolzano's utopian treatise to concerns expressed by Czech nationalist educators, physicians, and writers all make clear that a broadly conceived idea of fitness was a crucial part determining one's belonging and membership in the Czech national community. Although there were many authority figures who strove to regulate and discipline people's lives, all the texts underlined the importance of women, making them the critical imaginary citizens responsible for the proper establishing and reproducing of the national community. In a context where all individual members of a community were held accountable for the nation's future, women's positionality was crucial. Women's obligations included choosing the proper marriage partner, as they easily could lose membership in the national community by marrying the wrong men, and, consequently, give birth to non Czech children. As housekeepers, wives, and mothers, they were primarily responsible for ensuring that everyone leads the proper life that would not only ensure their health and fitness. The texts make clear that the requirements placed on women regarding the proper national reproduction show that construction of a modern nation is a process that occurs both the home and in the public and that women's private activities have important implications for the future of the national community.

Chapter 6

“A Matter of Physical Health and Strength”: Disciplining Women and Women’s Bodies and Reproducing the Czech National Community

In 1850, Jan Špott, the conventionally trained physician who also learned from the founder of modern water cure Vincentz Priessnitz and run his own Natural Hospital in Prague, published an article “Uzavírání sňatku” [Marriage]. Going beyond the genre of simple lifestyle advice, “Marriage” outlined the requirements for those who considered themselves to be a part of the Czech national community.¹ Merging the physical and physiological with the social and moral requirements, which as I discussed in the previous chapter were at the time considered to be inseparably intertwined, Špott suggested that those who wanted to ensure the future of the national community take special precautions and not endanger its survival and quality by marrying the wrong types of people. Špott specifically described the ideal “physical features” that would make a woman “fit for marriage.” According to him, the woman must have been “born of healthy parents, particularly the mother;” she must have been “healthy as a child, particularly, not suffering from King’s Evil and English Disease;” she must not wear “tight corseting;” she must “menstruate regularly;” and she must have “wide loins, non-curved thighs, healthy teeth, [and a] straight spine.”²

¹ Jan Špott, “Uzavírání sňatku,” *Posel z Budče* 3, no. 9 (1850): 129-134.

² Špott, “Uzavírání sňatku,” 131. Both King’s Evil, translated from the Czech term “krtice,” and English Disease, translated from the Czech term “anglická nemoc,” are historical terms. For an overview of the historical development of King’s Evil and the terminology used to describe it, see Kenneth F. Kiple (ed.), *The Cambridge World History of Human Disease* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University

Špott admitted that living up to these standards was difficult when he asserted that “it is not possible, however, to force entire families into celibacy.” He stated that “[s]uch a practice would be cruel and inhumane, and would only burden those who otherwise make a good contribution to the community.” He also proposed that, “[a]fter all, such a regulation would not be easily carried out, and could only provide bad people with a new opportunity to oppress innocent victims.”³ Although he noted that “[o]nly the government and proper legislature” could “exterminate and uproot” entire diseases, he stressed that to reproduce and sustain the national community, those concerned with its existence were responsible for educating themselves and each other carefully to create healthy offspring.⁴

This chapter focuses on the physical and physiological dimension of fitness, especially women’s reproductive health. Expanding on the arguments I made in the previous chapter, Špott’s “Marriage,” which I situate in the larger context of the history of medicine, allows me to explore not only the importance of biological health, but also the responsibility for the correct national reproduction that Špott formulated and made clear should concern each member of the Czech community, and particularly women.

Špott’s text was not only part of the effort to establish the social, cultural, and gender rules for the national community and teach them to its current and prospective

Press, 1993), 998-1000. In the Czech context, Antonín Jungmann equated the Czech term “krvice,” (King’s Evil) with the German terms Skrofelknoten, Skrofengeschwulst, Kropfgicht, and Skrofelsucht. He also provided Latin terms scrofula vera, scrofulosis, and choeras. See Antonín Jungmann, “Přehled jmen neduhů,” *Krok* 3, part 1 (1836): 157. For other similar definitions and descriptions of “krvice,” in the Czech context see also Am[e]rling, “Krtice a národní učitel;” and Sulek, *Vodolékař*, 50-51. See, also, the German-language journal *Vierteljahrschrift für die praktische Heilkunde. Herausgegeben von der medicinischen Facultät in Prag* published by the Prague Medical Faculty from 1844. Jungmann equated “anglická nemoc,” (English Disease) with rickets. See, Jungmann, “Přehled jmen neduhů,” 136, also 158. For an overview of rickets see, Kiple (ed.), *Cambridge World History of Human Disease*, 978. However, the term “English Disease” could also refer to syphilis. See, for example, Colin Milburn, “Syphilis in Faerie Land: Edmund Spenser and the Syphilography of Elizabethan England,” *Criticism* 46, no. 4 (2004): 597-632.

³ Špott, “Uzavírání sňatku,” 131-132.

⁴ For the quotations, see Špott, “Uzavírání sňatku,” 131.

members. Špott also strove to make Czechs, and especially women, aware of their responsibility for the future existence and prosperity of the national community. But, at the same time, his approach was quite different. His analysis resonated with other texts in the Czech context and elsewhere that provided instructions on how to improve one's health and physique, perhaps suggesting a certain lifestyle.⁵ Špott's recommendations, however, exceeded the realm of good advice provided in such literature. No other Czech nationalist publication between the 1820s and 1850s outlined such sharp propositions, explicitly warning against the destruction and, as Špott put it in the mid-nineteenth-century sense, degeneracy of the national community. It is important not to read "Marriage" in light of later debates and texts on national and racial fitness, health, and purity that originated with the emergence of (social) Darwinism and modern eugenics. Nonetheless, Špott's piece demonstrates that these concerns had existed and played a role in envisioning and creating (national) communities earlier in the nineteenth century.⁶ Furthermore, although Špott addressed all members of the community, his primary focus was women. Centering predominantly on female physical and physiological features, personal habits, and maternity, he made quite clear that women - and their role in the national construction - were crucial to his propositions and plans. He identified women,

⁵ For examples of texts on improving health available in the Czech context, see chap 5. For a discussion of establishing the physical culture in early nineteenth-century Germany, see Teresa Sanislo, "Models of Manliness and Femininity: The Physical Culture of the Enlightenment and Early National Movement in Germany, 1770-1819" (PhD diss., University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 2001). Claire E. Nolte's *The Sokol in the Czech Lands to 1914: Training for the Nation* (Basingstoke; New York: Palgrave/Macmillan, 2002) focuses on the ideas of national health and fitness connected to the Czech gymnastic organization known as *Sokol* founded in 1862.

⁶ These concepts and movements are typically dated after the publication of Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or, The Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life* (London, J. Murray, 1859). The term "eugenics" was coined by Francis Galton in *Inquiries into Human Faculty and its Development* (London, Macmillan and co., 1883): 25n. See also Desmond, *The Politics of Evolution*.

and women's bodies, both as the crucial reproducers and as the individuals most responsible for the national community.

Teaching National Reproduction

Despite the absence of a sovereign nation-state that would enforce and regulate such a mechanism, Špott's formulations can be, nonetheless, read in the Foucauldian sense as an attempt to introduce a system that would exercise "power over life" that served as the "basis of the biological processes."⁷ Špott's text suggests that such a regulatory and disciplinary mechanism of power was needed to produce and maintain a population that exhibited the traits that were in the best interest of the emerging Czech national community. According to Špott, marriage that led to the correct national reproduction was "foremost a matter of physical health and strength" of the marriage partners.⁸ Špott worried that "[t]he contemporary generation, harmed by unfavorable civic circumstances, the lengthy duration of celibacy in the army and civil service is endangered anyhow with destruction and degeneracy."⁹ After all, as he stated, "It is only appropriate to account for every proper citizen." As he explained that, "[t]o do so, we must righteously choose healthy offspring."¹⁰ Lacking the (Czechoslovakian) state system to control the process, Špott was convinced that it was necessary to oversee the proper reproduction of the national body.

As I noted in the previous chapter, although Špott embraced alternative curative practices, unlike many practitioners of alternative medicine, he was trained at universities

⁷ Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, vol. 1, 139.

⁸ Špott, "Uzavírání sňatku," 130.

⁹ Ibid.133.

¹⁰ Ibid.

Prague and Vienna.¹¹ He studied under Antonín Jungmann in Prague,¹² and several renowned physicians of the second Vienna school of medicine, including Karl Rokitansky (1804-1878) and Josef Skoda (1805-1881). Like other Czech physicians including Čejka, Staňek and Lambl, Špott conducted study-related trips around European countries, visiting, for example, Germany, Switzerland, and Paris.¹³ Along with other Czech physicians, Špott was familiar with ideas circulating outside the Bohemian territory. For example, he undoubtedly knew Lamarckian propositions as well as the Malthusian population theory that proposed restraining reproduction of certain groups.¹⁴ He was part of an international exchange of ideas, drawing from both his conventional and alternative training.¹⁵

Both as a conventionally trained physician and hydropath, Špott did not differentiate between “regular” and “hereditary” diseases. Although he did not accept Priessnitz’s method uncritically, a position he might have assumed to assert his authority as a university-trained expert, Špott clearly attempted to follow his success with treating

¹¹ Navrátil, *Almanach českých lékařů*, 319.

¹² Jaroslava Vondráčková, “MUDr. Jan Špott,” typed manuscript located in Špott Collection, LAML.

¹³ On Špott’s travels, see Karel Beránek et al, *Biografický slovník pražské lékařské fakulty 1348-1939, díl 2, L-Ž* (Prague: Karolinum, Moravské tiskárny, 1993), 123-124. Other Czech physicians also studied and traveled outside Bohemia. Čejka studied in Vienna and visited France, Italy, Germany and Switzerland. See Navrátil, *Almanach českých lékařů*, 33. Staňek was offered a position in Serbia in 1845. Navrátil, *Almanach českých lékařů*, 296. Lambl, too, traveled extensively around Europe. Navrátil, *Almanach českých lékařů*, 33

¹⁴ For an overview of the curricula at the Medical School of Vienna see Erna Lesky, *The Vienna Medical School of the 19th century* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976). See also W.B. Bynum, *Science and the Practice of Medicine in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994). For a description of the curricula at the Prague Medical Faculty at the Charles University in Prague, see Ludmila Hlaváčková, “Od osvícenských reforem do roku 1848,” in Petr Svobodný, Ludmila Hlaváčková, *Dějiny lékařství v českých zemích* (Prague: Triton, 2004), esp. 97-101. For an overview of the work of Thomas Robert Malthus, see James Bonar, *Malthus and His Work* (London, Cass, 1966); and William Petersen, *Malthus – Founder of Modern Demography* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 1999).

¹⁵ See, Erwin H. Ackerknecht, *Medicine at the Paris Hospital, 1794-1848* (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins Press, 1967)

diseases.¹⁶ Indeed, both Priessnitz and Špott approached and treated all diseases alike and, as reported, with the same, usually satisfactory, results.¹⁷ The physical, physiological, and moral features against which Špott warned in his article could all point to several diseases including those that Špott specifically mentioned and labeled as “family hereditary diseases.” But Špott not only cautioned members of the Czech national community to avoid the diseases. Similarly to other physicians and other medical practitioners, he also offered treatment for all of the diseases. Špott’s cooperation with Amerling in the hospital at the Budeč institute and, later, the Natural Hospital he founded with his brother in Prague, apparently earned him rave praises from people who would not be cured elsewhere and allegedly considered Špott to be no less than a magician.¹⁸

Like other physicians and medical practitioners elsewhere, the list of diseases that Špott claimed to have treated was extensive and overlapped with a number of the family hereditary diseases that he listed in his article. In an advertisement for his medical practice, Špott claimed to have successfully cured early stages of consumption, King’s Evil, rheumatism, digestive problems, irregularities in menstruation, epilepsy, diseases of skin, jaundice, syphilis, and hemorrhoids. The list also included melancholy and madness.¹⁹

¹⁶ According to Otakar Matoušek, Špott delineated from Priessnitz in that he refused an excessive use of water, and only prescribed baths. See Matoušek, “Současníci a předchůdci doby Purkyňovi.”

¹⁷ Claridge, *Abstract of Hydropathy*, esp. 11-12.

¹⁸ Matoušek, “Současníci a předchůdci doby Purkyňovi.”

¹⁹ See the two pamphlets announcing Špott’s medical practice – “oznámení přírodní nemocnice Jana Špotta na Senovážném náměstí,” (2 sheets; one entitled “J Špott;” the other one “Oznámení”) – both located in Špott Collection, LAML. The diseases Špott treated were also among the diseases widely discussed by medical experts in the *Vierteljahrschrift für die praktische Heilkunde. Herausgegeben von der medicinischen Facultät in Prag* between 1844 and 1850. The *Vierteljahrschrift* was a German-language journal published by the Medical School at Charles University in Prague from 1844. King’s Evil was undoubtedly considered to be particularly burning even outside the *Vierteljahrschrift*. In its first volume published in 1848, *Posel z Budče* featured a substantial article that outlined the symptoms and treatment of the disease, heavily focusing on natural curative methods. See Am[e]rling, “Krtice a národní učitel.”

The pool of the physical and physiological symptoms which Špott and other Czech nationalist physicians described and discussed in Czech journals could refer to multiple different diseases. Judging from other texts in Czech publications, a few of the diseases that Špott specifically mentioned seemed to present a particularly burning issue in the context of the Czech national community.

One of the diseases was known as “King’s Evil;” or in Czech as “krtice,” or, perhaps, as “scrofula.”²⁰ According to the physician Jungmann the disease manifested itself in protuberant and proliferated glands in children and youth, especially in the neck.²¹ A decade after the physician Jungmann, Amerling provided an even more detailed description, explaining that the disease is located in the lymph nodes, and, therefore, that the symptoms are visible all over the [child’s] body. He listed a variety of symptoms including worms, lumps in the neck and under the chin, and swollen abdomen.²² Similarly to Sulek, the Slovak pastor whose allegedly first treatise on water cure in the Czech language I discussed in chapter 5 and who attributed the disease to hereditary traits (i.e. parents transmitting the disease to offspring), unsuitable diet, and humid and polluted environment, Amerling too was convinced that environment contributes to the occurrence of the disease.²³ Although Špott warned against the presence of this disease in women, expressing the contemporary belief that diseases and predispositions to diseases are transmitted from parents to their children, the physician Jungmann, Sulek, and Amerling, similarly to medical practitioners in other context, described the disease primarily in relation to children. To illustrate the symptoms, the American hydropath Edward Johnson

²⁰ see note 2.

²¹ Jungmann “Přehled jmen neduhů,” 157.

²² Am[e]rling, “Krtice a národní učitel,” 281.

²³ Jan Šulek, *Vodolékař*, 50-51; and Am[e]rling, “Krtice a národní učitel.”

provided a particularly instructive list of signs that the general public should look for in children and youth. In children the disease could manifest itself in “[p]ale, pasty, dark and muddy complexion, large head, narrow chest, large sluggish pupil, swollen chapped lips, and redness and swelling about nostrils.”²⁴ In young people, some symptoms also included “[e]ruptions on the skin, dark, muddy complexion, crooked spine, and weak ankles.”²⁵ Given the contemporary context, these were also some of the indications that people were instructed to look out for when choosing their marriage partners.

Another disease that appeared on Špott’s list was “Anglická nemoc;” a term that could be translated as “English Disease.” The physician Jungmann equated the disease with rickets. However, it is important to note that the term could refer to syphilis, a disease that could have a significantly negative impact on the population and the future existence of the national community.²⁶ Both syphilis and rickets were manifested by symptoms including bone, dental, and skeletal deformities, all of which Špott also mentioned in his article. His concerns were echoed by medical practitioners elsewhere: Shew specifically warned that early marriages could result not only in children suffering from “[d]iminutive state, debility of body, and imbecility of mind.” He also suggested that marrying too early leads to “[s]trong predisposition to [diseases including] consumption-rickets [and] scrofula.”²⁷

Finally, Špott also mentioned consumption; a disease that could be linked to many of the physical and physiological signs he described.²⁸ Even a cursory look at

²⁴ Edward Johnson, *Domestic Practice of Hydropathy* (New York: Wiley, 1849), xviii.

²⁵ Johnson, *Domestic practice of hydropathy*, xix.

²⁶ See note 2.

²⁷ Shew, *Children*, 26.

²⁸ For another useful contemporary index of terms and symptoms of diseases see Josef Čejka’s overview of historical medical terms published as “Sbírka slov a způsobů mluvení ze starých rukopisů lékařských,” *Časopis českého museum* 22/2, part 3 (1848): 247-305; Josef Čejka, “Druhá sbírka lékařské terminologie,”

contemporary correspondence and journals shows that consumption was a rather common occurrence. For example, Rajska noted in her diary in February 1843 that Amerling might have suffered from consumption. Symptoms including violent hemorrhage described by Zapová in a letter to Karafiátová, and the violent fevers mentioned by Rajska in a letter to her sister may have also pointed to consumption.²⁹ Němcová's correspondence provides another interesting account of people including her own son who were sick, and died, of consumption.³⁰ Among those Czech nationalists who allegedly died as a result of consumption were the physician Čejka and poet Josef Jaroslav Kalina, who was also Špott's patient.³¹ But perhaps even more important than noting the frequent occurrence of consumption in the Czech community is Špott's suggestion that consumption was particularly dangerous in women who considered marriage (i.e. having children). In other words, certain social practices, such as premature marriages might lead to an outburst of the disease in women and thus reduce their reproductive potential.

King's Evil, English Disease, and consumption were neither the only diseases present in the Czech community, nor did they burden only the members of the Czech

Časopis českého museum 25 (1851): 3-50; and Josef Čejka, "Třetí sbírka lékařské terminologie," *Časopis českého museum* 27 (1853). Špott was also interested in historical medical terminology. See Špott Collection, LAML.

²⁹ For Amerling, see Rajska's diary excerpt from February 22, 1843 in Podlipska (ed.), *Z let probuzení: Paměti a korespondence Bohuslavy Rajske z let 1839-1844, kniha 1*, 93. For Rajska, see Rajska's letter to Božena Němcová, May 27, 1849 published in Podlipska (ed.), *Z let probuzení: Vzájemné dopisy Antonie Čelakovské (Bohuslavy Rajske) a Boženy Němcové 1844-1849, kniha 3*, 73. See also Honoráta z Wsniowských Zapová to Růžena Karafiátová, undated letter, located in Zapová Collection, LAML.

³⁰ According to Němcová letter to her son Karel (July 31, 1857), the physician Čejka was "fatally ill" [and spitted blood]" (Jiří Sirotek (ed.), *Vybrané spisy Boženy Němcové IV: Básně-stati-dopisy* (Prague: Státní nakladatelství krásné literatury, hudby a umění, 1957), 510). Němcová also described that Franta Šumavský, educator and 1848-1849 editor of the journal *Posel z Budče*, died of consumption. (See Němcová to V. Č Bendl, January 7, 1858 in Sirotek (ed.) *Vybrané spisy Boženy Němcové IV*, 518-519. Finally, Němcová, or rather the physicians in charge, equated consumption with the cause of the death of her son Hynek (See Němcová's letter to J. Huška, November 5, 1853 in Sirotek (ed.) *Vybrané spisy Boženy Němcové IV*, 403-405, esp.404).

³¹ Matoušek, "Současníci a předchůdci doby Purkyňovi."

community. Cholera is another example of a disease that physicians and common people frequently discussed.³² This disease is especially significant as it points to concerns with public health, and, as scholars including Allison Bashford, Richard Evans, and Pamela Gilbert have discussed, had important consequences for determining who belongs and who gets excluded from a community.³³

But all the three diseases that I have discussed in greater detail were nonetheless very specific. All were considered to be “hereditary” and, therefore, they posed a threat to the future existence of the national community.³⁴ In this respect Špott did not differ from other nineteenth-century physicians and medical practitioners. His attempts to cure diseases and change people’s physical, physiological, and mental dispositions were part of the general effort to improve the quality of life and humanity, as understood in the nineteenth-century sense. Similarly to other nineteenth-century practitioners, his efforts were also part of making a different, healthy, and prosperous class of people. However, Špott was influenced by his participation in the task of what he, along with his compatriots, saw as the recreation of the Czech national community. This gives his

³² Examples of texts that physicians wrote about cholera for Czech nationalist journals include J. L. Opic, “Pozorování o choleře epidemické,” *Časopis českého museum* 23/2 (1849): 98-103; and J. A. Ryba, “O nemoci choleře orientální,” *Časopis českého museum* 6/1 (1832): 82-104. See also Petr Svobodný, “The Health of the Population and Health Policy in 19th-Century Bohemia: The case of Asiatic Cholera (1830s–1900s),” < phoenixtn.net/publication/evora/papersOriginal/CholeraEvoraPaperA.doc; accessed 27 June, 2010 >. For an interesting perception of cholera among common people, see the letters that Božena Němcová wrote to her husband Josef Němec (4 September, 1855) and to her female friend Eliška Lamblová (12 September, 1855) from her stay at the Slovakian spa Sliač. In a letter to Lamblová, Němcová told her friend that common people around Sliač imagine cholera as a “tall woman wrapped in a bluish-grey shawl with bloody eyes. [The people] think that she walks from one village to another and strangles people.” Němcová’s account had a strong moral connotation, as the people associated cholera as a punishment for “world being too proud.” See Sirotek (ed.) *Vybrané spisy Boženy Němcové IV*. For the letter to Němec, see 434-435. For the letter to Lamblová, see 439-441 (for the quotation, see 441). For the letter to Lamblová see also “sent correspondence” in Němcová Collection, LAML.

³³ See Richard J. Evans, *Death in Hamburg: Society and Politics in the Cholera Years 1830-1910* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005); Bashford, *Imperial Hygiene*.

³⁴ For overview of the state of health in the Czech Lands in early- mid- nineteenth- century Czech Lands, see Svobodný, Hlaváčková (eds.), *Dějiny lékařství v českých zemích*. Note on hereditary nature of the three diseases. Also, Němcová’s letter to her son Karel (May 26, 1856) where she identified “scrofula” as a hereditary disease (Sirotek (ed.) *Vybrané spisy Boženy Němcové IV*, 457).

propositions and activities a particularly sharp nationalist tinge. In other words, Špott attempted to shape people, and particularly women, to fit the national purpose and make them responsible for ensuring the nation's future prosperity. To borrow, once again, from the formulations of the American hydropath Walker, Špott would no doubt agree that even if a person is born with a disease it is his or her responsibility to get cured.³⁵

All Czechs, but Particularly Women

As I pointed out in chapter 5, both the conventional and the alternative medicine, as well as his affiliation with the Czech national movement provided Špott with a framework that led him to underscore the positionality of women in overseeing, maintaining, and changing health condition of their own as well that of their families. Špott's "Marriage" also predominantly focused on women's physical and physiological features and personal habits. Thus, although "Marriage" seemingly addressed both men and women, purporting to provide guidelines when "[c]hoosing men for [your] daughters and women for [your] sons," Špott considered women to be the crucial agents and subjects of his biopolitical propositions.³⁶ Both women's natural responsibility and obligation to ensure the correct lifestyle, but also women's bodies and reproductive health was an essential factor determining the future existence and prosperity of the Czech national community. Špott discussed the "family hereditary diseases," prostitution, inappropriate marriage age, and incestuous marriages that he claimed threatened the continuity and prosperity of the national community. He made clear that women, who

³⁵ Walker, "Is it wicked to be sick?" 60-61.

³⁶ Špott, "Uzavírání sňatku," 131.

had the same opportunity to read the journal where “Marriage” was published, were both the prime targets and central agents of his biopolitical propositions.

Reading the text from this perspective, Špott’s discussion clearly emphasizes women’s responsibilities in the process of reproducing the national community. For example, “Marriage” included a reference to the animal world where males fight with each other and “only the strongest and sprightliest is allowed to reproduce.”³⁷ However, the key sentence of this passage is that “the females only submit to the males when there is satisfactory evidence of the males’ origin and success.”³⁸ Špott also pointed to the ancient Spartans to provide an example of a moralizing tale. He then went on to describe an ancient Czech custom which indicated that a “daughter could choose a husband of her own choice, and if the father did not approve, she could have filed a complaint in front of the entire clan.”³⁹ In accordance with Malečková’s arguments about women’s importance in the context of less advanced nations, this particular example served Špott to note that “we can see that [even then] women acted as human beings; they were not considered slaves.”⁴⁰ But Špott also used both of the examples to elevate women’s ability to know and make the right choice, and guarantee survival.

However, the moralizing examples brought up by Špott and other nineteenth-century practitioners only point out, as Jordanova, Butler, and Hrdy have made clear, that women do not possess any such natural abilities or innate motherly instincts.⁴¹ Instead, these were skills that needed to be instilled in women, just like women needed to be

³⁷ Ibid., 129.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid., 130.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Jordanova, *Sexual Visions*; Butler, *Gender Trouble*; *Bodies that Matter*; and *Undoing Gender*; Hrdy, *Mother Nature*; and *The Woman That Never Evolved*.

taught to protect the community from ideological strangers by marrying the correct men. For this reason, Špott, similarly to Shew, pointed to Ancient Greeks as a way to provide a particularly poignant example to remind women of their crucial duties regarding reproduction. According to Shew, woman must “be convinced that to become a mother is one of the most momentous of all earthly considerations.” He then continued, “[a]nd if she enters [marriage] without carefully considering the nature and importance of the duties she thus voluntarily takes upon herself,” Shew concluded that “[s]he will not only bring trouble and vexation upon herself but will entail misery and misfortune upon the offspring she may bring forth.”⁴² With a reference to the Ancient Spartan lawmaker Lycurgus, Shew noted a law according to which all children had to pass a test to determine whether or not they are fit. Children who were found healthy were important contribution to the community, unfit children were killed. Shew stressed that mother’s unhappiness resulted in an unhappy child who is, as a result, more liable to becoming sick.⁴³ This example, therefore served Shew as a useful way to remind women that they were responsible for “healthfulness of offspring;” a quality which he equated with a “great public good.”⁴⁴ Such arguments and recommendations were always even more pronounced and took on a particularly emotional appeal when written by women. For example Mrs. Hester Pendleton’s “Mother’s Prayer,” included at the end of *Husband and Wife*, a book where she situated Darwin’s hot off the press theories in the Lamarckian context, exemplify a particularly strong emotive advice clarifying who should and should not have children.⁴⁵

⁴² Shew, *Children*, 20.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ Shew, *Children*, 21

⁴⁵ Pendleton, *Husband and Wife*.

Like Shew and other medical practitioners who have expressed similar ideas, Špott strove to place the most responsibility and ultimate decision making about the national future on women. Although not specific to the Czech context, the notion of women's centrality to national processes, too, further underlines the link between women, education, and (national) reproduction. In the Czech situation, education provided by women was already elevated in the effort to promote the Czech language. Czech nationalists - and Špott was no exception - heavily promoted the connection between women, education, and reproduction in their writings. Czech nationalist journals published such exclamations as this one written by Jaroslavský and published in *Vlastimil* in 1842: "[w]ith mother's breast milk," the author of this text stated, "[t]he little young ones will suck in all the sacred love that flares in your hearts." He then continued to caution women reminding them that "[y]ou will plant your affiliation and minds in the delicate souls of your daughters, you will inspire the youthful minds of your sons by the spirit of the sacred motto 'for God, for the nation.'" He then concluded by making sure that women were aware of their important duty: "[y]ou are the ones who will uproot the disgraceful prejudices that take away strength from our dear mother."⁴⁶

This makes clear, first of all, that women were not responsible only for choosing the ideologically fit husband, as I discussed in chapter 5. They were also responsible for marrying a man who was physically and physiologically fit. In addition, women, who were familiar with the text and believed that they themselves or their marriage partners did not fulfill the criteria and thus would not be able to reproduce the national community correctly, should not willingly "risk" the future of the community. Instead, they were supposed to act responsibly by either refraining from entrance into a marriage (i.e., from

⁴⁶ Jaroslavský, "Slovo ke šlechtným a spanilomyslným pannám českoslovanským," 49.

having children), or substantially changing the lifestyle of their own and their marriage partner. But Špott did not hide that women's reproductive health was what mattered most. Assertions such as these significantly extend the propositions regarding women's choice of the correct marriage partner, broadening the definition of the strangers that women should not marry. They also expand the requirements to ensure the correct lifestyle by pressuring people, and particularly women, to seek treatment and get rid of diseases harmful to the community.

Women and the Correct National Reproduction

The connection between women and education is reflected in several other points through which Špott attempted to educate his compatriots. Whereas he mentioned incestuous marriages only in passing, he spent substantial time explaining the ideal age at which women and men got married. Špott was, indeed, interested in promoting the size of the population, and therefore fertility. But it was not his sole interest. He simultaneously asserted that he was concerned with the quality of the population, arguing that the natural purpose of marriages was both the quality and quantity of offspring.⁴⁷ Therefore, age at marriage was a crucial topic. He asserted that premature marriages “do no good to increase the population, only multiply the number of the weak and crippled.”⁴⁸ In other words, Špott was not interested in multiplying the population at all costs, and also implied that some populations simply do not count as growth. This contention provides an interesting contrast to such countries as France where later in the nineteenth-century

⁴⁷ Špott, “Uzavírání sňatku,” 129.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 133.

natalists strove to boost the population.⁴⁹ By outlining a number of propositions on how to improve the population, Špott advocated the regulation of reproduction, but he cleverly left the decision making up to peoples' own conscience by appealing to their affiliation with the national community.

Špott was concerned that age impeded and harmed the quality and fitness of the population and expressed his worry that people who married early - he set the appropriate marriage age for women between sixteen and twenty and for men between the ages of twenty-four and thirty - were not mature enough, and needed the constant advice of elders. Making a deliberate link between premature marriages, what he identified as overt sexual activity, and degeneration, he argued that this only led to the couples' exhaustion that impeded their health and thus resulted in a weak population.⁵⁰

But marriage age was another highly gendered issue, and Špott described it primarily in relation to women. Whereas his concerns about intellectual maturity applied to both men and women, Špott argued that the diseases and medical concerns that resulted from premature marriage age were visible in women much more than in men. Premature marriage, he asserted, caused women to suffer from various diseases including breast and abdominal diseases, gynecological diseases, wasting disease, dropsy, and consumption.⁵¹ His observation was that women who married too early also died

⁴⁹ For an interesting discussion of motherhood and natalist efforts in France between 1871 and 1914, see Joshua Cole, *The Power of Large Numbers: Population, Politics, and Gender in Nineteenth-Century France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000), especially chapter 6. For a discussion of the value of motherhood in Third Republic France, see Karen Offen, "Exploring the Sexual Politics of Republican Nationalism," in *Nationhood and Nationalism in France: From Boulangism to the Great War, 1889-1918*, 195-209, edited by Robert Tombs (London and New York: Harper Collins Academic, 1991).

⁵⁰ Špott, "Uzavírání sňatku," 132-133.

⁵¹ The diseases Špott mentioned included breast and abdominal diseases, inflammations, discharges, and irregularities in menstruation. *Ibid.*, 132.

prematurely - a result of being weakened by multiple pregnancies and births.⁵²

Interestingly, he also proposed that women should be prevented from getting married once they stopped menstruating. In contrast, he argued that no such upper age limit can be sufficiently outlined for men.⁵³ Despite his worries about the quality of the population, Špott did not fear that a father being too old may result in damaging the population. Špott clearly prioritized biological reproduction as a singular role for Czech women. Not only were they supposed to have children once married, but his attention to the right marriage age for women clearly implied that Špott prioritized optimizing women's reproductive potential. Such gendered perceptions, however, raise questions as to whether women in the postpartum phase of life were no longer necessary or desirable for the needs of the national movement. If this were the case, such propositions would be in sharp contradiction to the needs and intentions of the community that relied on women of all ages to educate its future members.⁵⁴

The marriage age as Špott proposed it did not correspond with the actual women's marriage age: in nineteenth-century Bohemia women's average marriage age was at least twenty-six years and the figure was always even higher in Prague.⁵⁵ But Špott's advice practically echoed that which Shew published only two years after Špott's "Marriage," making the Czech context an important addition to the ideas exchanged in the larger setting. According to Shew, women's marriage age depended on their bodily

⁵² Ibid., 132-133.

⁵³ Ibid., 133.

⁵⁴ Cf. the advice book *Agata* where the chapters are divided according to the phases of women's lives and where several sections discuss the importance of women in post-reproductive age.

⁵⁵ For the average marriage age in Bohemia between 1828 and 1865, see Václav Sekera, *Obyvatelstvo v českých zemích 1754-1918*, díl I. 1754-1865 (Prague: Český statistický úřad, 1978), 76-85. According to demographer Ludmila Fialová, the average marriage age for women in Prague was never below twenty-six years, and in the mid century reached twenty-eight years. See Ludmila Fialová, "Sňatkový věk obyvatelstva Starého města Pražského v 19. století," in *Documenta Pragensia XIII: Žena v dějinách Prahy*; for the average marriage age, see 178.

development and menstruation, making the marriage age a matter of “individual circumstance.”⁵⁶ In addition to Shew’s comments that I mentioned above, this American hydropath also warned that premature marriages caused “[f]aded beauty, blasted health, and premature old age of the female.”⁵⁷ At the same time, though, he argued that “[f]irst children of marriages, generally, are apt to be stronger and more healthy than those of after years,” a reason he encouraged women not to wait too long to have children.⁵⁸

Supporting his arguments by referring to unknown “[a]mple statistical data,” the American hydropath Russel Thacher Trall (1812-1877) claimed that “[t]he first children of those who marry very young are more animal and less moral and intellectual than those born nearer the middle period of the life of the parents.” However, at the same time, he suggested that “[t]he great majority of men and women, morally and intellectually eminent, have been among the younger children of the family.” Trall pointed to the opinions of “[t]he soundest physiologists and phrenologists,”⁵⁹ i.e. supporters of a theory proposing that human capacities and abilities can be determined by the shape of one’s skull.⁶⁰ As he claimed, these experts “regard twenty-two to twenty-five for the female and twenty-five to thirty for the male as the most appropriate ages for assuming the serious duties as well as participating in the pleasures of matrimonial life.”⁶¹

⁵⁶ Shew, *Children*, 27.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* 26.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.* 27.

⁵⁹ Russel Thacher Trall, *Hydropathic Encyclopedia: A System of Hydropathy and Hygiene in Eight Parts Designed As A Guide to Families and A Textbook for Physicians* (New York: Fowlers and Wells, 1856), 446.

⁶⁰ Phrenology was developed by the eighteenth-century German physician Franz Joseph Gall. The theory was particularly popular in England and United States. According to an article published in the *American Phrenological Journal* in 1840, the method was also known in Bohemia and in the Czech context of the Czech national movement. See “Phrenology in Bohemia” (unsigned), *American Phrenological Journal* III, no. 3 (1840): 324.

⁶¹ Trall, *Hydropathic Encyclopedia*, 446.

Another topic that Špott prioritized and discussed specifically in relation to women was prostitution. Prostitution was condemned in both the Czech and larger Euroamerican context as it was connected to the possibility of various diseases, or predisposition to diseases, and its negative effects on offspring. Špott warned against prostitution to the point that he once again referred to an ancient Czech practice that imposed severe punishments for prostitution, as well as probably any extramarital heterosexual activity.⁶² But Špott did not reflect on morality in the same way as the later nineteenth-century treatises and social and Christian reformers.⁶³ As I noted in the previous chapter, pointing to Shew's discussion of the devastating effects of prostitution causing cholera causing death, prostitution was connected to morality, meaning the necessity to lead a healthy and prosperous life; something that everyone was supposed to strive for.

Prostitution was dangerous as it could lead or predispose people to a variety of diseases. For example, Shew suggested that prostitution causes not only cholera but also

⁶² Špott condemns "všeliké zvrhnutí plitní," i.e. "all bodily perversions." In other words, he implies that other sexual activities besides prostitution have threatening effect on marriage and the quality of the population. See Špott, "Uzavírání sňatku," 133.

⁶³ Concerns over prostitution and morality and middle-class values were common in the second part of the nineteenth century in Europe. Judith R. Walkowitz's two books: *Prostitution and Victorian society: Women, Class, and the State* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980); and *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992); and Paula Bartley, *Prostitution: Prevention and Reform in England, 1860-1914* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000) focus on nineteenth-century England. But these concerns extended beyond England, as shown, for example, by Keely Stauter-Halsted's article "A Generation of Monsters": Jews, Prostitution, and Racial Purity in the 1892 L'viv White Slavery Trial," *Austrian History Yearbook* 38 (2007): 25-35; and Nancy M. Wingfield, "Echos of the Riehl trial in fin-de-siecle Cisleithania" *Austrian History Yearbook* 38 (2007): 36-47. See also Laurie Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters: Prostitutes and Their Regulation in Imperial Russia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); Engelstein, *The Keys to Happiness*; Alain Corbin, *Women for Hire: Prostitution and Sexuality in France after 1850* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990); Karin Jusek, *Auf der Suche nach der Verlorenen: Die Prostitutionsdebatten im Wien der Jahrhundertwende* (Vienna: Löcker, 1994); or Milena Lenderová's *Chytila patrola...aneb prostitute za Rakouska i republiky* (Prague: Karolinum, 2002).

consumption.⁶⁴ Prostitution appeared on Špott's list because, as he claimed, it impeded female fertility. As Claude Quétel has pointed out in his book on the history of syphilis, it was widely recognized that prostitution could transmit syphilis.⁶⁵ In "Marriage," Špott mentioned physical signs, including curved legs, spine, and bad teeth; all of those symptoms could indicate syphilis.⁶⁶ He also explicitly warned against English Disease, a term that could also possibly refer to syphilis.⁶⁷ The mid-1840s volumes of the *Vierteljahrschrift für die praktische Heilkunde*, a medical journal published at the Charles University in Prague, made clear that syphilis had been known to be transmitted through pregnancy, affect the health of newborns, and potentially cause infertility.⁶⁸ Thus, prostitution could have represented an essential threat to the future existence of the national community. Špott's argumentation, therefore, resembles later attempts to regulate prostitution for eugenic reasons.⁶⁹

Women and Social Aspects of Diseases

Špott's relatively brief, but significant discussion of prostitution also exemplifies social aspects and implications of diseases. In general, many contemporaries linked prostitution with spread of diseases and threat to the (nation's) future existence. As I have

⁶⁴ As I have mentioned in chap 5, some nineteenth-century physicians and medical practitioners were also convinced that prostitution could cause cholera. See my discussion of Shew (and Broussais) Shew, *Cholera Its Causes, Prevention and Cure*, 25 (and Broussais, *Cholera*, 9), in chap 5. See, also, Joel Shew, *Consumption, its prevention and cure...* (New York: Fowlers and Wells, 1856), 149 – 150.

⁶⁵ Claude Quétel, *History of Syphilis* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990), esp. chap 9.

⁶⁶ For an outline of symptoms of syphilis see Quétel, *History of Syphilis*, esp. chaps 1 and 5.

⁶⁷ See note 2 above.

⁶⁸ See Dr. Kraft's treatises of syphilis in the 1844 and 1845 volumes of *Vierteljahrschrift für die praktische Heilkunde*.

⁶⁹ I would like to thank to Keely Stauter-Halsted for sharing with me her notes from her research on prostitution in the Polish Lands at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as well as excerpts and notes from Antoni Wyslouch's, *Prostytucja i jej skutki* (Poznań: Christian Socialist Party, 1905). I am also grateful for her helpful leads as how to address and contextualize the theme of prostitution.

mentioned, in a book published only a year before “Marriage,” Shew warned that prostitution causes cholera, a wide-spread epidemic indeed.⁷⁰ In reference to the early nineteenth-century French physician Francois-Joseph Broussais (1772-1838), whose report Shew incorporated into his book on cholera while transforming it into a particularly moving moralizing warning, Shew asserted that prostitutes were most predisposed to the disease. But even more importantly, the prostitute, and the body of the prostitute, affected others.⁷¹ To exemplify the point, Shew pointed to Broussais who “tells us that one of his colleagues (...) informed him of numerous examples of students who were seized with cholera after having visited a house of ill-fame.”⁷² In the Czech context - at least in the popular texts aimed at the general nationalist audience and apart from Špott’s article – prostitution did not seem to warrant attention, and prostitutes were not blamed for spreading cholera, at least not in the texts in Czech nationalist publications at the time. Even so, Špott’s mention of prostitution in “Marriage” is nonetheless explicitly negative.⁷³ It is important to remember, however, that none of these statements were deterministic. Even though Shew identified prostitutes as a “class of persons,” anyone could and had a moral obligation to change. Even texts, like Pendleton’s book, that focused on heredity and began to reflect the changing context and incorporate the latest Darwinian ideas continued to maintain that responsibility is a gendered individual issue. Comparably, even if people realistically could not move or do

⁷⁰ See also Svobodný, “The Health of the Population and Health Policy in 19th-Century Bohemia.”

⁷¹ Broussais’s lectures on cholera that the French physician delivered during the prevalence of the disease in Paris were published in the U.S. context as *Cholera, Two Clinical Lectures Upon the Nature, Treatment and Symptoms of Spasmodic Cholera* (New York: Stodart, 1832). The author of the preface, Hohn S. Bartlett, explained that the lectures were translated from French since Broussais, expecting that the epidemics of cholera will also appear in the U.S. and follow the same course as the epidemics in Paris, wanted to share his knowledge and opinion on the disease. Shew evidently used and practically copied parts of the Broussais’s lectures in his book on cholera.

⁷² Shew, *Cholera, its causes, prevention and cure*, 25.

⁷³ Špott, “Uzavírání sňatku,” 133. note about scholarship on prostitution etc.

much to provide for better living conditions, they were still responsible for changing their biology.

Špott's arguments cannot be analyzed in the same light as the later nineteenth-century discussions that concerned both biological (physical) implications as well as the moral threat that prostitution presented to (emerging) middle-class values. But Špott's discussion had social and moral implications relevant to the process of the national construction and reproduction. The project of creating new social rules and requirements, educating the new and perceived members of the national community about appropriate conduct and moral values, inextricably joined both the biological and social. In other words, even if Špott did not succeed in physically curing the people, the moral base of his arguments would have implications for shaping national culture. The connections among women, education, and attempts to create a model of a middle-class values and morality (including the attempts to make women responsible, respectable, and, therefore, moral) further underscore the significance of the women, and women's bodies, for the national existence.⁷⁴

Despite his reported successes in curing well over three thousand patients, and creating an excellent advertisement for his own medical practice, these diseases did not cease to exist in the population.⁷⁵ As he stated, “[P]hysicians often merely treat individual diseases. Only the government and proper legislature can exterminate and uproot [entire

⁷⁴ An interesting comparison is Ann Stoler's article “Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Gender, Race and Morality in Colonial Asia,” in *Gender at the Crossroads of Knowledge: Feminist Anthropology in the Postmodern Era*, 51-101, edited by Micaela di Leonardo (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991).

⁷⁵ Between 1846 and 1869, Špott treated 5,767 patients, out of whom 3,840 patients were reported as having been successfully cured. (Out of this number, Navrátil further stated that 1,515 got better, 281 were not cured, 101 patients died, and 31 remained in care). See Navrátil, *Almanach českých lékařů*, 320).

diseases].”⁷⁶ Although Špott tried to get rid of hereditary diseases, he had to admit that some people remained whom Špott did not consider fit to reproduce the national community by bearing children.

This is neither surprising nor unexpected. As I discussed in chapter 5, lifestyle, living conditions, social class, and profession, including prostitution, were among the reasons that physicians and other medical practitioners listed as affecting one’s predisposition to disease. But these factors were all culturally, geographically, and temporally specific.⁷⁷ In addition, as Keely Stauter-Halsted has suggested, these factors also raise the issue of situational behavior.⁷⁸ They also possibly make the nineteenth-century situation resemble the situations of “structural violence” in contemporary contexts as described by Paul Farmer where some people are equally unable to alter their living conditions and lifestyles and become victims of disease and suffering.⁷⁹

A good case in point here is the well-known life story of the legendary female writer Božena Němcová. As is well known, and often sentimentalized by the Czech scholarship, the famous Czech author frequently lived in particularly dire conditions. Many of her biographies have stressed that she was often forced to ask others for food and money.⁸⁰ A note complaining that her bed crumbled under her in the humid Prague apartment where she lived in the late 1850s stands out as a particularly graphic

⁷⁶ Špott, “Uzavírání sňatku,” 131.

⁷⁷ For example, both Amerling and Špott were somewhat inconsistent as to whether or not the city was more harmful than the countryside, and both agreed that poor living conditions and diet resulted in impeded health.

⁷⁸ Keely Stauter-Halsted, “Moral Panic and the Prostitute in Partitioned Poland: Middle-Class Respectability in Defense of the Modern Nation,” *Slavic Review* 68, no. 3 (Fall 2009): esp. 574-578.

⁷⁹ Paul Farmer, “On Suffering and Structural Violence: A View From Below,” in *Social Suffering: Essays*, edited by Arthur Kleinman, Veena Das, Margaret M. Lock, 261-284 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

⁸⁰ The diaries of the renowned Czech nationalist Vojta Náprstek, located in Vojta Náprstek Collection in the Literary Archive of the Museum of Literature in Prague, Czech Republic, however, provide an interesting different perspective from the position of a well-to-do Czech man..

illustration of her poverty.⁸¹ Němcová is by far the most known and frequently evoked member of the Czech community who was both impoverished and chronically ill. She was treated by a number of Czech nationalist physicians including Čejka and Lambl; an issue, which – as I discussed in chapter 3 - adds to the stories and speculations about Němcová’s extramarital heterosexual affairs.⁸² But she was hardly the only one. Correspondence of other Czech nationalists including Zapová and Anna Vlastimila Růžičková, a writer, translator and attendee of the Rajska group of women, further underscore the grim living conditions in which many people in Prague lived.⁸³ This is also supported by an account written by an American tourist who visited Prague in the 1860s and described the town as “interesting but filthy capital of Bohemia,” suggesting that the situation exceeded living quarters.⁸⁴ Contrary to medical practitioners suggesting various lifestyle advices and urging people to change themselves, however, women like Němcová, Zapová, and especially Růžičková who never married and whose letters to Václav Hanka, a historian and librarian of the Czech national museum, detail the grave poverty she lived in to support herself, could do much to alter the situation.

Špott’s assessment of the less than idyllic situation, therefore, can be interpreted partly as an assessment of the situation and partly as a warning. According to Špott’s logic, the unfit were those who refused to be educated and to comply with the guidelines provided. In other words, these people were unwilling to be disciplined to participate in creating a successful future for their national community. Špott’s remark can be extended

⁸¹ Němcová’s letter to her son Karel written 31 July 31, 1857. Sirotek (ed.), *Vybrané spisy Boženy Němcové IV*, 508-510, esp. 509.

⁸² For biographical information on Němcová, see chap 2. For speculations about Němcová’s extramarital heterosexual affairs see also chap 3.

⁸³ Anna Vlastimila Růžičková to Václav Hanka, Václav Hanka Collection, Literary Archive of the Museum of Literature in Prague.

⁸⁴ S. Vienna, “Jottings in Germany,” *The Christian Recorder* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), November 26, 1864.

to the symbolic level of reproduction to caution against people who – by way of their refusal to conform to the requirements – would have a harmful effect on spreading desirable national customs and rules.

Yet, as Špott stated in the section of “Marriage” I quoted at the beginning of my chapter, “it is not possible, however, to force entire families into celibacy [on account that they are not fit to reproduce the national community].”⁸⁵ He proclaimed that “such a practice would be cruel and inhumane, and would only burden those who are otherwise a good contribution to the community.”⁸⁶ Reading this as a contradiction, such a statement could echo his nationalistic sentiment and his idea of repression faced by those who strove to establish and differentiate their own national community from other(s). Additionally, this statement could also reflect the state of the Czech community, as many of them suffered from some kind of “hereditary disease” from Špott’s list and many also sought his medical treatment. The statement, therefore, could respond to the contemporary situation as Špott would not have wanted to discourage anyone from joining the national community and simultaneously makes it resemble an advertisement for his own medical practice where he promised to make people Czechs.

Being part of the national community entailed compliance with certain rules. All of the points against which Špott argued encouraged people to watch themselves and others closely to determine possible signs that suggested that an individual was unfit to belong to the community. Špott’s rhetoric of such policing of self and others – a central component of Foucauldian concept of biopolitics – suggests that he may have envisioned a system similar to what Bashford, whom I discussed in the previous chapter, has

⁸⁵ Špott, “Uzavírání sňatku,” 131-132.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

described as the “hygienic citizenship” for the case of white consumptive patients in Australia: Current and future members of the Czech national community would be treated, cured, and trained in disease prevention.⁸⁷ They would simultaneously “sow the seeds of good health” in an increasingly eugenic formation of government, self-governance, population and hygiene.”⁸⁸ Even in the non nation-state setting of the mid-nineteenth-century Czech national movement, such a system could work to channel peoples’ lifestyles, personal habits, and customs.

In addition, Špott’s Natural Hospital may well have served as a test matchbox version of such a national community. Even if Špott’s patients did not consider themselves to be part of the Czech national community, and were only interested in a successful cure, they nonetheless agreed to his alternative practices, and were exposed to his views, which entailed specific nationalistic ideas and visions of a new and different community. As I have mentioned, Špott’s critique of Priessnitz might have something to do with Priessnitz’s early lack of credibility and accusations coming from Austrian authorities. But Špott was also an avid Czech nationalist. He was active in multiple Czech associations and groups and as one of his biographer’s suggested, his participation in nationalist activities and his Czech lectures at the Prague University might have been the reason he was later denied professorship at the university.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ For the term “hygienic citizenship,” see Bashford, *Imperial Hygiene*, 77.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 79.

⁸⁹ According to the article, Jan Špott was allegedly denied professorship at the Prague university for lecturing in Czech and attending funerals of a renowned Czech nationalist writers Karel Havlíček Borovský in 1856 and Němcová in 1862. See V.K. Š, “Přírodní léčba ve staré Praze, článek o bratrech Špottech,” 13. Article located in Špott Collection, LAML. Similarly to other Czech nationalists, physicians too particularly highlighted the importance of Czech language. Several articles particularly emphasized that medical experts use the language. See, for example, Václav Staněk, “Potřebnost jazyka českého pro lékaře a ranhojiče,” *Květy* I., no. 14 (1834): 113-114; and J. Z. “České přednášky na Pražské universitě,” *Květy* 16, no. 4 (1850): 15-16. The journalist J.Z.’s news concerns Czech lectures at the Prague University held by Czech physicians Jan Evangelista Purkyně (1787-1869), Antonín Jungmann, and Špott.

Similarly to water-cure establishments in nineteenth-century United States, Špott's Natural Hospital provided an important meeting space for those interested in changing their lifestyle.⁹⁰ This, again, took a particularly nationalist tinge, as the Hospital provided a space where members of the Czech community could socialize and plan activities of nationalist significance. Similarly to Amerling's Budeč, Špott's Natural Hospital was one of the semi-public, semi-private spaces that Czech nationalists utilized. An underground Czech association known as Repeal, named after the Irish anti English association of the same name that was founded in reaction to the revolutionary upheaval in the early 1848, met at the Natural Hospital.⁹¹ Moreover, if, as Cayleff stated "[t]he water cure as a system and as a world view promoted a sense of meaning, ordering, power, and control."⁹² Špott's vision as practiced in his hospital would also result in producing healthy and strong people and could very well suit the members of the emerging Czech-identified petty bourgeoisie that strove to define the rules of their national community. Therefore, the hospital, where Špott was surrounded by a community of Czech nationalists who followed his ideas about managing the population to create a proper and fit Czech nation, played an important role in shaping the Czech national community.

⁹⁰ See, advertisements in *The Water-Cure Journal*. See also announcements and reports such as "Temperance Banquet," and "The September Convention," *The Water-Cure Journal* 16, no. 4 (1853): 85.

⁹¹ Repeal was active in the 1848 Revolution, and organized an unsuccessful overthrow in 1849 for which many of its initiators were jailed. Several members of Repeal later helped to found the Young Czech Party, a major Czech political party that was in existence from the second half of the nineteenth-century until the formation of Czechoslovakia in 1918. On Repeal, see, for example, the memoirs of one of Repeal's members, Josef Václav Frič, *Paměti* vol. 1 (Prague: Státní nakl. krásné literatury, hudby a umění, 1957), esp. 324, 355-356. Other notable Czechs who visited Špott's hospital included [Josef Václav] Frič, [Karel] Sabina, [Dušan] Lambl, [Prokop] Chocholoušek, [Karel Jaromír] Erben, [Karel] Vinařický, [Josef Jaroslav] Kalina (See Matoušek, "Současníci a předchůdci doby Purkyňovi," 1008). According to a manuscript written by Slávka Vondráčková, Němcová also visited the hospital. (See, Slávka Vondráčková, "MUDr. Jan Špott," Špott Collection, LAML).

⁹² Cayleff, *Wash and be healed*, 18.

The common thread uniting Špott's propositions in "Marriage" is the emphasis on educating current members of the community. Špott stressed education repeatedly throughout his text. He made clear that those who wanted to belong to the national community should be educated and should educate one another; they were responsible for avoiding marriages with the unfit. Rather than acknowledging the failure of his curative methods or medical viewpoints, Špott's statement underscored the importance of education and the need to police people to make them fit the Czech community. Špott combined education with reproductive and physical fitness in pursuing his goal of a healthy national "body." And, as he constantly reiterated, it is primarily women who are most important and mainly responsible for the national existence.

Conclusion

"Marriage" unfortunately did not stir up any direct follow-up discussions. No subsequent issues of *Posel z Budče*, any other nationalistic publication, or the *Vierteljahrschrift*, contained any explicit response to Špott's text. This is not surprising in the mid-nineteenth-century context of the Czech national movement. The journal *Posel z Budče* was temporarily discontinued in 1851, and there may simply not have been adequate time for any explicit reactions to "Marriage." Furthermore, given the increased censorship placed on nationalistic activities and publications during the time of the Alexander Bach's absolutism in the 1850s, it is possible that no published responses were permitted.

Yet, the absence of response does not lessen the importance of Špott's text. The requirements of physical, physiological, and moral fitness add an important facet to the

debates on the rules and requirements that Czechs considered important to teach to members of the national community. Furthermore, the implications of “Marriage” do not solely concern Czech history. Špott’s ideas were motivated by his effort to help build prosperous and, therefore, healthy national community and participate in its success. “Marriage” and Špott’s recommendations are relevant to similar contexts where national reproduction and construction were underway.

Placing “Marriage” in the context of biopolitics shows that people’s health and their physical, physiological, and moral fitness were important concerns to national constructions even before the appearance of modern eugenics. Špott’s propositions that would ensure the national future existence were – in the Lamarckian and hydropathic setting - based on the belief that people are capable of, and responsible for, changing their biology. This is reflected in Špott’s outline of how individuals must attend to their own health, strive to stay or become fit, and avoid activities or pursuits that would impede the national prosperity. Špott did not outline a plan as to what should happen with the unfit. He maintained, however, that every member of the national community needed to know that their duty was to prevent multiplying the family of those who would endanger the ideal national reproduction and future.

Špott proposed a system of biopolitics and biopolitical thinking in which people would be trained in the responsibility for the national community. In this scheme, people would be instructed to police and discipline themselves as well as others, identifying those who did not fit the desired criteria. By putting forward the rules that he considered crucial for the correct national reproduction, Špott’s ideas, thus, had an impact on the moral basis of the national movement and the process of national construction. Even if

some people would not become healthy - which he suggested was not always completely possible - everyone knew the characteristics defining the fit and healthy members of the national community. Morality was determined according to the health of the population. Špott's vision of a regime that would be self-imposed by those who felt it was their duty and obligation to reproduce their national community. Špott's propositions are situated in the biopolitical framework of making people fit and useful. At the same time - and this is an important addition to discussions of the Foucauldian notion of biopolitics - "Marriage" suggested that the sovereign power did not have to be state or government imposed. The text made clear that in the absence of a nation-state, physicians and other medical practitioners may regulate and discipline people's lives and bodies instead of the state government. Moreover, individual people (and particularly women) become agents accountable for the existence and prosperity of the national community.

Špott's plans had particularly significant implications for women and provide another example of the ways national processes target women's bodies, use their reproductive potential, and stress their role as mothers and child educators. Špott stressed women's role in the process of reproducing the national community and focused primarily on female constitution, physiology, and moral characteristics and features. In the hydropathic approach that made seemingly no difference in approach between men and women, Špott made women accountable for their own health as well as the health of their families. Furthermore, he implied that their choices had wider consequences and had an impact on the national community. In this respect, therefore, women were burdened by this prime responsibility and remained implicated by their "natural" duties.

“Marriage” suggests that ideas and definitions of physical, physiological, and moral fitness as well as population management formed a vital component of national constructions. Being part of the endeavor, ideas on correct reproduction were entangled in the national definition and program. Furthermore, “Marriage” demonstrates how these ideas played a part in shaping the roles and positions of people - most specifically women – in processes of national constructions.

The dominant emphasis on women also suggests that if women became aware of the harmful effects of hereditary diseases, premature marriages, and prostitution, they would want to change and prevent these conditions in themselves. The way in which Czech nationalists asserted women’s supposedly innate connection with education and promoted the notion that they were the primary educators of future generations also placed responsibility on women for the building of a good and solid national community. The combination of the possibility to change and prevent, and the responsibility of reproducing the desired proper values, clearly worked on two levels. While on the one hand, this made women important assets of the process of the national construction, on the other hand, the responsibility for the national community represented a great burden on women’s shoulders. This responsibility and obligation is another example of the ways in which women, as the nation’s most important imaginary citizens, blurred the boundaries of the public and private in their endeavor to build the community and ensure its future existence and prosperity.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

“[I]f you want to get to know a nation and its future, get to know its women and maidens and their influence on families and youth” explained one Czech nationalist author in an article published in 1843.¹ As the author maintained, “for even if we [i.e. men] are seemingly more advanced, we do everything and we do it better if a woman encourages us – and smiles at us, though we do not admit this in public.”² These two lines highlight and summarize women’s positionality in the Czech national process: they possessed essential skills and abilities but were belittled at the same time. But their participation was important. Numerous texts available in the Czech context between the late 1820s and the late 1850s - a period that does not follow the conventional periodization of history - demonstrate that members of the national community considered women’s involvement in the construction of the nation to be crucial. The publications all show the complex ways in which Czechs – in relation to and in comparison with other nineteenth-century contexts - attempted to create the ideal national woman as the nation’s most crucial imaginary citizen who would guarantee the future existence, prosperity and resilience of the modern nation. Similarly to other nineteenth-century contexts where people concerned themselves with their future existence and strove to establish their own, distinctly different (middle) class, Czechs who strove to

¹ Př. M. Oustecký, “Žena,” *Noviny z oboru literatury, umění a věd (příloha ku Květům 10)* 2: 6.

² Př. M. Oustecký, “Žena,” *Noviny z oboru literatury, umění a věd (příloha ku Květům 10)* 23: 90.

establish their community in the context of Austrian Empire and lacked their own government, nonetheless made it clear that everyone who considered themselves to be part of the community needed to work on the nation's behalf and be responsible for the national future. In other words, and this is important contribution to the scholarship of modern state formations, nationalisms as well as discussions of biopolitics/biopower, my study of the nineteenth-century Czech national process shows that rules and requirements do not have to be imposed by the state but rather by those who feel responsible for the future existence and prosperity of their national community.

As I have demonstrated, the nationalist propositions regarding women's participation and positionality were complex, showing that in the process of national construction it is important to pay attention not only to social but also biological characteristics. The discussions were firmly situated in the framework of public and private spheres. Although these boundaries were always imaginary, and not quite corresponding with the actual situation in the national community, my analysis of the texts makes clear that Czech nationalists in their endeavor to establish themselves as a modern nation were very much concerned with women's positionality in this binary. Like activists in other subaltern and minority-group contexts, Czechs lacked their own autonomous public sphere and particularly underscored women's participation in public nationalist activities. Many nationalist writers and journal contributors emphasized the importance of women's literary activity. In what seems an interesting choice for an emerging nineteenth-century middle-class community, they welcomed the appearance of "our [Czech] Sappho,"³ and wished, as Jan Čejka formulated it, that Czechs had a woman

³ Vojt. Nejedlý, quoted in Jílek, "R- a L-ová v Puchmajerových Nových básních z r. 1798 *je Rebeka Lešková*," 267.

capable of writing a “novel full of daring and brave ideas just like George Sand did.”⁴

Although Sappho and George Sand were both well-known literary figures, they also had a decidedly scandalous reputation, which makes them interesting, if not risky, role models for other Czech women. Czechs also praised female actors and singers, particularly when performers with a German-language repertoire chose to perform in Czech. Many publications, including memoirs published later in the nineteenth century, also show that the nationalists especially valued and encouraged women’s participation in public social activities such as dance balls. The texts, typically full of admiration for the prettiness of the female attendees and their ability to speak the Czech language, combine the frivolous with the serious, indicating that the category of the ideal Czech woman included not only the appropriate language skills but also an adherence to a certain standard of beauty. In this sense, the publications blended modern cultural and political tendencies with traditionalism.

But discussions in journals, short stories and advice books written or appropriated from outside contexts as well as personal correspondence simultaneously show that women’s involvement in activities of public significance was a highly controversial issue. Contrary to Partha Chatterjee’s claims about women in the Indian national movement, I argue that Czechs did not unconditionally encourage and promote women’s participation in public activities. Rather, my sources have shown that as the community grew in the 1830s, 1840s, and even in the 1850s despite the censorship imposed by the regime of the Austrian minister of the interior Bach, Czechs began to emphasize the connection between women and the private sphere, making clear that, as František Doucha stated,

⁴ Tille, *Božena Němcová: s 35 podobiznami a 2 facsimily*, 167.

woman is first of all an “excellent housekeeper, mother and child educator.”⁵ Although this nationalist writer promoted the idea that women who wanted to be part of the community needed to write and publish Czech literature, this was by no means an unconditional support of Czech women becoming writers. As he simultaneously asserted, thus contradicting Čejka’s enthusiastic exclamation, writing might make women “disguised in an un-natural half-mannishness à la George Sand.”⁶ She might have been a convenient figure to point to when Czechs needed to demonstrate their cultural and literary maturity but clearly this French writer of the not particularly respectable reputation was hardly an example that Czech women ought to emulate.

As I have shown, Doucha’s message was echoed throughout the spectrum of Czech nationalists including those who focused on conceptualizing the idea of national education. Even the teacher Václav Kratochvíl, who insisted that “it is a basic human right that women receive the same education as men,”⁷ and the reportedly most unconventional member of the community, philosopher, educator, and physician Karel Slavoj Amerling, who asserted that poor education as well as exaggerated emphasis on fashion wasted women’s potential,⁸ did not deviate from Doucha’s opinions. Both Kratochvíl and Amerling, as well as other nationalists, agreed, as Amerling put it, that the family was the “cornerstone of the nation/state”⁹ and repeated Doucha’s statement that women were supposed to be “faithful wives, greatest mothers, educated tutors, (and) good housekeepers.”¹⁰ Even the institution of female friendships that some advice books

⁵ D[oucha], “Slovo o spisovatelství vlastenek,” 248.

⁶ Ibid. 249.

⁷ Kratochvíl, “O vychování dívek,” 166.

⁸ Kučerová, *K historii ženského hnutí v Čechách*, 18.

⁹ Ibid, 20.

¹⁰ *Promyslný posel*, 50.

promoted as the perfect activity for women emphasized the connection between women and the private sphere.

This was by no means an opinion limited solely to Czech men. The Polish-born Honorata Zapová z Wiśniowských, whose marriage to a Czech nationalist made her a member of the Czech community, expressed very similar ideas in her manuscripts focusing on the education and social role of women and made clear that she saw domesticity as the exclusive occupation for women. Zapová's assertions might seem surprising. As a writer, activist in the 1848 events, and a founder of an educational institute for girls and young women, she combined domestic duties with involvement in public nationalist activities. But as the larger scholarship shows, Zapová's positionality and opinions were not unusual and did not greatly differ from female activists in other contexts, including the early nineteenth-century American educator Catherine Beecher. Even Rajská's conflict over marriage to Amerling and becoming an independent educator leaves no doubt that, as she herself formulated it, she “knew the duties of a woman.” This is perhaps best reflected in her subsequent marriage to František Ladislav Čelakovský. Many contemporary nationalists considered Rajská's marriage to this nationalist writer and university professor to be an act of public nationalist significance. But the marriage simultaneously placed Rajská in the proper category of woman.

Other examples demonstrate that women's public activities caused much anxiety among contemporary nationalists. Even if women who met at gatherings organized by Rajská between the late 1830s and the mid 1840s might not have envisioned the national future differently than men, they had the means and were free to express their opinions. Similarly, evidence of actual relationships between Czech women shows that in the

Czech context female friendships did not underscore women's connection to domesticity. Instead, their relationships supported the women in their nationalist activities, enabling them their own visions of a personal and national future, and at least in the case of Božena Němcová an important discussion and representation in their literary activities. Even the complicated story of Kateřina Maršalová, an eighteenth-century female soldier who eventually gave up her public service of protecting her country, got married, had children, and thus became the role model for other Czech women, makes clear that women's involvement in public activities was risky terrain. While on the one hand, Czechs needed to demonstrate that women were involved in activities of nationalist public significance, they simultaneously expressed much anxiety over women not wanting to keep to their supposedly natural duties. One possible way to interpret the nationalist emphasis on the connection between women and the private sphere, then, is that if Czech women embraced the domestic sphere, the Czech national community would be on a par with the well-established middle-class communities that promoted such a dichotomy. In other words, and somewhat paradoxically both in respect to feminist discussions of the public/private binary and the scholarship that links modern communities with the existence of the public sphere, the Czech case shows that some nationalists could consider women's relegation to the domestic sphere as a sign of modernity and advancement. The Czech case also suggests that constructing a modern nation clearly presented a conflict between the need for women's participation in nationalist public efforts and, simultaneously, fear that women would be too independent and not keep to their domestic duties.

At the same time, the various roles through which the ideal national woman was supposed to participate in constructing the modern Czech nation encompassed both public and private activities, the spheres overlapped, and private activities had an important public significance. This was particularly evident in the discussions and propositions of the ways that the nationalists, and particularly women, also needed to be responsible for ensuring the future existence, health, and fitness of the national body. In other words, building the Czech nation was not solely about learning the Czech language and social customs. It was also important to ensure the health and fitness of those who wanted to belong in the national community. The Czech texts suggest an idea of repression faced by those who strove to establish themselves out of a multinational Empire, perhaps even underscoring the contemporary emphasis on individual people being accountable for the choices they make about their health. But the concerns with the nation's future echo similar discussions in many other nineteenth-century contexts, including, for example, the early to mid nineteenth-century American doctors who were concerned about health and fitness and proposed healthy lifestyle both as a way to create a healthy population and distinguish nineteenth-century Americans from their English counterparts.

Interestingly, therefore, the Czech nation-building case shows how universalist concepts of health could be used for the purpose of constructing a modern nation and nationalized concept of health. In other words, there was no Czech-specific way of being healthy and Czech nationalist physicians discussed similar concerns as their counterparts elsewhere. Like others in the early- and mid-nineteenth-century Lamarckian context of malleable heredity, Czechs were convinced that health, fitness, and therefore belonging in

the national community, was as much a matter of social and moral as physical and physiological health, that a proper lifestyle is key to good health, and that women's role in ensuring that was paramount. Publications, including a short story published in the journal *Vlastimil*, made clear that Czechs strove to make women responsible for choosing the correct marriage partner, that it was critical to choose men who adhered to the ideas and principles of the national community. I argue that this shows that the notion of "ethnic" belonging in the Czech community was more complicated than language and place of birth as the issue of ethnicity has been typically discussed by Czech scholarship. A number of texts published in Catholic-based and more specialized journals that aimed at those concerned with Czech national education, as well as popular medical treatises, made women – through their supposedly natural duties – primarily responsible for instilling and maintaining the proper, correct lifestyle that was at the time considered to play an essential role in securing the health, and therefore the prosperity, of individual people and the community at large. The Czech authors who published these articles sometimes underscored the authority and expertise of physicians and other medical practitioners, but all of them maintained that women were essential to the process.

Czech discussions of membership and belonging in the national community also included attention to the physical and physiological features that would make one fit – or be excluded from-- the community. Not only did these formulations, most sharply outlined by the university-trained physician and supporter of an alternative curative method known as hydrotherapy, Jan Špott, make clear that it was a women's task and responsibility to ensure the health of others and be healthy. They also stressed that it was women's responsibility to know, recognize, and prevent those who are not fit – as

understood in the pre-social-Darwinian framework - from reproducing the national community. The combination of the idea of the possibility to change one's physical and social dispositions, and the responsibility of reproducing the desired proper values, clearly worked on two levels. On the one hand, this made women important assets in the process of national construction. But on the other hand, as I have demonstrated in this dissertation, the responsibility for the national community, i.e. that women's lives and personal choices had a decisive impact on the large, collective national body, represented a great burden on women's shoulders.

On the most basic level, in forging the requirements for the ideal national woman, Czechs simply needed to convince women to "raise children and work on behalf of the nation's prosperity," - not because they would feel obliged to, but "because they want[ed] to." These were the tasks imposed on the crucial imaginary citizen who would, as he optimistically exclaimed, secure a "more joyful future of the Slavic Lands and our Czech country."¹¹

Although directed at Czechs, the implications of this quotation, as well as my study of the ways in which Czech nationalists between the late 1820s and the late 1850s identified women as most responsible for the nation's future existence and prosperity, are significant beyond the nineteenth-century Czech context. This Czech case brings to the extensive literature on gender and nationalism a focus on the various ways in which women's bodies, physical and physiological fitness, domesticity, marriage, romantic friendships, sexuality, and gender transgressions all contributed the process of modern nation-building. I demonstrate that the creation of a modern nation is a complex process

¹¹ Př. M. Oustecký, "Žena," *Noviny z oboru literatury, umění a věd (příloha ku Květům 10)*19: 75.

that exceeds the boundaries of the public and private and occurs not just in homes, but also in schools, concert and theatre venues, the marriage market, and within bodies, as well as armies. Although these are not pairings usually discussed in histories of nationalisms, at least for this early period, my analysis has demonstrated that constructing a modern national community tied together the liberal movement of emancipation with biopolitical forms of power. The lens of biopolitics, imposed not by state governments and authorities but (self-) imposed, in highly gendered terms, by those who felt responsible for guaranteeing the nation's future existence, gives new purchase on these nation-building processes by showing them as strategies to manage both the individual and the national body. By showing that individual people, and particularly women, become agents accountable for the existence and prosperity of the national community, my work enhances our understanding of the gender-specific ways activists in such similar national movements worked to guarantee their futures. My study is thus useful for thinking more generally about other contemporary national movements, including post-national contexts where national fitness is a concern. Furthermore, the lens of gender and attention to the ways that the positionality of women is instrumental in creating a well-established and resilient modern national community and exerting a decisive influence over the construction of gender relations is significant for the ways we consider histories of modern state formations, their periodizations, and temporalities both in the Czech context and beyond.

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