DOI: https://doi.org/10.2298/GEI2302225P
UDC 314.15.044(=162.3)(498)
Original research paper

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Neither Germans nor Czechs? Expatriates from the Czech lands in Romanian Banat in the Trap of Ethnicism*

In our opinion, the scholarly and general ways of perceiving the emigrants from the Czech lands are based on methodological nationalism, which identifies the concept of society with the modern national state. Based on this, Bohemian resettlers who founded several settlements on the southern border of the Habsburg Empire in present-day Romanian Banat in the early nineteenth century have hitherto been divided, in the spirit of ethnicism and methodological nationalism, into Czechs (Böhmen) and Czech Germans (Deutschböhmen). Against this, an alternative research perspective, represented by the concept of national indifference, can be applied. The object of this article is hereby to re-assess of the collective identity of emigrants resettlers from the Czech lands towards its nationally indifferent character. We propose to overcome the ethnicist framework of the research on Bohemian resettlers by introducing what we term as the inclusive approach to expatriatism. This article is based on archival and local written sources and ethnographic field research (interviews) collected during the years 2010–2017.

Key words: Habsburg Empire, Czech lands, Banat, migration, ethnicity, nationalism, national indifference, ethnicism

* I would like to thank to both two reviewers of the study for their valuable advice and comments. The article name is an allusion of the titles of studies written by Chad Bryant (2002) and James Bjork (2008), who dealt with the processes of nationalization, national identification, and national indifference in them.

Ни Немци ни Чеси. Исељеници из чешких земаља у румунском Банату у замци етницизма

Према нашем мишљењу, научни, као и општи приступи опажања емиграната из чешких земаља, заснивају се на методолошком национализму, који поистовећује концепт друштва са модерном националном државом. На основу тога, чешки досељеници који су почетком 19. века формирали неколико насеља на јужној граници Хабсбуршког царства у данашњем румунском Банату, били су дељени у духу етницизма и методолошког национализма на Чехе (Böhmen) и чешке Немце (Deutschböhmen). Насупрот томе, може се применити алтернативна истраживачка перспектива, представљена концептом националне индиферентности. Намера овог рада је да преиспита колективни идентитет емиграната из чешких земаља у односу на њихов национално индиферентни карактер. У раду се даје предлог превазилажења етницистичког оквира истраживања чешких досељеника увођењем приступа који се може назвати инклузивни приступ исељеништву. Рад је заснован на архивским изворима, локалној штампи и етнографским теренским истраживањима (интервјуима) обављаним од 2010. до 2017. године.

Кључне речи: Хабсбуршка империја, Чешке земље, Банат, миграција, етницитет, национализам, национална индиферентност, етницизам

1. INTRODUCTION: EXPATRIATES UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF NATIONALITY POLICY AND ETHNICIST RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

Czech ethnography and historiography were endowed with an interest in Czech emigration from the very beginning of this scholarly discipline in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. At that time, research and state interest created a unified corpus, which expressed the ideological orientation of the national community and state. Ethnography is rightfully criticized for its political role when the first ethnographers tried to study what could support the "project of Czech culture", independent of the German one.

> "For most of the twentieth century, […] Czech ethnographers acted as if it was just Czech culture that was intended to be researched in the Czech

> lands. The only acceptable behavior of Czech ethnographers […] was to search obstinately for a difference between the declared and certainly culturally constructed Czech and non-Czech systems. This resulted in the efforts to search for and emphasize the distinctions of Czech national and [Czech] folk culture" (Kandert 2002, 162).

The almost exclusive interest in Czech folk culture related to the idea that this was the basis for the forming national culture. "The Czechs needed to have an image of themselves, which would have helped them to defeat Germans at least symbolically, and ethnographers delivered tools for that" (Scheffel & Kandert 2002, 218). This ethnicist framework was also typical for the subsequent decades of research during the period of the communist regime in Czechoslovakia (1948–1989). The search for authentic Czech folk culture, antiquated Czech roots, and confirmation thereof did not target only the geographical area of the Czech lands, but it was also Czechs living abroad – the "expatriates" – who became part of this search for the entire twentieth century. Bohemian resettlers living in the Balkans were not an exception; they were presented as "remote patriots".

Czech ethnographers and historians approached the research on Bohemian resettlers similarly to the German "Volkskunde", meaning through the tradition of "Sprachinselforschung"[1] – they viewed the resettlers (colonists) as a kind of external island created by members of their own nation, a "colony", or a "branch". In these foreign "language islands" of theirs, both groups of researchers projected period ideals of ever-stronger nationalist movements, both the Czechoslovak and the German ones. In the past, several researchers argued, based on a lot of ethnographic and historical research, for the necessity to leave this nationality paradigm by substantiating the fact that emigrants built on other (mainly religious) sources of collective identification than those strictly national ones (e. g. Jakoubek 2010) and that they "became Czechs" in the national sense rather later on between the world wars due to the activities of national agitators sent from Czechoslovakia (Pavlásek, 2013).

In our opinion, the scholarly and general ways of perceiving the emigrants are based on methodological nationalism, which identifies the

[1] Meaning the research into (German) language islands, in which German ethnographers tried to describe and typologize German enclaves in non-national environments (including the Czech lands). The German ethnographer and historian Walter Kuhn tried to convert this approach, popular with (Sudeten)German ethnographers in Czechoslovakia (e. g. Gustav Jungbauer, Adolf Hauffen), into an independent sub-discipline termed "Sprachinselvolkskunde" (Kuhn 1934).

concept of society with the modern national state (Chernilo 2011). Against this, an opposing research perspective, represented by the concept of national indifference, can be applied. National indifference ranks among the most innovative concepts shaping research on nationalism in the past two decades. This concept was primarily allied and developed by the researchers who dealt with the history of Bohemia under the Habsburgs in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Miller 2019) when they cast doubts upon the mass character of nationalism in East Central Europe at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In contrast to the self-proclaimed success stories of nationalists, these scholars argued that most "ordinary people" were not in thrall to the nation; rather, they were indifferent, ambivalent, or opportunistic when confronting issues of nationhood" (Ginderachter & Fox 2019, 3). The option of applying national indifference as an analytic category for the modern history of Central and Eastern Europe was dealt with mainly by the historian Tara Zahra, who subjected it to critical reflection.[2] Zahra describes national indifference as

> "a new label for phenomena that have long attracted the attention of historians and political activists. What we might call indifference has gone by many other names (often derogatory) in the past: regionalism, cosmopolitanism, Catholicism, socialism, localism, bilingualism, intermarriage, opportunism, immorality, backwardness, stubbornness, and false consciousness, to name a few" (Zahra 2010, 98).

Our goal is to follow this national indifference research perspective and to re-assess of the collective identity of resettlers from the Czech lands in the first half of the nineteenth century towards its nationally indifferent character with the level of cultural identity, meaning with cultural similarity and ethnic affinity (Brubaker 1998, 1047) of Bohemian resettlers who have hitherto been divided, in the spirit of methodological nationalism[3], into Czechs (Böhmen) and Czech Germans (Deutschböhmen)[4] according to the nationality key. We will try to do this by compre-

[2] This research discourse which was criticized as well (see Toshkov 2010; Lieberman 2020).

[3] The term methodological nationalism is used for an assumption when a nation/state/society is a natural social and political form of the modern world (Wimmer & Glick Schiller 2003).

[4] From the 1840s, the German form of the ethnonym (der Tscheche) was more and more often used to term the national-conscious Czechs, while Deutschböhmen was used to name German-speaking Czechs.

hending the context of the colonization of the southeastern border of the Habsburg Empire by emigrants from the Czech lands in the first third of the nineteenth century, with a focus on their cultural identity. Based on this we will document that their designation and definition as Czechs and (Czech) Germans according to the ethnic and nationality key do not correspond to their period culture, largely shared to a large extent, which was based on their common origin, and on the local, regional, and provincial awareness, bilingualism, and shared Catholic confession which proceeded from that origin.[5]

For this reason, our target is to think about the cultural identity of expatriates in a different way, to "disenchant it"[6] in the sense that the ethnology takes off its "nationalism glasses" and grants the expatriate statute also to those whom we have not considered being expatriates to date, meaning to the "Deutschböhmen" , who left the Czech lands together with the Böhmen resettlers for the south-eastern corner of the Habsburg Empire to find a better life there. We rely on the assumption that this kind of perception of expatriatism should be problematized already at the level of the used term "expatriate/s", which was, due to the practice of the Czechoslovak interwar "politics of the care of expatriates" (see below), identified with *ethically exclusivistic* meanings. Against this *ethnically exclusive* model, we suggest an alternative interpretation in the form of an *inclusive* approach to expatriatism, which is based on the assumption of the shared religious identity (confessional affiliation) of colonists.

Applying this, we want to avoid the danger of practising methodological nationalism as well as the practice of "groupism", under which Rogers Brubaker understands the "tendency to represent the social and cultural world as a multichrome mosaic of monochrome ethnic, racial and cultural blocks" (Brubaker 2002, 164). We also respond to Brubaker's call not to view national identities as a logical outcome of an already existing ethnic identity or to conceptualize the nation as a real group but rather as a contingent event (Brubaker 1996, 7). We use the term "ex-

[5] In the Czech lands, the differentiation between "Czechs" and "Germans" in the nationality sense appeared particularly after the influence of *ethnification* through the spreading nationalisation of society in the second half of the nineteenth century. About this process, see below.

[6] With this "enchanting" we refer to Max Weber's concept "the enchantment of the world" (1922), by which he explained the rationalization and desacralization of society. By this I mean that the expatriates were "sacralised" too much in the past in the sense of their ethnic/national mythization.

patriates" as a *category of analysis*, not a *category of practice* (Brubaker & Cooper 2000, 4; Brubaker 1996). We came to the necessary reflection on the use of the above term because we also consider the concept of identity to be problematic. Identity, as a category of scholarly analysis (which abstracts the reality), is too vague without a necessary analytical quality; another problem with it consists in the fact that is it simultaneously a social and a political praxis (a kind of objective element of reality) (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000).

The theoretical and conceptual framework presented above seems to be the best fit for the interpretation of the research data collected during the years 2010–2017. This research relied on archival sources (the Archives in Temesvár), local written sources (village chronicles and teachers' chronicles) and ethnographic field research that was conducted in the villages of Svatá Helena, Weitzenried (Gerník), Ravensca (Rovensko) and Weidenthal (Brebu Nou) in Romanian Banat in 2010, 2013 and 2017. The main method of on-site data collection was the implementation of 30 semi-structured interviews (informants were anonymized in case of citation in order to keep the identity of individuals hidden and protected).

2. EXPATRIATE CARE

After the formation of Czechoslovakia, the matters relating to Czechs living abroad were administered by the interwar Ministry of Foreign Affairs and National Enlightenment. The activities directed at the expatriate diaspora were an integral part of the state politics of that period (Pavlásek 2011). Numerous expatriate enclaves came into the limelight of national agitators and workers in the sphere of public education, and later on of ethnographers and folklorists. All these people, supported by the state, visited the Czech minority living abroad to report on it in a rather romanticizing spirit, but also to condemn it.[7] The workers from the sphere of public education considered the trends of "denationalization", captured in several expatriate communities, to be deplorable. The nationality, or the awareness of the own nationality origin, was assessed as a de facto moral category. If this was not present, the repatriate community was assessed

[7] A number of national agitators and workers in the field of public education, who, especially in 1927–1939, visited their compatriots abroad (their reports were in some cases published a few years later – during the Second World War, see the travel report of Jan Hříbek cited below), also visited the Romanian Banat. These "amateur ethnographers" were followed by professional Czechoslovak ethnographers from the 1960s onwards with their interest in the compatriots.

negatively, as obsolete, lost, and doomed.[8] For this reason, Czechoslovak state institutions[9] were obliged to support Czechs abroad in every possible way to increase their low nationality awareness and to prevent the danger of their assimilation with the domestic population. This is demonstrated by one of the educative workers and national agitators, who worked with expatriates in south-eastern Europe: "It is an obligation of every nation to take care of all its members, whether they live in the bosom of the nation, or outside it. And every human speaking the language of his or her nation and claiming allegiance to it has the right to be borne in mind by the nation" (Folprecht 1940, 5).

Travelers, workers in the sphere of public education, and national agitators, who were reporting about Czechs living abroad, understood them to be an automatic part of the Czech nation. This is exemplified by one of the first published reports on Czech emigrants living in Romanian Banat, which was written by the traveller Josef Hříbek. In the "Czech" village of Svatá Helena, he took part in a wedding which he assessed in his report as a representation of the "national ceremony" with "surviving Czech character" and elements of "national life" which had survived despite "fierce repressions". His description of expatriates' lives contains a fascination that it is possible to find "remote patriots" in Romania, one thousand kilometres far from Prague, where "Czech golden hearts are hidden beneath their coarse blue shirts!" (Hříbek 1940, 3). The nationality appeal is also obvious in his subsequent narration. When he, for example, wrote about how the expatriates tolerate a German priest in their village, he declared with pride about the expatriates: "The patient Czech soul; only the faithful and open-hearted Czechs can resist the denationalisation" (Hříbek 1940, 5).

The spread of national culture from Czechoslovakia across its borders to particular expatriate communities proceeded from the conviction that the national state has to take care of its diaspora and to secure its future life in the host country. This policy directed at Czech emigrants was to be based on sending educators to provide "folk education". Teachers as well as priests were supposed to deliver lectures about national geography

[8] In this context, the historian Tara Zahra (2010) remarks that the term "national indifference" does not implicitly include pejorativeness or negativity – we usually translate that as "indifference", which evokes apathy or disinterest.

[9] The most important role in this was played by the Czechoslovak Foreign Institute, the task of which were the awareness-raising activities connected with the collection of information about expatriate enclaves, and the coordination of Czech expatriate associations abroad to spread the national consciousness (Comp. Zahra 2010, 98).

and history in the spirit of national education. Czechoslovakia found inspiration in its national neighbours. Jan Auerhan, a long-time director of the Czechoslovak Foreign Institute, proposed the following aspect: "We have to learn from Germans who used their organizations to take care of them [foreign Germans]" (Auerhan 1920, 4).

The policy aimed at Czech enclaves abroad is expressed by the formulation "expatriate care". In principle, it includes a complex system of efforts made by the foreign policy of inter-war Czechoslovakia to "save" the descendants of emigrants from the Czech lands from their assimilation in the host countries (Pavlásek 2011; Pavlásek 2013). The group identity of local expatriate communities was safeguarded by emphasizing the ties to their former homeland, "the ethnic fatherland" (Čapo Žmegač 2010). The educators' activities led "the expats–the likes of us" to preserve or to "awaken" their national awareness through creating emotional ties to the newly formed state identity – Czechoslovakia. This was the reason why they taught the expatriates about the cultural, social, and political context of Czechoslovakia, which became more and more ethnic due to ever stronger nationalism. It is only a slight exaggeration to say that between the world wars, the expatriate care was another stage of the Czech National Revival, when the Czech diaspora abroad was nationalized with a reference to the nineteenth-century language perception of national identity.

For many subsequent decades, ethnographers approached "Czechness" and the entitlement to "expatriatism" in the same way that the state and the Czechoslovak Foreign Institute considered the emigrants who spoke Czech to be "the likes of us". They mostly understood them as a reflection of the disappearing archaic world of traditional Czech (rural) culture which was expected to perish under the influence of modernization trends and migration to towns. This "rescue" approach of Czechoslovak ethnologists[10] alongside the previous interwar expatriate care, which focussed on nationalization of the expatriates, created an "ideal expat", meaning an active member of a local minority cultural club (called *Česká Beseda)*, to practise Czech traditions and annual customs, to eat traditional Czech foods, and, of course, to speak archaic Czech.

We do not include the German-speaking emigrants – "Deutschböhmen" among them, although they shared the common homeland, so they were also "expatriates" in the true sense of the word (Lozoviuk 1998, 39). The "Deutschböhmen" seem to have represented a sort of strange (or hybrid)

[10] In addition to Czech ethnologists, colleagues from Slovakia, such as Ján Botík (2016) also followed the issue of compatriots.

group when German-Bohemian and Czech-Bohemian mutuality has appeared unclassifiable in the face of the national-centered order, when its "subethnic ambiguity" and ethnic "impurity" (Douglas 1966), did not fit into the national view taken by Czech and even by German researchers. We think that they found themselves in the position of a "double exclusion" as they were considered to be neither Banat Czechs, nor Banat Swabians.[11]

3. (DEUTSCH)BÖHMEN IN THE TERRITORY OF PRESENT-DAY ROMANIAN BANAT

The migration of people from the Czech lands who went to south-eastern Europe especially in the nineteenth century with the much larger migration wave from Central and Western Europe[12] is one of the realms observed by researchers in this territory. These migrations from Western and Central Europe had involved so many people already from the eighteenth century that the European South-East went through considerable demographic transformations at social, economic, ethnic, and religious levels. After all, the present-day multi-ethnic face of the destination of these migrations is a strong piece of evidence thereof.[13] One of the migrants' destinations was also the historical territory of Banat in present-day Serbia and Romania, which was part of the Habsburg Monarchy (Austria-Hungary between 1868 and 1918).

Resettlers from the Czech lands settled in the historical territory of Banat more systematically from the 1820s. On the southern border of the Habsburg Empire, the Banat Military Border was created in the eighteenth century at the suggestion of the Military War Council. This military border extended the broad strip of the already existing sections of the Military Border, which the Habsburgs used as a buffer zone for Ottoman expansion. The military administration invited then colonists from many corners of the Habsburg Empire to Banat to defend the borderlands in the case of attacks (Štěpánek 2002; 2005).

The colonization also touched the Almas and the Semenic Mountains, and Clisura Dunarii, which was located in the area of the Wallachian-

[11] Deutschböhmen were far from being a culturally homogenous group even prior to their departure from the Czech lands. This was formed only through German efforts to create a unified group of "Sudetendeutschen" in the 1930s in Czechoslovakia.

[12] In South-Eastern Europe, there are still many locations with residents who claim their allegiance to Bohemian land origin. They are generational descendants of those who participated in these colonization processes and migration trajectories.

[13] About inter-cultural dialogue in Banat, a symbolic intersection of Central and South-Eastern Europe, see Neumann 2015.

Illyrian Regiment's activities. Colonel Michael Drasenović ordered a survey of the land for fifteen new settlements there, which were settled by colonists from the Pilsen, Prachatice, Domažlice, and Klatovy areas, and by the Czechs and Germans from the Cheb area and Bavarian borderlands between 1826 and 1830 (Unzeitig 1853[14]). The colonists from this wave, initiated by Colonel Andreas Schneller, settled in Banat with the promise of a journey at the expenses of the state, financial contribution until the first harvest, and tax exemption for ten years; the military border administration gave them material to build a log house (Štěpánek 2005).

Czech and German researchers have differentiated individual mountainous villages according to the assumed ethnic and nationality division of the colonists. Taking into consideration the above-mentioned colonization, the villages of Weitzenried (Gerník), Ravensca (Rovensko), Schnellersruhe (Bígr), Eibenthal (Eibentál), Schönthal (Paňásky), and Schumitza (Šumice) are considered to be "pure Czech", and Weidenthal, Wolfsberg, Lindenfeld, Wolfswiese, Frauenwiese, Neu Schuppanek, and Alt Sadova to be "pure German".[15]

Felix Milleker, one of the most important Banat historians of German origin, wrote in one of his books dealing with German-speaking residents in Banat that "the Wallachian-Illyrian Regiment's area was settled by altogether 1036 families, 3424 "Czechs and Germans" (Milleker 1926, 25). The perspective that divides the resettlers into two nationality groups was accepted by Czech ethnographers (Secká 1995; Jech et al. 1996), and after that this view was reified, due to the permanent reproduction of the nationality differentiation of the colonists, into the ethnically differentiated reality of resettlers. In this place, however, it is necessary to reflect the fact that the intellectual and educator Felix Milleker wrote the text one hundred years after the colonists from the above-mentioned migration wave had settled in Banat. It was a period between two world wars, when the ethnizing and national-emancipatory trends had already "re-branded" the everyday social reality both in Czechoslovakia and in Banat. While at the time, when Milleker wrote his text, the resettlers supported their identity with their national awareness formed by the educational efforts of teachers, this does not apply for the period of their arrival and subsequent first adaptation in the new environment, as nationality gradually came

[14] This is a manuscript of the parish chronicle from the village of Gerník.

[15] As the first one, I mention their official German typonym mentioned in maps and sources of the military administration, stored in the National Regional Archives in Timisoara (TNRAT, fond *Comandamentul General Banatean*, box n. 810).

to the foreground of the individual and group identification of the Banat (and Czech lands) population only two or three generations later.

Many similar reports describing the "condition" of expatriates in South-Eastern Europe show the national perspective from which the educators saw and evaluated the expatriates. Similarly, the effort to make a picture of expatriates as national-conscious Czechs is also present in other historical sources written as local (parish, school, club) chronicles by national awakeners from Czechoslovakia (teachers, priests), who acted in particular expatriate communities as workers in the realm of public education.

We think that these descriptions corroborate much more the national enthusiasm of the authors of these reports and the facts they desired to see than the more varied reality of expatriates' lives. We will now try to suggest that it is possible to offer an alternative to this exclusive ethnized understanding of expatriates' social reality, i.e. the inclusive approach to expatriatism. We support this approach with cultural similarity and affinity given by the identical origin of "Deutschböhmen" and "Böhmen" in that migration wave. What can an alternative interpretation of the

Picture 1. Cemetery at the outskirts of the village of Wolfsberg.
Photo author (2016).

Picture 2. Gravestones in the cemetery in the village of Wolfsberg with Czech names (Eduard Pankratz) are not exceptional.
Photo author (2016).

settlement in Banat look like when we try to reflect on the ignored resettlers –Deutschböhmen – from the position of a researchers?

Villages which were not strictly divided in terms of ethnicity/nationality

We know from available sources the number of inhabitants of the four largest settlements: 597 people settled in Weidenthal (Brebu Nou in Romanian), 444 people settled in Wolfsberg (Gărâna in Romanian), 256 people settled in Wolfswiese, and 166 people settled in Lindenfeld (Czoernig 1855, 108; Klaube 1972, 1984). Thanks to the chronicler Peter Grassl, the enumeration of the first residents in Weidenthal has survived

(Grassl 1904, 24-26). There we can find many Czech-like names (e.g. Johan Dusek, Johan Szahorzek, Johan Slup, Johann Wesselak, Jakob Peczak, Georg Buchal, Johan Pankratz, Wenzel Hronek, Josef Kronek, Wenzl Bartl, Johann Peczak, Michael Kral, Johann Pankratz, Petr Wesselak, and Mathias Pavlik). We could also find names like this among colonists in Wolfsberg and Lindefeld (e.g. Balthasar Pankratz, Peter Kral, Adam Resniczek, Josef Mener, Johan Adam, Wolfgang Resniczek, Georg Ruschitzka, Georg Janda, Johann Proschofsky, Franz Millota, Josef Pankratz, Adam Ruml, and Georg Wesselak).

Just as we could find "Czechs" – bearers of Czech names – in "German" villages ignored by Czech ethnographers, we can also find many "German" names among the first colonists in the "pure Czech" villages. This could lead to the conclusion that the villages were not ethnically homogenous, as has been assumed to date. This could lead us to problematize the assumption concerning the division of colonization settlements strictly according to the ethnic key.[16] We believe that those arguments do not have the effect of anything productive, and they do not prove much. In addition to active language skills, loyalty to an "ethnic group" was strengthened by the Czech or the German form of a name in the nineteenth century, but this does not apply in general. When taking into account their names, we certainly would not consider the significant Banat priest Unzeitig or the teacher Schlögl from the "Czech" settlement of Svatá Helena to be Czechs. Let us mention a contrasting example – Czechs with German-like names (Dobner, Voigt, Jung, and Rieger) were among leading figures of the Czech National Revival. The Czech lands of the first half of the nineteenth century did not consist of closed ethnic islands of Czechs and Germans, formed by the social rules of endogamy, and families with similar social status and class were often ethnically mixed.[17] For this reason, the form of the name cannot be a clear criterion for ethnicity in the first half of the nineteenth century, and it cannot give evidence of allegiance to one or the other nationality group.

Shared Land Origin

The shared place of origin and the assumed land citizenship and cultural identity are an important argument to relativize the assignment of a

[16] During the field research, we could find German and Czech names on gravestones at cemeteries in particular villages. See photo 2.

[17] The "Deutschböhmisch" and "Böhmisch" villages were also interconnected by local migration, and "it is highly probably that this process was bilateral" (Lozoviuk 1998, 59).

distinctive ethnic category to the colonists and division into two groups. The origin of the observed resettlers was geographically situated in the Czech-Bavarian borderlands. Moreover, the colonists with Czech-like and German-like names often came from the same locations. Most of these original locations have ceased to exist – the Weidenthal chronicle places the origin of colonists in locations, such as Rothenbaum, Neuern (Nýrsko), Flecken, Wassersuppe, Schwarzach, Pirschau, Hirschau (Hyršov). Josef Schmidt also mentions e.g. Rossbach in the district of Ellbogen (Hranice in the Loket area), St. Katarina (Svatá Kateřina near Nýrsko), Vollmau (Folmava) in the Klatovy area, Loburg, Stubenbach in Bavaria, Stanetietz (Stanětice), Holletitz (Holedeč in the Louny area), Neuklitschau (Klíčov in the Domažlice area), Grafenried (Lučina in the Domažlice area, now disappeared), Paschnitz (Poříčí), and Liptau (Liptov) (Schmidt 2003, 49).

The word "Boemi"[18], used in period sources, refers only to the country of origin, and it does not differ between the Czech and the German ethnicity / nationality because this simply did not exist. Similarly, the descendants also used ethnically indifferent terms for themselves Deutschböhmen or just Böhmen. During our research stay in Gărâna (Wolfsberg), we noticed historical awareness of the arrival directly from the Šumava region. On the other hand, in a "Czech" colonization village we recorded a testimony of a surviving contemporary who made a remark about Gărâna residents: "In Garina [Wolfsberg], Dojčbémi lived there. They were neither Germans, nor Czechs…"[19] The native level of the designation is supplemented with names given to them by the neighbouring autochthone Wallachian inhabitants, who, besides the common term "Deutschen", refer to them using a derivative of the originally non-Slavic name for their original fatherland (Pémi, Piemule), which is obviously not used exclusively for the present-day Czech minority in Romania.

Shared Faith and Folk Culture

The anticipated emphasis put on the national consciousness of the expatriates often ignored further levels of expatriates' collective identification, especially the religious one. But it was the confessional affiliation that played the role of the most important distinguishing sign in the first half of the nineteenth century. This was also translated

[18] Several sources speak about "hard-working Böhmen from the Czech-Bavarian borderlands" (TNRAT, fond CGB, 810, n. 88, 248).

[19] *Dojčbémi=Deutschböhme*. A record from field log (Svatá Helena, Romania, October 2017).

Picture 3. Multilingual signs have survived in most colonization villages in Banat.
Photo author (2012).

into the evaluation of resettlers by the mostly Orthodox autochthone population of Banat which reflected not only the shared land origin of the colonists but also their Catholic faith. The affiliation to the Catholic community once again served as a social tie inwards the colonist group, and also towards the neighboring inhabitants. At the practical level, the grouping was implemented based on the principle of religious endogamy. Confessional affiliation played the role of a key identity-creating factor through which the particular confessional groups built a long-impassable barrier between each other. But, on the other hand, within the observed group of resettlers with the majority-shared Catholic faith it produced, alongside their common folk (rural) culture and bilingualism, a "certain degree of mutual assimilability" (Lozoviuk 1998, 68). For this reason, we understand those arriving from the Czech lands rather as bearers of shared cultural similarities,[20] when the emphasis is put on their ethnic affinity and indifference at the expense of each other's difference. The shared cultural *böhme*-identity evolved through inevitable blending of Böhmen and Deutschböhmen in the Czech lands.

[20] In some cases, the cultural similarity was demonstrated by wearing significant similar folk costumes.

The unified local community, defined by church / confession, which gradually became interconnected also based on blood kinship, generated a sense of cultural belonging among the members thereof. In contrast to the Orthodox Wallachians, the shared cultural identity was demonstrated by the common annual cycle of Catholic festive days according to the Julian calendar. The church year with annual repeating events gave the rural community its order and sense. The Imperial kermesse – Kirchweih – was the most important event related to particular locations; Kirchweih, meaning the day of the church's consecration, was celebrated on the third Sunday in October. In Alt Sadová, Weidenthal, and Wolfsburg, the "bömische Kirchweihe" were expected long in advance and they were well-known in the environs[21] for dance parties at which the *polka* was danced, which also referred to the country of origin. Kirchweih also commemorated the construction of the church, and the arrival of colonists from the Czech lands.

In 2012 and 2017, I used the occasion to participate in the kermesse in Wolfsburg. During the festival, a "Slovak brass music band" from the border town of Nadlak performed outside the church. The music band played many Czech folk songs that accompanied dancing visitors who came all the way from Bavaria. The reply to the question as to why they came from Bavaria can be found in the historical development of emigrants' descendants in the Romanian Banat in the twentieth century. In the 1930s, the descendants of resettlers – Deutschböhmen, under the influence of nationalization, declaratively claimed their allegiance to German nationality, and they joined the developing German kulturbund[22] and, the men then the German army.[23] After the war, German inhabitants in Romania were dispossessed, and in the year 1945, Romanian Germans born between 1899 and 1928 were forced to work in the USSR because of their activity in Wehrmacht.

[21] The word "Kirchweih" was even taken over by colloquial Banat Czech and Serbian ("Kirvaj").

[22] These cultural and awareness-raising associations of Germans living abroad were established in the 1920s and 1930s, and they were supposed to develop their cultural and national activities. It is interesting that it was Deutscher Kulturverband, cultural associations of Sudeten Germans in Czechoslovakia, that served as a model for the organization of German associations in Banat (Janjetović 2009, 212).

[23] During the research carried out in the multi-ethnical environment of Serbian Banat, I recorded many statements of the local Czech minority members who justified the nationalization of Banat Swabians and Deutschböhmen by their conviction that they would benefit from that in the future. By joining the clubs, the members got German Reich citizenship, they became "Volksdeutsche" (Glajar 1997). On the issue of Germans in Serbia, see the contribution by Aleksandar Krel (2014).

The descendants of resettlers – Deutschböhmen began to leave Banat in the 1960s, and the largest wave of the "return" co-ethnic migration from Romania to the Federal Republic of Germany followed after the fall of the Communist regime in the year 1989.

The participants came to Kirchweih from eastern Bavaria, where they were the last generation of Deutschböhmen from Banat to find their home. It is certainly interesting that they live near the locations which their ancestors left for Romanian Banat two centuries ago. The native villages of their parents and grandparents in the mountainous countryside of Romanian Banat became a place where they spend their summer holiday or where they travel to as organized groups within "Heimat-Tourismus" to commemorate the life of their ancestors.

Picture 4. Interiors in several houses in Weidenthal still include traditional decorations, reminding of former residents.
Photo author (2012).

Shared Language vs. Nationalist Rhetoric of Unilingualism

Although in the nineteenth century linguists and even politicians accentuated the language more and more as an indisputable ethno-differentiating hallmark of the evolving nationality group of Czechs (Tschechen) and Germans (Deutschen), we think that this did not apply to at least the first generation of resettlers from the Czech lands, and that

Picture 5. A Museum of Ethnography for visitors who are interested in Deutschböhmen's way of life has been built in Wolfsberg.
Photo author (2017).

the parallel use of the regional form of German spoken in the Czech-Bavarian borderlands in addition to Czech did not lead to the formation of strictly separated groups, divided into Czechs and Germans according to the spoken language.[24] On the contrary – the colonists (and generational descendants of them) could easily communicate with each other in the observed locations. We know that many families were still bilingual even in the "Czech" locations in the 1960s (Jech et. al. 1996, 80).

Despite this fact the observed communities of resettlers were perceived through the lens of ethnicist perspective as being linguistically separated pursuant to the same model, as this can be seen in the example of the assessment of the co-existence of Czechs and Germans in the Czech lands. The reason is that in the ethnicist framework, unilingualism was always the norm, and bilingualism was always suspicious (Ginderachter & Fox 2019, 3). This "nationalist rhetoric of unilingualism hides the fundamental logic of local communities in multilingual regions", where it was not exceptional at

[24] The surviving dialect is witnessed by the descendant of emigrants who currently live in Bavaria and visit native villages of their ancestors to celebrate kermesse and to spend summer holiday there: "I am a German, but I don't understand them at all, they speak proper German". A record from field log (Gărâna, Romania, October 2017).

all that Czech-speaking farmers, for example, sent their children to German families and vice versa to learn the other language (Judson 2006, 3).

Czech-German bilingualism was widespread in the Czech lands, and it is presumed to have existed at least in the 1830s and 1840s. It was also common to use the second language in certain situations, when one language was spoken, for example, within the family, and the other was used for communication with staff and in the public.[25] It was also crucial for everyday life in the countryside including the multilingual regions to be able to communicate with neighbors or employers. This changed at the end of the nineteenth century when the development of the system of Czech secondary schools was finished and when Charles University was divided into a Czech Charles University and a German Charles University. This and the subsequent successes of the nationalist movement gradually led to a decrease in the number of those speaking bilingually. However, this happened much later than could be reflected by the language skills of the observed resettlers. If we summarize what was said above, in the case of the observed group of resettlers, the language did not fulfill the function of a mutually separating boundary marker after their arrival in Banat.

Picture 6. Memorial tables reminding of financial support from Germany (Bavaria) for the former DB village of Wolfsberg. Photo author (2012).

[25] In was a widespread form of bilingualism, also called "Kucheldeutsch" or "Kuchelböhmisch", which were specific forms of the language used by Czech servants in Prague and Viennese German households on the one hand, and on the other hand by German higher classes when they spoke to their employers and staff (German with a simple idiom of Czech to speak to lower classes) (Křen 1990, 45).

Picture 7. The local Romanian population replies to the ongoing trend of Heimat (Tourism). Photo author (2012).

4. BECOMING "CZECHS ABROAD"

Philologist Pavel Josef Šafařík termed Czechs "a philological nation" and it was the philologists whose linguistic studies provided the first supporters of the nationhood movement with tools for argumentation. It is a well-known fact that Czech nationalist circles emphasized the language already in the first stage of the National Revival; the situation with the other nationalist movement in Europe was identical (Hroch 1996). The concept of ethnic-language self-identification as a central classification framework of society was not a predestined result of the social and political development in the nineteenth century in the spirit of evolutionism when society leaves the pre-nationalist stage to automatically reach a more progressive stage, i.e., a nationally conscious one. This approach to the theme of national movements in the nineteenth century and to the formation of national

states and societies can be called "ethnicism", with reference to the work by Jeremy King (2001). He understands ethnicism as a vague perspective that considers the nations of Central and Eastern Europe to have originated from mutually exclusive ethnic groups defined by culture and language (King 2001, 123; Cole 2007).

But in fact, the cultural identity of the population of the Czech lands in the early nineteenth century was based on local and regional sources – especially on the connection of particular families to the land, local church community, religious practice, and personal piousness (re)produced by family upbringing. In the local micro-world, family ties were significantly reflected by everyday interaction, and they were a basis to create further cultural symbols, important for the identification of individual and larger communities. The specific "böhmisch" culture, the contours of which could develop due to the identical rural educational and cultural level of "Czechs" and "Germans", was formed in a manner like this.

The project of land-style nationality (Böhmen) was not implemented in the Czech territory, and in the second half of the nineteenth century, the "böhmisch" inhabitants began to define each other based on the ethic-language principle. The enforcement of ethnically defined nationality, provided with the necessary arsenal of romanticizing myth-creating historical narrations, became the only generally accepted historical alternative (Křen 1990, 61) and later on even a classification grid that automatically conceptualized the historical culture-creating processes. After the end of World War I, this also applied to the resettlers who "suddenly" found themselves in the position of a national minority after the formation of independent Czechoslovakia – Czechs living abroad (emigrants).

5. CONCLUSIONS

The previous passages were to document that ethnic/national identity, which the folk and scholarly discourse automatically attribute to expatriates these days, is neither "a matter of course" nor unambiguous, and for this reason, it is necessary to problematize the perspective like this. It is the resettlers from the Czech lands, who founded several settlements in Romanian Banat in the 1820s, who exemplify the unsuitability of these ethnicist categories being used in practice.

By following the national indifference research perspective has allowed us to demonstrate with this case study that if we search for period cultural identities of emigrants, it is necessary to overcome the prevailing ethnicist framework and to focus on phenomena that are not completely in harmony with it. These phenomena can include the cultural affinity of

emigrants from the Czech lands, who were not separated by the assigned different ethnicity and nationality but who were rather united by the awareness of their common homeland and shared Catholic belief.

The word "böhmisch" refers to the many centuries for which Czechs and Germans co-existed in the Czech lands, which led to their mutual acculturation. It does not mean the interpenetration of these two cultures, but rather their permanent closeness and mutual influence. For centuries, this happened in one common space, which was a meeting place and, until the time of spreading nationalism, also a place of dialogue and conflict-free co-existence. Jan Křen called this specific cultural symbiosis and dialectic tension "a tight land community" in which mutual stimuli, as well as obstacles, found their place (Křen 1992, 21). Under the influence of the subsequent historical development and politics of memory, it was unfortunately mainly the mutual tension and the conflict that was accentuated from this productive ambivalence. The construction of the past with the emphasis on the confirmed legitimacy of the difference in the "origin" of both groups proverbially drove a wedge between both groups and formed an image of a "conflict community" of Czechs and Germans.

As we showed, the ethnicist framework and imperative were subsequently (re)produced by the developing scholarly discourse and by the formed nationality paradigm, as well as by methodological nationalism within social sciences and humanities, which identifies the concept of society with the modern national state (Chernilo 2011). Through this we unjustly removed Deutschböhmen from the "historical portrait of Czechness", shifting them symbolically out of the frame of it. We tried to return them back through considering their common and shared cultural ties based on the example of expatriates from the Czech lands.

By rejecting the "grouping" of expatriates while applying the proposed inclusive approach to expatriatism we problematized the trend of scholarly and public discourses to identify collective identity with ethnicity. We consider the Deutschböhmen expatriates to be a kind of hybrid group which due to its ethnic/national ambiguity unjustly does not fit into the vision field of Czech researchers. This is a consequence of political development and state ideologies to which historical and social disciplines and humanities, in general, are not resistant. For this reason, we have brought up arguments about why they should be included in the research into expatriates living abroad from the perspective of Czech scholarly discourse. The national indifference research perspective offers a conceptual alternative to the fascination with the total power of nationalism, which unveils the limits of nationalization in European

countries as well as those of uncritical overuse of nationality categories and constructs. Our target was not to turn the research discourse at any cost towards the "no-ethnic approach" to reality, but to point out that a sore point of ethnology and historiography in Europe consists in the fascination with ethnicity and nation. Therefore, we think that it is necessary to specify, complete, and take into consideration the development of the whole territory of the Czech lands, and not to forget other identification offers which were not completely inconsistent, but also not completely consistent with the national one. The rectification can start very easily – "to add further points of view, to become aware of the fact that the national (nationalistic in the worst case) one is just one of the alternatives of viewing the world, and it was hardly accepted by all inhabitants across social strata and regions"(Kladiwa 2015, 1004).

This perspective which undermines the ethnic imperative might be applied to "rescue the citizens of Habsburg Central Europe from the 'prison of the nations' once and for all" (Zahra 2010, 119) and thereby contribute to a broader discussion on the possibilities of applying the "national indifference" as an analytic category for the modern European ethnology. Hopefully, the proposed inclusive approach to expatriates in this case study is a step in the right direction to problematize and gradually overcome the ethnicist framework of studying European ethnology with a particular focus on migration, nationalism, and (non-ethnic) identities.

Acknowledgment: The article was written with the support for the systematic long-term development of the Institute of Ethnology of the Czech Academy of Sciences (RVO: 68378076).

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Примљено / Received: 07. 03. 2023.
Прихваћено / Accepted: 14. 09. 2023.