

## Chapter 5.

# Conceptions of Czechoslovakism among Czech politicians in government inauguration debates 1918–1938

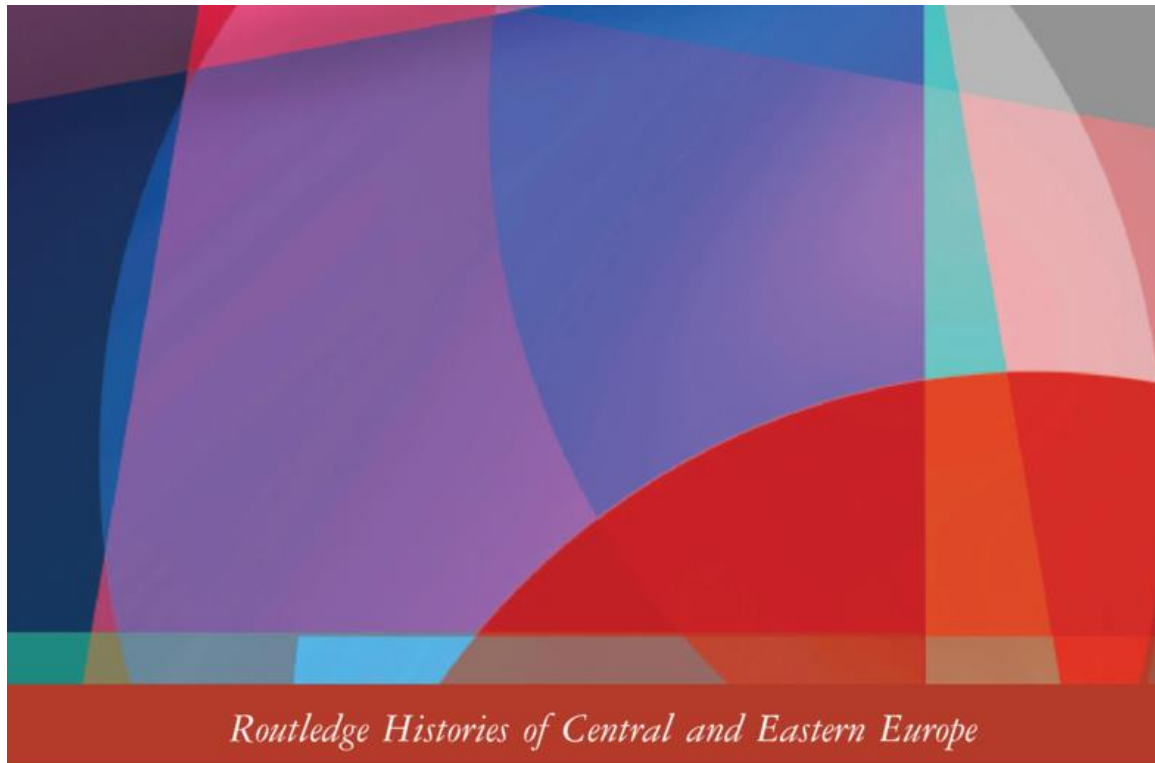
Elisabeth Bakke,  
Department of Political Science,  
University of Oslo  
[elisabeth.bakke@stv.uio.no](mailto:elisabeth.bakke@stv.uio.no)

### Abstract (web-version only)

This article analyses Czechoslovakism as the state ideology of the First Czechoslovak Republic. The main purpose is to shed light on an understudied part of the history of Czechoslovakism: namely, how Czech politicians used the concept of a Czechoslovak nation in parliamentary debates during the First Republic. Czechoslovakism held that Czechs and Slovaks were one nation, or alternatively, that Slovaks were part of the Czech nation. While Slovak autonomists bitterly opposed this ideology and national minority representatives were often critical toward it, it garnered little or no Czech opposition. A close reading of all government inauguration debates between 1918 and 1938 reveals that Czech MPs were more likely to evoke the concept than MPs representing Slovak autonomist or national minority parties, although there were differences in the manner and frequency of use between parties. The concept occurred most often in the context of the topics of a Czechoslovak nation-state and Czechoslovak national unity. Finally, the author addresses the question whether it is possible to speak of Czechoslovakism, at the time, as a concept of a political nation. She maintains that there is absolutely nothing to suggest that any MP in the First Republic regarded all citizens (including national minorities) as part of a Czechoslovak nation.

Published in: Adam Hudek, Michal Kopeček & Jan Mervart (eds.). Czechoslovakism. Abingdon: Routledge. Electronic version available here:  
<https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/edit/10.4324/9781003205234/czechoslovakism-adam-hudek-michal-kope%C4%8Dek-jan-mervart>

**LAST AUTHOR'S VERSION**



*Routledge Histories of Central and Eastern Europe*

# CZECHOSLOVAKISM

Edited by

Adam Hudek, Michal Kopeček and Jan Mervart



Publication date 30 September, 2021. <https://www.routledge.com/Czechoslovakism/Hudek-Kopecek-Mervart/p/book/9781032070728>. (Printed version).

## Conceptions of Czechoslovakism among Czech politicians in government inauguration debates 1918–1938

Czechoslovakism, the state ideology of the First Czechoslovak Republic, held that Czechs and Slovaks were one nation, or alternatively that the Slovaks were a “branch” of the Czech nation, only less developed.<sup>1</sup> From the outset, the latter conception was naturally more common among the Czech political elite than among the Czechoslovakist wing of the Slovak elite. In both cases, the idea of a Czechoslovak nation rested on the cultural and ethnic affinity of the Czechs and Slovaks. Czechoslovakism as a political program for the unification of the Czechoslovak nation in one state was formulated during the First World War by the independence movement abroad, with Tomáš G. Masaryk at the helm. The purpose was from the outset to legitimize Czechoslovakia as a nation-state, in contrast to the old “Austrian prison of nations”.<sup>2</sup>

There was little or no Czech opposition to this ideology. To be sure, Czechoslovakism was not consistently advocated, and Czech politicians often used “Czechoslovak nation” synonymously with “Czech nation,” but I have not found a single example of a Czech politician who, during the First Republic, protested against the idea that the Czechs were a part of the Czechoslovak nation. By contrast, official Czechoslovakism was hotly contested among the small Slovak elite. While the Czechoslovakist oriented wing supported it, the Slovak autonomist wing insisted that the Slovaks were an individual nation. Both agreed that Czechoslovakia was a nation-state, but while Czechoslovakia according to the official state ideology was a Czechoslovak nation-state, the Slovak autonomists regarded it as a Czech *and* Slovak nation-state. Moreover, clashes in parliament often featured Slovak members of parliament (MPs) in leading roles on both sides.<sup>3</sup> Much of the research on Czechoslovakism in the First Republic (including some of my own work) has therefore focused on Czechoslovakism in a Slovak context, while the *Czech* political class has received less attention.<sup>4</sup> In this chapter I set out to fill a part of this gap in the literature, by exploring how Czech politicians talked about the Czechoslovak nation in government inauguration debates during the First Republic. Who were the MPs that used the concept? How often did they use it, and in what context? How did the use of Czechoslovakist rhetoric vary between parties, and did it change over time? Finally, I will address a major controversy in the literature on Czechoslovakism: “whether or not it is possible to speak of Czechoslovakism as a concept of a political nation.”<sup>5</sup>

Czechoslovakism as such was never on the agenda of parliament. Stenographic reports of parliamentary debates during the First Republic take up thousands of pages, and a selection thus had to be made. Rather than sampling random debates, I chose to go systematically through all government inauguration debates. These were general debates with many speakers and thus well suited for my purpose.

While I ideally would have liked to base my analysis on a wider selection of sources, stenographic reports of parliamentary debates have some obvious advantages: they are complete, they are reliable, and they are easily accessible, since all minutes of parliamentary debates have been digitized and made searchable on the websites of the current parliaments of the Czech Republic and Slovakia.<sup>6</sup> The findings are consistent with my earlier work, which was based on a wider selection of debates in the Chamber of Deputies.

I start by briefly presenting the political context, the parties and the elites that took part in the debates. Then I give an overview of the foundations of Czechoslovakism, before I zoom in on the Czech political class.

## The Political Context: Parties and Political System in the First Republic

Czechoslovakia was officially founded on October 28, 1918, by the Czechoslovak National Council in Prague. The declaration was signed by Alois Rašín, Antonín Švehla, František Soukup, Jiří Stříbrný, representing the four largest Czech parties, and a single Slovak: Vavro Šrobár.<sup>7</sup> Unaware of this, the Slovak National Council, with Matúš Dula at the helm, two days later adopted the Martin declaration calling for unification of Slovak territory with the Czech lands. The Reichsrat representatives of the German minority in Bohemia and Moravia of course refused to accept this and proclaimed the provinces *Deutschböhmen* and *Sudetenland*, which they wanted to merge with rump-Austria. There were clashes between the new Czechoslovak and Polish states over the Teschen/Cieszyn/Těšín region. The situation was even more precarious in present-day Slovakia, which had been an integral part of the Kingdom of Hungary and had no clear borders to the south. Here the final borders were settled only with the conclusion of the 1920 Treaty of Trianon.<sup>8</sup>

The National Council in Prague adopted a provisional constitution on November 13, and on November 14, the (Revolutionary) National Assembly met for the first time. This parliament, consisting of only Czech and Slovak representatives, elected Karel Kramář as the first Prime Minister of Czechoslovakia and Tomáš G. Masaryk as its first President. On February 29, 1920 it adopted the Constitution of the First Republic, which established a bicameral parliament that was proportionally elected for six- and eight-year terms, respectively (in practice shorter because of snap elections). Elections were held in 1920, 1925, 1929 and 1935. The government was accountable to both chambers and needed a vote of confidence to commence work.

While a differentiated Czech party system had already developed under Austrian rule since the 1860s, the Magyarization policy of the Hungarian regime held back Slovak party development. Of the Czech MPs in the Revolutionary Parliament, over 25 percent were former members of the Austrian *Reichsrat*, while the rest were appointed by the parties according to a key based on the 1911 election results. By contrast, only two members of the Slovak Club had been members of the Hungarian parliament when the war started (representing the Slovak National Party); the rest were hand-picked by Vavro Šrobár from people he trusted. A majority belonged to the protestant, Czechoslovak-oriented part of the small Slovak intelligentsia, and several were prewar Hlasists.<sup>9</sup>

The party system of the First Republic resembled that of Austria: it was split along national, territorial and functional lines, with separate (sets of) parties for the various national groups. Most governments were therefore broad coalitions that straddled the left-right divide, the exception being the two caretaker or “expert” governments of Jan Černý in 1920 and 1926, respectively. Initially, Czechoslovak governments were dominated by five nominally Czechoslovak parties, the Pětka or group of five:<sup>10</sup> the Czechoslovak Social Democrats (ČSD), the Czechoslovak (National) Socialists (ČS), the Republican Agrarian and Smallholders’ Party

(Agrarians), the Czechoslovak People's Party (ČSL), and the Czechoslovak National Democrats (ČND). A sixth bourgeois Czechoslovak party joined the government coalition in 1925: the Czechoslovak Small Traders' Party.<sup>11</sup> Starting in 1926, German "activist" parties joined the government: the Farmers' League (BdL), the German Christian Social People's Party (DCV), and from 1929, the German Social Democrats (DSA), while the autonomist Slovak People's Party (SLS) was represented in government only between 1927 and 1929, as a part of the green-black or bourgeois coalition.

Of the five original parties in the Pětka, the Agrarians and the Social Democrats had been the electorally most successful Czech parties since the introduction of universal male suffrage in the Austrian part of the Habsburg Empire in 1907. The latter was the only party in the First Republic ever to surpass 25 percent of the vote (in 1920), but it was permanently weakened when its left wing split off to found the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (KSČ) in 1921. This was the only genuinely multinational party in the First Republic. This split also caused the resignation of the second red-green Tusar government. The Agrarians became the largest *Czechoslovak* party in the three following elections and held the position of prime minister from 1922 until the end of the First Republic (with a brief interlude in 1926). It was a classical, West European type of pragmatic peasants' party, mostly concerned with the interests of the farmers and the countryside. The remaining three parties in the original Pětka were only nominally Czechoslovak, and the same goes for the Small Traders' Party. The Czech National Socialist Party had been founded as a more nationally oriented, non-Marxist alternative to the social democrats, and had limited appeal in Slovakia beyond the Czech intelligentsia.<sup>12</sup> The National Democrats (a merger of the original Old Czech and Young Czech national parties) were strongest in Bohemia, while the Czechoslovak People's Party (a merger of older Catholic parties) had its stronghold in Moravia. The latter party ran together with its Catholic sister party, the Slovak People's Party, in the 1920 election. The Slovak People's Party (or *ľudáks*) won all three subsequent elections in Slovakia, while the old Slovak National Party was reduced almost to oblivion. Most of the Czechoslovak parties were class-based (or in the case of the Czechoslovak People's Party also based on the religious cleavage) and the national question did not occupy much space in their programs. The National Socialists and the National Democrats were the only parties that defined themselves as national in their programs.<sup>13</sup>

Of the national minorities, only the Germans were numerous enough to have a full set of parties. German parties were initially in opposition not only to the government, but to the state itself. In the forefront of clashes with Czech politicians on the national question were the German National Party (DNP), the German National Socialists (banned in 1933), and their successor, Konrad Henlein's Sudeten German Party, which won the 1935 election, surpassing even the largest Czechoslovak party. Of the three "activist" parties, the Social Democrats were the electorally most successful in 1920 and 1929, and the Agrarians in 1925. The only major Hungarian party was the Provincial Christian-Socialist Party.<sup>14</sup> Poles and Ruthenians were represented from 1925, mostly through various electoral alliances.

## The Foundations of Official Czechoslovakism

Czechoslovakism as a political program for the unification of the Czechoslovak nation in one state was formulated during the First World War by the (mainly Czech) independence movement abroad. The main founding father of this *official* Czechoslovakism was arguably Tomáš G. Masaryk, professor and later president of Czechoslovakia. The idea of Czechoslovak cultural reciprocity was of course much older, dating back to the Czech and Slovak national revivals. This idea had a renaissance among the Czech and Slovak elite, albeit in a diluted form, around the turn of the twentieth century, mainly through the Czechoslovak Unity on the Czech side, and the student association Detvan and the circle around the journals *Hlas* (the Hlasists) and *Prúdy* on the Slovak side. Masaryk played an important role through his contacts with the Hlasists, who regarded him as their teacher and leader. Masaryk had regarded the Slovaks as a part of the Czech nation already in his book *The Czech question* (1895).<sup>15</sup> In *The Problem of a Small Nation*, (1905) he claimed that “there are two million Czechs in the Hungarian kingdom! [...] We cannot just give up a third of our nation.”<sup>16</sup> During the war he repeatedly argued that the Slovaks were Czechs despite “using their dialect as their literary language,” and that the “Slovak districts of Upper Hungary” should therefore be included in a re-established Bohemian state. His motivation was explicitly political: this would make the Slav majority of both the historical lands and Slovakia stronger against the national minorities.<sup>17</sup>

To be sure, Czechoslovakism was not consistently advocated during the First Republic. Neither Masaryk nor Kramář used the term “Czechoslovak nation” in their first speeches to the Revolutionary Parliament, but by the time parliament adopted the Constitution, the Czechoslovakist rhetoric was taking hold. The Constitution was thus officially adopted by the “Czechoslovak nation,” which was mentioned twice in the preamble. Czechoslovakism was most consistently applied in statistics, including the population censuses of 1921 and 1930. It was less consistently applied to school textbooks in history, and Czech history textbooks for secondary school were, somewhat surprisingly, hardly Czechoslovakist at all.<sup>18</sup>

Besides Masaryk, the co-founder of the state Edvard Beneš helped lay the foundations for official Czechoslovakism during the First World War. He usually treated the Czechs and Slovaks as one nation, without bothering to justify this view, but when he did, he emphasized cultural affinity, psychological awareness of the political and moral unity, state association and a conscious will to form a shared national awareness. In his memoirs of the First World War, Beneš explicitly defined himself as a “nationally conscious Czech.”<sup>19</sup> Yet, in 1934, he spoke as a “Czechoslovak,” adding that “I do not have *only a Czech* national consciousness. I do not feel *only Czech*, and the Czech feeling is for me secondary to a Czechoslovak feeling.”<sup>20</sup>

After the war, two Czech professors at the newly founded Comenius University in Bratislava served in the front line of the academic debate: Václav Chaloupecký and Albert Pražák. According to Chaloupecký, the great task of historiography was to remove all doubt about whether the Czechs and Slovaks were one nation.<sup>21</sup> As a historian, he played a key role in the Czechoslovakist reinterpretation of history, where the strategy evidently was to cite all Czechoslovak contacts as proof that Czechoslovak unity had been preserved over the centuries. For Chaloupecký a nation was an ethnically unitary group of people born and raised under similar

conditions. Czechs and Slovaks had the same Slav ancestors, lived under the same geomorphologic conditions, and spoke the same language, with some “regional differences.” In Chaloupecký’s scheme, this nation was Czech. On the other hand, he admitted that the *awareness* of a Czechoslovak national unity was “a child of our national revival.”<sup>22</sup> According to Kamil Krofta, a fellow historian, diplomat and later Minister of Foreign Affairs, there was “no serious doubt today, that the Czechs and Slovaks—apart from minor dialect differences—really spoke the same language.”<sup>23</sup>

There were two critical junctures in this Czechoslovakist interpretation of history: the demise of Great Moravia in 907 entailed a *political* separation and the modern codification of Slovak by Ľudovít Štúr and his compatriots in 1843 entailed a *linguistic* separation of the two branches of the Czechoslovak nation. It is perhaps natural that the linguist Pražák put special emphasis on the original linguistic unity of the Czechs and Slovaks, arguing that “the Slovaks felt as one nation with the Czechs, as one linguistic and cultural grouping.” Until the codification of literary Slovak, Pražák asserted, “nobody in Slovakia had any doubt that they spoke the same tongue as the Czechs. And also written relics [...] are in Czech, sometimes mixed with dialect.”<sup>24</sup> By contrast, Bohuš Tomsa, Czech professor of the Philosophy of Law at Comenius University argued that the existence of a Czechoslovak nation did not depend on whether it could be proven that the Czechs and Slovaks had common ancestors or a shared language, but on whether they morally felt themselves to be a Czechoslovak nation.<sup>25</sup>

One of the few Czech scholars who publicly questioned the axiom of Czechoslovak national unity was the philosopher and biologist Emanuel Rádl. In his book *The war of the Czechs with the Germans* (1928), he criticized the anti-German policies of the Czechoslovak government, and the official conception of a Czechoslovak nation based on the ethnic and cultural affinity of the Czechs and Slovaks. While admitting that Bohemians and Moravians had originally been related to the Slovaks tribally, he argued that there was no such thing as a Czechoslovak language and asked: if a nation could have two languages, why not three or four? What held Czechs and Slovaks together was, according to Rádl, the constitution, laws, government, and administration. He advocated a political nation concept as a project for the future: the task was to overcome tribal feelings through the idea of a political nation, where the members would be Czechs as well as Germans, and Slovaks as well as Magyars. Not even Rádl claimed that such a nation existed.<sup>26</sup>

Although a majority of the scholars and scholar-politicians who helped flesh out Czechoslovakism as a state ideology were Czech, three Slovak scholar-politicians and prewar Hlasists belonging to the Agrarian Party should be mentioned: Milan Hodža, formally professor of modern Slavic history at Comenius University, MP and the longest-serving Slovak minister in the First Republic; the sociologist Anton Štefánek, MP, and briefly minister of education; and Vavro Šrobár, medical doctor, MP, and the first minister plenipotentiary of Slovakia. The first of these gradually left his original emphasis on Czechoslovak cultural unity for a more voluntarist or even political conception in the 1930s; by 1934 he regarded Czechoslovak unity as a “thought construction,” instead stressing the historical foundations of Czechoslovak political kinship. At this point he used the term “Czechoslovak political nation,” but importantly, this “political nation” only included the Czechs and Slovaks.<sup>27</sup> It was thus not a

political nation in any conventional sense, especially since the national minorities of course had the same civic and political rights, and lived under the same rules and regulations as the “Czechoslovak” majority. Štefánek argued that the Slovaks had national culture and cultural history in common with the Czechs, but separate political, social and economic history, and that the voluntarist element would therefore be most decisive in the new state formation. He nevertheless made clear that the Czechoslovak nation was not and could not “be the sum of all citizens of our state, only the sum of all Czechs and Slovaks.”<sup>28</sup> Šrobár, as well as Štefánek and Beneš, believed that sociological laws would inevitably turn the Czechs and Slovaks into one nation.<sup>29</sup>

### Who Used the Term Czechoslovak Nation, When and How Often?

There were a total of 17 governments between 1918 and 1938, each lasting on average a little over a year. In most cases there was an inauguration debate in the Chamber of Deputies as well as in the Senate, and always after elections. Exceptions are the inauguration of the Kramář government in 1918 (where only the prime minister, the newly elected speaker and the chairman of the Slovak Club spoke), the second caretaker government of Jan Černý in 1926, and Milan Hodža’s three governments between 1935 and 1937, which were mainly reshuffles. While it is not possible to go into these twelve sets of debates in any detail, they are a rich source of insight into how Czech politicians talked about the Czechoslovak nation.

As Table 1 shows, 83 speakers used the term “Czechoslovak nation” 169 times, i.e. on average twice each. The number of individual MPs who used the term is lower (at 63), since some MPs used it in more than one inauguration debate. However, the “Czech nation” and the “Slovak nation” occurred twice as often (333 and 356 times, respectively) in these debates. Senators comprised 20 percent of the speakers and accounted for less than 20 percent of the occurrences of “Czechoslovak nation.” This reflects that the Senate was the less important chamber (it generally had shorter debates with fewer speakers), but also that the tone was less confrontational. This was even commented on in senate meetings. Czech and Slovak MPs representing Czechoslovak parties were more likely to use the term than MPs representing Hlinka’s Slovak People’s Party, national minority parties or the Communist Party, who were also more likely to be critical or outright hostile to the idea of a Czechoslovak nation. Interestingly, the MPs of activist parties in government used it in a routine fashion.

Who were these MPs? To be sure, participants in inauguration debates were not random MPs. The main speakers of the respective parties were typically leading, and often experienced, politicians. This even applies to the only female speaker to use the term, Fráňa Zemínová (ČS), who was the vice chair of her party. And while members of government usually did not take part in these debates, many of the Czech speakers were ministers at some earlier or later point.

However, the frequency with which speakers used the term varied between the Czechoslovak parties as well as between debates. First, while Czech MPs account for nearly two thirds of the occurrences, the speakers of the Czechoslovak National Socialists Party alone account for 22 percent. Moreover, in addition to the party’s Czech MPs (the 18 speakers in the table), its Slovak deputy Igor Hrušovský used the term in three inauguration debates. The Czechoslovak



Social Democrats were second most likely to use the term Czechoslovak nation (14 speakers, including one Slovak, and 23 occurrences). By contrast, Czech Agrarian MPs used the term sparingly (nine occurrences, and of these, four in Malypetr's 1935 inauguration speech); however, six Slovak Agrarians used the term 12 times. A large majority of the Slovak Czechoslovakist speakers were Hlasists. The remaining Czechoslovak parties had only Czech speakers. Of these, the National Democrats had most speakers, while the Small Traders had more occurrences: one man – Rudolf Mlčoch – used the term 16 times in two speeches.

Second, two debates stand out: the inauguration debate of the second Tusar government in 1920 (14 speakers and 33 occurrences), and the inauguration debate of the third Malypetr government in 1935 (14 speakers and 36 occurrences). Czech speakers accounted for 23 occurrences in each of these debates. The former debate was the first inauguration debate held with members of parliament representing national minorities present. The latter debate was the first and only inauguration debate held after the 1935 election, with Konrad Henlein's Sudeten German Party as the largest party in parliament. A third debate with many Czech contributors was the inauguration debate of the third Švehla government in 1926, when the German activist parties joined the government. Here, Czech speakers accounted for 17 of the 18 occurrences.

*Table 1. Number of speakers using the term Czechoslovak nation in government inauguration debates in the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate put together*

	Czech speakers representing these parties						Speakers by nationality				Total occur.
	ČS	ČSD	ČND	Agr.	ČSL	ČŽOS	Czech	Slovak	Other	Total	
Kramář (1918)	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	4
Tusar I (1919)	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	3
Tusar II (1920)	2	4	1	1	0	1	8	2	3	14	33
Černý I (1920)	2	0	0	0	1	0	3	4	1	8	10
Beneš (1921)	1	2	0	0	1	0	4	1	0	5	7
Švehla I (1922)	3	2	0	0	1	0	6	1	1	8	19
Švehla II (1925)	2	1	2	1	1	0	7	1	2	10	15
Švehla III (1926)	2	1	2	2	0	0	8	0	1	9	18
Udržal I (1929)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Udržal II (1929)	2	0	1	0	0	0	3	1	2	6	14
Malypetr I (1932)	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	1	5	10
Malypetr II (1934)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Malypetr III (1935)	2	1	2	1	0	2	8	2	4	14	36
Total (speakers)	18	13	8	5	4	3	53	15	15	83	
Total (occurrences)	38	20	16	9	5	17	107	37	25	169	

Own calculations based on stenographic reports. The Czech total for Švehla II includes one Czech Communist MP (1 occurrence); the Czech total for Malypetr I includes a former ČSL deputy who ran in alliance with Hlinka's Slovak People's Party (1 occurrence).

## In What Context Did the Term Czechoslovak Nation Occur?

MPs representing nominally Czechoslovak parties used the concept of a Czechoslovak nation in three types of situations in government inauguration debates: in confrontations with MPs representing national minorities, in confrontations with Slovak autonomists, and as shorthand for Czechs or Czechs and Slovaks (routine occurrences). Slovak Czechoslovakist MPs were most active in confrontations with Slovak autonomists over whether the Slovaks were a part of the Czechoslovak nation and (even more so) in clashes over Slovak autonomy. Czech MPs mainly used the term “Czechoslovak nation” in a routine fashion and/or in confrontations with German opposition MPs. Moreover, they also actively supported the notion of a Czechoslovak nation when their party was in opposition. MPs representing the National Democrats and the Czechoslovak People’s Party (during the red-green coalitions of Tusar) and the National Socialists (during the bourgeois coalition) warned against national division and regretted that a broad government of all Czech or Czechoslovak parties had not been possible.

In confrontations between Czech and German MPs the “Czechoslovak nation” was mentioned most often in the context of a Czechoslovak nation-state and/or relations between the “state-nation” and the national minorities, especially in the first election period, but to some extent also in 1926 and 1935. It also occurred in the context of the “liberation of the Czechoslovak nation,” in appeals to Czechoslovak national unity to safeguard this nation, and in the context of “we, the representatives of the Czechoslovak nation” or “we, the majority”. There was a shift in emphasis from the Czechoslovak nation-state to Czechoslovak unity over time.

With only Czechs and Slovaks present, the opening meeting of the Revolutionary Parliament on November 14, 1918 was a festive event. At this point Czechoslovak rhetoric was not yet very well established. The concept of a Czechoslovak nation was thus conspicuously absent from the opening speech of Karel Kramář, Prime Minister and chairman of the National Democrats. Instead he talked about “our nation” or the “Czech nation,” while referring to the state alternately as Czech, Czechoslovak or Czechoslovak and the Slovaks as “our Slovak brothers.” In their acceptance speeches at the same meeting, the newly elected speaker František Tomášek (ČSD) and vice speaker Matej Metod Bella (Slovak Club) mentioned the Czechoslovak nation twice each, in the context of we, the representatives of the whole Czechoslovak nation (Tomášek) or we, the Slovak branch of our Czechoslovak nation (Bella); in the festive “long live our dear Czechoslovak nation” (Tomášek); and as a part of a public rejection of the offer of Slovak autonomy within a Hungarian state (Bella).<sup>30</sup> In the inauguration debate of the first Tusar government, the term was only used in a routine fashion.<sup>31</sup> Only Slovak politicians belonging to the Czechoslovak oriented wing spoke on behalf of the Slovak Club on these two occasions.

The dynamics of the inauguration debates changed after 1920 as the national minorities won representation and the autonomist Slovak People’s Party founded its own caucus. The nominally Czechoslovak government parties thus faced a two-way challenge: Slovak autonomists rejected the idea that Czechs and Slovaks were one nation, but nevertheless regarded Czechoslovakia as a (Czech and Slovak) nation-state.<sup>32</sup> German speakers demanded national self-determination for the Sudeten Germans, arguing that the state had been founded against their will, that the Constitution had been adopted without their participation; and that

democracy was only possible on equal terms. They did not accept the state ideology, but regarded the Czechs as the ruling nation, and argued (based on the 1910 census) that since the Czechs comprised a minority of the population, Czechoslovakia was a nationality state rather than a nation-state—and by implication, not any better than old Austria. They sometimes quoted Ľudáks to “prove” that no Czechoslovak nation existed. Most of the Czech MPs and all German MPs who used the term in the first election period were former *Reichsrat* members. However, the roles were now reversed, with German MPs demanding autonomy and Czech MPs insisting that the state was an indivisible Czechoslovak nation-state. While they promised equal rights for national minorities, Czech MPs would hear nothing of autonomy for Germans (or Slovaks, for that matter). The Communist Party was a partial exception, but only after 1925. In the inauguration debate of the second Švehla government, Bohumír Šmeral declared on behalf of the Communists that every nationality had the full right to self-determination, “all the way to secession.”<sup>33</sup>

The ambivalence of the Czech approach was present already in speeches in the Revolutionary Parliament. In his opening speech on November 14, 1918, Kramář insisted on “preserving the historical unity of the Czechoslav lands,” and would not “at any cost give up the ties with our Slovak brothers,” but declared that “the German nation living within the borders of our state does not have any reason to worry. [...] Our state will of course be a *Czech* state, because we have won it through blood and suffering. But it will be our pride and ambition to assure that in our state nobody who is not Czech will feel oppressed and not free.” At this point Kramář of course talked about the Czech rather than the Czechoslovak nation (which in his view amounted to the same). Václav Bouček (Progressive Party) made the same point in the inauguration debate of Tusar in 1919, but he called the state “Czechoslovak” and regarded it as a matter of honor for “our nation” to make sure that there would be “no second-class nations in this state.”<sup>34</sup>

In the meantime, President Masaryk had set the tone of the early confrontations with the Germans. In his first speech to Parliament on December 22, 1918, Masaryk left no doubt whose state it was:

The territory settled by Germans is our territory and will remain ours. We built our state, we upheld it, we will build it again; I would like the Germans to work with us in this—that would be a better policy than their dubious present efforts [at secession]. We formed our state; this determines the state rights position of our Germans, who originally came to the country as immigrants and colonists. We have every right to the riches of our territory, indispensable for our industry as well as for the Germans among us. We do not want to and cannot sacrifice our considerable Czech minorities in the so-called German areas.

Masaryk then switched to Slovak, arguing that it was “absurd that a nation like the Magyars had been allowed to exploit four other nations for that long,” including “our Slovaks.”<sup>35</sup>

The inauguration debate of the second Tusar government in 1920 is interesting because it contains an almost complete catalog of arguments establishing the state as a Czechoslovak

nation-state. The prime minister argued that “the Czech nation formed this state in the beginning of the Middle Ages and has now renewed with the Slovaks.” He saw historical justice in this and expressed hope that “the Germans, who have lived with us for centuries, will be happy to cooperate in building the state.” The founder of Bohemian German national socialism, Rudolf Lodgman (DNP) pointed out that the Germans had not joined the state voluntarily, rejected “the fable about the pure Czech state, the ‘Czechoslovak nation’, the ‘Czechoslovak language,’” and declared that his party would “never recognize the Czechs as masters [Herrenvolk].” To this the Agrarian František Udržal replied that the “Czechoslovaks”—even though Lodgman had said Czechs!—did not want to be *Herrenvolk* and would certainly not treat their national minorities the way the Czechs had been treated in Austria. His colleague Otakar Srdínko as well as the National Socialist Emil Franke argued that the Czechs and Slovaks had only this one state, while the German nation already had two independent states, Austria and Germany, and now wanted self-determination for the third time. Srdínko also took issue with the German claim that half of the population was non-Czech. “The new census will show that the Czechoslovak nation, Czechs and Slovaks, number at least 9 million.” Rudolf Mlčoch asked the German MPs to “kindly bear in mind” that Czechoslovakia was not “a new edition of old Austria,” but according to the peace treaties a Czechoslovak nation-state, where the Germans would not be privileged, but would have “the same rights as the Czechoslovak nation.” Kramář went further and asserted that “the master of the whole indivisible territory of this Republic will be and remain [...] only and exclusively the Czechoslovak nation.” He was not about to give up “our minorities” in the border regions to the mercy of the Germans.<sup>36</sup> His tone was less confrontational in the inauguration debate of the third Švehla government in 1926, but Kramář still insisted that the state according to the peace agreements and the Constitution was a national Czechoslovak state, and that cooperation with the Germans was possible only as long as they recognized the “national character of our state.” Autonomy for minorities was “out of the question,” yet they would get “more than they were entitled to.”<sup>37</sup>

Some of these arguments were also repeated in the inauguration debate of the third Malypetr government in 1935. The chairman of the Social Democrats Antonín Hampl repeated that the Czechoslovaks did not have any other state; the chairman of the Small Traders Rudolf Mlčoch insisted that “this Czechoslovak state is and remains the nation-state of the Czechoslovak nation; his party colleague Otakar Bas reminded the Senate of the obligation to safeguard the rights of members of the Czechoslovak nation everywhere (i.e. also in the border regions), and Kramář still wanted to give the minorities what they were entitled to.”<sup>38</sup>

There were some differences between the Czechoslovak parties, not only in terms of frequency, but also in terms of how they used the term “Czechoslovak nation.” Speakers from the Czechoslovak People’s Party were least likely to use it, and they mostly used it in appeals for Czechoslovak unity or in the context of a Czechoslovak nation-state and/or relations to the minorities. The chairman Jan Šrámek wanted to give the Germans and Magyars the fullest rights possible within the framework of a “Czechoslovak nation-state,” yet in the inauguration debates of both Tusar governments he preferred to talk about the Czech nation or “our small nation.”<sup>39</sup> He was minister most of the time and thus did not take part in later debates.

Czech Agrarian MPs used the term in inauguration debates sparingly and only until 1926. After the German activist parties joined the government, Czech Agrarian MPs generally spoke in a conciliatory manner on the national question—in stark contrast to their Slovak Agrarian colleagues Anton Štefánek and (senator) Kornel Stodola, who still defended the idea of Czechoslovak national unity in confrontations with Slovak autonomists. Prime Minister Jan Malypetr accounted for all the four occurrences of Czech Agrarians in his 1935 inauguration speech, where he used it in a routine fashion for instance when noting that “a large majority of the Czechoslovak nation” supported the government parties. In keeping with the “current policy of the Czechoslovak state and national unity” he promised, on behalf of the government, to “proceed with the decentralization of the state administration according to practical needs.”<sup>40</sup>

Likewise, only one Czech Social Democrat speaker mentioned the Czechoslovak nation in inauguration debates after 1926: the party chairman Antonín Hampl. He was happy that the third Malypetr government had emphasized Czechoslovak unity and argued that a large majority of the Czechoslovak nation supported the foreign policy of the government. He took issue with the methods of Hitler Germany, which were against the democratic principles of the Czechoslovak nation, and warned Henlein’s Sudeten German Party that the Czechoslovak nation was invincible.<sup>41</sup> While Czech Social Democrats were the second most likely to use the term Czechoslovak nation, they often used it in a routine fashion, and sometimes even in an economic context.

The National Democrats and the Small Traders (or rather their chairman Mlčoch) stand out in their defense of a Czechoslovak nation-state where the minorities would get what they were entitled to. Nearly all occurrences of “Czechoslovak nation” in Mlčoch’s speeches fall in this category, and the same applies to the National Democrat speakers. Yet, the National Democrats also emphasized the need to defend the liberation of the Czechoslovak nation, and to preserve Czechoslovak unity. They did not always mention the “Czechoslovak nation” when they talked about the Czechoslovak nation-state, they often talked about the Czech nation, and sometimes they evidently meant the Czech nation when they talked about the Czechoslovak nation. When for instance Mlčoch in 1920 claimed that the “whole Czechoslovak nation” wanted the Teschen/Cieszyn/Těšín region to be “ours at all cost” because it had “historically always belonged to us,” he hardly spoke about the Slovaks.<sup>42</sup>

Finally, Czech National Socialist MPs (who were most closely associated with Masaryk’s Castle circle) were most likely to mention the Czechoslovak nation, they used it in a broad range of contexts, and National Socialist speakers at least sometimes made explicit what a Czechoslovak nation meant besides being shorthand for Czechs and Slovaks. (I will return to this shortly). The most common usage was in relation to the Germans and in the context of Czechoslovak unity across parties. They also mentioned it in the context of a Czechoslovak nation-state, but less often than the National Democrats and Mlčoch. In one of these passages, Senator Antonín Klouda quoted the controversial part of Masaryk’s first speech as president (about the Germans as immigrants and colonists and the German-inhabited regions as “our land”) that had provoked such strong reactions among German representatives. “For us, the

opinion of our President Masaryk [...] of the relation of our Czechoslovak nation as state-nation to the Germans as a minority nation, is authoritative,” Klouda argued.<sup>43</sup>

Interestingly, the National Socialist Fráňa Zemínová (the only female speaker) used the term in combination with ad hominem arguments against the Slovak autonomist leaders Andrej Hlinka and Martin Rázus as well as in combination with praise of the two Czech founders of the state, Edvard Beneš and T.G. Masaryk. She accused the “high priests” Hlinka and Rázus of inciting hatred between Czechs and Slovaks through attacks on the Czechoslovak nation, and asked Hlinka what the ľudáks had done for the Czechoslovak nation, respectively the Slovak nation, when they were in government, at a time when the economic crisis had not yet hit the Czechoslovak nation. She then defended Beneš, arguing that he had served the Czechoslovak nation for 17 years and done more for the peace, freedom, justice and safety of the state as well as of Slovakia than all autonomists put together. In her view, instead of attacking the Czechs, Hlinka and Rázus should thank them for what they did for Slovakia, what the Czechs had sacrificed for its freedom. Her message, explicitly addressing the Czech fascists was equally clear: “The Czechoslovak nation rightfully sees its political and moral leader in the great President Masaryk and in his humanity, and not in the dictatorship of irresponsible people who are probably able to kill, but not to create and build.”<sup>44</sup>

### What Did They Mean by a Czechoslovak Nation?

While the scholars and scholar-politicians that participated in the academic or quasi-academic debate at least sometimes made clear what they meant by a Czechoslovak nation, this was normally not the case in the rather fragmented and polemic political debates.<sup>45</sup> However, the context in which the concept was used can give us some clues.

First, the brother metaphor that was popular especially in the beginning of the First Republic brings to mind a blood relation. The Social Democrat František Tomášek made this quite clear in his first speech to the Revolutionary Parliament:

Today we meet for the first time, representatives of the whole Czechoslovak nation. It is a great honor for me to welcome in our midst [...] our Slovak brothers, who have been torn from the body of the rest of the nation by ill fate and have suffered for ages under the murderous foreign rule of the Magyars. [...] They have returned to the womb of the nation to which they belong, and I express my firm conviction that [...] no power in the world will tear us apart. We belong to each other, and I am convinced that with the influx of that new, healthy blood, our nation as a whole will be led to a new, healthy, great development! While welcoming our brothers, who are blood of our blood, flesh of our flesh, this way, I cannot but remember that there are so far no representatives of our fellow citizens the Germans among us. Not words, but actions will convince them that they have no reason to fear the future.

On behalf of the “Slovak nation” or the “Slovak branch of our Czechoslovak nation” Matej Metod Bella expressed, in return, “love to the Czech brotherly nation, the love of a pure heart.”<sup>46</sup>

Second, although cultural unity was often implied, it was seldom explicitly expressed. The speech of the National Socialist MP Emil Franke in the inauguration debate of the second Tusar government is a rare exception.

When we first heard during the war that it was not about the liberation of the Czech nation living in Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia, but about the liberation of the whole great Czechoslovak nation, we received this message with immense joy. [...] We know quite well that [...] Czechoslovak unity for us does not only mean national and state unity, but also great cultural unity.

In the same debate, the writer and National Democrat Viktor Dyk took issue with previous speakers who had “talked as if” the Czechs and Slovaks were two nations. The fact that Kollár and Šafařík stood at the forefront of the Czech awakening was in his view proof that the Slovaks were not a different nation, because otherwise it would simply not be “possible for such truly patriotic people like Kollár and Šafařík to be so convinced and worthy Czechs.”<sup>47</sup> In the Senate, the National Democrat Bohuslav Franta reacted to Rudolf Lodgman’s allegation that

“we invented the Czechoslovak language. Does he [Lodgman], who speaks Czech well, not know that Czech and Slovak is one language with different dialects? After all, we and the Slovaks, Czechs from Bohemia, Czechs from Moravia and Silesia and the Slovaks, understand each other better than people from Cheb and Broumov [two towns in Bohemia that were German-speaking at the time] or Schwabians and Pomeranians. It was one language despite the fact that we were separated for more than 1,000 years, and had it not been for the unfortunate literary controversy of the last century [this probably refers to the codification of Slovak], we would have been even closer. From this stems the impression that the Slovaks might be reluctant to join us. [...] The future will show that we Czechs and Slovaks are one tribe and one nation.”<sup>48</sup>

Third, there are some examples of MPs extending parts of the traditional Czech self-conception as a small, democratic and peace-loving nation to include the Slovaks. During the inauguration debate of the first Tusar government in 1919, Alois Rašín expressed his conviction that the Czech nation, when the war broke out, realized that its freedom was at stake, and that it could win this freedom only if Germany was defeated. A strong Germany would “weight like a heavy cloud over our nation” and would put the “small nation between the Tatras and the Danube under pressure,” he argued. Here the Slovaks were evidently included in the small nation. During the inauguration debate of the first caretaker government of Černý in 1920, Fráňa Zemínová spoke of the Czechoslovak nation thus: “Our great national revolution brought us [women] to this parliament, that democratic nature that is embedded in the core of the Czechoslovak nation brought us here.”<sup>49</sup> In the 1929 inauguration debate of the Udržal government the National Socialist senator Antonín Klouda declared that “we are a peace-loving

nation,” adding that they would nevertheless defend their freedom and independence with weapons if needed. He hoped that the approaching 80th birthday of President T.G. Masaryk—beloved by the whole Czechoslovak nation and admired by the rest of the world—would become a great manifestation of the unity of the whole Czechoslovak nation, so that “we can prove to the whole world the truthfulness of the slogan inscribed in the preamble of the Constitution: that we want to take our place in the community of nations as a cultivated, peace-loving, democratic and progressive member.”<sup>50</sup> In 1935 Hampl warned the Sudeten German Party that “the Czechoslovak nation is invincible.” “Because the whole spirit of the Czechoslovak people is democratic in nature, it rejects all violence, even if it seems tempting in certain thorny situations.” The only way to “get closer to the state and its government” was therefore through the path of democracy and mutual trust,” he argued.<sup>51</sup>

Finally, there are a couple of examples of a class approach to the Czechoslovak nation. On one occasion (in 1926), the Social Democrat Tomášek described the working class as the foundation of the Czechoslovak nation, while František Navrátil (ČSL) saw the peasant as an ideal: “If every member of this state worked as honestly and conscientiously as a peasant, I firmly believe that in a short time our Republic would turn into a real paradise [...] and we would create a better and happier future not only for ourselves, but also for our descendants and thus for the whole Czechoslovak nation.”<sup>52</sup> Here, both were in effect arguing that their party’s core constituency constituted (a majority of) the nation.

### Concluding Discussion: A Political Nation?

As Michal Kopeček has pointed out in the introduction, a major controversy in the literature on Czechoslovakism has been “whether or not it is possible to speak of Czechoslovakism as a concept of a political nation.”<sup>53</sup> The question is not so much whether it could have been possible to form a Czechoslovak political nation during the First Republic, but whether the Czechoslovak political elite had a political nation concept in mind when they talked about a Czechoslovak nation. Based on a close reading of all government inauguration debates as well as several other parliamentary debates during the First Republic, the answer must be an unequivocal no. I will shortly summarize why.

What does a political nation mean? It is perhaps useful to note that in the context of early modern European diets of the estates, *natio* (and its vernacular equivalents) was used to designate estates with political rights—i.e. nobility, clergy and/or burghers. In the Lands of the Czech Crown, the *natio Bohemica* comprised the politically privileged estates of Czech as well as German stock.<sup>54</sup> Likewise, the German nation was originally the German higher nobility; the *Adelsnation* comprised electors who participated in imperial elections in the Holy Roman Empire (including the King of Bohemia), but also included princes who took part in the Imperial Diet (Reichstag) from the fifteenth century on.<sup>55</sup> A modern political nation concept developed only around the French Revolution. In *The Spirit of the Laws* (1748) Montesquieu still talked about the nation as the nobility and the bishops. In the course of the revolution, however, Abbé Sieyès (1789) defined the nation as “a body of associates, living under the same law, and represented by the same legislature.”<sup>56</sup> The modern political nation thus comprised all



citizens, in principle regardless of language and culture. In France, of course, this changed during the Jacobin phase of the revolution, when French became the language of the Republic.

In the German context, the pre-modern political nation concept (die *Adelsnation*) was gradually eclipsed by a more cultural conception of nationhood associated with the German literary language. This German *Kulturnation* initially comprised only the *literati*, not the population at large.<sup>57</sup> According to Aira Kemaläinen the Holy Roman Empire (as a loose confederation rather than a state), along with the existence of a zone of mixed populations in Eastern Europe, explains this cultural conception of nation, where German identity was defined ethno-culturally in relation to the Slavs.<sup>58</sup>

In the Czech context, the pre-modern political nation concept was associated with a *Landespatriotismus* on part of the (Czech and German) Bohemian nobility. However, parallel to this a conception of Czech-ness that was associated with language had existed since the early Middle Ages. English and German of course distinguish between Bohemian (böhmisch) and Czech (tschechisch), while the Czechs have one word for both. The word *český* had originally at least three meanings: It referred *geographically* to Bohemia (Čechy) as opposed to Moravia, *politically* to the Lands of the Czech Crown (Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia—sometimes also Lusatia), and *culturally* to the Czech language and nation.<sup>59</sup> When the national revival started in the late eighteenth century, the conception of Czech-ness was still open to interpretation. However, after 1815, the linguistically-based nation concept gained the upper hand under the influence of Romanticism and had its final breakthrough in 1848.<sup>60</sup> Since the Slovaks were not a historical nation, the cultural nation concept gained ground even earlier among the Slovaks.<sup>61</sup> Linguistic demands (the use of Czech, respectively Slovak in schools and public administration and separate institutions) were therefore a central part of the political program of Czech and Slovak parties between 1861 and the First World War.<sup>62</sup> This was still the situation when the First Republic was founded. In the words of Antonín Boháč, the man in charge of organizing the population censuses in 1921 and 1930: “In our lands nationality is not used in the political sense.”<sup>63</sup>

The contemporary cultural conception of nation alone makes it unlikely that Czech and Slovak political elites would have understood a Czechoslovak nation as a political nation comprising all citizens of the Czechoslovak state regardless of language. And there is absolutely nothing to suggest that they did. First, as I have demonstrated throughout this chapter, to the extent that they stated explicitly what they meant by “Czechoslovak nation,” Czech scholars and politicians emphasized shared ancestry (confer the brother metaphor, the reference to a Slovak branch of a Czechoslovak nation), shared language (albeit with dialectal differences), elements of shared history, a peaceful and democratic nature, and national awareness. These are elements of a cultural or voluntarist conception of nationhood rather than a political nation concept.

Second, I have not found a single example in official documents or in parliamentary debates during the First Republic of a conception of the “Czechoslovak nation” that included all citizens. It comprised the Czechs and Slovaks only, not Germans, Magyars, Poles or Ruthenians. On the contrary, the Czechoslovak nation was in most cases contrasted with the

Germans and/or other national minorities. And this was not only the Czech view. There are plenty of examples of Slovak autonomists and national minority MPs criticizing the idea of a Czechoslovak nation as fake or a fable, but not a single one of them claimed that Germans, Magyars or Poles were or should be part of this nation. Emanuel Rádl, the only scholar who advocated a political nation concept comprising all citizens, noted that “In all official and unofficial acts of our state, ‘Czechoslovak nation’ means only Czechs and Slovaks.”<sup>64</sup>

This also applies to the preamble of the 1920 Constitution. Eva Broklová argues that “we, the Czechoslovak nation” is an obvious parallel to the same formulation in the preamble of the French and American Constitution, and therefore can only be interpreted in terms of a political nation.<sup>65</sup> However, this is an unconvincing argument, not only in the context of the preamble and the main body of the Constitution, but also in the context of the parliamentary debate about the Constitution and who the members of this parliament were. For one thing, the Constitution used the words citizens (*státní občané*) or inhabitants (*obyvatelé*) rather than nation (*národ*) when it referred to the entire population of the Republic.

Second, a political interpretation of “we, the Czechoslovak nation” is particularly unreasonable the second time it appears: “...we, the Czechoslovak nation, declare that we will endeavor to carry out this Constitution and all the laws of our country in the spirit of our history as well as in the spirit of the modern principles embodied in the slogan of self-determination; for we want to take our place in the community of nations as a cultivated, peace-loving, democratic and progressive member.”<sup>66</sup> The “spirit of our history” and “the modern principles embodied in the slogan of self-determination” hardly refer to the citizens of the newly formed Czechoslovak state. On the contrary, this is consistent with the war-time propaganda aiming at independence. Moreover, the author of the preamble, Masaryk’s old friend Jan Herben, said in the parliamentary debate on the Constitution, that he would be happy if parliament would adopt the text of this preamble, because that way, parliament could end the vote on the constitution “in a conciliatory manner and on a note of real joy that after 420 years the Czech nation was again free to make its own independent constitution.”<sup>67</sup>

Third, the national minorities were of course not even represented in the Revolutionary Parliament, and there is no doubt about how they perceived “we, the Czechoslovak nation.” In the words of Rudolf Lodgman in the inauguration debate of the second Tusar government in June 1920: “But even in your Constitution, that is, quite officially, you have firmly established that only you have a say in this state. Because you write in the preamble: We, the Czechoslovak nation etc. have adopted the following constitution. Well, gentlemen, was that an invitation for us to cooperate?”<sup>68</sup> It is thus clear that the Constitution was not adopted in the name of a politically defined “Czechoslovak nation” comprising all citizens. It was not meant that way, and it was certainly not perceived that way.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> I would like to thank the editors, as well as Milan Ducháček and Miroslav Hroch for their useful comments to an earlier version of this chapter.

<sup>2</sup> Elisabeth BAKKE, “The Making of Czechoslovakism in the First Czechoslovak Republic,” in Martin Schulze Wessel ed., *Loyalitäten in der Tschechoslowakischen Republik 1918–1938. Politische, nationale und kulturelle Zugehörigkeit* (Munich: Oldenbourg 2004), 23–44. For the prehistory of the concept, see Vratislav Doubek’s chapter in this book.

<sup>3</sup> Elisabeth BAKKE, *Doomed to failure? The Czechoslovak Nation Project and the Slovak Autonomist Reaction* (PhD diss., University of Oslo, 1999), chapters 9 and 10.

<sup>4</sup> See Michal Kopeček’s introductory chapter in this book. See also Elisabeth BAKKE, “Czechoslovakism in Slovak History,” in *Slovakia in History*, eds. Mikuláš Teich and Dušan Kováč (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 247–268.

<sup>5</sup> On contributors to the controversy, see Michal Kopeček’s introductory chapter, p. 31, note 12.

<sup>6</sup> Společná česko-slovenská digitální parlamentní knihovna. Dokumenty českého a slovenského parlamentu, accessible online: <https://www.psp.cz/eknih/index.htm>; Spoločná česko-slovenská digitálna parlamentná knižnica, accessible online: <https://www.nrsr.sk/dl/>.

<sup>7</sup> Josette BAER, *A Life Dedicated to the Republic. Vavro Šrobár’s Slovak Czechoslovakism*, (Stuttgart: ibidem Press, 2014).

<sup>8</sup> Eduard KUBŮ and Jiří ŠOUŠA, “Nový stát uprostřed Evropy,” in *Republika Československa 1918–1939*, eds. Dagmar Hájková and Pavel Horák (Prague: Lidové noviny, 2018), 76–92; Pavel JAKUBEC and Jaroslav PAŽOUT eds., *Vznik Československa a provincie Deutschböhmen* (Dolní Břežany: Scriptorium 2019); Ismo NURMI, *Slovakia - A Playground for Nationalism and National identity: Manifestations of the National Identity of Slovaks, 1918–1920* (Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society, 1999); Sabrina P. RAMET and Carol SKALNIK LEFF, “Interwar Czechoslovakia – a national state for a multiethnic population,” in Sabrina P. Ramet ed., *Interwar East Central Europe, 1918–1941* (London: Routledge, 2020).

<sup>9</sup> Jan RYCHLÍK, “Ústavní pořádek,” in *Republika Československá 1918–1939*, eds. D. Hájková and P. Horák, 117–132. The Hlasists—named after and associated with the journal *Hlas*—were a youth movement that was strongly influenced by professor T.G. Masaryk. See Robert KLOBUCKÝ, “Hlasistická sociologie národa,” *Sociológia* 4 (2006): 327–352. See also Xénia ŠUCHOVÁ, *Idea československého štátu na Slovensku 1918–1939. Protagonisti, nositelia, oponenti* (Bratislava: Prodama, 2011); Natália KRAJČOVIČOVÁ, *Slovensko na ceste k demokracii* (Bratislava: Prodama, 2009), chapters 1-3; and Karol Hollý’s chapter in this book.

<sup>10</sup> The Pětka was an extra-parliamentary group formed during the first caretaker cabinet of Jan Černý in 1920, consisting of Antonín Švehla (Agrarian), Rudolf Bechyně (ČSD), Alois Rašín (ČND), Jiří Stříbrný (ČS), and Jan Šrámek (ČSL). It functioned as a coordinating organ between the caretaker government and the Parliament, and was formally dissolved only in 1926. According to Ferdinand Peroutka, the Pětka was the real government at the time. Ferdinand PEROUTKA, *Budování státu IV* (Prague: Lidové noviny, 1991), 1386–1393 [orig. published 1933–1936].

<sup>11</sup> See also Josef HARNA, “Stranickopolitický systém v Československu v letech 1918–1938,” in *Politické strany. Vývoj politických stran a hnutí v českých Zemích a Československu 1861–2004, I. Díl*, eds. Jiří Malíř and Pavel Marek (Brno: Doplněk, 2005), 535–552.

<sup>12</sup> Ľubica KÁZMEROVÁ, “Československá strana národnosocialistická na Slovensku v rokoch 1919-1929,” *Historický časopis* 1, 1993, 50-59.

<sup>13</sup> Programové zásady republikánské strany československého venkova, 1919; Československá Sociální demokracie. Její cíle, program a postup, 1925; Obnova lidské společnosti. Program a zásady československé strany lidové v Čechách 1920. Kdo jsou a co chtějí národní demokraté, 1925; Program a zásady československé strany národně-socialistické, 1933.

<sup>14</sup> On German and Hungarian minority parties, see Jaroslav ŠEBEK, “Politické strany německé menšiny,” and Pavel MAREK, “Politické strany maďarské menšiny,” in *Politické strany. Vývoj politických stran a hnutí v českých Zemích a Československu 1861–2004, I. Díl*, eds. J. Malíř and P. Marek, 861–891, 925–942.

<sup>15</sup> T. G. MASARYK, *Česká otázka. Naše nynější krize* (Prague: Svoboda, 1990 [1895]), 55, 56. See also BAKKE, *Doomed to failure?*, 154.

- <sup>16</sup> T. G. MASARYK, *Ideály humanitní. Problém malého národa. Demokraticismus v politice* (Prague: Melantrich, 1990), 87.
- <sup>17</sup> See for example T. G. MASARYK, “Independent Bohemia” [1915], in R.W. Seton-Watson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1943), 125; T. G. MASARYK, *V boji za samostatnost* (Prague: Státní nakladatelství, 1927 [1916]), 43–45.
- <sup>18</sup> BAKKE, *Doomed to failure?*, chapter 9; Elisabeth BAKKE, “Čechoslovakizmus v školských učebniciach (1918–1938),” *Historický časopis* 47, no. 2 (1999): 233–253. See also Slávka OTČENÁŠOVÁ, *Schválená minulosť. Kolektívna identita v československých a slovenských učebniciach dejepisu* (Košice: Univerzita Pavla Jozefa Šafárika, 2010); and Dana Šmajstrlová’s chapter in this book.
- <sup>19</sup> Edvard BENEŠ, *Světová válka a naše revoluce*, Vol. I (Prague: Orbis, 1927), 3 and 5.
- <sup>20</sup> Edvard BENEŠ, *Reč k Slovákom o našej národnej prítomnosti a budúcnosti* (Bratislava: Slovenska odbočka Národnej rady československej, 1934), 8 and 51. See also Zbyněk ZEMAN and Antonín KLIMEK, *The Life of Edvard Benes 1884–1948: Czechoslovakia in Peace and War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).
- <sup>21</sup> Václav CHALOUPECKÝ, “Československé dějiny,” *Český Časopis Historický* 1 (1922). See also Milan Ducháček’s very interesting biography, Milan DUCHÁČEK, *Václav Chaloupecký. Hledání československých dějin* (Prague: Karolinum, 2014), especially 171–252; and Ducháček’s chapter in this book.
- <sup>22</sup> Václav CHALOUPECKÝ, *Staré Slovensko* (Bratislava: Comenius University, 1923), 10. V. CHALOUPECKÝ, “Československé dějiny,” in *Český Časopis Historický* no. 1 (1922): 3–7.
- <sup>23</sup> Kamil KROFTA, *Čechové a Slováci před svým státním sjednocením* (Prague: Orbis, 1932), 18.
- <sup>24</sup> Albert PRAŽÁK, *Dějiny spisovné slovenštiny po dobu Štúrova* (Prague: G. Voleský, 1922), 64, 103, 114–15.
- <sup>25</sup> Bohuš TOMSA, “Národ a československá otázka,” *Průdy* 6, 1925, 319 and 322.
- <sup>26</sup> Emanuel RÁDL, *Válka Čechů s Němci* (Prague: Čin, 1928), 140–44. See also Michal KOPEČEK, “Czechoslovak interwar democracy and its critical introspections,” *Journal of Modern European History* 17, no. 1 (2019): 7–15.
- <sup>27</sup> Milan HODŽA, *Československý rozkol* (Martin: self-published, 1920); M. HODŽA, “Nie centralizmus, nie autonomizmus, ale regionalizmus v jednom politickom národe” [1934], reprinted in Rudolf Chmel ed., *Slovenská otázka v 20. storočí* (Bratislava: Kalligram, 1997), 183–188.
- <sup>28</sup> Anton ŠTEFÁNEK, “Problémy spisovnej slovenčiny a slovenský nacionalizmus,” *Slovo a slovesnosť* 1, no. 3 (1935): 6. A. ŠTEFÁNEK, *Exkurzia o nacionalizme* [undated, after 1929], 4 and 15.
- <sup>29</sup> Vavro ŠROBÁR, *Československá otázka a “hlasisti”* (Bratislava, 1927), 5; ŠTEFÁNEK, “Problémy spisovnej slovenčiny,” 4; BENEŠ, *Reč k Slovákom*, 50 and 60. Communist theoreticians adopted a similar view on the question. See Jan Mervart’s chapter in this book.
- <sup>30</sup> Minutes of the whole meeting are available in *Stenoprotokoly Národní shromáždění československé 1918–1920*, 1. schůze, at the website of the Czech Parliament, <https://public.psp.cz/eknih/index.htm>.
- <sup>31</sup> *Stenoprotokoly Národní shromáždění československé 1918–1920*, 62–63 schůze.
- <sup>32</sup> I have covered the confrontations between (mainly Slovak) Czechoslovakists and Slovak autonomists in detail elsewhere. See BAKKE, *Doomed to Failure?*, especially chapters 10 and 13.
- <sup>33</sup> *Stenoprotokoly Národní shromáždění republiky československé 1925–1929*. Poslanecká sněmovna, 3. schůze. See also Juraj Benko and Adam Hudek’s chapter in this book.
- <sup>34</sup> *Stenoprotokoly Národní shromáždění československé 1918–1920*, 1 schůze, 62–63 schůze. See also Johann W. BRÜGEL, *Tschechen und Deutsche* (Munich: Nymphenburger Verlagshandlung, 1967).
- <sup>35</sup> T. G. MASARYK, *Poselství prezidentova* (Prague 1924), 13–14; see also *Tisky Národní shromáždění československé 1918–1920*, at <https://www.psp.cz/eknih/1918ns/ps/tisky/poselstv.htm>.
- <sup>36</sup> *Stenoprotokoly Národní shromáždění republiky československé 1920–1925*. Poslanecká sněmovna, 2–6 schůze. Some of the same arguments were used in the Senate. *Stenoprotokoly 1920–1925*. Senát, 2–8 schůze.
- <sup>37</sup> *Stenoprotokoly 1925–1929*, PS, 45 schůze. See also Jaroslav Brabec’s speech in the Senate: *Senát*, 46 schůze.
- <sup>38</sup> *Stenoprotokoly 1935–1938*, PS, 2–3, 5–6 schůze; *Senát*, 3–5 schůze.
- <sup>39</sup> *Stenoprotokoly 1918–1920*, 62 schůze, *Stenoprotokoly 1920–1925*, PS, 5 schůze.

- <sup>40</sup> Stenoprotokoly 1935–1938, PS, 2 schůze.
- <sup>41</sup> Stenoprotokoly 1935–1938, PS, 3 schůze.
- <sup>42</sup> Stenoprotokoly 1920–25, PS, 4 schůze.
- <sup>43</sup> Stenoprotokoly 1925–29, Senát, 46 schůze.
- <sup>44</sup> Stenoprotokoly 1929–35, PS, 213 schůze.
- <sup>45</sup> BAKKE, *Doomed to failure?*, chapter 10.
- <sup>46</sup> Stenoprotokoly 1918–1920, 1 schůze.
- <sup>47</sup> *Stenoprotokoly 1920–25, PS*, 5 schůze. Kollár and Šafařík were both born in Slovakia but contributed to the Czech national revival.
- <sup>48</sup> Stenoprotokoly 1920–1925, Senát, 5 schůze. See also Melissa FEINBERG, *Elusive Equality: Gender, Citizenship, and the limits of Democracy in Czechoslovakia, 1918–1950* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2011).
- <sup>49</sup> Stenoprotokoly 1920–1925, PS, 17 schůze.
- <sup>50</sup> Stenoprotokoly 1929–1935, Senát, 6 schůze.
- <sup>51</sup> Stenoprotokoly 1935–1938, PS, 3 schůze.
- <sup>52</sup> Stenoprotokoly 1925–1929, PS, 45 schůze.
- <sup>53</sup> See Michal Kopeček's introductory chapter in this book.
- <sup>54</sup> William D. GODSEY Jr., *Nobles and Nation in Central Europe. Free Imperial Knights in the Age of Revolution, 1750–1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 249–51; Guido ZERNATTO, "Nation: The History of a Word," *The Review of Politics* 6, no. 3 (1944): 351–366, at p. 362.
- <sup>55</sup> Joachim WHALEY, "'Reich, Nation, Volk': Early Modern Perspectives," *The Modern Language Review*, 101, no. 2 (2006): 442–455, at p. 448.
- <sup>56</sup> ZERNATTO, "Nation: The History of a Word," 361; Liah GREENFELD, *Nationalism. Five roads to modernity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), 161.
- <sup>57</sup> Miroslav HROCH, *European nations: Explaining Their Formation*, trans. Karolina Graham (London, New York: Verso, 2015), 313.
- <sup>58</sup> Aira KEMALÄINEN, *Nationalism. Problems concerning the word, the concept and classification*, (Jyväskylä: Jyväskylän Kasvatusopillinen Korkeakoulu, 1964), 39.
- <sup>59</sup> Thanks to Miroslav Hroch for reminding me of this.
- <sup>60</sup> Anna M. DRABEK, "The concept of 'nation' in Bohemia and Moravia at the turn of the 19th century," *History of European Ideas*, 15, 1992, 305–311.
- <sup>61</sup> BAKKE, *Doomed to failure?*, chapter 7.
- <sup>62</sup> See for example Robert KANN and Zdeněk DAVID, *The peoples of the Eastern Habsburg Lands, 1526–1918* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1984).
- <sup>63</sup> Antonín BOHÁČ, "Národnost či jazyk," *Československý statistický věstník* II, 1921, 53.
- <sup>64</sup> RÁDL, *Valka Čechů s Němci*, chapter 4. Co jest národ? 1928, p. 9, at [www.go-east-mission.de](http://www.go-east-mission.de).
- <sup>65</sup> Eva BROKLOVÁ, *Československá demokracie* (Prague: SLON, 1992), 148. Confer the debate on the issue of Czechoslovak political nation: Jaroslav KUČERA, "Politický či přirozený národ? K pojetí národa v čs. právním řádu meziválečného období," *Český časopis historický* 99, no. 3 (2001): 548–567; Eva BROKLOVÁ, "Politický nebo etnický národ?" *Český časopis historický* 100, no.2 (2002): 379–394.
- <sup>66</sup> Zákon ze dne 29. února 1920, kterým se uvezuje ústavní listina Československé republiky, *Sbírka zákonů a nařízení státu československého*, 1920, p. 255. See also <http://ftp.aspi.cz/opispdf/1920/026-1920.pdf>.
- <sup>67</sup> Stenoprotokoly 1918–1920, 126 schůze.
- <sup>68</sup> Stenoprotokoly 1920–1925, PS, 6 schůze.