MIROSLAV HROCH

STUDYING NATIONALISM UNDER CHANGING CONDITIONS AND REGIMES
AN INTELLECTUAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY

NISE ESSAYS 3

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1 A.-M. Thiesse, *The Transnational Creation of National Arts and Crafts in 19th-Century Europe* – Antwerp, 2013.

2 J. Leerssen, *When was Romantic Nationalism? The onset, the long tail, the banal* – Antwerp, 2014.

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CONTENT

NOTE FROM THE NISE COORDINATOR

Miroslav Hroch has influenced nationalism scholars over the past 50 years, attracting a wide audience. So it is no surprise there have been already some publications dedicated to him, from Miloš Řezník & Ivana Slezáková's volume of *Nations-Identities-Historical Consciousness* in 1997, over a Czech-language 'festschrift' in 2000 (Jan Pelikán), to the commemoration in 2010 of the 25th anniversary of the English translation of the *Vorkämpfer*-publication in a special issue of the journal *Nationalities Papers*.

Less well known remain the circumstances for the intellectual journey which he has made, setting off for good in 1968 with the publication of *Die Vorkämpfer der nationalen Bewegung bei den kleinen Völkern Europas: Eine vergleichende Analyse zur gesellschaftlichen Schichtung der patriotischen Gruppen*.
As it is now exactly 50 years ago that he made public that landmark text for the study of national movements, we invited him to fill that gap for the NISE Essays series.

The result was diligently translated from German by Joep Leerssen (University of Amsterdam) and provided with an introduction by John Breuilly (LSE). It is also accompanied by a bibliographical section and a short biographical factsheet. A sample of the reviews of the *Vörkampfer* book is reproduced on the Nise website at http://hroch.nise.eu. You will also find there the original German version of the autobiography.

NISE wants to thank Miroslav Hroch for the effort he has put into retracing for us the intellectual steps he has taken over the years, describing the circumstances in which he took them. And as he has right from the start supported the development of NISE in word and deed, I would like to add (using the language foreign but known to us both): tusen takk for alt du har gjort for NISE!

Luc Boeva

PREFACE

I first met Miroslav Hroch in Belfast in May 1985. The occasion was the Wiles Lectures, the lecturer was Eric Hobsbawm, and those lectures turned into *Nations and Nationalism since 1780* (1990). A group of scholars were invited to attend and lead discussions after each lecture. We spent much time together, with interesting expeditions provided by our hosts. Miroslav had just published *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe: A Comparative Analysis of the Social Composition of Patriotic Groups among the Smaller European Nations*. I was to review this for *English Historical Review*. I mentioned this to Miroslav, along with my great admiration for the book. Miroslav expressed pleasure at my admiration but could I include stern criticisms in the review? Criticism from a bourgeois historian would be worth having in communist Czechoslovakia.

I mention this for two reasons. First, it is an indication of the constraints under which Miroslav pursued his research. Second, it is an instance of the sardonic humour which probably helped Miroslav and others like him to endure those constraints and nevertheless produce significant and original work.

Here is not the place to review that work. There are many such reviews (including critical ones!) and no substitute for reading Miroslav himself. What the autobiography brings which is new is a sense of how Miroslav came to study national movements, the difficulties he confronted in researching and writing on these, and how he surmounted those difficulties.

Once determined on the career of an academic historian Miroslav could have chosen less contentious subjects. Indeed, especially in hard times, he turned to early modern Baltic trade and, with his wife, Byzantium. However, he had a brief opportunity before the communist shutters came down in 1948 to visit Norway, start learning Norwegian and, relating this to research on early Czech national associations, to begin what became the major project on 'small nation nationalism'.[1] However, nationalism was a subject on which Stalin had pronounced and which orthodox marxism regarded as bourgeois and reactionary. So work in this field was constantly interrupted and sidelined, inhibited by restricted travel opportunities and access to foreign literatures and archives. Only with his stay in Marburg in 1964–65 were these problems eased. In 1968 Miroslav published in German his book on small nation nationalism. It was not

just a question of overcoming so many dangers and obstacles. The range of languages required, the detailed research involved, the innovative concepts deployed – all combined to produce a path-breaking work.

The key books which shaped the 'nationalism debate' in the west came later, such as those by Benedict Anderson and Ernest Gellner in 1983.[2] Miroslav had access to important – now largely forgotten - German texts but most were limited in historical detail and theoretical insight compared to his own work. This raises the question of how Miroslav made his breakthrough and why earlier than in the west. The autobiography suggests to me some answers.

First, nationalism was taken seriously in the communist world – which is precisely why it was dangerous to write about it in non-orthodox ways. By comparison in western universities in the 1960s and 1970s, even into the early 1980s, nationalism was not regarded as an important subject.

Second, whatever the official view, there were strong national sentiments in communist east-central Europe. Some could be positively evaluated, such as the resistance movements against wartime fascism, even if the term nationalist was avoided. Some had to remain silent and private, such as resentment of Soviet domination. However, this all fed the sense that there "really" were nations, a notion which academe tended to regard sceptically in the west. Furthermore, the national movements of small nations could be seen positively, battling against the economic exploitation, political oppression and cultural condescension of "large" nations. (Indeed, the 19th century had bequeathed such patronising terms as "historical" and "non-historical" both to describe and justify the national inequalities involved.) By contrast, historians of Britain or France or the USA confronted the reality of imperialism and great power conflict with all their negative connotations. Furthermore, in Europe such small nation national movements were framed in terms of language and culture in marked contrast to most of the nationalist movements which later came to contest western overseas empire using instead the language of human rights. Finally, of course, many of these movements had enjoyed what, in retrospect, appeared as a brief, even illusory period of success with the formation of numerous small nation-states after the first world war. There were some parallels in the west – above all the Irish case – but they tended to be treated as unique and were not subject to the kind of comparative study in which Miroslav engaged.

Third, despite his lack of access to the techniques of western sociology,

Miroslav used marxist concepts creatively, not just as a rhetorical gloss to gain official sanction. Thus the relationships of nationalism to the spread of commerce or peasant emancipation or the emergence of an urban bourgeoisie were explored in persuasive detail and in ways which lent themselves to rigorous comparison. Furthermore, the idea of 'complete' and 'incomplete' social structures enabled Miroslav to integrate into his analysis the relationship between dominant and non-dominant ethnic groups. (This is the more dispassionate terminology which has come to replace the discredited historical/non-historical contrast but also that between small and large nations.)

I have suggested some general conditions which I think have a bearing on Miroslav's work. However, the autobiography also brings out the determination and creativity with which Miroslav chose and researched his cases and the innovations he introduced. One of these – the distinction between three stages of nationalism – has attracted more attention than any other feature of his work. It provided Miroslav with a flexible framework for making comparisons within cases over time as well as comparisons between cases. It also avoided a single definition of nationalism which could not grasp its changing character.

For an impression of the impact of Miroslav's I will turn autobiographical. Reading Miroslav in the 1970s when I was lecturing on nation and state in modern Europe and thinking about writing a book on the subject, gave me confidence that one could write broadly about the history of nationalism while paying attention to individual cases and making illuminating comparisons.

In the 1980s communist control relaxed and eventually dissolved, and historians of nationalism came together across the former Cold War divide. The recognised quality of Miroslav's work brought him into collaboration with research projects and historians across Europe. Miroslav could undertake new work, for example extending his analysis from 'small nation' to 'big nation' nationalism in Europe and relating nationalist programmes to social structures, for example suggesting that national movements with 'incomplete' social structures also tended to have less complete national programmes. One theme is constant in varying ways: the effort to relate nation as objective social structure to nationalism as collective movement based on a subjective sense of identity.

This last point suggests to me that the 'east-west' divide remains important through its shaping of assumptions one brings to the subject of

nationalism. Today, especially after the collapse of the Soviet Union and then of the optimism which followed that collapse, nationalism has become an object of intense political, public and intellectual interest. However, if nationalism is taken seriously by western academics it is more because it is seen to matter politically, and less because it is seen as rooted in such 'real' things as social groups and their core values. Indeed, nationalism is often presented as being opposed to 'true' national values.

Miroslav came to the study of nationalism from a different perspective in which national movements bore a positive relationship to the nation although there could also arise movements and ideologies that did not. This I think lies at the root of his distinction between nationalism and national movement. Miroslav rejects the idea that the 'nation' could be imagined or invented by means of nationalism and focuses instead on the close relationship between those objective social structures which constitute a nation and the movements and programmes which gave voice to those structures. Intuitively I find this persuasive and agree with the need to reject the ways in which many nationalists distort and manipulate the concept of nation. My problem is to find a precise analytic distinction which works and my sense that instead the distinction becomes a normative one, somewhat akin to that frequently made between nationalism (bad) and patriotism (good). However, this may well reflect the context in which 'nationalism studies' has developed in the west and which continues to shape my views of the subject. The different context which shaped Miroslav's work gives rise to this very different understanding. This is another reason why his work remains important and distinctive. This autobiography helps one understand how that work came about and what a considerable achievement it represents.

John Breuilly
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President of ASEN

My path towards history was determined neither by the profession of my parents nor by any personal experiences.

My family tree combines two wholly different traditions and walks in life. On my father's side I am descended from a solid Czech farming family, established in their holding and in their village since at least the 16th century, and robustly conscious of its traditional rootedness – including those family members who, like my father (a younger son), sought their employment in the industrial cities. My mother came from a family of craftsmen in the glass manufacture, who traced themselves back to the Bohemian Forest region and who migrated in every generation to a different Bohemian glass-factory. Mingling as they did with the local Czech population, they had forgotten their original German identity and adopted a consciously Czech one. At the eve of the 20th century, my grandfather had even become an active member of the Czech Socialist Party, which had split off from the Social Democrats because they rejected that party's internationalism. Apparently my grandfather also saw to it that his eight daughters were all educated in Czech schools and married Czechs, despite being settled in the predominantly German north-west of Bohemia. Small wonder, then, that my parents met as members of the nationally-minded socialist youth organization of the north-Bohemian town of Teplice. Later on, they moved to Prague, where I was born. Tellingly, I myself was named after the founder of the Czech national gymnastic association (*Sokol*), Miroslav Tyrš, born as I was in 1932, exactly 100 years after his birth.

My parents were strongly committed to my receiving higher education, even though it was not easy for them to finance it. As luck would have it, a classical *Gymnasium* school, offering the traditional humanities and the classical languages (Latin and Greek), was located close to our street. This school-type was abolished after the communist takeover of 1948; I was proud to be part of the last annual cohort that could take its leaving exam in this elitist curriculum, in 1951. The educational programme of the *Gymnasium* suited my love of reading and my literary interests. Soon after the leaving exam I resolved to study literary history.

During my school days something occurred which would prove to be of great direct and indirect importance for my later development as a

scholar. In the years 1946–47 I was given the opportunity to spend my summer holidays in Norway, thanks to an Red Cross campaign in aid of "malnourished children" (especially those enrolled in *Gymnasium* schools); we were placed in Norwegian families. What for most of us was mere relaxation, was a decisive turn in my development for me. I had to communicate with an environment where only Norwegian was spoken, and at best a little English, languages I did not know. Unlike the other children who could make use of their smattering of English, I learned Norwegian; later, I continue to study this language from private interest. Language courses at the university enabled me to acquire a passive knowledge of Swedish; this would, unplanned, set me on course to become one of the few Czech historians who could read the relevant literature in the Scandinavian languages.

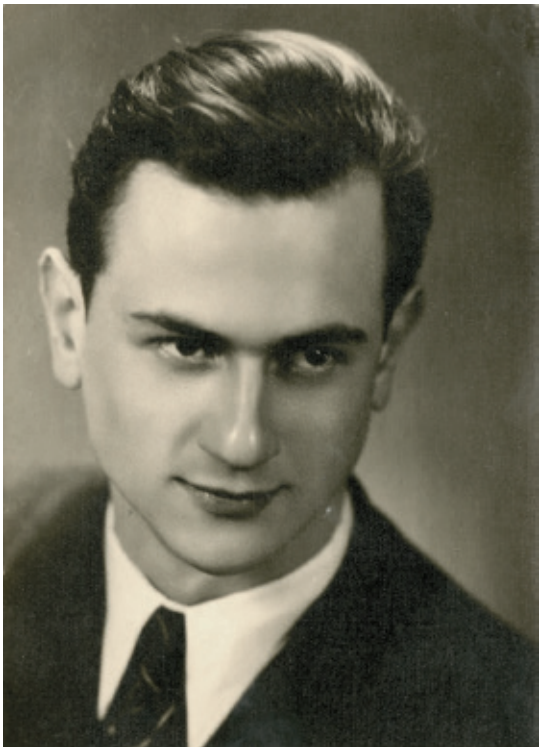
Moreover, my Norwegian sojourn enriched my life with something which for the younger generation would seem too obvious to notice: to experience directly the fact that there are many nationalities outside one's home country. This meant, first and foremost, the need to understand the modern foreign languages; but these did not form part of the core curriculum of my *Gymnasium*. I and some fellows-pupils chose to follow tuition in English and French. We were taught only the basics, but enough to provide a first leg-up in later reading the historical literature in those languages. Since we all received elementary school education during the time of German occupation, basic knowledge of German was self-evident. It may not be superfluous to recall that 1948 cut all of my generation off from travelling abroad and actively engaging with foreign languages, and with the wider world in general – with harmful consequences, both professionally and psychologically.

Haphazardly motivated though they were, and as yet unbeknownst to me, these language interests provided me with an important prerequisite for working transnationally. Without them I could never have become a European historian; but at the time I was not planning to become a historian, my central interest being literature. This was not only inspired by my love of poetry and *belles lettres*, but also from a certain political attitude. I considered literature, of all cultural genres, a decisive factor in the maintenance of national culture under the eroding threat of Sovietization. Well before my leaving exam I was firmly determined to study literary criticism and literary history. As a secondary-school teacher, I could keep the national cultural tradition alive even under communism, and salvage whatever I could for the next generation. I had no idea to become an academic, let alone a historian.

But life, as it so often does, turned out otherwise. When, following my leaving exam, I was called before the committee that was to decide on my academic abilities, I was told that the subject of Czech Philology (Language and Literature) was only available to me when combined with History: the new regime had imposed a student limit and a limited choice of subject combinations. I had to opt into History, and I have not regretted it. Even during my first semester I noticed that teaching standards in the history of Czech literature had suffered from the 1948 purges, and that, more than in History, the discipline's climate had been unpleasantly ideologized. A shift of emphasis was only a matter of time. In my second year, I already considered myself primarily a history student, albeit with strong literary interests.

The political context

All those emerging from Second World War felt, unquestioningly and habitually, a strong bond with the nation. One was part of the nation and cherished it. Of course this experience affected different nationalities differently: Czechs, Dutch, Poles, or Germans. The loss of state sovereignty under the Nazi occupation, and above all the threat to the national language and culture, had been experienced as a personal, existential hazard. Almost all members of the nation, not only those brave enough to engage in active resistance, had faced this threat as best they could, and were committed to maintaining their nation as a categorical duty. How should this resolve, this mental attitude, be labelled nowadays? Hardly



anyone will speak of it as "nationalism", but few will dare to call it "patriotism": love of the fatherland. What motivates this reluctance? Is it the fear to be chided by Europhiles or to be mocked by neoliberals?

It is necessary to make this point, I feel, before I attempt to outline the background, the context for my interest in the phenomenon of the nation. Even the leaders of the communist revolution of February 1948 declared their goals in the name of a working class as representative of national virtues and the nation's best historical traditions. The Czech nation imposed moral values such as honesty, a democratic character, industriousness, dedication to learning. At the time this quite naturally included the study of national history, and an identification with its glories and tragedies.

Things became more muddled as the new ideology – the only one permitted – penetrated into private life and education: for it also involved a critique of the nation. The nation was, as Stalin put it, a product of the attempt to dominate the national market. Bourgeois nationalism was a chimaera, and consequently the nation as a cultural community was downgraded to a by-product of middle-class greed. Gradually the writings were translated in which the "classics", Marx and Engels, denounced the reactionary role of Czechs and other Slavs in the revolution of 1848. This went hand in hand with a wave of sovietization and creeping russification; a thoughtful mind had to apprehend that all this amounted to a creeping erosion of the Czechs' national existence.

First research interest: The matica

In this context, straightforward historical topics can obtain an explosive wider relevance. When my professor, Josef Polišenský, introduced us (as beginning students, in 1952) to source criticism and the various types of sources, he charged me with a small project exemplifying prosopography and the quantitative method: I was to study the lists of supporters of the *matica* – the association dedicated to the printing of high-quality reading material in Czech during the 1840s.These printed lists of donating contributors specified their profession and domicile, allowing an analysis of the special make-up of these national-educational activists. It was immediately obvious that among these Czech-minded patriots there were almost no members of the bourgeoisie. Therefore, the national movement could not be explained as a bourgeois strategy to dominate the national economy. But who, then, were the move-

ment's active supporters? A beginning student, I was facing the problem how to order the many professions into social categories. And there were no sociologists, at that time, to whom I could turn: that discipline had been abolished in 1948. I made what use I could of older sociological sources, and for the rest operated by plain common sense. It occurred to me that I should correlate the professional category with the size and location of the place of residence; and since the majority of patriots had achieved higher education (which, under Habsburg rule, included the priesthood seminaries), I could also factor in the family background. In 90% of the cases the members belonged to that stratum which in Central Europa was called "intelligentsia": people with a higher-than-average education engaged in clerical professions. Their parents, so the university matriculation lists showed me, were mostly of the "modest class" (*Kleine Leute or alter Mittelstand*): shopkeepers, artisans and small farmers. Yielding to a hasty generalizing impulse, I interpreted these findings as an indication of the "petty bourgeois" character of Czech nationalism.

My professor was highly pleased with my project and for that reason I did not discard it, although in my further studies I turned to early-modern history, writing my master's thesis on Wallenstein's Baltic policy (1627–1630).

After my graduation, in 1956, I returned to my seminar paper and wrote an article on the social background of the matica supporters. It was refused by the main historical journal, but an abridged version I managed to place with the periodical for history teachers in 1957[1] – not because of its didactic importance, but because a former fellow-student, Bedřich Loewenstein (subsequently professor at the Free University Berlin) worked for it as an editorial assistant. In any case, few people, if any, took notice of the article.

Following my graduation I obtained an assistant's position at the department of general history, and had to decide where to go with my future research. Returning to the Czech pre-1848 period was difficult, since my appointment was in "general", i.e. European history. There were two attractive options. One was to study national movements as an aspect of European history; the other, to stick with the early-modern Baltic and to make use of my familiarity with the sources to explore the connections between trade and politics during the Thirty Years' War. I opted for the former, but at the same time decided to prepare my research on Wallenstein's policies for publication with some additional source material.

First contact with theory

For inscrutable reasons, assistants at the time were allowed, not only to conduct seminars, but also to give (elective) lectures. After three years, I too was allowed to do so and I decided to lecture on national movements. This involved grappling with the problematics of the nation, a topic which even then had generated a large body of historical, sociological and political writing, largely German, on the genesis of the nation in Europe. Besides surveying these theories, I also prepared a concise survey of various nation-formation processes. This took me beyond the existing historical literature; it was an interdisciplinary undertaking and fairly novel at the time. Maybe this is what attracted a sizeable audience. Of course the views of the approved "classics" had to be represented, but I also covered the blacklisted Austro-Marxist authors, principally Otto Bauer. In the process I noted how much inspiration Stalin had taken from

Bauer, how much he echoed in simplified form, even though he strenuously disavowed him.

Encouraged by the success of my lectures, I decided to write a theoretical article about the problematics of the concept of the nation. Obviously, certain strict limits needed to be observed: Stalin's definition, for instance, was the universally axiomatic and obligatory starting point. All the same I was tempted to question, or rather revise, certain elements of his definition surreptitiously by pointing out empirical problems of its concrete application and the terminological ambiguities resulting from its interpretation. My attempt was to investigate, on the basis of concrete historical data, what exactly the "national territory" is supposed to be, or the concept of a nation's shared history, how a national language is to be distinguished from dialects, how national culture was defined etc. Phrased in contemporary terms, I tried, at a very basic level, to point towards a deconstruction of Stalin's definition. The editor of the Czech historical review was Professor František Graus, eminent medievalist and known as an intelligent orthodox Marxist (he emigrated after 1968 and became, obviously past his Marxism, one of the editors of the German *Historische Zeitschrift*). He invited me over after having read my article, told me that he liked it and was ready to publish it, but warned me that it could lead to negative reactions and even "existential problems" for me. He recommended that I say "something positive about Stalin" in the course of the article.

This cynicism was part of the renewed ideological vigilance of the year 1960, which in Czechoslovakia dampened the slight political liberalization that had followed in the wake of the XXth Congress of the Russian Communist Party. The campaign against "revisionism", to which my mentor Polišenský was to fall victim, was the order of the day. I could, of course, have withdrawn the article; but after some hesitation I followed Graus's advice and inserted a sentence highlighting Stalin's ability to make use of, and to extrapolate from, what was positive in Otto Bauer's work. At the same time I resolved to enter into no more compromises and to leave aside the problematics of the nation for the time being. I returned to the thematic framework of my master's thesis, made use of the additional materials I had collected from the archives, and wrote my doctoral dissertation on "Trade and Politics in the Baltic" during the Thirty Years' War.

What does "General History" mean?

Since the days of Habsburg rule, the study of history at the Charles University had been divided between two chairs, one for "General" and the other for "National" History. This division remained after the Communist takeover. Since I had been appointed into the former department, I had to ask myself what characterized this "General" specialization. Obviously the object of investigation was territorially located outside the home country, but was that the only difference?

Traditionally, General History was practiced along two possible lines of approach. One synthesized the histories of other countries, the other investigated the historical relations between the Czech nation and others. In addition, my mentor Josef Polišenský formulated and practised a third approach: the investigation of foreign history on the basis of sources in the Czech archives. He found a surprising amount of material for the early-modern period in the family archives of the noble families. Although I participated in this approach while working on north-German history on the basis of Wallenstein's War Office, I doubted whether it amounted to a distinct method from what was done in national history-writing; it seemed more like the extraterritorial application of national-historiographical procedures. My own topic seemed to a supranational, rather than a national treatment. (The concept "transnational" did not yet exist.) This involved, foregroundedly, the search for general connections between trade and politics, and the differences between developments in East and West. It seems difficult now to judge how successful my attempts were; the decisive point was that I ventured into the territory of historical comparison, albeit spontaneously and diffidently: "comparatism" was, to the ideological powers that then were, a "bourgeois pseudo-science". What inspired and encouraged me was the French series *L'histoire des civilisations* and Eric Hobsbawm's *The Age of Revolution*.

Turning to national movements after all

After having defended my thesis in 1962, I had to ask myself where to move from there. I was tempted to return to the topic of modern nation-formation, this time not at the level of theory, but empirically: I wanted to pick up the thread of my Matica study and investigate the social basis of other national movements, so as to establish a comparative, Europe-wide context in which to situate the Czech case. This, then, was my second spontaneous, short-sighted step towards the comparatist method.

The political climate was entering a period of relaxation after the early 1960s, and my hope was that I could tackle this topic for a habilitation thesis, not only because it would bring fresh historical relations to light and afford new insights, but also because it could be treated with political neutrality. Possibly I believed that hard figures were not vulnerable to ideological scrutiny. That seems naïve now; my ambition was to depoliticize the topic of the nation and its formation by asking social-historical questions and evaluating these comparatively. A comparison between the social foundations of various nation-formations would allow me, so I thought, to work empirically and scientifically, free from a positive or negative parti-pris. The research was in the service of no contemporary political line, and would allow us to evaluate the historical events and processes clearly, without political distortion.

Looking back, I realize my motivation was then undergoing a change, a corrective. By this time the brutal phase of Stalinist sovietization had passed; so had the urge to salvage the nation. Before, my efforts had been motivated by the underlying sense that I needed to do my bit for the nation's survival; now I was driven by the ambition to solve a central problem in modern history. Where do nations come from? Was their emergence historically determined or contingent? How to interpret the fact that people in widely separated regions all decided to identify in national terms? The best approach to that question seemed to be a comparatist one.

What movement provided the best comparative counterpart for the Czech case? It seemed easiest to stay within the Habsburg territories, where sources and secondary literature were most readily available. All the same, this appeared problematic for comparative purposes since the movements in the Habsburg lands mutually influenced and inspired each other. And so I formed the ambitious plan to look for more general connections in nation-formation.

Without being aware of it, I had arrived at the dilemma that Marc Bloch had faced thirty years earlier. Should we compare interconnected developments, or those which took shape without direct contact or connection? Unlike Bloch, I opted for the latter (which in his view was both harder and less promising). My comparison brought together the peoples of the eastern Baltic, Finns, and Norwegians: societies with few if any connections to the Habsburg Monarchy, and developing asynchronously. In addition, they represented different starting situations, some having a previous history of statehood, some not. The choice was also

determined in part by my language abilities. While West-European national movements like the Welsh, Irish or Flemish ones appeared highly interesting, I felt ill-equipped to address them, and the materials documenting developments in these countries were unavailable under the given political circumstances.

Successful source-hunting and international cooperation

I should have realized that it would be difficult to locate and study analogous sources for the social composition of these national movements. Even within the Eastern Block I failed at my first attempt. I applied for a research trip to the Soviet Baltic republics to identity sources for the national movements in these countries; but my application, while approved, was modified in a tell-tale way: I could travel, not to the Baltic Republics, but to Moscow. I was about to abandon the whole project when by coincidence I met a man who would prove to be of formative if not decisive importance for the realization of my plans. This was Peter Scheibert, Professor of East-European History at the University of Marburg. He was in charge of a student excursion to Czechoslovakia and was looking for someone who spoke German and was willing to give the students a guided tour of the University. Somehow we were introduced, and as we talked, also about my work, he showed himself highly appreciative of my plan to compare

national movements, especially my decision to include the Finns. He himself had worked and published on Finland, a subject close to his heart. He felt that Marburg would be an ideal place for my research and suggested that he procure me a Humboldt fellowship. To be sure applications for foreign fellowships were not allowed in Czechoslovakia in those years; Scheibert, understanding the predicament, offered an invitation to Marburg for research purpose, and although a permission to travel abroad was only obtained with difficulty, the matter was finally arranged – thanks in part, possibly, to the fact that Scheibert had invited during the previous two years some "official", regime-endorsed scholars from Prague as guest-professors and therefore counted as politically acceptable. I spent two 4/5-month research stints in the Federal Republic in 1965-66, during those non-tuition periods in Prague when the academic year was still in full swing in Germany. This allowed me to participate in seminars there.

Once in Marburg I understood why Scheibert considered the place so well suited for my research. The enormous Prussian Royal Library had been lodged there following its wartime evacuation from Berlin and the post-war division of Germany. I obtained stack access thanks to Scheibert's personal contacts; since the statistical, political and pamphlet materials were largely geographically ordered it was easy to find my bearings. The Wilhelminian Empire considered, not only the Eastern Baltic, but also Finland to fall within its sphere of interest; as a result, contemporary source material on the national movements in that region and also statistics was richly represented. More recent literature could be consulted in Marburg's Herder Institute.

An added bonus for my search for biographical data was the encounter with helpful colleagues. Scheibert invited, for a small workshop, the Finnish historian Aira Kemiläinen, who had just published a groundbreaking book on nationalism in English. She took an interest in my project and spontaneously helped me by translating Finnish terms and concepts and sending me relevant publications. I could profit from the fact that the sources from the early period of the Finnish national movement were largely written in Swedish, a language familiar to me. A German-Lithuanian student, Helene Grauduschus, also helped me as a translator; and a happy coincidence alerted me to the work of the Soviet-Estonian historian Ea Jansen. In the early 1960s she, from an interest similar to mine, had researched, and published on, the social structures of the support network of Estonian patriotic endeavours; helpfully, she made her published results available to me for my comparative framework.

Facing the comparative method

I diligently excerpted the source material, but by early 1965 I was still in the dark how I could operationalize a comparative approach. The comparisons I encountered in the critical literature – usually in the form of parallel narratives – seemed unsuitable and failed to inspire me. What proved a decisive breakthrough was the fortuitous encounter with a comparative study on national character and national stereotypes by the Dutch social psychologists Duijker and Frijda.[2] I realized I should apply the comparative method as a serial process, and that I should organize and conceptualize the empirical data accordingly.

To define the object of comparison appeared unproblematic. On the basis of a thorough familiarity with the ongoing discussion on how to define the nation, I had established an eclectic, personal definition which, though adjusted since then, still fits my current understanding of the issue. The adjustment is that originally I had failed to explicitly factor in the notion of a community of empowered and equal citizens. At first sight my definition, unreflected as it was, may seem what nowadays is called "perennialist": I felt (within the limited understanding we had of the problematics in those days) that the nation existed before the rise of the middle class: there was a feudal or pre-modern nation. Nowadays, the social aggregate which I then considered a pre-modern nation, I would term a "ethnic community" (following Anthony Smith)[3]. His definition of that community seamlessly covers what I was striving to catch with the term "pre-modern nation". Even so, my unreflected perennialism already carried within itself the seeds of constructivism. And this came through in my attempt to focus my comparative approach.

My comparatism addressed the causes of nation-formation among the so-called "smaller nations": as an examination of the centripetal factors which brought individuals to commit themselves positively to their national belonging. Some constructivists took note of this and remarked approvingly that I documented how the nation had been helped into being by intellectuals – as if I saw it as an effect or product of "nationalism". I consider this a misapprehension. In fact my theoretical reflections ignored or rejected, no doubt one-sidedly, almost all authors who presented "nationalism" as a decisive factor in nation-formation. I was wrong to do so; but in any event, in those years (the early 1960s) the time of the constructivists had not yet come, and they were thin on the ground.

What proved more complex was the temporal axis of my comparison. Given the asynchronous development of nation-formation processes, a

synchronic comparison made no sense. The only option was to compare analogous historical situations, analogous phases of nation-formation. But how, and on the basis of which criteria, were these to be identified? What seemed to fit the character of national movements (and of my investigation) best, was to take the social support-base of national activism as a criterion. It was obvious that at the beginning of each movement stood the introduction of a new identity and that the nation reached its full realization when this national identification had found general acceptance.

For every national movement that I had studied, three stages could be distinguished in this process. Of these, the decisive one for the movement's success was the second one: a deliberate agenda to win over the fellow-members of the ethnic community for the national identity. This stage of activism I Iabelled stage "B"; its run-up I labelled "A": the period when a patriotically-minded generation of scholars accumulated fundamental knowledge on the character, language and history of the aspirational nation – knowledge that could be instrumentalized by subsequent activists. If successful, activism could move into its large-scale phase, "C". The fate of any national movement was decided in its phase B. Only later did I notice that this ABC model was more than just a periodization for comparative purposes; it allows us to view the nation, not as a given but as a process, which begins with a vision and leads into social reality – an open-ended process, at that. At the same time the distinction between separate phases makes it possible to situate, evaluate and typify different nation-formation processes.

I decided to concentrate on phase B as an analogous situation amenable to comparative analysis, and to study its development in the various national movements under review. My earlier research into the social structures of the national protagonists was an obvious criterion for comparison; I supplemented it by looking at the territorial footprint of national mobilization during phase B. This theme had attracted little attention and existing studies had little to offer on this point.

The comparatist framework proved productive for analysing my quantitative data; various questions offered themselves as comparative sightlines. I studied the participation of social groups and professions, the social background of the intellectuals, the relation between wealthy and poor, etc. More challenging was the search for similarities or shared factors when interpreting the irregular territorial spread of national mobilization. I plotted data on manufacture, trade, education, settlement

etc. onto the maps of places and regions with a strong national mobilization and noticed salient regularities, which could be described in the Karl Deutsch's key concept of the intensity of social communication. This high communicative intensity provided, I felt, a common denominator for nationally active areas in various national movements. Intense social communication geared to national issues proved one of the most important preconditions in the success of national activism. I may note in passing that I was disappointed to see this insight disregarded by the majority of my reviewers (Eric Hobsbawm excepted) and in subsequent research.

From Marburg to Gent

I presented some observations and hypotheses to Professor Scheibert's PhD seminar; the interested and respectful, but also critical discussions that followed I still recall as one the high points of my intellectual life. These discussions were a great boost for me, and it was no mere formula when I remarked, in the preface to my book, that "an engaged plurality of opinions can be more fruitful and valuable for subsequent work than indifferent agreement". I spent long hours, not only with Professor Scheibert, but also with Gottfried Schramm, who was then teaching in Marburg's East-European Institute, and Charlotte Warnke from Giessen. Our talks revolved not only around the social background of patriots but also, more widely, around modern nation-formation and nationalism in general.

During these talks I was repeatedly irked by the stereotypical representation, not only among my German colleagues at Marburg, of national movements as somehow "Eastern". I took up an pan-European perspective, but the case of Norway, which I had included into the comparison from the outset, was apparently not "Western" enough to counterbalance that perception. Wishing to include an unambiguously "Western" case in my research, I surveyed the field. The Catalan movement was linguistically impenetrable and banned in Franco's fascist state; the Irish and Welsh cases were too distant, and so Flanders seemed to offer the best opportunity for a westward expansion of my horizon. The area was geographically close and I had some familiarity with Netherlandic-language texts from my research into Baltic trade (which had been dominated by the Dutch). Since my Humboldt grant could be spent in four separate stages I wrote the actual text of my dissertation in Prague, adjusting my last research trip so as to travel to Gent in February 1967; I did work in the local university library and in the Antwerp archives.

In Gent I met with two local assistants and importuned them with my queries. They seemed less than eager to discuss the subject, more markedly so when I tried to establish my credentials by mentioning the *Geschiedenis van de Vlaamse gedachte* by an author named Elias. (I had no notion as to who this Elias was.)[4] My research results fitted my working model and it was with some satisfaction that I inserted the Flemish chapter into the almost-completed manuscript of my habilitation thesis, which I submitted in the autumn of that year.[5] Shortly before the 1968 summer break it was accepted by the Faculty's scientific council, and my habilitation was granted. The formal conclusion of the procedure took place in October.

The more liberal political climate of the time meant that I could write without fear of ideological cavils. In the spring of 1967 I had the occasion to present some basic tenets to the Czech public in popularized form. Together with a few colleagues I had been invited to bring out a collective volume in which we could put forward our "revisionist" views

on Czech national history in programmatic essays. My contribution was about the Czech National Renaissance; I gave it the title "Patriots without a Nation"[6], capturing the notion that a nationally-minded community had emerged from activism. At the time I had no proper understanding of "constructivism", but nowadays I am struck how I tried to balance a constructivist tendency by referring to social modernization processes. This involved my critique of the Czech patriots, on the grounds of their political naiveté and their failure to look beyond a linguistic and cultural programme. I would not be quite so critical nowadays on this score; what mattered to me then was the question what determined the structural differences in the agendas of different national movements.

The volume appeared in early 1969 and attracted practically no critical attention; following the Soviet occupation, people had other things on their mind. Graus, the volume's editor, left the country; as a result the book, in the repressive political climate of the day, was suppressed and disappeared from the library shelves.

From the Czech habilitation thesis to the German-language book

Meanwhile I learned of the possibility to offer my work to the *Monographia* series of the Charles University. Publishing a book was no simple matter in Czechoslovakia then: most theses remained unprinted, but a habilitation thesis ought to be placed with a publisher. I applied and was lucky: as it happened, some other manuscript fell through and I could take its spot, albeit on two conditions. My 660-page MS should be reduced to 220 pages (that being the norm for the series *Acta Universitatis Carolinae*), and it should be submitted immediately. As luck would have it, the volume that, owing to the non-delivery of the MS, had fallen through had obtained finances for a German translation. It was obviously impossible to produce a fresh, brief version at such short notice; the only option was to drastically shorten the theoretical introduction, the overview of previous research and to omit the historical accounts of the various national movements used for the comparison. What remained was the essential: the quantified analysis of patriotic groups, the territorial analysis and the general comparative observations. In later years I have often used this case to tell my students and PhD candidates that dissertations should not be published as fat books, but in compressed form, concentrating on the essential results and conclusions. My book may have remained unnoticed if it had been printed in its full 600-page girth. And how many of my weak spots in the field of theory might not have come to the fore!

The trimmed-down version that appeared in spring 1969 fared much better. The book attracted reviews (especially, of course, in the German language area), and the ABC phases proved beguiling to readers – although I myself did not consider this my most important insight. Personally I believed the book's most important conclusion was that the success of national movements depended mainly on intense social communication and on the polarity of material contradictions which ran parallel to differences of nationality. Reviewers tended to praise the book's comparative method and its interdisciplinarity (something which was just becoming fashionable at the time). One reviewer called me a "structuralist sociologist".

Within Czechoslovakia, oppressed as the country was by the so-called normalization policy of the post-1968 years, the book remained obscure. The new power brokers in history-writing considered it insufficiently Marxist and while they did not dare to endorse my book, they were reluctant to review it in dogmatically negative terms. In any case, neither the habilitation thesis nor the book has appeared in Czech, not even later, when the political situation relaxed.

Should I pursue this line of research under these circumstances? The positive response to the book suggested as much, and I mulled a topic for further comparative analysis: the relationship between the social structure of national protagonists and the type of demands they made for the nation in Phase B. Research conditions for such a topic were, however, difficult. I had good reason to expect that ideological constraints would be tight and force me into one compromise after another. The a-priori mistrust of national ideals as "bourgeois nationalism" was once again official doctrine.

Two decades away from the nation

Under this renewed ideological tutelage it came as a relief that I could collaborate with my wife, Byzantine scholar in our department, on a history of the Crusades – the first synoptic Czech work on the topic.[7] I then returned to my doctoral dissertation and prepared its book publication.[8] This chimed with my interest in the international discussion on the crisis of the European societies and politics in the seventeenth century. My colleague Josef Petráň and I brought out a short book on the topic; it also appeared in German.[9] Still mindful of the comparative method, I undertook an attempt in the late 1970s to draw up a typological comparison of the European revolutions.[10] In all these cases I was motivated by the

sense that Czech history-writing, suffering as it was from provincialism, urgently needed a European perspective.

And I had not forgotten about the national movements. My analysis of territorial patterns and some reflections of the comparative method I published as articles, further themes were investigated by MA students for their theses. I returned to nationality topics in a more culture-historical sense: what role had been played in national mobilization by historical awareness and its transmission? This met with broad interest among my Polish colleagues, with whom I collaborated in three conferences on historical awareness among Czechs, Germans, and Poles; one of these concentrated on the nineteenth century.[11] The same topic had been the theme of a collected volume gathering the MA research results of my students, which I had edited in 1976, with a theoretical outline of the concept and study of what was then called historical awareness and which nowadays would be categorized as "memory culture".[12] I later included German his-

torical awareness in my scope, following my participation in the project on *Verbürgerlichung* ("becoming middle-class", *embourgeoisement*) initiated and directed by Jürgen Kocka in Bielefeld in 1987–88.[13]

Noticed in Britain

Meanwhile my book had started to lead a life of its own, at first like a concluded episode in my scholarly activities. Its positive reception in Germany remained inconsequential in that the Czech political climate in those years allowed no regular contacts with West-German universities and no initiatives from outside were forthcoming. But soon there were wholly different reasons to return to the book.

In the mid-1970 I was contacted by the British publisher New Left Books, unknown to me in my isolated country. An English translation was proposed. At the time approval from the authorities was a requirement for publishing in the West, and this alone brought its measure of stress. I was quite taken aback to learn of the publisher's profile and the authors on its list: merely to request approval for publishing alongside the likes of Trotsky and some Yugoslav revisionists would have been politically reckless.

I suspected that the man behind the invitation was Eric Hobsbawm, whom I had met in Prague in the 1960s. I wrote to him, stating my worries, and without in fact knowing that Hobsbawm had highlighted my book in the most flattering terms in 1973, singling out its comparative approach and the territorial theme.[14] I was equally ignorant of the fact that the initiative to have my book translated was in fact not his, but Perry Anderson's, who later told me he had come across a copy in the early 1970s. His interest in it was increased by Hobsbawm's review article, following which they had jointly decided to try a publication with New Left Books.

Having been made aware of the risks that publishing with New Left Books would entail for me, Hobsbawm contacted Cambridge University Press, who contacted me with a publishing proposal; they would, however, like to see the book expanded by some 7 000 words in order to cover the development of the various national movements more fully. This requirement posed no problem for me, on the contrary: not only did I flesh out the narratives, I also worked out some of the conclusions more fully. It took some time, and I did the work in blithe ignorance of the stringent meaning of the 7 000-word stipulation, running well over that limit.

Back and forth between Cambridge and Prague

The main problem proved to be, not so much the actual word count as the political-bureaucratic obstacle race. To begin with, it was an offence to privately send manuscripts abroad for publication. The only legal path involved the state agency "Dilia", which also held a monopoly on representing intellectual property rights outside the country. A helpful staff member was to undertake this on my behalf, on the condition however that I showed an official agreement from my Faculty for publication abroad as well as an endorsement on the MS content (guaranteeing that the text was politically and ideologically suitable). At that time it was unthinkable that I should ever get such an endorsement: no one would want to run the risk; might not a book, unacknowledged by local reviews, be praised in foreign parts for its undogmatic or even revisionist character? I submitted only my faculty's publication agreement to the Dilia staff member; it contained a statement that the content of the MS was subject to further assessment after its completion. This proved sufficient to enter into a contract with the publisher.

What followed then was a curious mixture of misunderstandings and obfuscations. I gave Dilia the completed MS in 1980, without the endorsement as to its contents. The staff member did not ask any questions and, satisfied with my remark that she was already in possession of the publication agreement, forwarded the MS to Cambridge. Ten years later, after the Velvet Revolution, I ran into her again, and I asked her if she had been aware that the content endorsement had been lacking. She laughed and said: *"Of course I knew"*.

After more than a year, maybe even two, Cambridge UP sent me a reproachful letter stating that my book was being translated, but that the translation was too lengthy for publication: instead of a 7 000-word expansion I had almost doubled the book length. I was to shorten it accordingly, and to that purpose they let me have the translated text. Let the reader imagine what that meant, in those days before digital storage, and with all communication, ink-on-paper, subjected to censorship excisions. It took me a while to remove some of my additions; then I went back to Dilia and had them send off the MS. By now the year was 1983. After a few months the publisher inquired when they could expect to receive the MS: my shortened version had never reached England. The publisher informed me that this, unfortunately, had been the only copy; unless I had a spare, the publication was off.

Dilia insisted they had sent the parcel; inquiring whether it had been

seized by the national mail's police inspection was not be thought of, for officially there was no such thing. I resigned myself to the idea that the entire venture had been shipwrecked. By sheer coincidence I was invited, around that time (early 1984) to a conference at the School of Slavonic and East-European Studies in London, for the first time in my life. Here I met the outstanding literary scholar Robert Pynsent, and at some point I told him of my experience. He was outraged and telephoned Cambridge University Press, announcing a visit in person the following day. My last Sterling cash (which was not to be bought for East-European currency at the time) went on a train ticket and taxi ride in Cambridge; it proved well-spent. The meeting at the publisher's was brief, to the point and fruitful: it transpired that the translator had a spare copy which, having been placed at my disposal, allowed me to re-do my outtakes. Nothing further went wrong, and the book appeared; the time lags made it impossible, however, to include a response to the important studies (notably by Ernest Gellner and Benedict Anderson) which had appeared in the meantime. This shortcoming does not seem to have been noted by reviewers.

The materials taken out at Cambridge's request were not altogether wasted. I reworked them, expanded them with some further case studies and published them as a separate book in Prague in 1986.[15] Thus I could put my general extrapolations to the Czech public; after twenty years I returned to the problem of national movements, and more was to follow. But the impulse came from abroad.

The old book is successful, its author surprised

By the mid-1980s I had re-established my contacts with the West and this should have allowed me to follow my book's fortunes there; but it came as a surprise to be referred to, during a conference in Bielefeld, as the successful author of a "ground-breaking" book. Equally surprising was the invitation, as guest of honour, to Hobsbawm's 1985 Wiles lecture in Belfast: here I encountered Perry Anderson for the first time and made the acquaintance of John Breuilly, who let me know he was writing a very positive review of my book despite differences in approach and interpretation.

Around the same time I was invited to participate in two major projects. One ran in Bielefeld under the direction of Jürgen Kocka and addressed the European process of *embourgeoisement* ("*Verbürgerlichung*"); my input consisted in a comparison of the historical imagery of nineteenth-century Czech and German literature. The other, funded by the European Science Foundation, was called, tellingly, "Comparative studies on Governments and Non-Dominant Ethnic Groups in Europe, 1850–1940"; I formed part of its team nr. 6, directed by Andreas Kappeler. We were not numerous, which facilitated intense discussions during our regular meetings. Since I, besides Gerhard Brunn, was the only participant to have conducted empirical research on the topic, I could help shape the resulting publication, which, unlike the other volumes, was more than an incoherent collection of separate contributions and consisted of thematically structured chapters accompanied by selected case studies.[16]

After the fall of communism I experienced what it means to be the author of a successful Western-published book. A foretaste had come in 1988, when Gale Stokes invited me to a guest professorship at Rice University – something I refused because of my insufficient command of English. Further invitations followed from early 1990 on: conferences, guest professorships. Even leaving aside the conferences on topics outside my field, such as minority politics, this presented an unexpected new challenge. I did not want to rehash my older findings and models, even though this was what was asked of me. I felt I should, in these discussions, confront new theories and insights, largely new to me, and requiring a good deal of catching up with the theories that had emerged in the previous decade.[17] My motivation now was quite different from what it had been in the 1960s. The topic of nationalism was now so omnipresent that willy-nilly a tendency made itself felt to look at historical processes and questions through the prism of the contemporary situation. What had been a very

academic topic for me was now an issue in contemporary politics. To remain neutral in one's analysis was now much more difficult than it had been. Even so, I felt that it remained a duty, and not an impossible one; and I always maintained my refusal to subject oneself to contemporary political sensibilities (which at this moment implied a dismissal of nationality).

I was not really moved from my earlier position by my reading of the new publications; if anything, I was irked by the one-sided emphasis on the primacy of "nationalism" in the process of nation formation. While I saw my theory of the formation of modern nations confirmed in its fundamental outline, the recent publications also forced me to some revisions. For one thing I felt it necessary to distance myself clearly from perennialism and to acknowledge the important role of individual actors; also, to emphasize explicitly their civic equality (which until then had appeared self-evident). I was strongly inspired by the concept of collective identity of Anthony Smith and others and adopted it into my own conceptual toolkit. Despite my critical reservations about mainstream nationalism mania, I kept aloof from theoretical debates, except when I felt compelled to respond to an unfair criticism by Ernest Gellner.[18] Generally, my initial impression (which was confirmed subsequently) was that many authors of these theoretical constructs were more interested in the originality of their hypotheses than in their applicability in actual empirical research. At some point I spoke of an "overproduction of nationalism theories"; and I was reminded, by the turn of the century, of a German saying from the 1930s that "every PhD candidate has the ambition to propose a new definition of the nation". I was specifically irritated by the fact that many authors, especially in the 1990s, recycled or modified older theories without referring to their original authors. This, it appeared to me, suggested that the theoretical positions of most serious authors were more closely akin than the authors themselves would admit. I frequently found reason to point out that we should not only dwell on the differences between various nationalism theories, but especially also on their common features.

Continuation and a fresh start

In general I was never happy to be described as a "theoretician of nationalism". Both words are misnomers. I never studied theoretical disciplines such as Philosophy or Social science and am unqualified to engage in theoretical discussions about abstract topics. I consider my work empirical,

and when I contextualize my work and extrapolate generalizations from it, I do so in the conviction that history is not just about the singular, but above all about processes and structures with a multiplicity of acting subjects. It may be objected that this position goes against the idiographic nature of the source-focused historian; and indeed I must admit that in recent years I have found it easier to engage with political or social scientists than with (traditional) historians.

The fall of the Iron Curtain and the evaporation of ideological control opened possibilities, and indeed a necessity, to expose my long-established insights and generalizations to new theories. For me, the critical engagement with colleagues abroad offered confirmation for some fundamental tenets, but forced me to re-think some others, while evident lacunae necessitated fresh research.

Among the many conferences and encounters of the early 1990s some stand out. In the summer of 1990 I met Ernest Gellner personally for the first time in Santander. As I brought up our common interest in a private conversation, he was reluctant to engage in a discussion and said we were basically in agreement. I do not know if he was already contemplating his critical commentary on my book at that stage.

More inspiring was the conference of the Society for the Study of European Ideas in Louvain, shortly afterwards, on European nationalism. It brought home to me that West-European colleagues had certain blind spots on the role of language in national movements. I also realized that I had unduly neglected, until then, the connection between nation-formation and Romanticism. This, as connected with language activism, I was forced to acknowledge as an important research topic.

The critical reconsideration of my tenets was properly borne in on me during a conference in the Bielefeld Centre for Interdisciplinary Research, in 1991. This had been planned to involve me since the 1980s by professor Hans-Jürgen Puhle, with whom I enjoyed a friendly personal relationship. We invited some thirty colleagues, young and old, with expertise on the national movements of Eastern, Central and Western Europe. It was Puhle's aim to test the applicability of what was called my "theory" to single national contexts. The colleagues responded on that set topic, some of them with great care and precision, others with less. I have rarely experienced discussions as fruitful and interesting, and as thought-provoking; the lessons I took away from this event were of formative importance for my subsequent work. Going over my notes now for my concluding remarks, I see some points that deserve being summarized here. To begin with two fundamentally positive observations:

- I found my basic notion (which until today has not found general acceptance) confirmed that nation formation as manifested in national movements is not just a specifically "Eastern" but rather a generally European phenomenon, albeit with typological differentiations.
- The application of A-B-C phases worked for all national contexts, but turned out to require certain clarifications and specifications.

This brings me to the points of inspiration and revision.

- In my work I had marginalized the role of Phase A, neglecting its structure, its causative background and (possibly) its typology.
- Phase B should be seen as including two sub-phases: in the earlier

one, patriots start their activism without gaining much feedback from their fellow-nationals, and after a certain interval the activism takes hold by eliciting noticeably increasing support.

- In my book I failed, when identifying the various phases, to emphasize that they mutually overlapped: the activities of Phase A continued during the phase of national activism, which itself lasted into the achievement of phase C.
- My "definition" of the nation should stress its subjective component as well as the civic equality of its members.
- The social structure of the protagonists of various national movements offered itself as an important analytical tool for the comparative study of their respective agendas.
- In the causal investigation of centrifugal and centripetal forces I had paid insufficient attention to forces coming from outside.

Some of these points I developed in the lectures held during guest professorships in Saarbrücken and at UCLA. Following a Los Angeles workshop on my book, where I spoke on partial revisions and clarifications of my

position, Perry Anderson suggested I write an article summarizing my more recent views on modern nation-formation. I did my best, and in 1993 an article appeared in the *New Left Review* in which I presented the tenets of my book in a revised and terminologically differentiated form. It remains my most-quoted article, no doubt also because Perry translated my primitive English into his elegant idiom. This essay concluded my theoretical re-orientation; I was now free to return to empirical, comparative research – happily so, because I was embarrassed at having to fall back on my old research all the time.

My new topic picked up on the plans I had been forced to shelve in the 1970s: a comparative analysis of the agendas and aims of national movements and their protagonists. To begin with, I resuscitated the question I had planned as a continuation of my *Vorkämpfer* project: what connection was there between the social structure of the protagonists and the structures of their programmes and agendas? I wrote an essay on the social context of the linguistic demands of national movements while engaged in a project at the European University Institute of Florence.[19] I argued that ethnic communities with a full social structure had a politically oriented programme from their beginning, while those with an incomplete social structure foregrounded linguistic demands in phase B, moving to political demands only in phase C.

This was a first step in the elucidation of another problem in nation-formation: for after the question "who were they?" I needed to address the question "what did they want?" For this question I decided to apply three comparative criteria, corresponding to the empirically measurable structure of the national programmes: the political, linguistic-cultural and social demands. These were complemented by a chapter on minority problems, their typology and interests. And all that resulted in my second book, which first appeared in Czech, and four years later in English.[20] It was less empirical and more deductively "theorizing" than the first one, partly because of the nature of its topic: the discourse of considerations, interest and ideals lends itself to a generalized treatment, subsuming specifically local demands under general principles. Looking back across an interval of two decades it seems that detailed narratives might have made the argument more convincing, but that would have led to a threefold increase in length, and I confess to an irrational dislike of obese books.

The response with which my second book met in my home country was not unlike that of the first one, thirty years before. Of course, ideologi-

cal control was now a thing of the past, but a lack of interest in national problems remained. Although reviews were positive, a commercial publication was considered non-viable; both the Czech and the English version came out as internal publications financed by my faculty. Only after the English version had appeared did a publisher come forward for a new edition of the Czech book. In contrast to other post-Communist countries, Czech readers – for whatever reason – are a-nationally-minded, sceptical concerning both nationalism as a topic and patriotism as an affect. This does not prevent a strong provincialism among them.

These remarks on the socio-cultural ambience, earlier and later, lead me back to the contextualization of my own position. Firstly, politically: the danger of a Stalinist de-nationalization had passed since the early 1960s. Hard to tell: did my renewed interest in national movements result from the new virulence of nationalism in the 1990s, or from the breathing space, free from ideological regulation, that the more relaxed climate gave to my interests? The latter seemed to matter most to me; but even a neutrally-minded research project can have unintended political implications, which, whether they are welcome or not, indicate how important it is for academic researchers never to place their work in the service of politics, as an "applied science". The results of unbiased and disinterested analysis are weightier than findings made to order. An example: at a conference in the early 1990s I was accosted by a colleague of my own age, as yet unknown to me, who informed me how important my book on the *Vorkämpfer*, and my classification of the Flemish as a nation, had been for the Flemish debates on that issue. His name was Lode Wils; and he was not the only Flemish patriot who took a positive interest in my concept of the nation.

When the topic of nationalism becomes fashionable…

I had tried until 1990 to concentrate my research on the past and to avoid the explosive topical manifestations of nationalism; that position became untenable during the Yugoslav civil war and the break-up of the Soviet Union. Who else, other than historians, could investigate the historical roots of these conflicts? Unfortunately, the tensions of the time were little suited to rational analysis; discussions were dominated by facile denunciations of all "nationalisms", politically opportune and specious incriminations of "communism", moral grandstanding on civic virtues and open societies.

My attempts at an even-handed historicization of the events and of the new national movements found scant agreement among the delegates (self-styled Europeans) at the conferences of the time. People in the 1990s failed to heed for example the possible parallel between the radicalization of German and Magyar minority populations during the inter-war years and the potential radicalization of contemporary Russians. National agendas were dismissed by "Europeans" who considered nations to be an outmoded relict of the past, to be replaced by civil societies. To my regret this attitude among leading academics also affected government policies; even at the time I denounced their impact on the disastrously misguided European interventions in the Balkans. When I realized that my efforts in this area resulted only in two or three largely unnoticed texts,[21] I gave up on my efforts to intervene in this political "nationalism" debate, and returned to my historical research – which, of course was not completely unaffected by the political state of affairs.

The atmosphere of the 1990s in Europe fostered academic research into nationalism. Although I sensed that funding was driven by a tacit political desire to discredit the national as superfluous and nationalism as noxious, I tried to make use of the opportunities – with varying results. One successful attempt was the project (jointly with my Cologne colleague

Otto Dann, and funded by the *Volkswagenstiftung*) to trace the aftereffects of the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire in its borderlands: Switzerland, the Low Countries, Bohemia, Hungary and Tyrol. A fine volume appeared – belatedly – but it did not include general-theoretical extrapolations.[22] Inspired by the workshop discussions I decided to write a book on the early stages (beginnings of Phase B) of the Czech national vindications in the early nineteenth century; the first and the last book which I have written on my own national history.[23] It surveyed a broad source corpus to establish which conditions fostered patriotic attempts to propagate a generalized acceptance of Czech national identity, and which ones hindered them. I concluded from the data that there would have been no nation without these patriotic activities, but also showed that these activities were only successful because they could play into favourable cultural and social circumstances – which confirmed my fundamentally consensualistic notion of nation-building.

Meanwhile, many other initiatives remained inconclusive. One concerned a comparative treatment of constructions of national history. I organized a workshop on this topic towards the end of my professorship at the EUI Florence in 1997, which brought together interesting participants headed by Georg Iggers. The lengthy, engrossing discussions were recorded and typed out, but a publication failed to emerge because most contributions failed to be handed in.

Another project aimed to define and characterize the specifics of the histories of small nations; here, too, the participants proved reluctant to submit their contributions for publication, and the project got bogged down. And I still regret my lack of energy to push through a third project: a handbook of national movements. This fell at the first hurdle, when I was informed that funding agencies, while willing to support empirical research, were disinclined to finance popularizing publications.

These failures made me realize that my strength is not in research management; I withdrew to pursue my own projects

Nationalism as an East-European singularity?

The new wave of nationalism in the 1990 was linked by the media to the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the fall of the authoritarian communist governments. The ensuing national movements, while vindicating liberty and civil rights, defined these ideals in ethnic terms, as

residing in the nation, so defined in its language, culture, history etc. The fact that these events occurred in Eastern Europe gave rise to a stereotype which unfortunately gained some currency even in mainstream political and social science: the idea that "ethnonationalism" emerged in the east and remains to this day an East- or East-Central-European speciality. Some historians projected this perception back into the past, thus (often unwittingly) reviving the old and obsolete dichotomy of Hans Kohn.

I was bothered by this politically skewed model because it stood in strident contrast to the results of my research and ignored facts which I had come to believe were now self-evident and generally recognized. I felt it necessary to point out that developments in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe after 1990 should be considered as national movements, with resemblances and some divergences from the "classical" model.[24] I did not manage, however, to mount a project comparing old and recent national movements. Research into the topic was fully dominated by the notion and phraseology of "nationalism", subsuming all countries and periods.

A second attempt to intervene in contemporary debates was with reference to "ethnonationalism". Drawing on my earlier registration of the correlation between social structures and the character of national agendas, I argued that an emphasis on language and culture in national movements was by no means an East- or East-Central-European phenomenon but an attitude, socially rather than culturally determined, which can be historical encountered anywhere in Europe given the right sociocultural conditions.[25] As it happens, events in the last 10-15 years have confirmed my position that ethnonationalism as a mental attitude gains varying degrees of popular support both in Eastern and in Western Europe.

These and other experiences strengthened my resolve to return to the topic of nation formation, and to broaden my scope beyond that of the "small nations" to a pan-European frame.

A third and final book

Around the end of the century I spent a few months as "former Humboldtian" at the Institute for Comparative History at the Free University Berlin, whose director, Jürgen Kocka, knew me from our Bielefeld days. He suggested I do a synoptic survey of modern European nation-formation for his new monograph series "*Synthesen*". I accepted the offer on the condition that, rather than summarizing a compendium for students, I could use the book to state my final position on the topic. Thus the resulting *Europa der Nationen* formed the final part of what I considered a Trilogy.[26] After research into the actors and their agendas, I moved to the central question: Why were they so successful? I extended my scope to the formation of state-nations in order to clarify the typological difference between the two fundamental types of European nation-formation.

At the same time I was driven by my desire for consensus in the interpretation of national movements. In empirical research, the different opinions as to nation-formation are by no means as insurmountable as certain theoreticians of nationalism (especially those who have never conducted empirical research) would have it. My fundamental line of reasoning was that nations emerge from a tension and interaction between subjective aims and ideals on the one hand, and, on the other, objective conditions and processes independent of the volition of the actors involved. They are a necessary consequence both of the abstract modernization process as such and of the deliberate endeavours of identifiable "nationalists". I put

forward a model that should be acceptable to Modernists, Constructivists, Perennialists and Ethnosymbolists alike, involving the interactions between social and cultural conditions and determinants, and the innovative efforts of activists. This was subject to a double proviso which unfortunately I should have emphasized more: that the word "nationalism" be used only in a specific and pejorative meaning, limited in time and purport, and without applying its globalized political sense to the study of European history. I had long underestimated the importance of this cardinal methodological crux and realized it fully only in my later years.

Which brings me to the final part of my reflections.

Can an old man think of anything fresh on this topic?

I finished the manuscript of my third book fifteen years ago. Since then I have contributed nothing new to the topic of nation-formation, have turned to other themes such as the construction of national history, memory culture, the history of Norway, and a secondary school textbook on modern history. Importantly, however, I continued to follow with increasing intensity the topical debates on contemporary nationalism as well its underlying political developments.

Two significant shifts in terminology have struck me. First, the creeping, decades-long expurgation of the term "nation" from the public sphere has tended to blunt our sensitivity as to its semantics. Spurred on by this realization, I became aware that both in general and in academic usage the term refers to two, neatly separate phenomena. On the one hand it means the huge aggregate of people who, in spite of their different interests, share an understanding as members of a single nation. It is in this sense that I understood the concept in my research on the genesis of the social macro-groups called "nations"; it is in this sense that I consider nations to have a real-world existence. On the other hand, we understand a nation to be something intangible: an abstract community which by means of cultural ties (literature, language, arts, history, and possibly religion and character) represents itself to the members of the nation-as-social-group as a community of values. In this sense, as an abstract community of values, the nation is truly a cultural construct and it resides above all in the heads of its members as a social group, with a variable degree of foregroundedness; its beginnings go back to the incipience of phase B of national movements. To be sure this construct is much older and stronger among state-based nations than among small nations,

but restricted to a narrow social bandwidth (elite and intellectuals). Once the nation finds its full modern expression, its image as an abstract community is present in the minds of its members and its different intensity is depending on differences in education, life experience, social position, and increasingly influenced by ideology.

This duality between social group and abstract community is not a new insight on my part but its presence in my work has so far been implicit and non-articulated. When I referred to the identification with the nation I basically meant the individual's willingness to see the abstract cultural community as his own and to engage with it in a two-way interaction. The same duality had in fact been reflected upon by Otto Bauer; Rosa Luxemburg had developed it into her central argument against the na-

tional movements of her time: the uneducated classes did not participate in the nation's high culture. Since then, her stance would at first sight appear to have been disproved: the massive spread of social communication has in fact allowed popular classes to participate in high and bourgeois culture. However, if, 100 years on, we inquire how the degree of recognition of the nation as a cultural value correlates with social class, we get the sense that Rosa's view would have been proved right in the long run: national cultural values are once again non-popular and belong to the intellectual elite. We must even ask ourselves if nations as cultural value communities are becoming a thing of the past.

If we were to approach the question of nation-formation from this point of view, would it lead to fresh insights? I do not expect to be able to answer this neglected question.

Let me emphasize that this duality is a specifically European characteristic of the nation, rare on other continents: there the nation is usually understood in state terms. and attempts to build it into a cultural community followed on its power-politically based establishment, with scant historical roots. Such a nation is by nature very different from the European one. The distinction remains unnoticed as longs as one studies, not nations but nationalisms. And this brings me to the second terminological shift which has occurred in the last four decades.

Unreflectedly and spontaneously the mainstreaming of nationalism has globalized the term; and as a result it has been applied and adapted to non-European conditions. If by the universal terminological umbrella-concept of nationalism we understand nation-formation in Africa, Latin America and Asia, it comes as no surprise that this will skew the image of older European history. The endeavours of early-19th-century high-minded intellectuals to enrich the culture and the educational standards of their nation are being referred to by the same derogatory term "nationalism" as a separatist insurrection in Africa or Asia.

I am not an expert in contemporary history, but would hazard the guess that this anachronistic globalization of terms reflects back on the contemporary, manipulative news coverage of "nationalism" within Europe. When Marine Le Pen states that she wants to assert French national interests, this is critiqued as "nationalism"; why is not the same term applied to Helmut Kohl's drive for German unification in the interest of the German nation? But what was that, if not nationalism? This is just one example among many, how the word nationalism is avoided in certain

contexts (especially if it concerns those who are in power in great nations) – and those who would dare to use it "from below" might risk being denounced as "nationalists" themselves. Conversely, we notice a tendency among the politically correct to discredit every manifestation of patriotism as "nationalism".

When I was made a corresponding member of the Finnish Academy of sciences, forty years ago, because I had written about the Finnish national movement as a part of European history – was that an expression of Finnish "nationalism"? When ten years ago, with a similar motivation, I was given an honorary doctorate by the Vytautas Magnus University of Kaunas – was that a sign of benighted "nationalism"? Even, possibly, its eastern variant? And should I for that reason have refused the honour? In accepting it, I may have compromised myself as an East-European nationalist in the eyes of some. Indeed, some readers, in the spirit of a globalized interpretation of things, may read this account of my original reasons for studying national movements as the typical autobiography of a nationalist.

I understand that the term "nationalism" can neither be expunged from our vocabulary nor authoritatively redefined. I can only hope that researchers realize its uselessness, or worse, for deeper historical analysis. Some recent literature on the topic show signs of this in the attempts to find alternative terms; but in the media such terminological self-reflection is a distant prospect. By accident I came across an article in an Indian magazine which made a strict distinction between patriotism and nationalism. Will Europe require the aid of the globalized world to revive a sensible older set of concepts? But then again, does the way back offer a way out? All these are questions I would like to come to terms with, but lack the time and strength to; so let them be entrusted to a younger generation.

I shall not write a fourth book on the problem of nation-formation. Were such a thing to lie within my powers, its central, very difficult topic would be: how did, over time, the polarity develop between the nation as a social group and as an abstract cultural value-system? That is to say: between the sociological fact and the construct? How did their interdependence take shape during the various phases of the national movements and afterwards, within the conditions of the nation-state? And how does this European polarity compare with non-European "nations"? There may not even be an analogue outside Europe. In the wake of such an analysis, one could reflect comparatively on the contemporary state of that polarity under current conditions. Nothing easier, of course, than planning projects which will be left to the industry of others. But planning things is a way of being alive.

The publications are put into three categories (books, textbooks-readers-handbooks and articles) and one subcategory (popularizing books). Within these categories, the lists are chronological. Titles in so-called 'non-metropolitan languages' (like Czech) have an English translation added to. The list of articles is not exhaustive.

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Lieber Broch,

Besten Dank fuer Ihren Brief und Ihr Buch, das ich nun auch erhalten habe. Darf ich Ihnen zu einer ganz erstklassigen wissenschaftlichen Leistung gratulieren? Insbesondre hat mich Ihre Analyse der territorialen Zusammensetzung der nationalen Bewegungen ungemein interessiert (und auch ueberzeugt). Was sie ueber soziale Zusammensetzung sagen ist ja an sich weniger unerwartet (etwa mit Ausnahme der Rolle der Geistlichkeit in einigen Faellen), oder besser gesagt, entspricht den bisherigen Ansichten. Trotzdem, vor Ihnen hat noch niemand die Fakten komparativ behandelt und auch zusammengebracht. Aber was Sie - negativ wie positiv - ueber die territoriale Frage sagen, schien mir ganz neu. Ich hoffe, Sie setzen diese Arbeit auch fuer Phase C fort. Der Einbruch der nationalen Bewegung in die Volksmassen ist noch sehr im Dunkel. Hier duerften vielleicht auch andre Quellen nuetzen. Z.b. haben die Franzosen die Militaerstatistik der 1820er Jahre in diesem Sinne sehr interessant analysiert, und die territoriale Verteilung der Dienstverweigerung (bezw. der andern Methoden sich vom Dienst zu druecken) festgestellt: weit mehr Fahnentreue in Nordostfrankreich, weit weniger in der Bretagne, im Suedwesten (dem alten Languedoc), und natuerlich ein Minimum in Korsika. Kein Wunder, dass die heilige Johanna aus Lothringen kam, wie Le Roy Ladurie bemerkte!

Um zur Frage Ihres Artikels zurueckzukehren. Ich glaube eine Zusammenfassung Ihrer Resultate, womoeglich mit konkreten Beispielen, waere fuer uns das Beste. Besser als Ihre Vorschlaege b)und c), erstens, weil die Resultate noch wenig bekannt sind, und daher noch wichtiger als methodologische Erwaegungen, zweitens weil die Kraft Ihres Buches in der komparativen Analyse liegt. Wir moechten - wie Sie - die tatsaechlichen historischen Basen der nationalen Bewegungen zur Diskussion stellen. Auch glaube ich, dass im Hinblick auf die Unbrauchbarkeit des Grossteils der bisherigen Literatur, es besser ist auf lange Diskussion darueber zu verzichten.

Schreiben Sie mir wann Sie einen solchen Aufsatz fertig machen koennten. In welchem Umfang? Sagen wir gegen 20-25 unserer Druckseiten (8000 Worte). Wir uebersetzen aus dem Deutschen.

Kommen Sie nach Leningrad zum Internationalen Kongress? Falls ja, dann sehen wir uns wohl dort.

Mit besten Gruessen

Eric Hobsbawm

The landmark publication by Miroslav Hroch of *Die Vorkämpfer der nationalen Bewegung bei den kleinen Völkern Europas: Eine vergleichende Analyse zur gesellschaftlichen Schichtung der patriotischen Gruppen*, Prag, Universita Karlova, 1968, 171 pp. (*Acta Universitatis Carolinae Philosophica et Historica Monographia*, 24), already at the time drew a considerable amount of reviews. A sample of those contemporary publications is reproduced on the NISE website, at http://hroch.nise.eu. The letter on the opposite page, written by British historian Eric Hobsbawm to Miroslav Hroch in 1970, discusses the work.

ENDNOTES

PREFACE

[1] I will use the term "nationalism", though Miroslav prefers to call his object of study "national movements". Leaving aside my disagreement with making a sharp distinction between nationalism and national movement, most of the literature uses the term nationalism. However, this disagreement is important and I address it later.

[2] There were earlier important works by such as Deutsch (1953) – which Miroslav knew, Kedourie (1960) and Anthony Smith (1971) but I suggest it was a cluster of publications in the early 1980s which came to define the terms on which nationalism was debated.

INTELLECTUAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY

[1] M. Hroch & A. Veverka, Kotázce sociální skladby české obrozenecké společnosti [On the social composition of the Czech patriotic society], in: *Dějepis ve škole*, 1957. Alois Veverka was a fellow-student who with me had crunched the data for the seminar paper; although he had never returned to the topic, it seemed inappropriate not to mention him as co-author.

[2] H.C.J. Duijker & N.H. Frijda, *National Character and National Stereotypes*, Amsterdam, 1960.

[3] A.D. Smith, *National Identity*, London, 1991.

[4] Translator's note: Hendrik Elias (1902–1973), the author of

Geschiedenis der Vlaamse gedachte [The History of the Flemish Idea], 4 vols., 1963–65, a committed Flemish nationalist, had been a prominent Nazi collaborator in occupied Belgium as leader of the fascist VNV party and mayor of Gent. After the war he was sentenced to death; the sentence was commuted to life imprisonment. His history of the Flemish Movement was published after his release from prison.

[5] *Sociální předpoklady obrození malých národů severní a východní Evropy* [Social Preconditions of the Revival of Small Nations in Northern and Eastern Europe].

[6] *Vlastenci bez národa*, in: *Naše živá i mrtvá minulost*, Praha, 1968.

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[11] *Polska, czeska i slowacka świadomość historyczna XIX.wieku* [Polish, Czech and Slovak historical awareness in the nineteenth century], Wrocław, 1979.

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[13] *Die historische Belletristik als Vermittlerin des bürgerlichen Geschichtsbewusstseins: Deutsches und tschechisches Geschichtsbild im Vergleich*, in: *Bürger, Bürgerlichkeit und bürgerliche Gesellschaft*, 9, Bielefeld, 1986/87. A Czech summary appeared in: *Acta Universitatis Carolinae, Studia Historica*, XXXIII, Praha, 1988, pp. 115–136.

[14] E. Hobsbawm, *Some reflections on nationalism*, in: T.J. Nossiter et al. (ed.), *Imagination and precision in the Social Sciences*, London, 1972. Hobsbawm had previously (1970) informed me of his appreciation in a private letter. (see page 83)

[15] *Evropská národní hnutí v 19. století. Společenské předpoklady vzniku moderních národů* [European national movements in the 19th century: The social conditions of the emergence of modern nations], Praha, 1986.

[16] A. Kappeler (ed.), *The Formation of National Elites*, New York, 1992.

[17] Guest professorships in Saarbrücken and at UCLA (1991–92) gave me time and opportunity to do so.

[18] In his *Encounters with Nationalism* (Oxford, 1994), Gellner imputed that I interpreted nations from a class-struggle perspective; this he sought to demonstrate with contrived quotations and formulations which in my book are not to be found where he said they were. See my *"Real and constructed: The nature of the nation"*, in: J.A. Hall (ed.), *The state of the nation*, Cambridge, 1998.

[19] *The Social Interpretation of Linguistic Demands in European National Movements*, Florence, 1994 (*EUI Working Papers* 94.1), later incorporated, in abbreviated form, as chapter 9 into my *European Nations: Explaining their formation*, London, 2015.

[20] *In the National Interest: Demands and Goals of European National Movements of the Nineteenth Century. A Comparative Perspective*, Prague, 2000.

[21] M. Hroch, "An Unwelcome National Identity, or What to Do about Nationalism in the Post-Communist Countries", in: *European Review*, 4.3, 1996, pp. 265–276. A similar text had appeared earlier in the collection A. Clesse & A. Kortunov (ed.), *The Political and Strategic Implications of the State Crisis in Central and Eastern Europe*, Luxembourg, 1993, pp. 33–39.

[22] O. Dann, M. Hroch & J. Koll (eds), *Patriotismus und Nationsbilung am Ende des Heiligen Römischen Reiches*, Köln, 2003.

[23] *Na prahu národní existence: Sen a skutečnost* [On the threshold of national existence: Dream and reality], Praha, 2000.

[24] "Nationalism and national movements: Comparing the past and present of Central and Eastern Europe", in: *Nations and Nationalism*, 2, 1996, p. 35.

[25] *Ethnonationalismus – eine ostmitteleuropäische Erfindung?* (Oscar

Halecki Lecture 2002), Leipzig, 2004.

[26] The book was finished in 2001 but due to translation delays it only appeared in 2005: *Das Europa der Nationen. Die modern Nationsbildung im europäischen Vergleich*, Göttingen, 2005; English translation: *European Nations. Explaining Their Formation*, London, 2015.

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All illustrations are from Miroslav Hroch's personal collection, except those on p. 8 and p. 46 (photo by Tom Cobbaert)

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p. 92 Renovating the summer house, 1981.

p. 94 Last time as promotor, at the Charles University aula, 2007.

BIOGRAPHICAL INDEX CARD

1932 (14 July)
Born in Prague

1943-1951
Secundary education at the Altsprachen Gymnasium
(classical languages)

1951-1956
Study of Czech philology and history at Charles University in Prague

1956
MA paper on *Wallenstein and the German Hanseatic towns 1627-1630*

1956-1959
Assistant at the Department of General History
(Faculty of Philosophy, Charles University)

1958
Marriage with Vera Hrochová (who became a teaching assistent,
and in 1990s, professor in Byzantine History

1959-1968
Teaching assistent at the Department of General History
(Faculty of Philosophy, Charles University)

1962-1963
History teacher at the high school (gymnasium) in Prague

1962

PhD with dissertation on *Trade and Politics in the Baltic during the Thirty Years War*

1965-1966

Bursary of the Alexander von Humboldt Stiftung
Two semesters at the University of Marburg
Research for postdoctoral thesis on European national movements (finished at the end of 1967 and defended in the summer of 1968)

1966

Birth of only child (David)

1968-1989

Associated professor ("dozent") at Charles University, Department of General History, with lectures and seminars focussing on Early Modern and Modern European History

1968-1969 (winter term)

Visiting professor at the University in Freiburg i. Breisgau (BRD)

1972 and 1978

Research in Danish archives and libraries, in 1972 preparing for a book on the Baltic Trade, in 1978 for comparative studies on revolutions

1987-1988

Participation with a project directed by Jürgen Kocka (Bielefeld) on "Verbürgerlichung"

1989

Professor in General History at Philosophical Faculty
Charles University, Department of General History

1990

Elected for two years as director of the Instituteof General History
(at Charles University)

1991-1992 (winter term)

Visisting professor at University of Saarbrücken (Germany)

1992 (spring term)

Research fellow at UCLA (USA)

1993 (spring)

Research fellow at the European University Institute (EUI) in Florence

1994

Involved with a Seminar for General and Comparative History
(MA program)

1994-1995

Visiting professor at the Martin-Luther University
in Halle-Saale (Germany)

1996

Death of Vera Hrochová

1996-1997

Professor at EUI

1997

Dr.h.c. of the University of Uppsala (Sweden)

1999

Research fellow at the Institute of European Comparative History, Freie Universität Berlin

2000

Retirement from the Faculty of Philosophy at Charles University

2000-2012

Part-time professor of history at the Faculty of Humanities at Charles University

2002-2003

Visiting professor at University of Chemnitz (Germany)

2003

Dr.h.c. of the Martin Luther University Halle-Saale (Germany)

2007

Dr.h.c. of the Vytautus Magnus University in Kaunas (Latvia)

2008-2013 (spring term)

Part-time visiting professor at University of Warsaw