

7 Reform, Revolution, and Reaction

The accession of Charles VI's daughter, Maria Theresa—the first woman to reign over the Czechs since the legendary Libuše—marked another watershed in the development of the Bohemian crownlands and the Habsburg monarchy. The power of the Bohemian Estates had been broken after the White Mountain, but the institutions of the Estates monarchy had continued to exist, even if in attenuated form. With the loss of Spain in 1714, the center of gravity of the Habsburg realm shifted to Central Europe. But it was under Maria Theresa (1740–1780) that concerted and continuous efforts began to forge a unified, centralized, bureaucratically administered realm at least out of the non-Hungarian possessions of the monarch.¹ For the remainder of the monarchy's existence the Bohemian crownlands would be treated more or less as one province among many.² At the outset, however, it seemed more likely that the monarchy itself would melt down altogether in the crucible of war into which Frederick II of Prussia plunged it a scant two months after Charles VI's death.

THE BOHEMIAN CROWNLANDS
IN THE WARS OF THE
EIGHTEENTH CENTURY
(1740–1790)

In December 1740, Prussia invaded Silesia, a Bohemian crownland since John of Luxemburg, defeated the Austrian armies, and occupied most of the province. Frederick's victory spawned a coalition of Charles Albert of Bavaria, Frederick Augustus III of Saxony and Poland, and Philip V of Spain, supported by his French nephew, Louis XV, each of whom had designs on the Habsburg inheritance. By the end of 1741, a combined French and Bavarian army had occupied Prague. On December 7, 1741, Charles Albert had himself proclaimed King of Bohemia and a part of the Bohemian Estates swore the oath of fealty. A few months later he was elected Holy Roman Emperor as Charles VII.³

Maria Theresa regrouped, winning the support of the Hungarian lords, but in June 1742 she had to surrender most of Silesia in a separate peace with Frederick at Breslau. After driving the French and Bavarians out of Bohemia, Maria Theresa had herself crowned in St. Vitus's Cathedral in May 1743. Though she treated the seriously embarrassed Bohemian Estates with leniency, she never thereafter looked at the Bohemian lords as sympathetically as she did at the Hungarians.⁴ Maria Theresa was well aware, though, of what Bohemia meant to Austria's position as a power. She devoted scarce resources to forcing the Prussians out of northeastern Bohemia in 1744, but a series of defeats in 1745 led to the treaty of Dresden. Charles Albert's unexpected death that year, and his heir's renunciation of Bavarian claims, enabled Francis Stephen's election as Holy Roman Emperor. After three more years of conflict the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle (Aachen) ended the War of the Austrian Succession in 1748.⁵

None of the protagonists expected the treaty to be more than a temporary truce. Maria Theresa, advised by the Silesian nobleman Friedrich Wilhelm Haugwitz, began to centralize her administration so as to prepare the Habsburg monarchy for another war with Prussia. Meanwhile, Frederick had also been preparing for war. In 1756, Prussia concluded the Convention of Westminster with Great Britain. In response, Maria Theresa, aided by state chancellor Wenzel Anton Kaunitz, member of an

old Moravian noble family, allied with Russia and France. This realignment of the European alliances set the stage for another conflict over Silesia.

The Seven Years' War began with a Prussian attack on Saxony. The following year the Prussians overran most of northern Bohemia and besieged Prague. A decisive Austrian victory over Frederick in June 1757 ended the siege and forced a Prussian withdrawal, and a renewed invasion of Moravia was defeated in 1758. In 1759, a new Habsburg-French-Russian coalition inflicted one defeat after another on Frederick, but French overseas losses at British hands weakened their support for Austria, and Russian Empress Elizabeth's death and the accession of Peter III—mentally unstable, and an admirer of Frederick the Great—led Russia to withdraw from the coalition in 1762. Maria Theresa had to recognize Prussia's annexation of Silesia as final in 1763, in the treaties of Paris and Hubertusburg.

Grabbing Silesia set Prussia well on the road to becoming a European power. For Austria, losing the populous and economically significant province was a hard blow, yet the outcome of the Seven Years' War reaffirmed the Habsburg monarchy's status in Europe. The loss of Silesia reduced the lands of the Crown of St. Václav to the dimensions of the Přemyslid kingdom. Bohemia, Moravia, and the Silesian duchies of Opava (Troppau), Těšín (Teschen), and Krnov (Jägerndorf) now formed the Bohemian crownlands until the collapse of the monarchy, the western part of Czechoslovakia after 1918, and the Czech Republic today. The loss of heavily German Silesia changed the linguistic balance in the Bohemian crownlands, confirming their Czech-speaking majority, and possibly providing more favorable conditions for the future revival of the Czech language and culture.

The Habsburg dynasty reestablished its claim to the imperial title in 1764, when Maria Theresa's son Joseph II was elected to succeed his father as Holy Roman Emperor, which he did in 1765. Joseph II (co-regent from 1765, as sole ruler, 1780–1790) pursued an active foreign policy. A permanent Austro-French alliance did not develop even though Maria Theresa's youngest daughter, Marie Antoinette, married the future Louis XVI. Austria instead cooperated with Russia and Prussia in the partition of Poland in 1772–73. The Habsburg share of southern Poland was organized into the "Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria." Joseph II also took Bukovina from the Ottoman Empire in 1774. These territorial changes did not affect the Bohemian crownlands directly, but

they were not insignificant either. Relatively undeveloped Galicia and Bukovina represented a potential market for the Bohemian crownlands' manufactures. The monarchy's expansion eastward absorbed lands that were not part of the German Holy Roman Empire. Strengthening the Slavic element added another complicating factor to the monarchy's future. A more immediate, and negative, impact was a new war with the Turks in 1787. Joseph contracted fever at the front and died in 1790, leaving his realms discontented by the combined impact of the wartime difficulties and his ambitious reform program.⁶ By that time, however, Europe's attention was already riveted to events in France.

ENLIGHTENMENT AND ABSOLUTISM

During the eighteenth century the idea spread that reform was possible and desirable, bringing with it a serious challenge to the twin authorities of religion and tradition. The Enlightenment subjected problems to critical scrutiny, and proposed remedies based on the application of human reason through scientific method. Enlightenment ideas spread eastward as rulers attempted to compete with such powerful states as France and Great Britain. In this struggle, rulers like Frederick the Great of Prussia, Catherine II of Russia, and Maria Theresa and Joseph II of Austria undertook reforms that have been called "enlightened absolutism." These monarchs did not strive to realize an Enlightenment Utopia, but the Enlightenment provided the critical and theoretical work from which they and their advisers sought to adopt and adapt whatever would help in achieving their goal: to increase the power and security of their states.

Reform Efforts under Maria Theresa

The practical goal of power and security dominated Maria Theresa's early efforts at administrative reform.⁷ Realizing that the surviving noble-dominated institutions in her realm prevented the monarchy from tapping needed finances and manpower, Maria Theresa concentrated on taxation and administrative reforms. A key success came in 1748 when through Haugwitz's efforts the Bohemian Estates (with their counter-

parts in the other non-Hungarian lands) accepted the decennial recess, approving taxes for ten years. Maria Theresa thus gained the financial resources to settle the state debt, establish a state bureaucracy, and equip an army of more than 100,000 men. Reforms also placed tax and military matters in the hands of newly created royal offices, after 1763 called *gubernia*. The previously existing Estates offices became only personal distinctions of their holders. Between 1748 and 1751 a salaried circuit captain, resident in the district town, replaced the former system of two Estates captains, one lord and one knight.

In 1749 a major change in central administration abolished the Bohemian and Austrian court chancelleries, replacing them with two institutions common for both the Bohemian crownlands and the Austrian provinces. Administration and financial matters were linked in the United Bohemian and Austrian Court Chancellery; judicial matters were placed under the Supreme Court. These reforms increased the ties binding the Bohemian crownlands directly to Vienna, while loosening further their mutual connections. The central administration in Vienna did not include Hungary, however: already under Maria Theresa the basic outlines of the dualistic system later established in the Compromise of 1867 emerged.⁸

Maria Theresa's practical goals—and the monarchy's difficult financial situation—also forced her to consider the economy. As a consequence of the Seven Years' War the state debt grew from around 100 million gulden a year at the end of Charles VI's reign to almost 300 million in 1764. By 1780, in spite of improvements in the budget balance, it had risen to 376 million gulden.⁹ Leading Austrian cameralists believed that the state needed to promote trade through developing domestic productivity. Thus in addition to customs and currency reforms, Maria Theresa's government improved the communications infrastructure, stimulated manufacturing (in which Francis Stephen was very active on his Bohemian estates), and removed or limited the traditional guild restrictions on the development of artisan production.¹⁰

The loss of Silesia increased the significance of the remaining Bohemian crownlands in craft and manufacturing production. Textiles led the way, and Bohemian linen, wool, and to some extent cotton manufacturing expanded during the second half of the eighteenth century.¹¹ This development concentrated where water power was plentiful, mostly in northeastern Bohemia and Moravia and the remnant of Silesia. Mills processed hand-spun and woven cloth, so individual artisans produced

most Bohemian textiles up to the end of the century, helping to account for the dominance of textiles in manufacturing employment.¹² An industrial exhibition was part of the festivities surrounding Leopold II's coronation as king of Bohemia in 1791.

Though manufacturing developed, the Bohemian economy remained overwhelmingly agricultural. Reliance upon *robota* labor limited the lords' ability to innovate or increase production, while the peasants were hampered by the relative scarcity of cash and land (in the 1780s better than two-fifths of all the agricultural land was dominical). The hated *robota* limited the effect of changes such as adopting crop rotation, introducing new industrial plants, different food crops, and fodder crops to allow stall-feeding of livestock. These gradual changes were in part driven by the rising population, which increased over the eighteenth century from between 1.6 to 1.8 million for Bohemia proper to 2,580,000 (4,150,000 for all the Bohemian crownlands).¹³

Maria Theresa supported some attempts at state intervention in the landlord-peasant relationship.¹⁴ By 1748 a new survey of the rustical land was completed, and reissued in revised form in 1756. The state's financial needs placed a heavy burden on the peasantry, with taxation demanding up to 42 percent of their gross production. Only increasing agricultural productivity and a rising population, so the prevailing mercantilist and populationist logic ran, could possibly improve this picture. Following the revised cadastral survey, the state tried to improve the legal situation of the peasant, and especially to intervene if the landlord grossly mistreated his subjects or illegally transferred their land to his demesne (thereby removing it from taxation).

In 1771 Bohemia suffered its last great famine, during which as many as half a million people, approximately 12 percent of the total population, died. Emperor Joseph II personally investigated conditions in Bohemia during 1771–72, and returned to Vienna horrified by what he had learned. In 1771, a new *robota* patent was issued for Silesia, and an urban commission in Bohemia began work on distributing the state's demands more equitably between subjects and landlords. The lords' delaying tactics were interrupted in 1775 by the greatest peasant rebellion in the Bohemian crownlands in the eighteenth century.

Early in 1775, the Bohemian peasantry responded to rumors that the lords were purposely keeping secret a "golden patent"—freeing them from *robota*—with a spreading wave of strikes and forced reduction of *robota* demands. On March 20, 1775, a large band of peasants set off

from near Trutnov (Trautenau) in northeastern Bohemia toward Prague, while other bands of insurgents headed into the interior, or along the mountain foothills seeking support. Although the peasant columns were dispersed in a series of skirmishes with the army between March 24 and 28, recurrent local disturbances continued through the summer.¹⁵ Several hundred rebels were arrested, but the government declared an amnesty after a few exemplary executions.

The uprising removed the lords' resistance, and the government quickly finished and promulgated a new *robot* patent for the Bohemian crownlands, on August 13 in Bohemia and September 7 in Moravia. Maria Theresa's patent of 1775 provided only a partial solution: it fixed *robot* obligations based on the peasants' tax assessment and established a system of eleven grades of *robot* workers with different obligations, but to the peasant it did not go nearly far enough. Neither did the concept of "Raabization," Hofrat Franz Anton von Raab's plan to divide dominical land among the peasants, in return for cash payments in place of their *robot* obligation. Raabization was carried out on the crown's former Jesuit estates in 1773, and later on other crown and town lands in Bohemia. Maria Theresa never made Raabization compulsory, however, and few noble landlords were willing to imitate it.

Maria Theresa's government, advised by Johann Andreas Felbiger, introduced important reforms of elementary education. The General School Ordinance of 1774 created three basic types of schools: the trivial schools, one-year elementary schools with compulsory attendance teaching reading, writing, and arithmetic—the "trivium" of the traditional seven arts—in every parish seat; the main schools in every district town, which added history, geometry, drawing, further German language, and some vocational training; and the model, "normal" school in the capital of each crownland, providing the terminal education for middle-class youth as well as training a body of teachers for the rest of the system. In Bohemia the director of Maria Theresa's school policies was Ferdinand Kindermann, who had already introduced education reforms in southern Bohemia. Kindermann's greatest experiment was the industrial school, where vocational education predominated over academic subjects.

After the dissolution of the Jesuits in 1773 other teaching orders, notably the Piarists, took over their schools. At the universities the state established the content of lectures and textbooks, and appointed the heads of faculties, choosing supporters of Enlightenment ideals in educa-

tion. Maria Theresa established several new specialized professional institutions, including the Theresianum in Vienna, set up in 1749 as a training school for higher administrators, the military academy in Wiener Neustadt (1752), the Oriental Academy in Vienna (1754), and the Commercial Academy (1770). These schools were not, however, dedicated to learning for its own sake, but to preparing professionally trained servants of the state.

Maria Theresa wanted to preserve and extend state control over church administration, though she left the church's internal organization alone. Mercantilist thought emphasized preserving bullion reserves, so state oversight over church finances had to be extended. Populationist concern for the birthrate and productive employment of the population frowned on the diversion of workers into monasteries and religious orders. Thus, the government forbade the acquisition of new landholdings by the church without state approval, limited the number of religious holidays, and restricted recruitment to monastic orders.

Nevertheless, Maria Theresa remained a devout, not to say bigoted, daughter of the church. While many of her fellow monarchs in Catholic Europe abolished the Jesuit order, she supported it until the pope himself suppressed the Jesuits. Several times during her reign she renewed measures against non-Catholics (especially patents from 1748, 1754, and 1764). Using the excuse of their supposed disloyalty during the Franco-Bavarian occupation of Prague in 1741–42, Maria Theresa ordered the expulsion of Prague's 20,000 Jews in 1745. Even though the Prague magistrates and the Bohemian Estates protested, Maria Theresa not only stuck by her decree but widened it to include all the Jews in Bohemia and the major towns of Moravia. Only after two years of sabotage of her orders by local authorities and protests from various quarters did Maria Theresa relent, and even then she imposed heavy "voluntary" payments on the Jews in return.¹⁶ By the end of her reign, Maria Theresa was in frequent conflict with some of her most significant advisers on the question of religious toleration.

Joseph II and Enlightened Absolutism

Maria Theresa's death on November 29, 1780, changed the tempo and the general atmosphere surrounding reform. Joseph II's approach was characterized by centralism and rationalism, and by a deep and fundamental utilitarianism. It was also definitely a transformation from

above. If the emperor was the “first servant of the state” under Joseph, power ultimately rested in the first servant’s hands. The Josephinist tradition in Austria remained visible long after his death in a belief in a centralized, well-administered state with a common German culture. Later attempts to make Joseph II either a nineteenth-century anticlerical liberal or a German nationalist were mistaken. What is unmistakable, however, is that Joseph II left a deep and indelible imprint on his possessions, including the Bohemian crownlands.¹⁷

In religious matters, Joseph promulgated on October 13, 1781, a patent granting toleration to Lutherans and Calvinists, as well as regulating the status of Orthodox Christians. Czech non-Catholics (some 50,000 registered) could not follow the faith of the Brethren or the Czech Confession of 1575; they had to opt for either the Augsburg or the Helvetian confessions. Joseph also reduced the restrictions on the Jews, opening trades to them, allowing them to live outside the ghetto, and removing the demand that they wear distinctive clothing. Joseph’s aim was not only economic advantage but also the equality of all subjects. The Josephine state viewed its people as citizens whose conscience was not the state’s concern as long as they behaved properly and contributed to the public welfare.

Joseph strengthened the state’s role in church administration through a commission at court for spiritual affairs. The state established general seminaries, one in each crownland, to educate the clergy. Joseph also abolished all monasteries that did not fulfill social charitable functions. In the Bohemian crownlands more than one third of the monasteries were dissolved, including several with ancient traditions (St. George’s Benedictine convent in the Prague castle, the Benedictine monastery at Břevnov, the Cistercian foundation at Zbraslav, and many more). Their property went into a religious fund that was used to nearly double the number of parishes, whose boundaries were rationalized. The priests also had to keep more accurate records. Joseph dissolved a number of churches and chapels, whose buildings were converted to secular uses, and reduced the number of church holidays, feasts, and pilgrimages.

Joseph II continued his mother’s administrative policies, maintaining the United Chancellery in Vienna. He also took more direct steps to remove the Estates’ participation in the administration. In 1783 the land committees were abolished, and their remaining functions transferred to the state. Henceforth the Estates had only the right to elect two deputies from a list of six government nominees to sit in the *gubernia*. The land

courts were also integrated into the state justice system. Joseph II even began to appoint state bureaucrats to the traditional land offices instead of members of the noble estates. As though to symbolize his vision of a unified, centralized empire, Joseph II refused to be crowned king of Bohemia.

Joseph II challenged the noble interests most directly in his reforms of the landlord-peasant relationship. His patent of November 1, 1781, abolished serfdom in the empire and substituted for it a state of “moderate subjection.” From now on, all peasants, dominical and rustical alike, had the right to marry without their lord’s permission, to move where they liked under certain limited restrictions, and to send their children to learn a trade or study. The economic obligations of the peasant to the landlord, however, were not removed. *Robotas*, payments in kind, and cash rents were still regulated according to the Theresian patent of 1775.

Joseph II proposed to transform this situation in his most far-reaching reform. New cadastral surveys between 1785 and 1789 prepared the way for a reapportionment of the tax burden, to make the lords bear a larger share. The peasant was to retain 70 percent of the gross output of his holding for his own consumption and local, school, and church payments. Of the remaining 30 percent, the state was to receive 13 percent, leaving 17 percent for cash payments to the landlord in lieu of *robotas* labor and other obligations. These reforms ran into stiff resistance from the lords, and uncomprehending opposition from the peasants. In the military and economic crisis toward the end of his reign, the threat of outright rebellion forced Joseph to rescind most of his reforms, except for the edict of toleration, the abolition of serfdom, and the monastic legislation. The emperor’s brother Leopold succeeded him in 1790.

REVOLUTION, THE FRENCH WARS, AND REACTION (1790–1815)

Leopold II (1790–1792) had shown an interest in enlightened reform as Grand Duke of Tuscany, but his major task now was to contain the upheaval threatening his realm. To do so required tactical re-

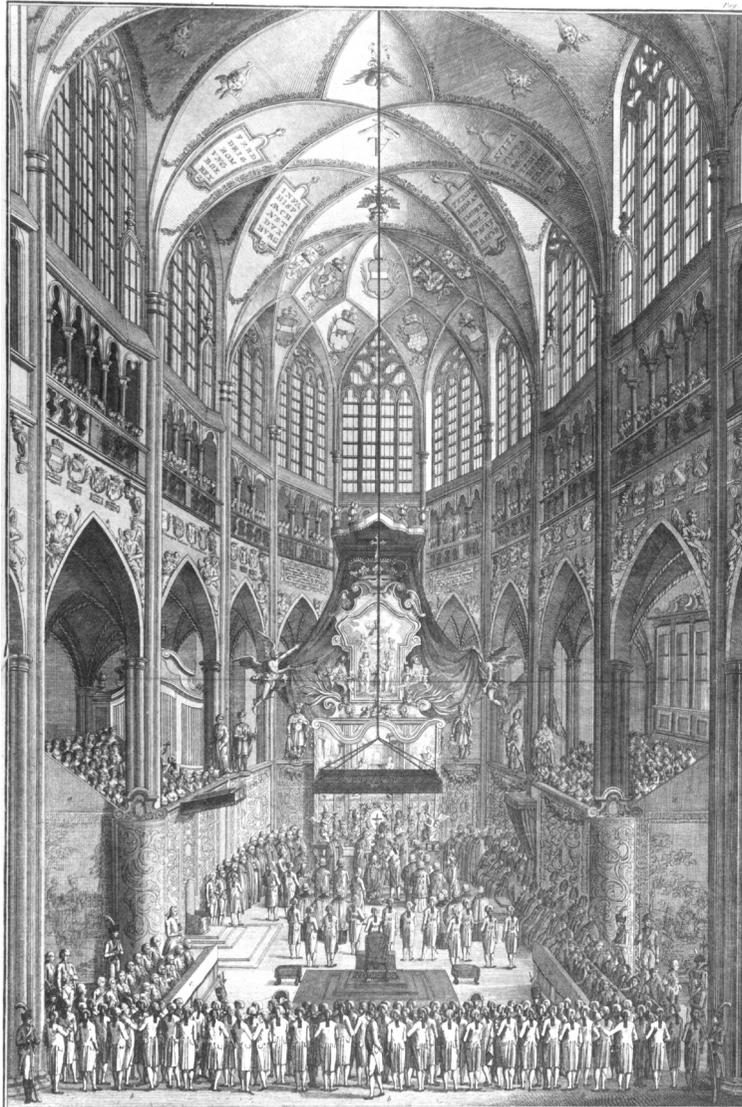
treats in domestic policies. Tragically, Leopold died after only two years, leaving open the question whether his initial retreat would have been followed by somewhat more tactfully pursued reforms. Certainly his son Francis II (1792–1835) did not further the changes Joseph began. Incapable of perceiving the French Revolution as an expression of social and political pressures that could have been treated by astute reforms, Francis saw it as mere anarchy and terror unleashed by conspiratorial elements. After his accession, a reactionary mood dominated in Austria.

Leopold II: Compromise with Resistance

As a first step, Leopold convoked the diets of all his possessions in 1790, and invited them to submit their complaints and requests to him.¹⁸ None of the Estates of the Bohemian crownlands challenged the existence of the United Bohemian-Austrian Chancellery, though they called for a return to Estates government within each land. In addition, the Silesian Estates requested administrative separation from Moravia. The Estates of Bohemia called for the land offices to be filled in consultation with the Estates, and for the Viennese official responsible for Bohemian affairs to be a noble with Bohemian citizenship. Interestingly, the language in which the Estates phrased their requests reflected Enlightenment political thought, presenting them as the representatives of the nation, with whom the ruler concluded a social contract.

Leopold limited his concessions to the Estates. Instead of concluding a new contract with the “nation” he reverted to the situation of 1764. He also filled several long-empty traditional offices, agreed to renew the land committees for Bohemia and Moravia, give them control of the domestic fund, and consult the Estates diet in all customary matters. In a brilliant symbolic move, Leopold staged a festive coronation as king of Bohemia on September 6, 1791, having earlier ceremonially transferred the crown from Vienna back to Prague. The coronation, coming nearly half a century after Maria Theresa’s, was accompanied by public celebrations, including several that reflected increasing interest in the Czech language.¹⁹ Prospects for further reform, however, ended with Leopold’s premature death on March 2, 1792. The challenge of revolutionary and Napoleonic France dominated government policy thereafter.

In foreign affairs, Leopold laid the foundation for meeting this challenge by achieving a rapprochement with Prussia and ending the war with Turkey. In August 1791, he met the Prussian king Frederick Wil-



Kronung
Seiner Majestät des Königs von Böhmen Leopold des Zweiten.

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|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Seine Majestät der König | 11. 4. Oberkämmerer | 17. Erbkämmerer | 23. Kammerherr des Kaiserlichen |
| 2. Erbkämmerer des Königs | 12. Kammerherr des Kaiserlichen | 18. Erbkämmerer | 24. Oberkämmerer |
| 3. Erbkämmerer des Königs | 13. Kammerherr des Kaiserlichen | 19. Erbkämmerer | 25. Oberkämmerer |
| 4. Erbkämmerer des Königs | 14. Kammerherr des Kaiserlichen | 20. Erbkämmerer | 26. Oberkämmerer |
| 5. Oberkämmerer | 15. Kammerherr des Kaiserlichen | 21. Erbkämmerer | 27. Oberkämmerer |
| 6. Oberkämmerer | 16. Kammerherr des Kaiserlichen | 22. Erbkämmerer | 28. Oberkämmerer |
| 7. Oberkämmerer | 17. Kammerherr des Kaiserlichen | 23. Erbkämmerer | 29. Oberkämmerer |
| 8. Oberkämmerer | 18. Kammerherr des Kaiserlichen | 24. Erbkämmerer | 30. Oberkämmerer |
| 9. Oberkämmerer | 19. Kammerherr des Kaiserlichen | 25. Erbkämmerer | 31. Oberkämmerer |
| 10. Oberkämmerer | 20. Kammerherr des Kaiserlichen | 26. Erbkämmerer | 32. Oberkämmerer |

Coronation of Leopold II in Prague's St. Vitus's Cathedral, part of his successful policy of pacifying the Estates of his possessions. (Courtesy of the State Central Archive of the Czech Republic, Prague)

liam II at Pillnitz in Saxony, where they issued a declaration warning the French assembly of the concern of the European powers. The Declaration of Pillnitz was followed on February 7, 1792, by a treaty of alliance between the Habsburg monarchy and Prussia. Shortly afterward, Leopold II died. Under Francis, Habsburg policy became more openly anti-revolutionary, until on April 20, 1792, the French Constituent Assembly declared war on “the king of Bohemia and Hungary” (Francis did not become Holy Roman Emperor until July 1792).

Francis and the French Wars

The conflict that began with the First Coalition War lasted until 1815. Under Francis, the Habsburg monarchy took part in the first three anti-French coalitions, in 1792–97, 1799–1801, and again in 1805. The Bohemian crownlands were not a direct theater of conflict in the First Coalition War, which failed to prevent the execution of Louis XIV, reduced to “Citizen Capet,” on January 21, 1793. Austria’s armies fought the French with limited success, as their Prussian ally concluded a second partition of Poland with Russia, leaving the Habsburg monarchy entirely without compensation. The Polish reaction, a national uprising under Tadeusz Kościuszko, was crushed in the third partition in 1795. The Habsburgs received additional territory, but they had to accept Prussia’s desertion of the coalition. While Habsburg armies retreated along the Rhine, a rising star in the French military firmament, Napoleon Bonaparte, defeated them in Italy. The Treaty of Campo Formio (1797) ended the First Coalition War.

Russia and Britain immediately drew Austria into the Second Coalition, and during the winter of 1798–99, Russian armies crossed the Bohemian crownlands on their way to northern Italy. War began with a French declaration on May 19, 1799, but after initial successes the Russian armies abruptly withdrew (crossing Bohemia again in the winter of 1799–1800). The Russian armies in the Bohemian crownlands provoked interest, especially among the Czechs, who recognized the Russians as fellow Slavs. Without allies, however, the Austrians were crushed in Italy and forced to sign the treaty of Lunéville on February 9, 1801.

Napoleon’s coronation as Emperor of the French in May 1804 symbolized on the one hand the definitive close of the revolutionary phase of the French wars. On the other hand, it spelled the end of the ancient Holy Roman Empire, whose title had been in Habsburg hands since the

fifteenth century. If it disappeared, Francis would be merely King of Hungary and Bohemia, while the upstart Corsican took precedence. He therefore assumed the title of Emperor of Austria (as Francis I) on August 11, 1804. The proclamation explicitly assured his possessions of the undisturbed continuity of all their titles, dignities, and constitutional privileges, but it further weakened the status of the Bohemian crownlands and strengthened centralism.

Within a year the new Emperor of Austria was at war again with the Emperor of the French. In the Third Coalition War, Napoleon occupied Vienna in November 1805, and then defeated the combined Russian and Austrian armies near the village of Slavkov (Austerlitz) outside Brno, on December 2, 1805. The Treaty of Pressburg on December 26, 1805, forced Austria to accept French hegemony in Italy and along the Rhine. Francis I formally resigned the title of Holy Roman Emperor on August 6, 1806. That autumn Napoleon crushed Prussia so thoroughly that it disappeared as a European power, and by the Treaty of Tilsit of 1807 he aligned a reluctant Russia with his European system, proclaimed in Berlin in December 1806. This Continental System created a European economic union that completely excluded Great Britain, while subordinating the economies of Napoleon's European allies to France.

When an anti-French guerrilla insurgency broke out in Spain in 1809, the Austrian government decided (with British encouragement) to renew hostilities. This time, influenced by German refugees in Bohemia, the state attempted to stir up German national feeling and appeal to the traditional provincial identities of its subjects, including the Hussite military traditions in the Bohemian crownlands. After some initial successes, the Austrians were decisively defeated at Wagram. The peace treaty of Schönbrunn (October 14, 1809) confirmed Austria's subordination to France, and the new chief of Austria's diplomacy, Count (later Prince) Klemens Wenzel Metternich, negotiated a marriage alliance with Napoleon, who divorced his first wife and married Francis's daughter, Marie Louise.

The opportunity to break away from French domination came with Napoleon's ill-fated invasion of Russia in 1812. Austrian forces accompanied their French ally, but avoided conflict with the Russians. When Napoleon's expedition ended in disaster, Austria concluded a truce with the Russians and after some hesitation joined with Great Britain, Russia, and Prussia against the French in the "Battle of the Nations" at Leipzig on October 16–19, 1813. The coalition armies entered Paris as Napo-

leon abdicated in April 1814, and from September 14, 1814, to June 19, 1815, they met in Vienna to forge a peace. Their guiding principles were to restore Europe's political conditions before 1792 (if possible), to restore the powers of "legitimate" ruling dynasties (in particular the Bourbons in France), and to preserve this restored order from the threat of renewed revolution. In spite of disagreements, the four powers were united enough to respond to Napoleon's escape from Elba and his return to France. Napoleon's "Hundred Days" shook Europe, but the last hurrah ended in one of the fiercest battles of the wars near the Belgian village of Waterloo, on June 18, 1815.

Meanwhile, the Congress of Vienna's final agreements, signed on June 8 and 9, 1815, confirmed that Austria would regain its lost territory, and added Lombardy and Venetia in Italy in return for Austria's surrender of the Belgian provinces to the new Kingdom of the Netherlands. Austria also received back its share of the first Polish partition. With the exception of Cracow, supposedly a free city under four-power guarantee, the rest went to the newly created Kingdom of Poland attached to the Russian crown. Rather than attempt to revive the Holy Roman Empire, the Congress of Vienna replaced it with a German Confederation, linking thirty-five sovereign territories (far fewer than the old empire) with four self-governing cities. The presidency of this confederation was vested in the Austrian Empire. Prussia and Austria eventually agreed that Bohemia, Moravia, and both Austrian and Prussian Silesia would enter the confederation.

Francis I's government after the Congress of Vienna retained features that it had assumed during the struggle with France. The freer cultural atmosphere connected with the Enlightenment was long a thing of the past. Censorship regulations were strengthened after 1789, and Leopold II further developed Joseph's police system, using informers and provocateurs to undermine aristocratic opposition. A supposed Jacobin conspiracy uncovered in 1794 seems to have had its origins in such tactics against Hungarian opposition.²⁰ Although the public generally reacted negatively to the revolution, the authorities in the Bohemian crownlands carefully followed the opinions of the population and severely limited what could be published. The resulting stultification of cultural life continued beyond Francis's reign. Although these conditions stamped some specific features on the emerging modern Czech nation and national culture, they did not halt the process, which had its origins in the preceding decades.

BEGINNINGS OF THE CZECH NATIONAL RENASCENCE

In Czech historiography, the emergence of the modern Czech nation and national culture is called the Czech national renaissance, usually describing the development of Czech language and literature up to the revolution of 1848.²¹ Such a renewal is not unique to the Czechs: the Czech national renaissance is one of many similar movements in Europe, and shares common features with them.²² Nor did the movement emerge out of nowhere, though contemporaries did speak of their national “re-birth” or even “resurrection.” The immediate origins of the renaissance lie in the economic, demographic, cultural, and political changes in the Habsburg monarchy during the second half of the eighteenth century, in particular the impact of the Enlightenment and the reform program of enlightened absolutism.

Enlightenment concepts of the theater influenced Count Franz Anton Nostitz-Rieneck to establish a theater in Prague specifically for the performance of serious works by German playwrights, as well as Italian operas. The new theater, a true gem of classicist architecture, was built from 1781 to 1783 directly beside the oldest part of the university, still symbolizing the Jesuit education against which the Enlightenment set itself. If theater was to enlighten the people, some attention would have to be paid to the people who did not speak German. The center of Czech-language theater in this period was the Patriotic Theater, which was established in 1786 in a temporary wooden structure on the Horse Market (today’s Wenceslas Square) in Prague’s New Town. Czech translators and authors such as Karel Hynek Thám and Prokop Šedivý provided the Czech-reading public with statements of the Enlightenment understanding of the didactic role of the stage, which persisted long into the next century.

The size of the reading public and distribution of reading material in the Bohemian crownlands also grew. Books were published in Latin, German, and Czech, though the production of Czech reading material lagged far behind in both genres and quality. Many publishing houses became centers of literary life, and associations formed around them. The most significant such circle for the Czech-speaking public was the *Česká expedice* (Czech Expedition), created by the journalist Václav Matěj Kramerius to publish Czech-language material.

In 1781, Joseph II liberalized censorship, unleashing a veritable explosion of publication, but with the outbreak of the French Revolution the trend reversed. In the Bohemian crownlands the government was particularly worried about newspapers, both German and Czech, though the Czech-language press received special attention. In 1798 a court decree made it illegal to place uncensored newspapers in coffeehouses or pubs. In spite of the cooler atmosphere, the circulation of the main newspapers published in Prague in Czech and German continued to rise through the last decades of the eighteenth century.²³

The development of a reading culture also expressed itself in the organization of learned societies, including short-lived private examples in the Bohemian crownlands (the Olomouc Societas Incognitorum, 1747, Prague's Learned Club, 1772). A private Society for the Development of Mathematics, Patriotic History, and Natural History in Bohemia formed in Prague around 1772, and issued six volumes of its proceedings between 1775 and 1784. Finally it transformed itself into the Bohemian Society of Sciences, eventually adding the adjective "Royal."²⁴

In the Masonic lodge noble and non-noble could associate as social equals. The first Masonic lodges in Prague were established around 1742 with the help of French officers then occupying the Bohemian capital. As a result, under Maria Theresa the masons suffered from official suspicion, yet by the 1770s there were already three lodges in Prague, pursuing charitable and intellectual activities. Government concerns about the Freemasons increased under Francis to such levels that in 1794 the Masonic lodges in Prague and Brno voluntarily suspended their activities. Former masons still participated in unofficial circles, and many of the people implicated in the "Jacobin conspiracy" of 1794 were or had been Freemasons.²⁵

Aristocrats' involvement in intellectual and cultural life and their support of non-noble scholars linked cultural developments in Bohemia to the aristocratic resistance to government reforms. For these nobles, the word "nation" still referred to the social corporation granted political rights, the nobility. Belonging to this corporation did not depend on language. The Enlightenment also saw patriotism as loyalty to the land where one lived, held property, and undertook what activities one chose. Thus the term "territorial patriotism" is commonly used to describe noble attitudes in the Bohemian crownlands. The aristocracy—even descendants of families that arrived after the White Mountain—naturally

turned to traditions of the separate existence of the Bohemian crownlands to defend their prerogatives. They patronized Czech history and saw the Czech language as a symbol of the separate traditions of the Czech kingdom, if not a means of communication. The Czech national renaissance drew on these elements of reaction to the reforms of Maria Theresa and Joseph II, but the reforms also stimulated it.²⁶

The acceptance of critical principles by most historians in the Royal Bohemian Society of Sciences—Josef Dobrovský was the most rigorous of them—ensured the dominance of the new trends. The specific aspects of Czech history they studied reinforced the historical separateness and unique traditions of Bohemia, which pleased the nobility. Count Franz Joseph Kinský's comment that "if the mother tongue of a Frenchman is French and of a German, German, then the mother tongue of a Czech must be Czech," reflected the symbolic value of the Czech language.²⁷ Patriots challenged the nobility to prove their love of their homeland through supporting Czech.²⁸ At the same time, philologists were shaping modern literary Czech. Leopold II approved the creation of a chair of Czech language and literature at the Prague university in 1791. Literary history drew on historical and philological interests to demonstrate that Czech had once been a language of high culture. Czech works from the later fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, published in new editions, provided models for the patriots attempting to write in Czech. They helped reinforce the classicist approach to Czech and the myth of a previous "golden age." Some patriots also experimented with journalism, drama, and poetry, laying the groundwork for nineteenth-century Czech culture and its characteristic "linguocentrism."²⁹

Other patriots concentrated on the common people. Enlightened reforms tried to improve the social, economic, and cultural condition of the countryside. Many writers and publicists involved in these tasks also tried to heighten the Czech consciousness of the people and improve the Czech language in everyday use.³⁰ By involving the common people, they began redefining the meaning of nation. Because language determined who belonged to the nation, and because the upper classes refused to adopt the Czech language, the importance of those who actually did speak Czech increased. Eventually the concept of nation would include all Czech speakers. Even though the school system assumed that pupils would learn German, enlightened absolutism led to a greater use and awareness of Czech. And in its efforts to rally popular support against the French, the government used Czech history, even the Hussite tradi-

tion—at least in its military aspects—to drum up support for the land militia. In these and other ways, through newspapers, market broadsheets, plays, odes, and festivals, some of the traditions that would be adapted to Czech nationalism were revived and spread among the broader masses.

This early phase of the national renaissance also reflected a Czech awareness of the wider Slavic world. Yet Slavism was almost always subordinate to specifically Czech aims. The Napoleonic wars exposed many Czechs directly to the Russians, and interest in this Slavic ally among intellectuals and the urban classes was common, but Russophilism was limited to some younger intellectuals. This younger generation came to the fore as the French wars drew to a close. Under conditions of Francis's police absolutism, these younger patriots would push the national renaissance into a new phase, in which active patriotic agitation replaced scholarly investigation of the language, customs, and history of the nation.