"Each nation only cares for its own": Empire, Nation, and Child Welfare Activism in the Bohemian Lands, 1900–1918

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In the fall of 1917, Franziszka Pollabrek, a Czech-speaking factory worker, was at her wits' end. In a scathing letter to the Austrian Ministry of Education in Vienna, she demanded that the state do something about her incorrigible teenage sons. Pollabrek expressed her frustration with the state's inaction in the face of what she perceived to be a disturbing wartime social crisis: "My boys will become nothing but thieves, liars, and murderers if you, dear Sirs, don't intervene soon," she warned. "The fathers are in the military, the male teachers are mobilized, and I work in the factory. You want to do nothing, so where should I begin? Since you have taken away their father, why don't you take the children as well, let the boys be locked up or shot, so that I don't have to see them anymore."[1]

Pollabrek was not alone. Across Europe, citizens depicted the upheaval of World War I through stories of broken families, absent fathers, negligent mothers, and delinquent children, and they demanded action from the state.[2] In the Bohemian lands (the Austrian crownlands of Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia), German and Czech nationalist child welfare activists took the initiative in responding to these demands. As a nationally segregated child welfare system developed and expanded in this region between 1900 and 1945, nationalist social welfare activists created and transformed imagined boundaries between public and private, as well as relationships between state and nation in the context of a multinational empire.[3]

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[1] Z. 8.500, Vienna, October 15, 1917, Carton 2483, Jugendfürsorge, Ministerium für soziale Verwaltung [hereafter MfSV], Allgemeines Verwaltungsarchiv [hereafter AVA], Österreichisches Staatsarchiv [hereafter ÖSTA]. All translations are mine unless otherwise noted.

[2] For examples of similar demands, see Stimmung und wirtschaftliche Lage der österreichischen Bevölkerung im Hinterland, Carton 3751, Armeeoberkommando [hereafter AOK], Kriegsarchiv [hereafter KA], ÖSTA. On Austria, see Maureen Healy, *Vienna and the Fall of the Habsburg Empire: Total War and Everyday Life in World War I* (New York, 2004), 211–300. On Germany, see Edward Ross Dickinson, *The Politics of German Child Welfare from the Empire to the Federal Republic* (Cambridge, Mass., 1996), 113–118; David F. Crew, *Germans on Welfare: From Weimar to Hitler* (New York, 1998); Young-Sun Hong, *Welfare, Modernity, and the Weimar State, 1919–1933* (Princeton, N.J., 1998); Richard Bessel, *Germany after the First World War* (Oxford, 1993); Elizabeth Harvey, *Youth and the Welfare State in the Weimar Republic* (Oxford, 1994).

[3] For a discussion of the uses of the public/private divide in gender history and historiography, see

By the late nineteenth century, middle-class Czech and German nationalists, concerned about the alleged "denationalization" of children in bilingual regions, had already begun to compete for the national loyalties of the next generation. Suspecting that many parents were indifferent to nationalism, they attempted to penetrate the family and to socialize children directly, through schools and child welfare activism. By 1900, local nationalist voluntary associations had established a vast network of private, nationally segregated nurseries, kindergartens, maternal and infant health clinics, summer camps, and soup kitchens, through the private Czech and German Provincial Commissions for Child Protection and Youth Welfare (Deutsche Landesstelle für Kinderschutz und Jugendfürsorge [hereafter DLS] and Česká zemská komise pro ochranu dětí a péči o mládež [hereafter ČZK]), founded in 1907.[4] During the First World War, the supranational Austrian state turned specifically to these private commissions to build and manage an ambitious new Ministry for Social Welfare (k.k. Ministerium für soziale Fürsorge) in 1917–1918. As the acknowledged pioneers in the realm of child welfare, nationalist activists easily claimed the scientific expertise, infrastructure, and popular legitimacy necessary to provide for Bohemian and Moravian children. By harnessing an existing private nationalist child welfare system to the Austrian state, the new ministry hoped to repair the war-damaged bodies and morale of Austrian citizens, and to boost the state's own flagging legitimacy during the Russian Revolution.

The history of child welfare in the Bohemian lands may seem at first glance to represent a marginal tale even within East Central Europe. In actuality, however, it is illuminating both for what it teaches us about the specificities of the relationship between state, nation, and family in the multilingual and multinational Habsburg Empire, and for what it reveals about wartime welfare-state formation in Europe more generally. The story provides a fresh perspective on the particular dynamics of welfare-state formation and revolution in the context of a multinational empire. It sheds light on how and why nationalists gained legitimacy and influence within the structure of an avowedly supranational imperial state. Historians of Central and Eastern Europe have traditionally seen nationalism as an explosive force that was directed against the Austrian Empire. In fact, however, far from working against the state, German and Czech nationalist activists dramatically expanded their influence over children and families during the First World War, by serving as the imperial state's own trusted agents.[5]

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the forum "Women's History in the New Millennium: Rethinking Public and Private," *Journal of Women's History* 15, no. 1 (2003): 11–69.

[4] The first major state welfare initiatives in Habsburg Austria took effect in the 1880s, when a conservative coalition of provincial landowners, social Catholics, and Czech and Polish nationalists led by Count Eduard Taaffe (the so-called Iron Ring) introduced several major reforms targeting industrial workers, including protective legislation that restricted working hours for women and children in 1884 and the creation of health and accident insurance in 1888. William A. Jenks, *Austria under the Iron Ring, 1879–1893* (Charlottesville, Va., 1965), 179–220; see also Margarete Grandner, "Special Labor Protection for Women in Austria, 1860–1918," in Ulla Wikander, Alice Kessler-Harris, and Jane Lewis, eds., *Protecting Women: Labor Legislation in Europe, the United States, and Australia, 1880–1920* (Chicago, 1995), 150–187.

[5] John W. Boyer has recently argued that the Austrian state imploded during the war, suggesting that nations did not destroy the state but that the state destroyed itself, "releasing the individual nations from its orbit." I would like to suggest, in contrast, that the Habsburg state attempted to *draw* the nations

In addition, the history of the wartime welfare state in the Bohemian lands suggests new ways of thinking more broadly about relationships between welfare activism, the state, and the family in Europe. While the nationalist inspiration for and structure of child welfare in East Central Europe were peculiar, the expansion of state obligations toward children during World War I was typical across Europe, as was the development of new state welfare programs out of private and local projects. Historians have often characterized those developments as new and troubling forms of state interference in the previously apolitical and private realm of the family. These critiques rest on a romanticized and ahistorical view of the family as a harmonious, autonomous unit, best protected from outside intervention. To the contrary, however, childhood in Europe was politicized well before World War I, such politicization often had beneficial consequences for children, and new state welfare programs were often built from the ground up as the state explicitly sought to improve its own popular legitimacy.

THE CASE OF THE BOHEMIAN LANDS is instructive for historians of East Central Europe precisely because German and Czech nationalist welfare activists and social workers were in the vanguard of a broader movement toward the establishment of a nationally divided social welfare system throughout Habsburg Central Europe. Thanks to the competitive activism of nationalists, child welfare and social work was actually far more developed in the Bohemian lands by the eve of World War I than in any other part of the Dual Monarchy, including urban Vienna and Budapest.[6] There is surprisingly little published research on the development of social welfare in other parts of East Central Europe before the war. It is clear, however, that German, Czech, Polish, Slovene, Romanian, Slovak, and Italian nationalists were also obsessed with preventing the "denationalization" of children in late Habsburg Austria. These concerns formed the basis for nationalist intervention in the family through child welfare activism. By 1916, nationalist social welfare activists had therefore demanded nationally segregated guardianship councils, which appointed guardians for orphans and children born out of wedlock, in cities such as Graz (Styria), Ljubljana/Laibach (Krain), and Cracow (Galicia) and in Austrian Silesia, all following the early

into its orbit in its final years, at least in the realm of social welfare. See Boyer, "Silent War and Bitter Peace: The Revolution of 1918 in Austria," *Austrian History Yearbook* 35 (2003): 12. For other work that emphasizes the state's own role in exacerbating nationalism during the war (negatively), see Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century* (New York, 1999), 46; Mark Cornwall, "The Dissolution of Austria-Hungary," in Cornwall, ed., *The Last Years of Austria-Hungary: A Multi-National Experiment in Early Twentieth-Century Europe* (Exeter, 2002). For less negative assessments of how nationalism developed within a framework authorized by the Austrian state, see Jeremy King, *Budweisers into Czechs and Germans: A Local History of Bohemian Politics, 1848–1948* (Princeton, N.J., 2002), 114–153; Gerald Stourzh, *Die Gleichberechtigung der Nationalitäten in der Verfassung und Verwaltung Österreichs, 1848–1918* (Vienna, 1985).

[6] For example, in 1914, there were 95 professional social workers in Bohemia with 2,510 charges, while in Moravia 54 social workers supervised 3,599 children. Most of these social workers were employees of the ČZK or DLS, which set up frequent professionalization courses to recruit and train them. Lower Austria, which included urban Vienna, lagged far behind, with only 17 social workers overseeing 933 children in 1914. Generalvormundschaft, Carton 433, Justizministerium, Sig. I, AVA, ÖSTA.

example of the Bohemian lands.[7] In 1917, the government officially adopted the "successful" system established in the Bohemian lands, whereby each nation managed its own public social welfare institutions, as the model for an expanding public child welfare system in all multilingual regions of Habsburg Austria, including Galicia, Bukovina, southern Styria, and Silesia. In each of these regions, government officials in the new Ministry for Social Welfare planned to create nationally segregated city and regional youth welfare offices, guardian councils, and provincial commissions to care for the physical and moral welfare of the empire's children and youth.[8]

Welfare activism naturally developed differently in other regions of Eastern Europe. For example, although Hungary included significant Slovak-speaking, Croat-speaking, and Romanian-speaking minorities, it was governed more like a nation-state after the Austro-Hungarian Compromise (*Ausgleich*) of 1867. Whereas German and Czech nationalist child welfare activists competed with their national "enemies" to expand their numbers and improve the nation's physical and moral health, the liberal Hungarian state limited itself to providing sparse, short-term poor relief to the neediest children. In more linguistically homogeneous regions of Austria, such as Vienna, a combination of municipal or provincial authorities and private religious charities generally stood at the forefront of child welfare movements, which were driven by sharp conflicts between Socialist and religious activists rather than by nationalist priorities.[9]

In 1917, the new Austrian Ministry for Social Welfare created a Youth Council (Jugendbeirat), charged with developing a new centralized imperial policy on youth welfare. It was designed with the explicit goal of facilitating national representation, and included Czech, Polish, Italian, Croat, and Jewish delegates, many of whom represented private nationalist social welfare institutions in their respective crownlands.[10] In one of the council's first and only official sessions, Jona Kimmel, a Jewish social welfare activist from Galicia, requested state funding for Jewish kindergartens and welfare organizations, in anticipation of the general national division of educational and social institutions across Habsburg Central Europe. Kimmel suggested that Jewish commissions for social welfare be erected next to those of other nationalities in all mixed-language regions of Austria, especially Galicia and Bukovina, explaining, "Considering the fact that public life in Austria will certainly sooner or later be oriented according to purely national perspectives, I consider it a given that

[7] Note des Ministerium des Innerns, betreffend die Generalvormundschaft und Gutachten über denselben Entwurf, Z. 13739, April 20, 1916, Generalvormundschaft, Carton 433, Justizministerium, Sig. I, AVA, ÖSTA.

[8] On Silesia, see Z. 14915, June 16, 1918, k.k. Landesregierung in Troppau, Carton 2477, Jugendfürsorge 1918, MfSV, Archiv der Republik [hereafter AdR], ÖSTA. On plans for the national segregation of welfare institutions in other crownlands of the monarchy, see Skizze zu Richtlinien für ein Gesetz über die öffentliche Erziehung, November 1, 1917, Carton 43, Präsidium 1917, MfSV, AdR, ÖSTA.

[9] Susan Zimmermann, *Prächtige Armut: Fürsorge, Kinderschutz und Sozialreform in Budapest—Das "sozialpolitische Laboratorium" der Doppelmonarchie im Vergleich zu Wien, 1873–1914* (Sigmaringen, 1997), 154–157, 300–317, 384–390, 398–410. In Warsaw, part of the Russian Empire before the First World War, religious charities also typically assumed responsibility for child welfare. The most famous of these institutions was Dr. Janusz Korczak's "children's republic," a home for Polish Jewish orphans established in 1912, which promoted progressive, child-centered pedagogies. See Betty Jean Lifton, *The King of Children: A Biography of Janusz Korczak* (New York, 1988), 48, 62, 73.

[10] Jugendbeirat, I. Band, Carton 2475, Jugendfürsorge 1918, MfSV, AdR, ÖSTA.

the time will come in which each nation only cares for its own. The Jewish population will then be receptive to the idea of a pan-Austrian organization for the care of school-age Jewish youth, which could arrange its own Jewish kindergartens in every community."[11] The nationally segregated social welfare system in the Bohemian lands thus gradually became an explicit model for a developing "separate but equal" welfare system across Habsburg Austria. And by relying on nationalists to address a growing social crisis during World War I, the Austrian state itself encouraged and legitimized this trend.

State officials also enabled nationalist activists to claim the mantle of popular legitimacy. This is not to say that nationalist self-representation should be taken at face value. Historians of the Habsburg Monarchy and interwar Czechoslovakia have vigorously debated the "democratic" credentials of the Habsburg and Czechoslovak states, typically measuring Central European states against an ideal type of Western, liberal democracy.[12] On a broader level, historians of World War I have also disagreed about the extent to which the war had "democratizing" or emancipatory consequences for women, workers, and colonial subjects, enabling them to claim new political or social rights on the basis of their wartime service.[13] Rather than assessing the extent to which nationalist movements, the supranational Austrian state, or interwar European nation-states were or were not authentically "democratic" or had "democratizing" effects, child welfare activism in the Bohemian lands offers a promising context for exploring the historically specific ways in which nationalists defined and appropriated discourses of popular legitimacy. They did so in a time and place when the Wilsonian right to national self-determination came to be seen as a fundamental democratic right.

Tracing the relationship between nationalist child welfare activists and the imperial state thus provides a fresh perspective on the revolutions of 1918–1919 in East Central Europe. Typically, these upheavals are understood as national uprisings that were directed against a crumbling Austrian state, and which stood in for the social revolutions that shook Russia and Germany at the end of the war.[14] In fact, by en-

[11] Protokoll über die erste konstitutierende Sitzung des Jugendbeirates am 17. Juni 1918, Beilage 3, Z. 1807/18, Carton 2475, Jugendfürsorge 1918, MfSV, AdR, ÖSTA.

[12] For an overview of this debate in historiography on the Habsburg Empire, see Gary B. Cohen, "Neither Absolutism nor Anarchy: New Narratives on Society and Government in Late Imperial Austria," *Austrian History Yearbook* 29 (1998): 37–61. On interwar Czechoslovakia's democratic credentials, see Vera Olivová, *Dějiny první republiky* (Prague, 2000), 7; Václav Kural, *Konflikt anstatt Gemeinschaft? Tschechen und Deutsche im Tschechoslowakischen Staat, 1918–1938* (Prague, 2001); Joseph Rothschild, *East Central Europe between the Two World Wars* (Seattle, Wash., 1974). For more critical assessments of Czechoslovak democracy, see Peter Bugge, "Czech Democracy 1918–1938: Paragon or Parody?" in Christiane Brenner and Stephanie Weiss, eds., *Phasen und Formen der Transformation in der Tschechoslowakei, 1918–1993* (Munich, forthcoming); Peter Heumos, "Pluralistische Machtorganisation als Garant der Demokratie? Zur Struktur und zum autoritären Potential der Ersten Tschechoslowakischen Republik," in Erwin Oberländer et al., eds., *Autoritäre Regime in Ostmittel- und Südosteuropa, 1919–1944* (Mainz, 2001), 136–139.

[13] For recent discussions of the wartime transformation of citizenship in the Austrian context, see Healy, *Vienna*, 300–313; Maureen Healy, "Becoming Austrian: Women, the State, and Citizenship in World War I," *Central European History* 35, no. 1 (March 2002): 1–35; Alon Rachamimov, *POWs and the Great War: Captivity on the Eastern Front* (New York, 2002); King, *Budweisers*, 147–177.

[14] While Marxist historians have lamented that the revolutionary potential in Eastern Europe was diluted by nationalist priorities, others have explored the ways in which nationalism provided a language for expressing a broad array of social and cultural concerns. For the argument that nationalism overwhelmed socialism in the revolutions of 1918–1919, see István Deák, "The Habsburg Empire," in Karen

trusting private nationalist welfare organizations in the Bohemian lands with the management of the state's most ambitious social programs to date, Austrian state officials themselves encouraged the conflation of social and national grievances. By using a nationalist social welfare system to meet citizens' social needs, officials ceded to nationalists the right to define social questions, such as the welfare of war orphans and the fate of starving children, as questions of national survival. Moreover, the revolutions of 1918–1919 did not represent a revolt by the nationalized masses against a state doomed to collapse, as historians of Austria have traditionally argued.[15] Far from passively slipping into the twilight, Austrian government officials responded to citizens' claims with a significant attempt at reform in 1916–1918. These last-ditch efforts failed to save the monarchy, but the "separate but equal" welfare state reflected an escalating trend toward the national segregation of public institutions, setting the stage for the revolutions that would carve the map of East Central Europe into nation-states in 1918.

THE NATIONALIST FLAVOR AND DIVISION of social welfare institutions in the Bohemian lands may have been peculiar to Habsburg Central Europe. However, several aspects of this history will sound familiar to historians who have studied welfare activism in other contexts. In particular, the emergence of a more centralized and expansive welfare state during the First World War from a preexisting network of private (religious, national, and political) charities and institutions was typical throughout Europe.[16] Thus this case can be used to rethink more general understandings of welfare-state formation, and of relationships between public and private, in modern Europe. In the past fifteen years, historians have fruitfully explored the multiple ways in which the Great War radically transformed relationships between sexes, families, nations, and states in Europe.[17] Specifically, they have linked the expansion of European

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Barkey and Mark von Hagen, eds., *After Empire: Multiethnic Societies and Nation-Building* (New York, 1997), 135; Hans Lemberg and Peter Heumos, eds., *Das Jahr 1919 in der Tschechoslowakei und in Ostmitteleuropa* (Munich, 1993). On interactions between nationalism and socialism, see Peter Heumos, "'Kartoffeln her oder es gibt eine Revolution': Hungerkrawalle, Streiks, und Massenproteste in den böhmischen Ländern, 1914–1918," in Hans Mommsen, Dusan Kováč, and Jiří Malíř, eds., *Der erste Weltkrieg und die Beziehungen zwischen Tschechen, Slowaken und Deutschen* (Essen, 2001), 255–287; Kural, *Konflikt Anstatt Gemeinschaft?*, 20.

[15] For examples of narratives about the inevitable collapse of the monarchy, see Solomon Wank, "The Habsburg Empire," in Barkey and von Hagen, *After Empire*, 45–58; Robert A. Kann, *The Multinational Empire: Nationalism and National Reform in the Habsburg Monarchy, 1848–1918*, 2 vols. (New York, 1970); for a revisionist perspective, see Cohen, "Neither Absolutism nor Anarchy," 37–61.

[16] For examples of how welfare-state structures were built from and/or shaped by private activism, social work organizations, and municipal or regional initiatives in Western Europe and the U.S., see Kathleen Canning, *Languages of Labor and Gender: Female Factory Work in Germany, 1850–1914* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1996), 126–217; Laura Lee Downs, *Childhood in the Promised Land: Working-Class Movements and the Colonies de Vacances in France, 1880–1960* (Durham, N.C., 2002); Seth Koven, "Borderlands: Women, Voluntary Action, and Child Welfare in Britain, 1840–1914," in Seth Koven and Sonya Michel, eds., *Mothers of a New World: Maternalist Politics and the Origins of Welfare States* (New York, 1993), 94–127; Theda Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States* (Cambridge, Mass., 1992).

[17] In several European states, including Austria and Czechoslovakia, women were granted suffrage shortly after the war's end. On gender, family, and citizenship during World War I in Europe, see Healy, "Becoming Austrian," 1–35; Belinda J. Davis, *Home Fires Burning: Food, Politics, and Everyday Life in World War I Berlin* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 2000); Nancy M. Wingfield and Maria Bucur, eds., *Gender and*

welfare states with the new responsibilities assumed by wartime governments for the health and morale of citizens on the home front. The success (or failure) of official efforts to ensure the physical, educational, and moral welfare of children was directly linked to the fundamental legitimacy of the state, the outcome of the war, the development of new welfare states, and gendered understandings of citizenship in interwar Europe. In the Central European context, Belinda Davis and Maureen Healy have convincingly argued that the failure of the state to fulfill its social promises during World War I significantly contributed to the fall of the Habsburg and German empires in 1918.[18]

Historians of the welfare state in modern Europe have thus typically cast the First World War as a moment of expanding government intervention into a so-called "private" sphere. In this view, as wartime states took on ever more responsibility for women and children on the home front, paternalist welfare systems politicized childhood and inserted themselves into the family, taking the place of the absent fathers lamented by Pollabrek. At the same time, new, centralized bureaucracies often undermined or usurped the authority of middle-class women, who had been at the forefront of earlier private, religious, or feminist charity organizations.[19] The expansion of European welfare states during the war is thereby situated within a larger Foucauldian narrative, in which the rise of the welfare state is associated with new and presumably troubling practices of social discipline.[20] Particularly in the Central European context, such intervention in the "private" realms of reproduction and child-rearing has been linked to a slippery slope to later Nazi eugenics and population policies, which promoted murder in the name of fortifying the nation's racial

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War in Twentieth-Century Eastern Europe (Bloomington, Ind., 2006); Susan Pederson, *Family, Dependence, and the Origins of the Welfare State: Britain and France, 1914–1945* (Cambridge, Mass., 1993), 79–133; Nicoletta Gullace, *"The Blood of Our Sons": Men, Women, and the Renegotiation of British Citizenship during the Great War* (New York, 2002); Laura Lee Downs, *Manufacturing Inequality: Gender Division in the French and British Metalworking Industries, 1914–1939* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1995), 119–147; Susan R. Grayzel, *Women's Identities at War: Gender, Motherhood, and Politics in Britain and France during the First World War* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1999).

[18] Davis, *Home Fires Burning*, esp. 190–218; Healy, *Vienna*, esp. 1–30. On state legitimacy and welfare provision during World War I, see also Richard Wall and Jay Winter, eds., *The Upheaval of War: Family, Work, and Welfare in Europe, 1914–1918* (Cambridge, 1988).

[19] See, for example, Dickinson, *The Politics of German Child Welfare*, 130; Young-Sun Hong, "World War I and the German Welfare State: Gender, Religion, and the Paradoxes of Modernity," in Geoff Eley, ed., *Society, Culture, and the State in Germany, 1870–1930* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1996), 360–361; Christoph Sachse, "Social Mothers: The Bourgeois Women's Movement and German Welfare-State Formation, 1890–1929," in Gisela Bock and Pat Thane, eds., *Maternity and Gender Policies: Women and the Rise of the European Welfare States, 1880s–1950s* (London, 1991), 136–158; Seth Koven and Sonya Michel, "Womanly Duties: Maternalist Politics and the Origins of Welfare States in France, Germany, Great Britain, and the United States, 1880–1920," *AHR* 95, no. 4 (October 1990): 1076–1108.

[20] For examples of literature that associate World War I with the rise of an interventionist welfare state, see Pederson, *Family, Dependence, and the Origins of the Welfare State*, 79–133; Elizabeth Domansky, "Militarization and Reproduction in World War I Germany, " in Eley, *Society, Culture, and the State in Germany*, 447–451; David F. Crew, "The Ambiguities of Modernity: Welfare and the German State from Wilhelm to Hitler," ibid., 319–344; Hong, "World War I and the German Welfare State," 345–371; Ute Daniel, *The War from Within: German Working-Class Women in the First World War* (Oxford, 1997); Sylvia Schafer, *Children in Moral Danger and the Problem of Government in Third Republic France* (Princeton, N.J., 1997); Christa Hämmerle, "Diese Schatten über unserer Kindheit gelegen: Historische Anmerkung zu einem unerforschten Thema," in Hämmerle, ed., *Kindheit im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Vienna, 1993), 265–335; Deborah Dwork, *War Is Good for Babies and Other Young Children: A History of the Infant and Child Welfare Movement in England, 1898–1918* (New York, 1987).

health. These studies have highlighted the disciplinary effects of state intervention in working-class families, and the conditions of economic crisis under which progressive programs to reform and rehabilitate children were transformed into racist initiatives to exclude allegedly racially inferior or "incurable" individuals from the national community.[21]

But what if the private invaded the public? The situation in the Bohemian lands challenges these general narratives of welfare-state expansion in Europe.[22] The argument that new forms of child welfare activism during the First World War represented a troubling encroachment on parental rights or an invasion of a previously apolitical "private" sphere is based on problematic assumptions about the family and children in Europe in the long nineteenth century. Specifically, the social disciplinary framework not only assumes a preexisting division between a public and a private sphere, but also imagines that children were firmly located in the realm of the private, before childhood was instrumentally politicized by mass political movements, social reformers, and invasive militarized states during the war. However, there were important continuities between prewar and wartime welfare activism. In the Bohemian lands, children were not secluded in an apolitical private sphere before the outbreak of World War I. They had long been objects of vigorous nationalist contestation. Similarly, in other parts of Europe, working-class children lived public lives in the workplace and in the streets, and were mobilized outside of the school and home in Socialist, religious, and nationalist child welfare institutions, summer camps, and youth groups. Across Europe, moreover, the wartime welfare state was often built from the bottom up, in response to demands from aggrieved citizens, and through the initiative of religious, political, and charitable organizations that had established their expertise and authority in the realm of child welfare well before the outbreak of war.[23]

Second, normative critiques of welfare-state expansion tend to downplay or naturalize the gendered and age-based power relations within families. The ideal of the family as a harmonious unit that should be protected from state intervention has historically protected the rights of men to rule over women and children with impunity. Historians of gender have persuasively analyzed the gendered inequalities

[21] For a general overview of these debates, see Young-Sun Hong, "Neither Singular nor Alternative: Narratives of Welfare and Modernity in Germany, 1870–1945," *Social History* 30, no. 2 (May 2005): 133–153. For examples of work linking early-twentieth-century welfare programs and population policies to Nazi eugenics, see Detlev Peukert, *Grenzen der Sozialdisziplinierung: Aufstieg und Krise der deutschen Jugendfürsorge von 1878 bis 1932* (Cologne, 1986); Domansky, "Militarization and Reproduction," 427–464; Peukert, "The Genesis of the Final Solution from the Spirit of Science," in Thomas Childers and Jane Caplan, eds., *Reevaluating the Third Reich* (New York, 1993), 234–252.

[22] Recently several scholars of the welfare state in modern Europe have critiqued the overly pessimistic implications of social disciplinary models, emphasizing the agency of welfare clients, tensions between disciplinary and progressive potential in welfare programs, and the multiple conflicts of interest that characterized the formation of European welfare states. See Hong, *Welfare, Modernity, and the Weimar State*, 3–16; Dickinson, *The Politics of German Child Welfare*, 286–300; Crew, "The Ambiguities of Modernity," 326; Downs, *Childhood*, 7, 286; Sarah Fishman, *The Battle for Children: World War II, Youth Crime, and Juvenile Justice in Twentieth-Century France* (Cambridge, Mass., 2002), 3–4, 151, 227.

[23] For an overview of recent historiography on childhood that questions the teleology implicit in Foucauldian narratives of social discipline, see Nicholas Stargardt, "German Childhoods: The Making of a Historiography," *German History* 16, no. 1 (1998): 1–15. On the "public" lives of working-class children, see Anna Davin, *Growing Up Poor: Home, School, and Street in London, 1870–1914* (London, 1996).

within the family, as well as the ways in which male domination over an imagined private sphere became a basis for citizenship in Europe's emerging liberal and republican states.[24] Historians have done less, however, to analyze inequalities of age within the family, or to challenge idealized views of relationships between parents and children, depicting state intervention in the family as a menacing threat to "natural" parental rights.[25] These critiques are often based on the underlying assumption that an autonomous biological family is the natural environment for child-rearing, and that the family itself should be self-sufficient. On the eve of the First World War in the Bohemian lands, different norms prevailed. Children were not typically considered the property or the sole responsibility of their parents. Czech and German nationalists already enjoyed considerable rights and responsibilities in regard to educating their children and providing for their health and welfare. The Austrian state's reliance on private nationalist welfare institutions during the war strengthened and legitimized these rights, anchoring them in law and emerging public institutions. As in other parts of Europe, this development did not necessarily represent a fundamental rupture, a menacing expansion of state power, or a troublesome abrogation of parental rights. It reflected a state-sanctioned expansion of private welfare initiatives, often in response to popular grievances, based on the conviction that the biological family alone was not sufficient to guarantee the health, welfare, and socialization of the nation's children.

In 1899, Czech nationalists in Prague published a pamphlet aimed at convincing the city's Czech-speaking parents not to enroll their children in German schools: "Czech parents! Remember that your children are not only your own property, but also the property of the nation. They are the property of all of society, and that society has the right to control your conduct!"[26] Nationalists in the Bohemian lands were hardly alone in declaring that children constituted a precious form of "national property" (*nationaler Besitzstand, národní majetek*) at the turn of the century. Across Europe, nationalists fretted about the quantity and quality of the nation's young, seeing them as a measure of the nation's future demographic, political, racial, and military strength. Nationalist claims on children in the Bohemian lands nonetheless differed from those in Western European nation-states in several respects.[27]

First, since the state was not coterminous with the nation, efforts to nationalize

[24] Isabel V. Hull's work persuasively highlights the centrality of men's dominance over the "private" sphere as fathers and husbands to the construction of citizenship and the public sphere in Germany. See Hull, *Sexuality, State and Civil Society in Germany, 1700–1815* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1996). See also Carole Pateman, *The Sexual Contract* (Palo Alto, Calif., 1988); Joan B. Landes, *Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1988).

[25] On the tendency to romanticize parent-child relationships, see Larry Wolff, *Postcards from the End of the World: Child Abuse in Freud's Vienna* (New York, 1995).

[26] *Národní socialisté českým rodičům v Brně! České dítě patří do české školy!* (Brno, 1899), 6.

[27] There is a vast literature on nationalism in Europe in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Some recent examples focused on Central and Eastern Europe include Pieter M. Judson, *Guardians of the Nation: Activists on the Language Frontiers of Imperial Austria* (Cambridge, Mass., 2006); King, *Budweisers*; Timothy Snyder, *The Reconstruction of Nations: Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus, 1569–1999* (New Haven, Conn., 2003); Pieter M. Judson and Marsha L. Rozenblit, eds., *Constructing Nationalities in East Central Europe* (New York, 2004); Nancy M. Wingfield, ed., *Creating the Other: Ethnic Conflict and Nationalism in Habsburg Central Europe* (New York, 2003); Maria Bucur and Nancy M. Wingfield,

children and families were not undertaken by a central state seeking to make "Frenchmen out of peasants," but rather by mass nationalist movements, political parties, and private voluntary associations, the ranks of which were bolstered by growing numbers of middle-class teachers, civil servants, white-collar workers, and women at the turn of the century.[28] The Austrian state, meanwhile, attempted to cultivate patriotic imperial loyalties that transcended nationalist commitments. Nationalist claims to "own" children were nonetheless first articulated within a legal and political framework created by the supranational Austrian state itself, a system that increasingly recognized nationality in order to defuse nationalist tensions. For example, beginning with the Imperial School Law of 1869, the state provided citizens with the opportunity to be educated in their native language. Municipal governments were required to build a public elementary school in a recognized language wherever there was an average of forty potential pupils over five years within a four-kilometer radius. In a series of important rulings in the 1880s, the Austrian Supreme Administrative Court ruled that this legislation implied a minority right to primary education in one's native tongue. By the turn of the century in the Bohemian lands, German and Czech nationalists enjoyed considerable autonomy to determine the curriculum and manage a linguistically segregated public school system.

Certainly, nation-states across Europe in the late nineteenth century sought to nationalize populations whose loyalties were more closely tied to localities, regions, or religious, professional, or class-based communities. In the bilingual regions of the Bohemian lands, however, it was often far from clear which children belonged to which nation. While activists claimed to be working against the alleged "Germanization" or "Czechification" of children, they actually competed to win the loyalties of a great many children and families who were bilingual, flexible about their national affiliation, or altogether indifferent to nationality.[29] The nationalist child welfare movement in the Bohemian lands was the product of this struggle for children's souls in bilingual regions. While traveling through the town of Prachatice/Prachatitz in the late summer of 1918, the Austrian writer Robert Scheu observed, "There is always a great deal of agitation during the summer holidays because of the schools. Both nations attempt to win students over for their schools, and not always with the most

eds., *Staging the Past: The Politics of Commemoration in Habsburg Central Europe, 1848 to the Present* (West Lafayette, Ind., 2001).

[28] Although women represented a minority among the leadership of nationalist child welfare organizations, they were well represented in nationalist movements as kindergarten and nursery school teachers, child guardians, and social workers. On women in German nationalist organizations, see Pieter M. Judson, "The Gendered Politics of German Nationalism in Austria," in David F. Good, Margarete Grandner, and Mary Jo Maynes, eds., *Austrian Women in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives* (Oxford, 1996), 1–17. On Czech feminism and nationalism, see Katherine David, "Czech Feminists and Nationalism in the Late Habsburg Monarchy: The First in Austria," *Journal of Women's History* 3, no. 2 (1991): 26–45; Melissa Feinberg, "Gender and the Politics of Difference in the Czech Lands after Munich," *East European Politics and Societies* 17, no. 2 (2003): 202–230.

[29] On national indifference or side-switching, see Gary B. Cohen, *The Politics of Ethnic Survival: Germans in Prague, 1861–1914* (Princeton, N.J., 1981); Judson, *Guardians of the Nation*; Chad Bryant, "Either German or Czech: Fixing Nationality in Bohemia and Moravia, 1939–1946," *Slavic Review* 61, no. 4 (2002): 683–706; King, *Budweisers*, 158–159, 198; Benjamin Frommer, *National Cleansing: Retribution against Nazi Collaborators in Postwar Czechoslovakia* (New York, 2005), 200–204; Tara Zahra, "Reclaiming Children for the Nation: Germanization, National Ascription, and Democracy in the Bohemian Lands, 1900–1945," *Central European History* 37, no. 4 (2004): 499–541.

honest methods."[30] These methods included enticing working-class and rural parents to enroll their children in German or Czech schools by offering pupils generous welfare benefits. This competition for children's loyalties may have contributed to a more inclusive dynamic in the social welfare movements of the Bohemian lands than in neighboring nation-states. Nationalist child welfare activists did not typically seek to exclude ineducable or "inferior" children from the nation. Rather, they competed to claim as many children as possible as Germans or Czechs.

Nationalist campaigns to increase the number of children enrolled in German and Czech schools soon inspired more ambitious schemes to fill classrooms in nationally contested regions. For example, nationalist child welfare organizations began to establish "colonies" of ten to twelve orphans in villages where a local German or Czech school was threatened by declining enrollments. These orphan colonies not only saved endangered schools, they also promised to save orphans from the threat of "Germanization" or "Czechification" in the orphanages or foster homes of the national enemy. In a 1913 appeal to build new orphanages, Czech nationalists insisted, "Every day children are lost to us in orphanages, where they are given a piece of bread with one hand and robbed of their mother tongue with the other."[31]

The driving force behind these efforts was himself a nationalist orphan. At the turn of the century, Hugo Heller, who had been raised in an orphanage in Prague, was just embarking on what would become a long and impressive career as a nationalist child welfare activist. In 1907, Heller founded the German Provincial Commission for Child Protection and Youth Welfare in Bohemia (DLS), and a parallel Czech organization, the ČZK, was established shortly thereafter. They were quickly followed by German and Czech commissions in Moravia and Silesia. The provincial commissions and their local branches remained the most important and wide-reaching child welfare institutions in the Bohemian lands until the Nazi occupation in 1938–1939. Writing on the growing nationalist welfare movement in 1912, Heller insisted, "The deepest and most powerful driving forces behind the youth welfare movement are precisely national in nature. They [activists] wish not only to improve the inner diligence of the nation and to promote its economic interests, but above all to maintain the nation's numerical strength and its ability to uphold its cultural values."[32]

Bolstered by the apparent success of their programs for orphans in the Bohemian lands, nationalist child welfare activists began to target children with living parents. They were particularly intent on decreasing infant mortality rates and providing child-care support for working mothers in industrial regions. The provincial commissions sought to address infant mortality primarily through a network of nationally segregated infant and maternal welfare centers, which dispensed medical supplies and treatment, breastfeeding advice, and basic necessities such as sanitized infant formula, food, and clothing, all in the name of "protecting children from the hygienic dangers that gnaw at the nation's roots."[33] While working mothers were a source of

[30] "Prachatitz," in Robert Scheu, *Wanderung durch Böhmen am Vorabend der Revolution* (Vienna, 1919), 200–201.

[31] "U dětech národu," *Ludmila: Časopis věnovaný ochraně opustených dětí a sirotků vůbec a zvlaště na Ostravsku* 1 (1913): 4.

[32] Hugo Heller, *Jugendland* (Prague, 1912), 34.

[33] *An die deutsche Lehrerschaft in Mähren* (Brünn, 1912, 1. In 1900, for every 1,000 children born in

concern, they also afforded nationalists an irresistible opportunity to expand their primary pedagogical influence on children. In 1912, Heller himself insisted that nationalist child welfare organizations should share the burden of child-rearing with the working mother, who "should be helped in her difficult situation to pursue paid employment in order to earn a living, to run a household, and to become a mother or simply to be a mother."[34] In 1913, local DLS activist Albin Dimter described how nationalists in the Bohemian industrial town of Broumov/Braunau put these ideals into practice by offering "morally flawless supervision and stimulating activities for those poor children whose parents must earn their bread, in daycare centers, nurseries, soup kitchens, student workshops, and homes for girls." He elaborated, "The poor child's missing parental home should be replaced to the extent possible, so as to raise a new generation that finds joy in work, that is competitive and happy."[35]

Thanks to burgeoning nationalist pedagogical and child welfare movements, national affiliation was supposed to determine not only where children attended school, but how they spent their summers, their preschool years, and their after-school hours, and where they turned for a cup of soup or a free medical exam in times of need. By the same token, parents no longer enjoyed unlimited "rights" to educate or govern their children as they pleased. They rather enjoyed the "right" to a national education for their children, and to certain social services also provided by the national community. Nationalist child welfare activists had helped to institutionalize a political culture in which the socialization, health, and welfare of children were not the responsibility of parents alone.

THE TREND TOWARD THE NATIONAL SEGREGATION of child welfare institutions was legitimized and accelerated by the Austrian state itself during World War I. Not long after they mobilized men for the battlefields and women for the armaments factories in 1914, Europe's Great Powers mobilized children for the war. "No child is too young to help!" argued Austrian school reformer and teacher Dora Siegl. "Students of all ages can contribute to a considerable degree."[36] German and Czech nation-

districts in Bohemia with a German-speaking majority, 28.1 percent died within one year and 35.8 percent died within five years. In Czech-speaking districts, the numbers were only slightly better: 23.7 percent did not reach their first birthday, and 32 percent did not survive five years. Among European lands, only Russia had higher infant mortality rates. On infant mortality in the Habsburg Monarchy, see Heinrich Rauchberg, *Der nationale Besitzstand in Böhmen* (Reichenberg, 1905), 586.

[34] Heller, *Jugendland*, 26. For nationalist discussions of working mothers, see "Mädchenfürsorge," *Jahrbuch der deutschen Jugendfürsorge* 2 (1909): 98; "Školství menšinové a ochrana mládež," *Stráž severu: Věstník národní jednoty severočeská*, December 31, 1909, 2. According to the Austrian census of 1900, women accounted for 38 percent of the total workforce in Bohemia, and 38.2 percent of Bohemian women worked outside the home in 1900. Adam Wandruszka and Peter Urbanitsch, eds., *Die Habsburgermonarchie, 1848–1918*, vol. 3: *Die Völker des Reiches* (Vienna, 1980), 38; and Rauchberg, *Der nationale Besitzstand*, 336.

[35] Albin Dimter, "Siebenter Bericht der dreiklassigen Josef Edler von Schroll deutschen Privat-Volksschule mit Öffentlichkeitsrecht und des mit ihr verbundenen Kindergärten in Branau," in *Die deutsche Landeskommission für Kinderschutz und Jugendfürsorge*, vol. 4 (Branau, 1913).

[36] Dora Siegl, "Der Krieg und die Jugend," *Schaffende Arbeit und Kunst in der Schule* 4 (1917): 67. On war pedagogy in Austria, see Healy, *Vienna*, 211–240; Hämmerle, "Diese Schatten über unserer Kindheit gelegen," 265–335. On war pedagogy in France, see Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau, *La guerre des enfants, 1914–1918: Essai d'histoire culturelle* (Paris, 1993).

alists alike initially promoted the war as a beneficial pedagogical experience for Austrian children. In 1915, for example, a Czech provincial judge and child welfare activist, Franz Mézl, published a pamphlet that contained this advice for Czech educators: "The teacher must, when he speaks of the enemy, introduce a drop of hatred into the child's soul."[37]

While nationalists across Europe praised the pedagogical and patriotic value of "hatred" in 1915, those words generated an unusual amount of controversy among Austrian civil servants. Universal public education had long been a primary strategy through which nation-states such as Great Britain, Germany, and France sought to cultivate the patriotic loyalties of the next generation. In many multilingual regions of Austria, however, primary schools were firmly in the hands of nationalists. For decades, Czech and German nationalists in the Bohemian lands had competed to show their patriotic loyalty to the Habsburg dynasty. These imperial loyalties had been perfectly compatible with nationalist loyalties. With the outbreak of war, however, German nationalists attempted to depict Czechs, and particularly Czech teachers, as subversive traitors. German-speaking officials in Moravia therefore perceived a threat to imperial loyalty in Mézl's war pedagogy, explaining that a Czech teacher "cannot be expected to encourage hatred against Russians and Serbs."[38]

In fact, while the myth of Czech nationalist opposition to the Austrian state and to the war continues to shape the Czech collective memory, these accusations were largely the invention of German nationalists.[39] In the face of considerable evidence of Czech patriotism, however, the Austrian state abandoned its traditional position of impartiality in nationalist affairs, arresting Czech nationalist leaders, scrutinizing Czech school curricula, and censoring the nationalist press. Simultaneously, the Austrian state began to rely on Czech nationalists to help build its wartime welfare system. Ironically, even as the state suppressed Czech nationalism in the schools with paranoid zeal, Austrian officials enabled both Czech and German nationalists to expand their influence over children and youth through wartime welfare activism.[40]

Moreover, while World War I began in the Bohemian lands with a chorus of nationalist declarations about its pedagogical value, it did not take long for more pessimistic voices to prevail. The experience of the war directly challenged idealized views of the family as harmonious and self-sufficient, and thereby helped to produce a political culture ripe for state action. As early as 1916, reports from across the Bohemian lands warned of a menacing crisis of youth. Children allegedly roamed the

[37] F. Mézl, *Rada zemského soudu, válka světová a naše péče o dorost* (Brno, 1915), 9, Sig. IEI/3, 1900–1918, Carton 433, Justizministerium, AVA, ÖSTA.

[38] Report of the OLG Abteilung 5 to Z. 22058/15, Sig. IEI/3, 1900–1918, Carton 433, Justizministerium, AVA, ÖSTA. In his study of letters from the front, Alon Rachamimov has found that while state censors judged nationalist sentiments in letters written by Magyar, German, and Polish soldiers to be fully compatible with loyalty to the empire, any hint of Czech or Slovak nationalism was deemed subversive and irreconcilable with imperial loyalties. Rachamimov, "Arbiters of Allegiance: Austro-Hungarian Censors during World War I," in Judson and Rozenblit, *Constructing Nationalities*, 21.

[39] See, for example, "Vnitropolitické otázky za války," *Národní listy*, January 20, 1915, 1. See also "Národní souručenství," *Národní politika*, November 14, 1915, 4; Kolektiv prácovníků SÚA, *Soupis dokumentů k vnitřnímu vývoji v českých zemích za 1. světové války 1914–1918*, 4 vols. (Prague, 1993–1997), 1: doc. 33, 87–89, and 2: doc. 10, 39–40.

[40] For an overview of Czech and German responses to the outbreak of World War I, see Jan Křen, *Die Konfliktgemeinschaft: Tschechen und Deutsche 1780–1918* (Munich, 1996), 303–400; King, *Budweisers*, 147–151; Rachamimov, *POWs and the Great War*; Mommsen, Kováč, and Malíř, *Der erste Weltkrieg*.

streets aimlessly, patronized bordellos and cabarets, stole food and provisions, threw rocks at store windows, and begged in railway stations. By 1917, the Defense Ministry itself found it necessary to address the situation, arguing that youth delinquency threatened the state's military capacity. Officials declared, "This office can ignore these disturbing facts all the less, in that it concerns the physical deterioration and moral degeneration of that human material out of which the state should rejuvenate its defensive power." The Bohemian governor's office attempted to counter the perceived epidemic of youth delinquency in 1916, restricting smoking, drinking, attendance at variety shows, and gambling, and instituting a 9 P.M. curfew for youth under age sixteen.[41]

These disciplinary measures hardly sufficed to counter a growing social crisis. By 1917, the Austrian population was starving. As food shortages became more frequent and poverty consumed even the middle classes, observers in state and nationalist circles began to fear that the love of mothers for their children was itself at risk. In 1917, one state censor reported that as mothers talked of killing themselves along with their children, "the destruction of family life and the burial of motherly instincts" was proceeding apace.[42] In the same year, the DLS in Bohemia reinforced popular fears about the destruction of familial bonds: "The war has revealed the sad truth that the pretty picture of the family as a force of social education has been destroyed by hard economic realities, and a certain wildness has emerged in its place. Feelings of parental duty are considerably stunted."[43] Another 1917 censor's report cited a letter from a Czech teenager, Stefanie Pěkná, to her father, who was stationed in Italy, to illustrate the social crisis brewing on the home front. The letter confirmed the worst nightmares of child welfare activists:

> We are here alone without our father, and perhaps we will soon be without a mother as well, as our mother doesn't want to and cannot support us . . . Every day she goes without breakfast, and at lunch we have only black coffee. At night she comes home totally exhausted and cries from hunger, and we cry with her. When she goes to work, we stay home hungry and with no one to watch us.[44]

Meanwhile, nationalists in the Bohemian lands painstakingly interpreted this social crisis in nationalist terms, building on their prewar activism. Since the 1860s, when the Austrian constitution was drafted and ratified, the supranational Austrian state had attempted to relegate nationalist expression to an imagined social or private sphere, while preserving the "universal" and supranational quality of public

[41] For quotations, see Ministerium für Landesverteidigung an das Ministeriun des Innern, Jugendfürsorge in Krieg, November 20, 1916, Carton 2475, Jugendfürsorge 1918, MfSV, AdR, ÖSTA. For measures taken against juvenile delinquency, see Z. 2446/18, Massnahmen gegen die drohende Verwahrlosung der Jugend, Statthalterei in Böhmen, Prague, December 31, 1917, Carton 2476, Jugendfürsorge 1918, MfSV, AdR, ÖSTA; Prázdinová péče o mládež a zabezpéčení nerušeného vyučovaní školního v příštím školním roce, Ratschläge für Jugendfürsorge, both in Carton 2588, Sig. IV13u-2 1915, Zemská školní rada [hereafter ZŠR], Národní archiv, Prague [hereafter NA].

[42] Z. 4766, July 1917, Carton 3752, AOK, KA, ÖSTA. Between 1915 and 1918, food rations allocated to the average consumer in Vienna, for example, declined from 1,300 to 830 calories per day. On the crisis of provisioning in wartime Austria, see Healy, *Vienna*, 31–86; for statistics, 45.

[43] Auszug aus dem Tätigkeitsbericht der Deutschen Landeskommission für Kinderschutz und Jugendfürsorge in Böhmen für das Jahr 1917, Z. 5524, Carton 2476, Jugendfürsorge 1918, MfSV, AdR, ÖSTA.

[44] Bemerkenswertennachrichten zur Verpflegungsfrage in der Monarchie, Prague, June 4, 1917, Carton 3752, AOK, KA, ÖSTA.

institutions such as the dynasty, army, church, and bureaucracy.[45] Nationalists, of course, aggressively challenged this division in the late nineteenth century, most successfully in their efforts to dominate public educational institutions. In constructing this public/private divide, however, and attempting to relegate nationalism to an imagined private realm, the Austrian state could not have anticipated that state legitimacy would one day hinge precisely on questions such as the health, welfare, and bad behavior of children. Nationalist movements flourished by focusing their attention precisely on children and families, and by defining social issues as questions of national survival. During World War I, Czech and German nationalists were in a prime position to shape popular understandings of social conflict as well as influence social policy. Austrian officials were obliged to create new institutions to address growing wartime social concerns, but it was too late to reconstruct child welfare as a supranational domain in the Bohemian lands. The state was far too dependent on the infrastructure that nationalists had already built through the strictly nationalized provincial commissions.

The most threatening food riots and the longest strikes came from bilingual border regions of the Bohemian lands, where economic despair was also most extreme. In 1917 alone, at least 252 hunger demonstrations erupted in Bohemia, and citizens took to the streets to protest provisioning at least 232 more times in 1918. Several riots culminated in violence against Jews.[46] German nationalists blamed Czechs for the food crisis, arguing that Czech farmers refused to surrender requisitioned crops, while Czech nationalists claimed that all the food was being sent to Germany. As soldiers returned from the Russian front in 1918, censors reported fearfully that they had brought new revolutionary ideas with them, and did not hesitate to compare the situation at home with that in the "free Russian state." The condition of their families did not lead to favorable conclusions, and appeared to prepare the ground for social revolution: "Contributing to the disappointment that has seized the demobilized soldiers is the physical and spiritual state of many of the women and children who meet them at home," government censors observed.[47] Austrian officials were compelled to respond to these grievances, which appeared to threaten the state's basic legitimacy. The ominous popular mood, coupled with the shadow of the Russian Revolution, propelled a genuine change of course within the Austrian government in early 1917. Emperor Karl, who assumed the throne after Francis Joseph's death in November of 1916, reconvened the Austrian Parliament, pronounced a general amnesty—releasing most Czech-speaking political prisoners—and secretly negotiated with the Allies to take Austria out of the war.[48]

[45] On Austrian liberalism, see Pieter M. Judson, *Exclusive Revolutionaries: Liberal Politics, Social Experience, and National Identity in the Austrian Empire, 1848–1918* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1996), esp. chaps. 3–5. On the supranational character of "public," imperial institutions, see István Deák, *Beyond Nationalism: A Social and Political History of the Habsburg Officer Corps, 1848–1918* (Oxford, 1990); Stourzh, *Gleichberechtigung*; Daniel Unowsky, "Reasserting Empire: Habsburg Imperial Celebrations after the Revolutions of 1848–49," in Bucur and Wingfield, *Staging the Past*, 13–46.

[46] Z. 4647, Stimmung und wirtschaftliche Lage der österreichischen Bevölkerung im Hinterland, Carton 3751, AOK, KA, ÖSTA. See Heumos, " 'Kartoffeln her oder es gibt eine Revolution," 255–287, for a survey of popular protests in the Bohemian lands.

[47] Stimmung und wirtschaftliche Lage der österreichischen Bevölkerung in Hinterland, June 1918, Carton 3759, AOK, KA, ÖSTA. For nationalist complaints about provisions, see Z. 4837, Beilage 6 zum Monatsbericht pro Sept 1917, Carton 3753, AOK, KA, ÖSTA.

[48] On reform efforts after the Russian Revolution, see Křen, *Die Konfliktgemeinschaft*, 348–350; Jo-

As part of this reform effort, Austrian authorities established a new Imperial Ministry for Social Welfare, which opened its doors in August of 1917 to face a flood of nationalist demands. Czech nationalist delegates to the Austrian Parliament initially rejected the creation of the new centralized ministry altogether, fearing a challenge to their well-established rights to educate Czech children. The influential Czech liberal magazine *Naše doba* reported that Antonín Kalina, representing the Czech National Social Party in the Austrian Parliament, had protested that the new central agency would "disturbingly intervene in each and every Czech person's life, requisitioning for itself the last scrap of Czech autonomy in the realm of social welfare." Czech delegates were explicitly concerned that private nationalist institutions such as nursery schools, daycare centers, and orphanages "could pass from the autonomous national sphere" into the hands of an overpowering central state, "which could cause great damage, especially . . . in the realm of national education."[49] Bitter that their own more radical demands for state reforms in their favor were rejected in 1917, German nationalists also initially approached the new ministry with skepticism, warning officials, "It would be as incomprehensible for us as it would be unbearable if . . . an Austrian government should again attempt to place German Bohemia under the rule of common Czech authorities, and to force us into a community that we are determined to reject."[50]

It did not seem like a fortuitous beginning. In fact, however, nationalists should not have been concerned about losing their privileged authority in the realm of social welfare. Austrian officials in the new ministry foresaw the national division of its regional and local offices in the Bohemian lands from the outset. During the parliamentary debates surrounding the ministry's creation, newly appointed minister Heinrich Mataja, a prominent Christian Socialist from Vienna, had declared, "The new Ministry for Social Welfare will strive to be national/popular (*volkstümlich*). It will be open and accessible to everyone and will in particular strive to attract the enthusiastic cooperation of private associations and autonomous organizations."[51] He was true to his word. The ministry was built to expand an infrastructure that Czech and German nationalist activists in the Bohemian lands had already created from the bottom up. Nationalist activists from the private provincial commissions were immediately appointed as advisors, judges, and officials in the new ministry. The state hoped to harness the private, nationally segregated child welfare system to achieve its own goals in 1917–1918. Above all, Austrian officials aimed to take advantage of an alleged reservoir of trust between nationalists and local populations in order to reinforce the legitimacy of the war-battered Austrian state.

As the negotiations surrounding the creation of the new ministry continued, na-

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seph Redlich, *Österreichische Regierung und Verwaltung im Weltkriege* (New Haven, Conn., 1925), 262–263. For an interesting police report on the effects of the Russian Revolution on the mood of the Bohemian population, see "Zpráva o politické náladě a reakci na zprávy o ruské revoluci mezi obyvatelstvem," March 17, 1917, in Kolektiv prácovníků SÚA, *Soupis dokumentů*, 4: 61–63.

[49] "Věcí sociální," *Naše doba*, January 20, 1918, 19–20; see also *Bohemia*, November 21, 1917, 2.

[50] Z. 98, January 7, 1918, Carton 45, MfSV, Präsidium 1918, AdR, ÖSTA.

[51] "Fortsetzung des Sitzungsberichtes, Wien, 20 November, Abgeordnetenhaus," *Prager Tagblatt*, November 21, 1917, 2. For state plans to segregate the welfare system, see also Skizze zu Richtlinien für ein Gesetz über die öffentliche Erziehung, Z. 277, and Organisation des Jugendamtes, Z. 280, both in Carton 43, MfSV, AdR, ÖSTA.

tionalist activists succeeded in depicting their expertise in the realm of youth welfare as far more than the sum of their knowledge, labor, and experience. "Expertise" now implied an intimate, emotional understanding of the local populations being served, an ability to connect with, mobilize, and earn the trust of the client. National empathy supposedly bred popular legitimacy, differentiating the nationalist welfare system from both liberal paternalism and cold state bureaucracy. For example, in a 1917 memo by Anton Tůma, submitted on behalf of the Czech commissions, Czech nationalists invoked both their scientific expertise and their populist, emotional, and national credentials as they sought greater control over wartime welfare programs, arguing, "Our deep understanding of practical life has convinced the ČZK that . . . we can only hope for success with a law written in a national spirit, which can count on the deepest sympathy and eager cooperation of the widest masses."[52]

These claims reflected a powerful fusion of populist and national rhetoric in political discourse (though not necessarily popular opinion), which reached an apex in 1918–1919. Nationalists working within the ministry argued that democratic legitimacy and social expertise were circumscribed by the specific ethnic "individuality" of nations, a claim that they had articulated before the war. In reality, as Peter Bugge has argued, little besides language use differentiated self-identified Germans from Czechs in the Bohemian lands.[53] Nevertheless, nationalist social welfare activists insisted that if the nascent Austrian welfare system was to be popular, democratic, and effective, it had to allow each nation the greatest possible degree of autonomy to address its allegedly unique, nationally specific social needs. As far back as 1909, in a memo to the Ministry of the Interior, the ČZK had outlined both its ambitions to take on more state responsibilities and its populist intentions "to escape a purely official role, to secure the popular support of the broadest classes of the population." Achieving these goals required that the state acknowledge the "differences in the cultural development, economic relationships, and social composition" of each nation.[54]

Activists promoted the segregation of social welfare institutions, claiming that national differences permeated deep into family life. Alois Epstein, a professor of pediatrics at the German University in Prague, addressed a memo to teachers in German schools in 1910 in which he insisted that the needs of German and Czech children were fundamentally different. Specifically, he claimed that the high rates of infant mortality in German districts were deeply rooted in the unique cultural and social structures and traditions of the German community, especially the reluctance of German women to breastfeed their children, arguing, "Just as individual nations have in the course of their development adopted certain tendencies and character traits that exercise a great influence on the type and activity of their entire economic life, there is also national individuality with respect to attitudes and practices in family life. The traits that are meant here . . . are passed on through tradition from

[52] Anton Tůma, Beilage 1, Protokoll über die erste konstitutierende Sitzung des Jugendbeirates am 17 Juni 1918, Z. 1807/18, 35–39, June 14, 1918, Carton 2475, Jugendfürsorge 1918, MfSV, AdR, ÖSTA.

[53] Peter Bugge, "Czech Nation-Building, National Self-Perception and Politics, 1780–1914" (Ph.D. diss., University of Aarhus, 1994), 26.

[54] Böhmische Landeskommission für Kinderschutz und Jugendfürsorge in Prag, betreffend die Verwendung der Kaiser Jubiläumsfonds "Das Kind," November 15, 1909, Carton 2757, Sig. 37 in genere, Ministerium von Innern 1907–1909, AVA, ÖSTA.

family to family, generation to generation, and have become unique to the concerned nation."[55] In the Bohemian lands, he claimed, even the most basic and supposedly universal human attributes, such as the nature of maternal love, differed between the two nations. Germans and Czechs thus had completely different conceptions of "the instinctive feelings of the female, a mother's love, and the ethical form as well as the practical fulfillment of maternal duty."[56]

Drawing on these ideas about essential national differences, private nationalist child welfare organizations during World War I called upon the new ministry to segregate social welfare institutions in the name of democracy itself. Nationalist control of the nascent welfare state, they insisted, would "reinforce the recent tendency of individual nations to express their national individuality in public services as well as the trend toward the widespread democratization of government."[57] In a 1918 appeal, the ČZK in Moravia successfully used these claims of nationally specific social empathy and expertise to lobby for the appointment of Czech judges in the expanding network of family courts, insisting, "A German judge has neither the necessary understanding nor the emotional sympathy for the claims and rights of Czech children!"[58]

By claiming that the national separation of expanding social welfare institutions was a precondition for popular legitimacy, the local branches of the provincial commissions sought to protect their monopoly on child welfare, ensuring that the expansion of the wartime state did not threaten their own preexisting claims on children. In making these arguments, German and Czech nationalists capitalized on their hard-fought claims to represent and understand "local" relationships. The terms "local," "national" (*völkisch*), "democratic," and "popular" were often used interchangeably in nationalist appeals to the new ministry, even in discussions of regions in which localities were anything but linguistically homogeneous. Nationalists demanded that the state strengthen their own local organizations—which, they asserted, enjoyed widespread legitimacy and support—rather than blindly creating new and redundant state organizations that the popular classes allegedly would mistrust. "The possibility of swift individualized intervention, an inner sympathy . . . with the needy classes are the primary requirements of effective youth protection, requirements that are met only through far-reaching decentralization and the cooperation of the widest circles of the population," asserted Czech nationalist leaders in the spring of 1918.[59]

If Czech representatives in the Ministry for Social Welfare were expecting a fight from their German colleagues or Austrian officials, they were sorely disappointed.

[55] Alois Epstein, *Über Kinderschutz und Volksvermehrung: Mit besonderer Beachtung der Verhältnisse in Böhmen* (Vienna, 1910), 21. See also Marianne Tuma von Waldkampf, "Kindersterblichkeit und nationaler Besitzstand," *Deutschböhmen: Mitteilungen des Bundes der Deutschen in Böhmen* 7 (July 26, 1913): 1. While German and Czech women were equally represented in the labor force, German-speaking women were almost twice as likely as Czech-speaking women to be employed in the industrial sector. Wandruszka and Urbanitsch, *Die Habsburgermonarchie*, 3: Table 1, 38; Rauchberg, *Der nationale Besitzstand*, 336, 582–600.

[56] Epstein, *Über Kinderschutz und Volksvermehrung*, 25.

[57] Tůma, Beilage 1, Protokoll über die erste konstitutierende Sitzung des Jugendbeirates.

[58] Berufung eines böhmischen Richters in das Ministerium für soziale Fürsorge, Z. 323 1918, January 1, 1918, Carton 46, Präsidium 1918, MfSV, AdR, ÖSTA.

[59] Tůma, Beilage 1, Protokoll über die erste konstitutierende Sitzung des Jugendbeirates.

Margarete Roller, representing the DLS in Moravia, only reinforced the strategic fusion of national segregation with popular legitimacy, arguing in 1917 that new welfare laws "will be executed in the spirit of the population and find support in the population only if the provincial youth offices are fully separated by nationality."[60] By August 1918, the Austrian state was prepared to concede far more than nationalists themselves might have envisioned, putting the local administration of far-reaching state welfare programs directly into experienced nationalist hands. Activists in the formerly private provincial commissions were not unaware of the change in their status, or their role in "rescuing" a state overwhelmed by the social demands of its citizens. The DLS in Bohemia boasted in 1918, "As a private union we actually had to take the place of a government authority, because nothing was undertaken from the side of the government or the provincial bureaucracy to relieve the misery of youth in our time."[61]

The state threw its lot in with the nationalists not only because the two entities shared concerns about youth delinquency and social unrest during the war, but also because nationalists were simply well ahead of the Austrian state in the development of child and maternal welfare programs, orphanages, nurseries, and soup kitchens. Wartime logic dictated that the state not tamper with the impressive results of nationalist initiative. Officials in the Justice Ministry and the Ministry of the Interior agreed as early as 1914, "The national division of the guardian councils is not to be undone in Bohemia and Moravia. All of youth welfare is built on this foundation there, as the planned child welfare laws already acknowledge."[62] Out of desperation or choice, the state relied on the private nationalist welfare system to achieve its own goals.

Through the tireless wartime work of professional social workers, nationalists' self-congratulatory ideological claims to possess "exclusive" popular legitimacy and emotional expertise seemed to become a self-fulfilling prophecy. As the social needs of families grew during the war, so too did nationalists' own sense of self-importance about their influence in local communities. German nationalist social worker Anton Vrbka reported in early 1916, "From day to day I felt more and more how the DLS was anchored in the *Volk*, how the people's trust for the commission grew stronger and stronger, since the people often came from far away and from foreign districts and with every possible malady. Nothing seemed too minor; for every pain I sought a remedy, and I found one too."[63] If the problems allegedly posed by hungry, delinquent children and neglectful parents seemed almost impossible to overcome, these social workers took minimal comfort in the belief that their charges degenerated less than those of the national enemy. Czech social worker Josef Petr thus concluded a 1918 report: "The corruption and immorality of the children is to a large degree a result of their indigence, which is enormous in this area: the children are hungry, they soon begin begging, then they steal, and before long they have become

[60] Ibid.

[61] "Auszug aus dem Tätigkeitsbericht."

[62] Entwurf einer Verordnung über Vormundschaftsräte, Denkschriften der beiden Landeskommission für Kinderschutz und Jugendfürsorge in Böhmen, Z. 37.299, October 23, 1914, Carton 433, Sig. I, Generalvormundschaft, Justizministerium, AVA, ÖSTA.

[63] Anton Vrbka, "Berufsmundes in der Kriegszeit: Bericht, erstattet in der 5. Vollversammlung der Deutschen Landeskommission am 29. Januar 1916," Carton 50, MfSV, AdR, ÖSTA.

complete criminals. The only small gratification is that children of German nationality, and a great many of them, too, are just as morally delinquent."[64]

The provincial commissions, not surprisingly, enjoyed tremendous financial and organizational growth during the war, even as other nationalist associations struggled with wartime scarcity. By 1918, the ČZK in Bohemia boasted 130 district offices, while the DLS in Bohemia had established 95 branches. Hardly an inch of territory in the Bohemian lands was unaccounted for. In 1917, the DLS in Bohemia reported a budget of 773,619 Austrian crowns, up from 27,539 crowns in 1908, while the ČZK in Bohemia reported a budget of 558,368 crowns in 1916. DLS nationalists boasted in their 1917 annual report, "We don't want to neglect to emphasize that the mentioned payments flowed almost exclusively into German districts, and of course only to the benefit of German children."[65] These impressive amounts, raised through private contributions, only begin to measure the vast sums of money that actually passed through local branches of the nationally segregated commissions en route to Austrian children. The organizational and financial fusion of the Bohemian welfare state with the provincial commissions was most powerfully expressed when the state officially entrusted the administration of the Imperial Widow and Orphan Fund (k.k. Witwen und Waisenfond, WuWf) to the DLS and ČZK. By 1917, the WuWf had given out over 30 million crowns empire-wide, employed more than 10,000 civil servants, and mobilized 100,000 women in its women's auxiliaries, becoming the monarchy's largest wartime welfare fund. In the Bohemian lands, these funds were distributed exclusively through local branches of the provincial commissions.[66]

Familiar reasoning motivated the state to join forces with the nationalists. The government faced financial collapse and a crisis of legitimacy, and the DLS and ČZK offered a final chance to meet the expectations of an agitated population. In a 1918 memo, Ministry of Social Welfare officials claimed that the provincial commissions offered individualized care, a rationalized, efficient means of distribution, and scientific expertise:

> The work of an organization with many branches is required to reach all classes of the population with material help, and to encourage them to participate in welfare work for the victims of the war. The same organization is necessary to research the relationships of every individual family . . . such that individualized care is correctly deployed, and the greatest impact is achieved with the available means of support.[67]

The nationalist commissions now best represented the values that the state itself wanted to appropriate. The funds from the WuWf flowed through the district offices of the provincial commissions in Bohemia beginning in June 1915, and a year later the success of this arrangement encouraged the WuWf to extend the partnership to

[64] Josef Petr, "Zprávy poručník z povolání," *Ochrana mládeže: Časopis pro veřejnou a soukromou péči o mládež v Království českém* 7 (1917): 151.

[65] For German statistics and quotation, see "Auszug aus dem Tätigkeitsbericht"; for Czech statistics, see Z. 8504, October 25, 1917; both in Carton 2475, Jugendfürsorge 1918, MfSV, AdR, ÖSTA; and *Ochrana dítěte: Časopis české zemské komise pro ochranu dítek a péči o mládež v Markrabství moravském* 5 (August 15, 1916): 5; and 6 (May 31, 1917): 8.

[66] "Hinterbliebenen und Jugendfürsorge," May 11, 1918, Carton 2481, Jugendfürsorge, MfSV, AdR, ÖSTA.

[67] Memo from December 5, 1917, to the Ministries of Finance and Social Welfare, Z. 1262, Z. 1246, Carton 49, Präsidium, MfSV, AdR, ÖSTA.

the other multilingual crownlands (including Galicia, Bukovina, and Styria).[68] The financial dependence of the state on these half-private organizations is striking. Much of what was officially called "state support" during World War I was in fact money raised by private charities. The monarchy's largest welfare fund thus relied heavily on the generosity and patriotism of Austrian citizens. The ČZK in Bohemia alone raised 514,000 Austrian crowns for the WuWf in 1915–1916.[69] The state could not compete with the impressive fundraising efforts and expertise of local nationalists, and recognized that the best strategy was to harness this formidable power to its own emerging social welfare apparatus.

Officials responsible for the WuWf believed that individuals were more inclined toward charitable donations for welfare purposes when they were guaranteed that their money would be used within their locality and would exclusively benefit conationals. The agreement they created with the DLS and ČZK therefore specified that 75 percent of any funds raised by a local office would remain in that district. Equally important, the state recognized that its social goals could be realized only through another kind of financial contribution, namely the efforts of voluntary (female) labor. "The fund will do best not to create new organizations, which, especially in smaller places, could be staffed only by the same people and therefore create unnecessary complications or otherwise lead to clearly undesirable rivalries and tensions," officials in the WuWf argued in August 1916.[70] The leader of the Youth Office of the Ministry for Social Welfare in Vienna, Eduard Prinz von Liechtenstein, applauded this cooperation between the state and the provincial commissions until the war's end, also emphasizing rationality and efficiency. In a widely published lecture given in May 1918, he praised the merger of the DLS, ČZK, and WuWf, which "puts the advertisement of its ideals and also the people who are available for this branch of work in the service of the common cause—and so both win out."[71]

The financial justifications for the state's contract with the nationalists remind us of the extent to which the "nationalization" of public life and institutions in the Habsburg Monarchy was often a consequence of middle-class activism rather than popular sentiment. The state was certainly intent on revitalizing its popular legitimacy, but that legitimacy depended on the adequate provision of welfare services. Provision of services, in turn, hinged on the financial generosity and volunteer labor of middle-class individuals and organizations, those most likely to be nationalist. The decision to embrace a nationally segregated welfare state may have ultimately reflected the nationalist loyalties of charitable middle-class women much more than the nationalist affiliations or demands of the working-class and peasant clients of welfare organizations, in spite of claims by the nationalists that they represented the popular will.[72]

In fact, it seems that parents in bilingual regions rarely chose welfare institutions

[68] "Zemská úřadovna c.k. fondu pro vdovy a sirotky po rakouských vojínech, " *Ochrana dítěte* 6 (March 15, 1917): 1.

[69] "Činnost organisační a správní 1916," *Ochrana mládeže* 7 (May 31, 1917): 138.

[70] K.k. Österreichische Militär-Witwen und Waisenfond, Memo to the Ministries of Defense and the War Welfare Bureau, Z. 3645, August 2, 1916, Carton 2479, Jugendfürsorge, MfSV, AdR, ÖSTA.

[71] Hinterbliebenen und Jugendfürsorge, Z. 6731, May 11, 1918, Carton 2481, Jugendfürsorge, MfSV, AdR, ÖSTA.

[72] On the Austrian state's wartime dependence on the voluntary labor and financial support of middle-class citizens, see Redlich, *Österreichische Regierung*, 153–156.

on the basis of nationalist loyalties. For example, the DLS lamented in 1909 that it was difficult to maintain the desired level of national segregation in its daycare centers in Prague. The organization had established five nurseries for German preschool children in the city, all "created through German initiative and largely maintained by German money." But activists had to concede in frustration that these institutions "almost exclusively benefited the children of the Czech working classes."[73] Such complaints suggested the practical limits of segregating social welfare institutions and organizations at the local level. Families in need probably based their choice of daycare centers, soup kitchens, and nurseries far more on the generosity of the organizations and on their geographical proximity than on their national loyalties. Heinrich Holek, a working-class, bilingual Bohemian, recounted in his memoir that his own father had decided to send him to a Czech school because of the many welfare benefits being offered to its pupils, rather than out of nationalist conviction. He recalled, "No Czech child should attend a German school! This motto was promoted by the Czechs with great zeal. For my father, however, this propaganda was less decisive than the fact that the children of poor parents were promised clothing and shoes as Christmas gifts."[74]

Political theorists and sociologists commonly suggest that a unified national culture is an essential basis for a developing welfare state. Will Kymlicka argues, for example, that "the sort of solidarity essential for a welfare state requires that citizens have a strong sense of common identity and common membership, so they will make sacrifices for each other, and this common identity is assumed to require (or at least be facilitated by) a common language and history."[75] Such arguments, however, presume the preexistence of national communities, rather than exploring how welfare regimes have been used to first create such communities or to strengthen nationalist sentiment. Instead of seeing social solidarity as the product of a shared identity, we might consider how shared identities have been imagined and constituted through social assistance. Middle-class nationalists in the Bohemian lands justified their claims on working-class children on the basis of alleged nationally bound social needs, arguing that they alone possessed the expertise and popular legitimacy to care for war-damaged children. In fact, the emerging nationally segregated welfare state in the Bohemian lands did not reflect the strength of preexisting national loyalties or essential national differences; rather, it reflected the success of a nationalist strategy for claiming ever more Bohemian and Moravian children as Czechs and Germans.

By 1918, nationalists in Austria held a firm mandate to realize some of their most ambitious ideals with regard to youth. German and Czech social welfare activists were united in the self-congratulatory rhetoric that they both deployed to advertise their role as the local arms of the Austrian state, protectors of children from the

[73] "Mädchenfürsorge," *Jahrbuch der deutschen Jugendfürsorge* 2 (1909): 98–99.

[74] Heinrich Holek, *Unterwegs: Eine Selbstbiographie, mit Bildnis des Verfassers* (Vienna, 1927), 146.

[75] Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (Oxford, 1995), 77; Peter Baldwin, *The Politics of Social Solidarity: Class Bases of the European Welfare State, 1875–1975* (New York, 1990), 33.

brutality of war and parental neglect. Czech nationalists in Moravia boasted proudly in March 1918 of their significant power as mediators between the Austrian state and Czech-speaking children. The ČZK assured its supporters that it had achieved "the greatest influence in all practical matters. Every single application from the Czech side must first go through the orphan councils and the ČZK."[76] Even the most extreme German nationalists indulged in this spirit of self-congratulation. In a June 1918 article in the nationalist *Deutsche Volkszeitung*, nationalists informed citizens in Reichenberg that each and every German was nothing less than a democratic shareholder in the new Austrian welfare state: "One often encounters the claim that the care of war widows and orphans is not the responsibility of private charity, but is solely the task of the state. This view is fundamentally correct . . . Only—who is the state in the final analysis? In fact it is only us, in that directly or indirectly, we must provide the state with the means that will enable it to fulfill its duties." Thanks to the fusion of the WuWf with the DLS, German nationalists insisted that nationalist activism had become coterminous with support for the Austrian state:

> Everything that the Imperial Widow and Orphan Fund collects through its commissions . . . will be painstakingly nationally managed so that it is absolutely impossible that Czech war victims will be provided for with German money or Germans with Czech money. The efforts of the Fund deserve our strongest support, because everything which we do for the WuWf, we are only doing for ourselves.[77]

World War I ultimately offered rich opportunities for German and Czech nationalists alike to "become father and mother" to unprecedented numbers of children in the Bohemian lands. "More than ever, we must step in for the ideal of the family," urged teacher and DLS activist Karl Theimer in 1918.[78] Children, nationalists hoped, would respond to their new national "families" with all the loyalty they felt toward their biological parents. Moreover, thanks to their role in addressing the perceived crisis of the family during the First World War, nationalist movements in the Bohemian lands were well-positioned to speak in the name of popular legitimacy and social justice at the end of the war. Austrian authorities willingly entrusted the state's most ambitious social welfare programs to local nationalists, in an attempt to avoid the fate of the Russian Empire. If citizens and political activists increasingly expressed their social grievances in nationalist terms, this was no accident (or error) of history. The state's own reliance on nationalists to boost popular morale and address social grievances contributed heavily to this development. The national revolutions of 1918–1919 did not simply reflect a "misplaced" expression of social demands as national demands, the climactic result of Czech émigré maneuvering, or a revolt by the nationalized masses against the tottering Austrian state. These revolutions were co-produced by dissatisfied Czech and German citizens, a state in fear

[76] Zpráva o sedmém roce činnosti české zemské komise pro ochranu dětí a péči o mládež v Markrabství moravském, Z. 2498, Carton 2476, Jugendfürsorge, MfSV, AdR, ÖSTA.

[77] "Der k.k. Österr. Militär-Witwen und Waisenfond, seine Bedeutung und sein Aufgaben," *Reichenberger Deutsche Volkszeitung*, June 16, 1918, 1–2, Carton 2481, Jugendfürsorge, MfSV, AdR, ÖSTA.

[78] Aufruf, Bund der Deutschen in Böhmen, Sig. 13u-1 1917, Zemská školní rada, Carton 2587, NA; Bericht über die Errichtung der Frauenkriegsbeisteuergruppen durch die Deutsche Landeskommission für Kinderschutz und Jugendfürsorge, Z. 7873–18. AdR, MfSV, Carton 2476, Jugendfürsorge 1918, ÖSTA.

of social revolution, and the prescient idealism and opportunism of nationalist social welfare movements, which eagerly offered the state a leg to stand on.

In the Bohemian lands, as elsewhere in Europe, World War I represented an important moment in the expansion of the welfare state. The welfare of children was intimately linked to the legitimacy of the state and the nation's future demographic, military, and political strength. But in the Austrian Empire, nation and state were not coterminous. When Austrian officials entrusted private nationalist associations with the management of the wartime welfare state, German and Czech nationalists significantly expanded their authority over children and the family. This development did not, however, represent a radical new assault on "natural" parental rights, or a disciplinary "invasion" of a previously apolitical private sphere. In the Bohemian lands, children already occupied a different place on the frontiers between nation, state, and family before 1914. Well before 1914, children "belonged" to the nation, as nationalists had successfully advanced the claim that the family alone was ill-equipped to protect children's moral, social, and national well-being. Likewise in Western Europe, a view of emerging wartime welfare states as a novel and dangerous form of state interference with parental rights is based in part on problematic assumptions about the family before 1914. If sovereign fathers, sanctified parental rights, and strict divisions between public and private represented a liberal ideal in Western Europe in the nineteenth century, realities for working-class and rural families certainly looked quite different. Children worked in factories and on farms, lived and played in the streets, and were cared for by wet nurses and relatives. Parents themselves were subject to the social disciplinary gaze of churches, local communities, and relatives. Well before World War I, childhood and child-rearing had been politicized by Europe's growing mass political movements, and by nationalizing states, which articulated new pedagogical ideals in order to realize their political visions.

Moreover, when European states did take on the growing responsibility for children's health and welfare, they often built on preexisting local, municipal, and private initiatives. Across Europe, centralized states frequently relied on the legitimacy, expertise, personnel, and financial resources of private organizations during the Great War, creating hybrid welfare structures in which the lines between public and private were far from clear. The state itself was not a unified or homogeneous entity, and "intervention" did not simply emerge from the top down. Expanding wartime welfare programs were a product of popular demands and concerns as well as state and middle-class activism. Moreover, state officials and welfare organizations explicitly sought to claim and cultivate popular legitimacy through their child welfare initiatives, however polemical those claims.

Finally, in writing the history of emerging welfare states, we must be careful not to idealize what came before. Scholarly assertions about how bureaucratic states invaded the private sphere or destroyed parental rights during wartime should be greeted with skepticism. Welfare activists, teachers, and state officials across Europe certainly had explicitly pedagogical and political intentions when they mobilized to socialize, feed, and care for the nation's children during wartime. However, suspicion of these campaigns often rests on a romanticized ideal of the self-sufficient and apolitical family as the natural unit for child-rearing. The welfare state in the Bo-

hemian lands was shaped by a competing understanding of the family, in which children were not seen as the private property or sole responsibility of their parents. The history of nationalist child welfare in the Bohemian lands in the early twentieth century reveals that the location of children on the frontiers between imagined "public" and "private" spheres has shifted and been contested across both time and space. Nationalists' campaigns to protect, educate, and enlist children for political struggles shaped both changing relationships between nation, state, and empire, and the imagined boundaries between public and private in twentieth-century Europe.

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