

Tourism, Travel, and National Activism in the Böhmerwald, South Tyrol and South Styria around 1900

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Von warmen Freunden des Deutschtums wurden Anregungen zur [nationalen] Abhilfe vorgebracht [...] und da könnte gerade ein Faktor recht wirksam eingreifen, die Touristik, die moderne Völkerwanderung, die alljährlich tausende von Deutschen hinführt in ferne Gegenden, wo das Deutschtum in schwerem Kampfe mit wällschen und slavischen Gegnern liegt.¹

Wir Deutsche haben die Pflicht, und das jetzt mehr denn früher, vor allem dorthin zu gehen, wo wir bedrohtes Deutschtum zu stützen haben, nationale Arbeit leisten können auch beim Geniessen.²

Wer seinen Urlaub an der Adria zu verbringen gedenkt, der kann durch Besuch dieser deutschen Gaststätte zugleich einen deutschen Besitz erhalten helfen.³

At the opening of the last century a travel guide to the linguistically diverse South Tyrol appeared that contained the following remarkable statement: “[Ich] halte es für notwendig [...] darauf hinzuweisen, dass das nachstehende Verzeichnis kein Reiseführer sein will, und das es deshalb auch nicht nach touristischen, sondern ausschliesslich nach nationalen Gesichtspunkten zusammengestellt ist. [...] Denn immer noch gibt es deutsche Reisende in Menge, die keine Ahnung davon haben und kein Verständnis dafür besitzen, dass jeder deutsche Gast in diesen national so heiss umkämpften Gebieten zugleich Träger einer völkischen Aufgabe ist, die er zu erfüllen hat.”⁴

The author, Wilhelm Rohmeder, nationalist activist and co-founder of the *Tiroler Volksbund* (1905) challenged the German traveler to join the

1 Mitteilungen des Vereines deutscher Touristen Brünn 2 (1903), p. 8.

2 Ewald HAUSE, Soll der Deutsche die slawischen Küstengestade des Südens besuchen? In: Mitteilungen des Vereines Südmark (1910), p. 38.

3 Mitteilungen des Vereines Südmark 1912, pp. 116–117.

4 Wilhelm ROHMEDEDER, Gasthäuser in den sprachlichen Grenzgebieten Südtirols, welche deutschen Reisenden zu empfehlen sind. In: *Alldeutsche Blätter*, Sonder-Abdruck 25 o.J., pp. 1–12. The guide was frequently republished in the decade before 1914.

ongoing war for national survival that supposedly pitted local Germans against Italians in the Tyrol. Rohmeder demanded that nationally conscious travelers spend their money in the correct establishments, and boycott those that abetted the enemy. His guide carefully evaluated the nationalist commitment of even the smallest establishments in the tiniest of mountain villages, and warned the reader to beware the subtle subterfuges of an enemy who well knew how to take advantage of any traveler's inexperience. Rohmeder's exercise contained both elements of hubris as well as of extraordinary naivete. The naivete lay in Rohmeder's absolute confidence that the tourist, once alerted to the issue, would arrange his consumer choices according to an abstract principle like nationality. And he would do so at a moment when he may have been far more concerned with obtaining a good meal than with the national identity of its cook! Rohmeder's hubris lies in his conviction that he can actually categorize every hotel or restaurant owner according to a clear principle of national identity. In this guidebook one is either a German ally or one is an enemy of the Germans. If there are any difficulties in making such a determination they are associated with the fact that tourist establishments often change hands and not with the assumption that national commitment is somehow transparent.

Rohmeder's project rested on yet another problematic assumption and that was the idea that nationalist political activism somehow transcended the daily boundaries separating the personal realm from that of the public and political world. In fact, Rohmeder wanted to erase those boundaries. Although the traveler may have considered tourism a purely private leisure activity, Rohmeder demands that he (or she!) infuse this individual activity with the same nationalist vigilance normally reserved for community political life. Rohmeder's writings invoked a far more extremist ideology than that of most German nationalists in Austria around 1900, yet he was not exceptional in his concern to link the private habits of the individual consumer to some kind of nationalist form of self-identification. Elsewhere in the Habsburg Monarchy activists of all kinds discovered in tourism one of several forms of personal consumption that might usefully be made to serve a nationalist cause.

This essay examines attempts like Rohmeder's to link tourist habits and practices to national identity and thereby to create something approaching a nationalist tourism industry. The analysis rests on examples drawn largely from three regions of Austria that produced very different tourist industries, as well as very different types of German nationalist movements: the South Tyrol, the Böhmerwald region of Southern Bohemia,

and Southern Styria.⁵ Some of my questions are more easily addressed than are others. How did German nationalist associations use tourism as a means both to create and to promote their particular visions of national identity within the Austrian Empire? What exactly did nationalist organizations hope to gain from their rhetorical focus on tourism, for example, or from their material investments in this developing new industry? Other questions challenge us to step outside of our nationalized present, a world where Rohmeder's assumptions (or hopes!) are much easier to grant than was in fact the case in 1900. Did German speakers in these three regions identify themselves as German nationalists? And if we grant this highly questionable assumption we must still ask whether German nationalist fixation on tourism actually shaped the practices of individual tourists? Even more difficult to answer is the question of whether efforts like Rohmeder's impacted the activities of local tourist industries?

The notion that tourism could somehow serve a nationalist interest was not uncommon in turn of the century Western and Central Europe, yet it assumed a different form in Austria than in self defined nation states like France, Germany, England, or Italy. In those emerging nation states, tourism offered both nationalists and the state a symbolic means to unify culturally diverse societies. Tourist literature might emphasize the unique identity of a discrete region or *Heimat*, but it also located that region in a larger narrative whose inexorable logic produced a united national culture.⁶ The anti-nationalist Habsburg state in fact promoted such an

- 5 The South Tyrol boasted a well-developed tourism industry by Austrian standards at the turn of the century, whereas the Böhmerwald and South Styria faced serious infrastructural obstacles to their development either as centers for Sommerfrische or for Wintersport. German nationalism also looked quite different in each of these areas and varied in the degree of political influence it commanded. So-called Progressive, anti-clerical German nationalists dominated politics both in Styria and Deutschböhmen (as it came to be called around 1900), yet faced a more complex situation in the Tyrol, where clerical conservatives and increasingly Christian Socials dominated rural areas as well as the provincial Landtag. German nationalist associational life in Styria, dominated largely by the anti-Semitic Südmark, also differed from that in southern bohemia, where the ideologically more liberal deutscher Böhmerwaldbund set the tone. In the Tyrol after 1905 the Südmark competed unsuccessfully with the Tiroler Volksbund. The latter promoted a vision of nationalist life that paid lip service both to the power of the Catholic Church as well as to Tyrol's strong provincial identity, while the Südmark suffered from accusations of crypto-Protestantism.
- 6 On tourism and national identity see Rudy KOSHAR, "What ought to be seen": Tourists' Guidebooks and National Identities in Modern Germany and Europe. In: *Journal of Contemporary History* 33 (1998). For good examples of how the concept of *Heimat* tied a particular regional identity to a larger national one in Germany, see Alon CONFINO, *The Nation as Local Metaphor. Württemberg, Imperial Germany, and National Memory, 1871–1918*, Chapel Hill 1998. German nationalists often adopted or modified strategies that had already been tested by their Czech nationalist opponents, including their emphasis on tourism. See, for example, Pavla VOSAHLÍKOVÁ, *Bädertouristik. Ihre Bedingungen und ihre Form in Österreich-Ungarn bis zu dem Ersten Weltkrieg*, unpublished manuscript. I thank Dr. Vosahlíková for sharing the results of her research on Czech nationalist efforts to establish spas that would compete with the traditionally German-dominated spa towns in Bohemia. On Ger-

approach, similar in its unifying intent.⁷ Both the state and most private Austrian tourist organizations depicted the Monarchy as a culturally diverse yet institutionally united entity loyal to the dynasty in the person of Emperor Francis Joseph. They characterized ethnic, linguistic or religious differences as purely regional, not national ones, seeing cultural pluralism as something of a tourist attraction in itself, and cultural interaction as a positive good. As one study of tourism in Austria noted, [...] innerhalb dieser mitteleuropäischen Gemeinschaft erhält der Fremdenverkehr eine über seine wirtschaftliche Wirkung hinausgehende Bedeutung; der Reisegast wird hier [...] als ein Kulturbote [auftreten], der die Annäherung der befreundeten Völker und die Vertiefung ihrer gegenseitigen Beziehungen befördert.⁸

By contrast, German or Czech nationalists in Austria used tourism as a means to subvert the government's emphasis on an inter-regional, unified public culture organized around dynastic patriotism. Yet even as nationalists undermined the notion of a common Austrian identity, they offered an alternative concept that stressed a different kind of interregional unity. Czech nationalists worked hard to create a common sense of identity to link Czech speakers in Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia. German nationalists promoted a common identity that supposedly linked German speakers across the Monarchy, from Vorarlberg in the west to the Bukowina in the east. The fierce political competition that pitted Czech, German, Italian, Polish, and Slovene nationalist politicians against each other for local political hegemony and the distribution of state resources provided

man nationalist efforts linked to alpine tourism, see Rainer AMSTÄDTER, *Der Alpinismus. Kultur – Organisation – Politik*, Wien 1996, and Laurence Cole, "Für Gott, Kaiser und Vaterland." *Nationale Identität der deutschsprachigen Bevölkerung Tirols 1860–1914* (Studien zur historischen Sozialwissenschaft 28), Frankfurt/New York 2000. On the local escalation of nationalist division of the tourism industry in the South Tyrol around 1900, see Michael WEDEKIND, *La politicizzazione della montagna; borghesia, alpinismo e nazionalismo tra Otto e Novecento*. In: *Archivio Trentino* 49 (2000) 2, pp. 19–52. There is now a growing literature on the institution of the Sommerfrische in Austria, but nothing yet that connects it explicitly to nationalist concerns. See Hanns HAAS, *Die Sommerfrische – Ort der Bürgerlichkeit*. In: Hannes STECKL/Peter URBANITSCH/Ernst BRUCKMÜLLER/Hans HEISS (eds.), "Durch Arbeit, Besitz, Wissen und Gerechtigkeit" (Bürgertum in der Habsburgermonarchie 2), Wien/Köln 1992, pp. 364–377.

7 See, for example, the publication *Reise und Sport*, originally the *Österreichische illustrierte Alpenzeitung*, whose lavish illustrations, frequent supplements and international readership bespoke a far bigger budget and readership than any comparable German or Czech nationalist tourism journal. Although *Reise und Sport* occasionally praised German cultural achievement and listed several German nationalist organizations among its sponsors, it clearly aimed to avoid any nationalist conflict. It promoted a kind of generalized German pride that frequently lauded the accomplishments of the Czechs and other national groups in Austria as well. In 1911 the *Südmark* attacked *Reise und Sport*, claiming for example, that it was financed by Czech banks. *Mitteilungen des Vereines Südmark* (1911), p. 353.

8 Josef STRADNER, *Der Fremdenverkehr*, Graz 1972, p. 100.

the political context for the rise of nationalist tourism.⁹ But at least among German nationalists this form of tourism was also meant to build the concept of a geographically far-flung and united community of Germans in Central Europe.

The perceived necessity for a common German nationalist politics within the Empire grew out of the increasing political mobilization of Austrian society since the implementation of constitutional life in 1848, 1861 and 1867. By the 1890s the expansion of the suffrage had radically changed the character of German nationalist ideologies and organizations in Austria. Earlier more elitist and localized forms of German nationalism going back to 1848 had borrowed heavily from a liberal worldview, imagining that universal education and increased social mobility in the Monarchy would, for example, inevitably transform Slavs into cultural Germans.¹⁰ By the 1880s, however, it had already become clear that liberal educational reforms had only strengthened other nationalist movements, and that Slav nationalists in general expressed little interest any more in 'becoming' Germans. This reality was finally brought home to most German nationalists when the unthinkable occurred in 1879. In that year a coalition of anti-Liberal Slav and Conservative parties replaced the German Liberal parties that had wielded considerable power since the dawn of the constitutional era.

German nationalists in the 1880s quickly abandoned much of their socially elitist heritage and attempted to mobilize a broader constituency defined more by national self identification rather than by education, property ownership, or social status. Their growing populism produced a less flexible, ethnic definition of nation that was rooted in the specifics of language use and increasingly linked to geography. The predominant role activists gave to language use in defining identity is crucial to understanding the changing nature of nationalist politics in Austria. The liberal constitution of 1867 did not recognize the existence of nationalities as such in Austria, but it did promise to establish linguistic equality in public life to the greatest extent possible. After 1867 nationalist political conflict in the Monarchy focused on the institutional application of this constitutional

9 This competition for resources was clearly understood by most mainstream nationalists (Czech, German) within the accepted context of the Imperial State. It represented a contest for greater influence within Austrian institutions, not an attempt to destroy those institutions or to secede from the Monarchy.

10 See, for example, the arguments about national identity made in the 1848 Viennese newspaper *Schwarz-Roth-Gold*, or the 1861 anonymous pamphlet *Das Deutschtum in Krain. Ein Wort zur Aufklärung*, Graz 1862. Pieter M. JUDSON, *Exclusive Revolutionaries. Liberal Politics, Social Experience, and National Identity in the Austrian Empire, 1848–1914*, Ann Arbor 1996, pp. 49–64.

provision to specific communities. Nationalist conflict increasingly centered on questions of language use in local public life, from street signs to schools. Activists of all kinds therefore stressed the close correlation of language use to an innate national identity. They defined co-nationals as those who spoke a common language, no matter what other cultural differences might separate them. At the same time, nationalists deployed every kind of statistical data and even developments in cartography to lend their territorial claims a greater aura of positivist objectivity. Increasingly, they asserted the particularly national character of places, not simply of populations, irrespective, of course, of how local Austrians actually viewed themselves.¹¹

Questions about the nationalist uses of tourism are therefore more complex than may at first be apparent, because they appear to treat classifications like “nationalist”, “German”, “Czech” or “Italian” as self-explanatory categories of analysis. Yet despite the claims of nationalist activists themselves, these categories constituted anything but stable forms of self-identification in 1900. Nor was it at all clear in the early twentieth century who they encompassed, who for example was a German?¹² German nationalists in Austria rallied a diverse range of political supporters by deploying an aggressive rhetorical defense of their nation’s supposed rights against the encroachments of other so-called nations. Yet activists spent even more time trying to instill a nationalist self-consciousness among their own linguistic brothers and sisters, than in fighting some national enemy. Rohmeder’s guidebook might angrily denounce the cunning used by Italian nationalists to rob the unsuspecting German visitor to the South Tyrol, yet the real object of this guide was often the unsuspecting German speaker who did not yet realize that he was in fact a German nationalist. Tourism was one of several new forms of consumption invoked by nationalists to help instill a sense of national identity and national commitment in potential nationalists who did not yet share in that identity.

Of equal concern to nationalist activists was the precise content of that national identity, the question of determining who belonged to the nation and who did not belong. Some promoted the idea of a racialized

11 Emil BRIX, *Die Umgangssprache in Altösterreich zwischen Agitation und Assimilation. Die Sprachenstatistik in den zisleithanischen Volkszählungen 1880 bis 1910*, Wien 1982, demonstrates how the census became politicized, linking national claims to geographic regions. See also Pieter M. JUDSON, *Frontiers, Islands, Forests, Stones: Mapping the Geography of a German Identity in the Habsburg Monarchy, 1848–1900*. In: Patricia YEAGER (ed.), *The Geography of Identity*, Ann Arbor 1996, pp. 382–406.

12 Jeremy KING, *The Nationalization of East Central Europe, Ethnicism, Ethnicity, and Beyond*. In: Maria BUCUR/Nancy WINGFIELD (eds.), *Staging the Past. The Politics of Commemoration in Habsburg Central Europe, 1848 to the Present*, West Lafayette 2001, pp. 112–152.

national community while others defined their nation by language use or cultural values. Many nationalists subscribed to a situational view of national identity that incorporated elements of several positions in an unstable tension. The boundaries between a racially anti-Semitic view of nation and a purely cultural view were not always so clearly drawn. But however activists defined the content of their identity, their efforts to promote nationalism focused far more on promoting their particular version of it than on fighting a national enemy. Despite aggressive rhetoric directed outward, German nationalist activism in Austria actually focused foremost on constituting and popularizing German identity among German speakers.

Thus a key challenge to nationalist activists throughout Austria was to “awaken” (as they saw it) the sense of national identity that lay dormant among all potential members of a nation, that is, among those who spoke a given language. Tourism offered particular ideological possibilities to the early twentieth-century nationalist who was trying to delineate the boundaries that separated his nation from other nations, and to make those boundaries visible to others. Tourism brought together ideas about landscape, nature, history, and authenticity, and each of these elements was also an important element to defining nations within the Habsburg Monarchy.

German nationalists used tourism as a strategy to make their national identity meaningful to German-speaking Austrians in three ways. First, they made tourism a key part of their attempts to anchor German identity more strongly in the private world and thus the consciousness of individual consumers. This effort produced little more than propaganda, but it added a popular theme to the rhetoric of economic self-help and nationalist boycotts.¹³ Second, nationalists used tourism and tourist literature to give the landscape a national character. This effort produced a great deal of aggressive propaganda and occasional violence. Third, some nationalists used tourism as a means to raise the economic viability of German-speaking populations in order to prevent further population decline or even a “mixing” among peoples. Tourism brought the promise of economic prosperity to those communities flexible enough in their outlook to take good advantage of the opportunities it offered. This too appealed to nationalists who often sought to preserve the linguistic and national identity of so-

13 For an excellent consideration of the controversial rhetoric of economic boycotts within the Czech and German nationalist movements in Bohemia, see Catherine ALBRECHT, *The Rhetoric of Economic Nationalism in the Bohemian Boycott Campaigns of the Late Habsburg Monarchy*. In: *Austrian History Yearbook 2001*, pp. 47–67.

called Sprachinseln in the face of migration and economic decline. Ironically, these economic efforts, when successful, tended to mute the more strident nationalist rhetoric of radical nationalists as it brought some real economic benefits.¹⁴ Clearly each of these three kinds of efforts also shared overlapping goals to some extent.

Locating German Identity in the Private World of Consumption

Always on the lookout for innovative strategies to use against their opponents, organizations like the Deutscher Schulverein, the Südmark, or the Tiroler Volksbund increasingly sought to raise nationalist awareness by convincing the individual to apply nationalist principles to questions of personal consumption. Nationalists tried to link public activism to personal life by making national identity a critical consideration in how consumers spent both their income and their leisure time. Associations offered inexpensive household items, selling mountains of kitchen matches, soap, shoe polish, pipes, pins, hats, pencils, postcards, stationery, and stamps. These products advertised the consumer's nationalist loyalties while their purchase lent material support to the nationalist cause. "Der Tiroler Volksbund ist in seinem schweren Kampfe auf die werktätige Unterstützung aller seiner Mitglieder angewiesen. Durch Bezug und Verschleiss der Verkaufsgegenstände können dem Bunde viele Mittel zugeführt werden."¹⁵

A few organizations proceeded beyond such small-scale consumption to suggest that travel to one of the so-called Sprachgrenze regions might help to raise an individual's nationalist consciousness. The consumer should visit the sites where it was imagined that nations fought a daily battle over the boundaries that separated them. One nationalist tourist tract praised the tourist who visited the Sprachgrenze, claiming that the national struggle dignified [adelt] not only those who fought the daily battles, "er adelt auch diejenigen, die ihn als bewundernde Zeugen mitfühlen – miterleben."¹⁶ This newly enlightened nationalist would return home with a personal understanding of the importance of nationalist identity having witnessed the terrible struggle of his brothers and sisters. In the future he or she would be more careful about other forms of daily

14 On the organization of the industry in Cisleithania see aniz Josef STRADNER, *Der Fremdenverkehr*, Graz 1917, and Arthur MÜLLER, *Das Problem des Fremdenverkehrs in Österreich. Psychologische-propagandistische Betrachtungen*, Wien 1909.

15 *Tiroler Volksbund Kalender*, Innsbruck 1911, no page numbers.

16 *Mitteilungen des Vereines deutscher Touristen Brünn* 2 (1903), p. 8.

consumption, such as where one shopped or whom one employed. This was the case, for example, with the well-publicized trip to the South Styrian village of St. Egydi in 1913 of a group of pupils from Mannheim. The pupils had read Rudolf Hans Bartsch's *Heimatroman* "Das deutsche Leid", and proclaimed a desire to see the actual Sprachgrenze where much of the novel was set. After their tour, including several social evenings with local German nationalist groups, the pupils returned home, promising to publicize their emotional impressions of life on the Sprachgrenze.¹⁷

For nationalists the issue of encouraging the right kinds of consumption (and tourism in particular) was not a simple one. Tourism, as a form of leisure activity, had to be linked to ideas about moral improvement, otherwise it might be seen as a form of irresponsible hedonism. Early tourist literature thus displayed a profound concern to present bourgeois tourism as an educational activity that promoted self-improvement rather than self-indulgence. This fit well with emerging ideas about national identity that defined virtue in terms of personal commitment to the national community rather than in terms of abstract liberal ideals. Consumer choice assumed a moral dimension when made for the good of the nation. Nationalist appeals frequently depicted Austrian Germans as people who sought only enjoyment in life and whose easy-going ways had enabled the Slavs and Italians to make so many territorial, cultural and legal gains at German expense. German speakers who lived in areas of Austria where there was little or no Slav presence were described as lazy or unthinking, since they could easily ignore the problem of nationalist conflict that was not part of their daily existence. A writer for the *Südmark* in 1912 claimed that it was clear that, "eigentlich wir Deutschösterreicher unseren völkischen Niedergang durch unsere Selbstsucht, Genusssucht und Gleichgültigkeit hinsichtlich unseres Volkes Schicksal und Zukunft selbst verschuldet haben."¹⁸

As a form of leisure and enjoyment, tourism too might also be suspected of encouraging the worst traits among the Germans. Thus nationalists who promoted tourism linked it consciously to concepts of duty, labor, and personal virtue. A 1903 manifesto published by the German Tourist Association of Brunn (Czech: Brno), for example, stressed tourism's

17 *Mitteilungen des Vereins Südmark* (1913), p. 400. St. Egydi was a source of particular pride for the *Südmark*, since it was here that it attempted to increase the German population by settling German "colonists" from Schwaben.

18 *Zwecks Vermehrung des deutschen Fremdenverkehrs*. In: *Mitteilungen des Vereins Südmark* (1912), pp. 150–151.

potentially moral and hygienic functions: "Der Leser soll mit dem Endziele der Touristik, mit den hygienischen Vorteilen und der sittlichen Bedeutung derselben bekannt werden." The appeal then linked these morally positive elements of tourism to the nationalist cause, stressing the ways that the tourist could serve the nation: "Halte auch jeder nicht zuletzt die hohe Aufgabe vor Augen, welche unser Verein für unser schwer bedrängtes, deutsches Volkstum zu erfüllen hat."¹⁹ And yet, tourism was also meant to be enjoyable. So even as they couched their appeals in sternly moralizing terms, nationalists maintained that work for the nation could also be personally fulfilling. "Die Sommerfrischen und Kurorte mit ihren wohlhabenden Gästen...bieten ein aussichtsvolles Arbeitsfeld für jede Art völkischer Betätigung, die für den wahrhaft deutschgesinnten Urlauber keine Arbeit, sondern eine Freude und ein Vergnügen ist."²⁰

One might well ask whether such nationalist exhortations actually shaped consumer choices, or whether they fell on deaf ears? Each organization does seem to have raised a not inconsiderable sum for its annual budget through the sale of kitchen matches and postcards. But did this propaganda actually shape tourist behavior? When in 1907 the Südmark advertised "die erste Südmarkreise" to its members with some fanfare, no one actually expressed interest in the proposed ten-day guided tour of the threatened regions of southern Styria and Carinthia, and the idea had to be dropped.²¹ We will investigate this question somewhat further below, but here I want to stress that it didn't much matter whether tourists changed their behavior or not. Even if tourist literature may not actually have brought German-speakers in great numbers to visit the threatened Sprachgrenze, it at least made them far more aware of the existence of nationalist conflict by familiarizing them with the local sights and sounds of such regions. This brings us to the second and related nationalist use of tourism.

Nationalizing the Landscape through Tourism

Tourist literature became an important instrument as nationalists increasingly sought to give real places a national identity, using a mix of ethnographic and historical arguments. Long before Austro-German nationalists took up tourism, their publications featured informative articles about particular places that, while part of the broader German cultural heritage, were unfamiliar to the average reader. Starting in the mid 1880s,

19 An unsere Leser! In: Mitteilungen des Vereines Deutscher Touristen Brünn, 1 January 1903, p. 1.

20 Völkische Ferialarbeit für unsere Sommerfrischler Touristen und Studenten. In: Mitteilungen des Vereines Südmark (1909), p. 329.

21 Viktor Heeger, Die erste Südmarkreise. In: Mittheilungen des Vereines Südmark (1906/07), pp. 273–275.

almanacs, associational reports, journals and nationalist newspapers encouraged their readers to learn more about German peoples and their physical environment without ever leaving home. *Das Deutschtum in der Bukowina* or *Die Deutschen in Galizien* for example, were particularly popular topics that repeatedly appeared in the publications of several regional nationalist associations. In 1906 members of one nationalist organization even petitioned the leadership to include pictures in its publications: “Wenn von irgendeinem bedrohten Orte ein Bild erscheint, so wird das viel mehr beachtet, viel mehr Eindruck machen und in Erinnerung bleiben, als wie ein paar trockene Zeilen.”²²

Such articles sought to define for their audience just what it meant to be German by describing far-away German communities, their customs, crafts, religious practice, architecture, as in some basic way similar to the reader's own familiar world. Suggesting that common language use meant that the readers shared a fundamental identity with other German speakers across the Monarchy, these articles also aimed to root the reader's abstract understanding of national identity more fully in a specific geography.²³ Tourist literature often added the element of historical geography to a nationalist rhetorical arsenal that had previously relied on the question of local language usage alone to argue its positions. Earlier nationalist debates had often centered on relatively abstract questions regarding the general rules of language use in the civil service or in educational institutions. Now, for example, popular guidebooks re-described traditionally multi-ethnic regions in the Tyrol or Bohemia as originally and therefore authentically German. They claimed a homogeneous German Bohemian Woods, South Tyrol, or South Styria, using an anti-historical argument that nevertheless looked to history for its justification. This argument located a region's “authentic identity” in the distant past, and then rendered all historical change since this original moment invalid. The imagined national past justified attempts to claim an original national identity for a place in the present where Italian or Slav immigration or even Slav tourism posed a threat.²⁴

22 *Mitteilungen des Vereines Südmark* (1906/07), p. 56.

23 JUDSON, “Frontiers, Islands, Forests, Stones”. After 1900, organizations like the *Südmark* or the *Deutscher Schulverein* circulated travelling slide shows to their local branches to teach local German speakers about other German peoples and regions in Austria. See *Mitteilungen des Vereines Südmark* (1906/07), p. 24.

24 *Durch Deutschböhmen. Die Weltbäder, Sommerfrischen, Fremden- und Touristenorte Deutschböhmens, Eger*, no date. See also Wilhelm ROHMEDER, *Die ehemalige Ausdehnung des Deutschtums in den italienischsprachigen Bezirken Tirols*. Sonderdruck aus dem *Tiroler Volksbund Kalender* 1908, Innsbruck 1908.

Wilhelm Rohmeder offers two instructive examples of this phenomenon and its important link to tourism. His 1908 essay "Die ehemalige Ausdehnung des Deutschtums in den italienischsprachigen Bezirken Tirols" marshaled historical arguments to suggest that the region known as the Trentino should in fact be considered "German territory." Only the historical migration of Italian speaking peoples into the region had produced its unjust modern characterization as somehow "Italian." This kind of thinking underlay Rohmeder's long-term obsession with "winning back" as much territory as possible in the Trentino by establishing German schools there. But it also underlay his promotion of nationalist tourism, as a second example suggests. In an 1898 volume, "Das deutsche Volkstum und die deutsche Schule in Südtirol", ostensibly about German nationalist school issues, Rohmeder nevertheless took the opportunity to chide the Baedeker guidebooks to the region for using certain Italian place-names rather than the historically "correct" German ones.²⁵

The physical presence of German tourists could also be understood as a real conquest of the landscape for the nation. The tourists' presence transformed nationalist rhetoric about space into real action, and tourists were often viewed as nationalist activists, whether or not they actually saw themselves in such terms. When a tourist club planned a trip to a nationally disputed territory or when it set up a system of marked paths [Wegmarkierungen], its members physically asserted their ownership of that terrain. Such actions often produced violence as activists clashed over symbolic ownership of the land. Several tourist clubs complained that rival organizations had vandalized the systems of Wegmarkierungen they had constructed for hiking.²⁶ Similarly, when German nationalist gymnasts from Bergreichenstein (Czech: Kasperské Hory) in the Böhmerwald made an Easter excursion on foot to nearby Eleonorenhain (Czech: Lenora) in 1908, they passed through the majority Czech-speaking village of Stachau (Czech: Stachy). Here, according to a local German newspaper, Czech 'fanatics' attacked the gymnasts. Whether the gymnasts' actual behavior provoked the confrontation is largely irrelevant. What is important is that local Czech nationalists clearly understood this trip as a territorial violation.²⁷ Perhaps

25 Wilhelm ROHMEDER, *Das deutsche Volkstum und die deutsche Schule in Südtirol*, Wien 1898, p. vii.

26 The vandalism of Wegmarkierungen even became a way for rival German nationalist groups to battle each other over the question of how to define the nation. In 1903 the politically moderate Österreichische Touristen-Klub in Brünn took its more radical and anti-Semitic rival, the Verein deutscher Touristen to court, accusing the latter of vandalizing Wegmarkierungen in the forests of Fürst Schönburg. See *Mitteilungen des Vereines Deutscher Touristen Brünn* 3 (1903), pp. 6–7.

27 *Deutsch Böhmerwald (Prachatitz)*, 3 May 1908, p. 3.

the most notorious of this kind of episode involved a provocative trip to the Trentino by members of the German nationalist Turnverein in the summer of 1907. Led by artist and Professor Edgar Meyer, also a founder of the Tiroler Volksbund, the group of thirty-four men and seven women planned a walking tour to visit German-speaking enclaves in this predominantly Italian-speaking region of the South Tyrol. Italian nationalist activists quite correctly understood the trip as an aggressive assertion of the German ownership of the landscape, and they resolved to prevent the tour from taking place. Hostile demonstrations in several villages harassed the travelers. When they arrived in the village of Calliano to board a train for the trip back home, an angry mob physically attacked them. The five policemen present lost control of the situation and the ensuing bloody battle left several people badly wounded.²⁸

Whether or not individual Austrian tourists actually identified themselves as nationalists, activists certainly liked to frame tourists' behavior in a highly partisan light. Nationalists, who already interpreted the Monarchy's censuses as a statistical picture of nationalist competition, now began to estimate the numbers of each nationality who visited their region as tourists. Josef Taschek, chairman of the Deutscher Böhmerwaldbund, repeatedly warned of a Czech invasion of German territory using such statistics. "Die Tschechen veranstalten häufig Ausflüge in den Böhmerwald und trachten auch durch Massenbesuch in den einzelnen Orten die Tschechisierung zu fördern. Dem kann nur durch recht zahlreiche Zuwanderung von Deutschen in Sommerfrischen entgegentreten werden."²⁹ These warnings, along with the statistics that informed them, suggest just how strongly nationalists worked to reconfigure local reality in their own terms, increasingly describing multilingual regions as historically German, in order to justify their depiction of recent Czech, Slovene or Italian immigration as an illegitimate invasion.

The activists' desire to populate endangered landscapes with German tourists if necessary combined with their frequent equation of Germanness with civilization, points to yet another problem embedded in the promotion of a nationalist tourism. What, after all, was to be the relationship

28 Hans KRAMER, *Der "Argonautenzug" der Deutschen nach Pergine oder die "zweite Schlacht von Calliano" 1907*. In: *Mitteilungen des Oberösterreichischen Landesarchiv* 8 (1964), pp. 330–341.

29 *Hauptbericht über die Thätigkeit des Deutschen Böhmerwaldbundes für die XVIII. Hauptversammlung am 7. September 1902 in Neuern, verfasst und erstattet von Bundesobmann Josef TASCHEK*. In: *Mittheilungen des Deutschen Böhmerwaldbundes* 45 (1902), Beilage, p. 10. While some retailers might have been happy to gain the income generated by tourists of any linguistic background, TASCHEK and other German nationalists could only see the presence of the enemy as a threat to national survival.

between the urban tourist and the so-called “German peasant” on the Sprachgrenze? Nationalist rhetoric, particularly in its most radical formulation, stressed the commonalties that united all members of the nation, across conceivable barriers of class or of educational difference. It often praised the peasant as the most “authentic” German. Yet the peasant on the Sprachgrenze who supposedly embodied Germanic virtues often became the object of nationalist educational efforts. In reality peasants too needed to be taught their heroic national identity. And they needed to be taught to accept the presence of the tourist as well. As we will see, several reports from the Böhmerwald around 1900 suggested the immense difficulties involved with bringing tourists to villages that had previously had no contact with outsiders. For this reason, nationalist students who traveled to the countryside often focused their activities on bringing peasants into nationalist activities. Guides for students who hiked in such areas stressed the need for treating peasants with respect, thus betraying the assumption that in fact the opposite would more likely be the case. We will see later on how local peasants responded to the arrival of tourists from the outside world.³⁰

Tourism and the Local Economy: No Room for Nationalism?

Tourism brought the promise of economic prosperity to those communities flexible enough in their outlook to take good advantage of the opportunities it offered. This too appealed to nationalists who often sought ways to preserve the linguistic and national identity of so-called minority Sprach-inseln in the face of migration and economic decline. Tourism offered considerable opportunities for economic development as long as activists were willing to make a sustained investment. Unlike the nationalist approaches to tourism discussed above, which focused on intensive propaganda campaigns and leisure-time activism, this kind of vision for tourism demanded a strong commitment to research, publicity, and the development of local infrastructure. And unlike the above mentioned invocations of tourism that could lead to violent incidents, this concern for the economic benefits of tourism often ironically muted the nationalist rhetoric of local organizations.

Guides like Rohmeder's that urged a tourist boycott of nationally hostile vendors, hoteliers, and restaurateurs counted on the same efforts to bring prosperity to local “German” businesses. “Meiden Sie die Osterien und Alberghi, wenn Sie nach Süden ziehen, wie die tschechischen Gasthäuser

30 Wandervogel und Jugendwandern. In: Der Kampf ums Deutschtum 2 (1913), p. 30.

im Norden,” wrote one organization, “und unterstützen Sie die deutsche Bewohnerschaft.” The act of spending money, if done in a self-consciously national way, would create a kind of ripple effect that benefited the nation in several important ways. Activists frequently linked the economic benefits of such nationalist tourism both to the psychological benefits it would bring local Germans and to the educational effect on the tourist. „Die Veranstaltung von Wanderfahrten unter fachgemässer Leitung in einzelne Gebiete des bedrohten Landes würde [...] neben ihrem erzieherischen Wert auf die Teilnehmer äusserst befruchtend auf die schwerringenden Volksgenossen des Sprachgrenzgebietes wirken, denn sie würden hiedurch nicht nur neuen Ansporn zum weiteren Ausharren empfangen, sondern auch vielfach wirtschaftlichen Nutzen daraus ziehen können. Es wäre nicht nur prächtig [...], die Liebe zur Heimat zu pflegen, sondern auch eine Handhabe, um in jährlich steigendem Masse unsere reichsdeutschen Volksgenossen mit unserem Kampfe vertraut zu machen.”³¹

By 1914 several guidebooks to ethnically mixed regions helped German nationalist tourists to spend their money wisely. And in 1913 the ambitious *Deutsches Jahrbuch für Österreich* appeared, which listed German nationalist-owned businesses in every crownland of the Austrian half of the Dual Monarchy.

Activists used tourism in their publications to link the nation's economic strength to its very demographic survival in border regions. The struggle involved strengthening the German nation in such localities, house by house, business by business. Every “German-owned” property sold to a Slav suggested demographic and economic decline. Headlines like “Das tschechische Fiasko im Riesengebirge” regularly warned German readers against Czech efforts to buy tourist properties in supposedly German resort areas, whether in Bohemia or Dalmatia. “Die Tschechen wollen, wie auf anderen Gebieten, so auch in den deutschen Bergen Fuss fassen und tschechischer sprachlicher und wirtschaftlicher Natur daselbst betreiben. Dieser Umstand kam der Pacht des Hotels ‘Austria’ in Spindelmühle durch einen Tschechen zustatten.”³² And Czech expansion was not even limited to the linguistically-disputed regions of Bohemia, as the *Südmark* pointed out in 1911. In an article on the Austrian Riviera, the organization claimed that more and more Czechs vacationed on the Adriatic even founding their own hotels, such as the Hotel Riviera in Pola.³³

31 *Mitteilungen des Vereines Südmark* (1906/07), S. 56–57.

32 *Das tschechische Fiasko im Riesengebirge*. In: *Deutsche Volkszeitung* (Reichenberg), 1 February 1908, p. 4. See also *Hotel Seifera. Eine Tat deutscher Selbsthilfe*. In: *Mitteilungen des Vereines Südmark* (1913), p. 1.

33 *Mitteilungen des Vereines Südmark* (1911), p. 84.

In 1906 the Südmark began listing its own local recommendations for Sommerfrische housing in its *Mitteilungen*. Members in rural areas were urged to send in information about accommodations, local climate, day-trips in the region, swimming possibilities, restaurants, the nearest railroad and post office. These would be listed free of charge to encourage Südmark members to spend their vacation money on their fellow Germans in threatened regions. “Anempfehlungen nichtdeutscher oder völkisch unverlässlicher Leute oder Unternehmungen sind ausgeschlossen.”³⁴ The Südmark *Mitteilungen* only carried such advertisements for two years, however. This suggests that the concept of organizing such information for the benefit of local German speakers originated with club leaders in Graz or Vienna and not with local activists eager to share their homes with urban Sommerfrischler. As long as such ideas came from above and did not involve sustained local initiatives, they were doomed to failure.

Other fundraising ideas enjoyed more, if still limited financial success. The Südmark sought to have old numbers of its *Mitteilungen* placed in alpine huts run by the Österreichische Touristenklub and the Alpenverein in the Tyrol and Carinthia (“So mancher deutsche Tourist, der bisher vielleicht nicht einmal den Namen Südmark gehört hatte, wird in der Schutzhütte die *Mitteilungen* zur Hand nehmen.”³⁵) Later the group added Südmark collection boxes [Sammelbüchse] to such huts, as well as to restaurants and hotels. These boxes became a key element in annual fundraising, despite the almost constant complaints of the thievery directed against their contents.³⁶

Only one major German nationalist organization in Austria, the Deutscher Böhmerwaldbund, actually undertook a sustained effort to use tourism to improve regional economic circumstances. The others simply presumed that their published rhetoric would somehow create a generally positive economic effect for local Germans. When Josef Taschek and his colleagues founded the Deutscher Böhmerwaldbund in 1884 they immediately made a priority of encouraging tourism to their region. Economic problems in the Bohemian Woods had generated a large-scale emigration among German-speakers there in the nineteenth century. Activists argued that tourism could help to revitalize the economy and sustain the local German-speaking population in the face of an increasing Czech migration to the region. Taschek firmly believed that the developing institution of

34 *Mitteilungen des Vereines Südmark* (1906/07), pp. 218–219.

35 *Mitteilungen des Vereines Südmark* (1907/08), p. 5.

36 *Mitteilungen des Vereines Südmark* (1912), p.104.

the Sommerfrische offered a solution to the economic misery of the Germans in the Böhmerwald. He wagered that southern Bohemia's sumptuous landscapes, its meandering rivers, its small medieval towns, and its forested hills, high enough to offer dramatic views, but easily accessible to the average nature lover, not to mention its low cost of living, could attract summer vacationers from neighboring Bavaria or Austria. The problem was that the Bohemian Woods was virtually unknown to the outside world and had no tourist infrastructure to speak of. The major commercial routes of the nineteenth century had bypassed the region. Seeking to make a virtue of this isolation, the Böhmerwaldbund published guidebooks and worked actively with local beautifying or tourist associations to generate grassroots excitement for tourism. It encouraged local groups to create well-marked systems of paths to lead tourists to unique natural attractions, and it encouraged municipal councils with donations to undertake beautification, renovation and building projects, such as the creation of local swimming pools.

Ironically, the Böhmerwaldbund soon found it necessary to call on the anti-nationalist Austrian State for assistance. In order to compete with traditional tourist destinations like the Tyrol, Böhmerwaldler needed public transportation links to make their region accessible to vacationers. They found themselves forced to lobby the state to build new railway connections, roads, bus service, more telegraph and later telephone connections in the places they hoped to transform into centers of tourism. The need for state assistance in turn moderated the content and tone of the Böhmerwaldbund's nationalist rhetoric considerably. Unlike the more strident Südmark, for example, the Böhmerwaldbund promoted a more positive vision of self-help within a loosely defined German national community that was not defined racially.

The Böhmerwaldbund's success in lobbying the state for the modest Budweis-Salnav railway line in 1893 emboldened the organization to launch its most ambitious effort to bring tourists to the region. In that year it financed the production of a local passion play in Höritz (Czech: Hořice našumavě), a small rural village located just to the south of Krumau (Czech: český Krumlov) on the new rail line. The Passion play had been a tradition in Höritz since the time of the Napoleonic Wars. It had been presented at irregular intervals over the years by villagers dressed in their Sunday best, usually at a local inn and to a local rural audience. In 1890, a local Gymnasium teacher in Krumau, researching folk traditions, took note of the play and began investigating its origins. In conjunction with the Böhmerwaldbund he updated and published the play in 1892. In

the same year the association built a modern festival theater capable of accommodating almost two thousand visitors on a hill overlooking H \ddot{o} ritz. The theater was the first building in the B \ddot{o} hmerwald to use electric power. The B \ddot{o} hmerwaldbund made this enormous financial investment in the expectation that H \ddot{o} ritz would eventually rival the Bavarian Oberammergau for international attention and bring fame (and tourists) to the Bohemian Woods. Although the Passion play was controversial among anti-clerical German nationalists, and the high cost of producing it meant that it rarely made a profit, it helped to draw far more tourists to the region. It was advertised across Europe and even attracted visitors (and in 1897 a motion picture crew) from the United States.³⁷

Nationalists and locals

So far I have focused on three ways that nationalist organizations used a form of leisure activity like tourism to transform a discursive national identity into a material reality for the average German speaker, and thereby lay claim to specific territory as well. I would like to conclude with a necessarily brief consideration of an altogether different question: how did this movement for a nationalist tourism influence social relations in the rural areas it targeted? Did it engage at all with the perceived needs of local activists? Did it function as an imposition of an urbanized center on a rural periphery? And did it in fact create nationalist tourists?

In a highly perceptive essay on the impact of tourism in the German-speaking Tyrol during this period, Laurence Cole concludes that "tourism brought modernity to the mountains, but wearing traditional clothes."³⁸ In political terms Cole argues that a broad coalition of local business and consumer interests promoted tourism against some (but not all) defenders of the agrarian milieu. In social and economic terms, however, tourism created a set of conflicts that cannot simply be categorized under a rubric of urban versus agrarian, or bourgeois versus peasant. The industry required a modern infrastructure in order to function, and yet it simultaneously required a natural and un-spoilt environment within which it

37 For statistics on visitors to the passion play, see: *Rückschau über die zwanzigjährige Tätigkeit des Deutschen Böhmerwaldbundes. Für die 20. Hauptversammlung berichtet vom Obmann Josef TASCHKEK*, Budweis 1904, p. 13. The play was performed in the interwar years until the Nazi occupation. After World War II the communist regime demolished the theater, but current Czech Catholic inhabitants of the village have recently revived the German nationalist tradition.

38 Laurence COLE, *How modernity came to the Alps: the emergence and impact of tourism in German-speaking Tirol c. 1880–1914*. Paper presented to the *Seminario Permanente di Etnografia Alpina*, May 2000, p. 6. See also Cole's insightful discussion (*Kommerzielles und heimatbewusstes Image: Jahrhundertfeier und Tourismus and "Peasants into Austrians?"*) in his "Für Gott, Kaiser und Vaterland".

could operate. In cultural terms Cole argues that the rise of a service sector locally helped “nationalize” peasant culture by redefining its significance and then marketing it. Peasants became drawn into national life because peasant practices now became a symbol of a kind of national authenticity. This was particularly evident in a region like the Tyrol that attracted a large number of tourists from the German Reich. In 1903, for example, 73 % of all tourists to the Tyrol came from the German Reich, and 46% of all Reich German tourists who visited the Austrian half of the dual monarchy traveled to the Tyrol.³⁹ Peasant traditions became in themselves a tourist attraction, a commodity linked (I would argue) to the commodification and nationalization of the landscape itself. The focus on peasant material culture as a tourist attraction went hand in hand with the tourist interest in fresh air, physical activity, and the beauty of dramatic mountain landscapes.

Cole’s work also suggests that while tourism might bring modernization to rural local communities, this process involved a set of complex interactions at several levels between local, regional and inter-regional interests. The tourist industry was not necessarily an outside bourgeois imposition on peasant life. Rural inhabitants might well take advantage of new opportunities offered by the completion of a railway line or road. Local initiatives often underlay the rise of the tourist industry, so it is difficult to characterize it completely as the work of “outsiders” to the rural milieu, just as it is difficult to see general processes of modernization in Europe as external impositions. These points are important to a consideration of the ways in which a particularly nationalist form of tourism might have impacted local forms of self-identification. Clearly we would be mistaken to imagine that national identity, like other forms of self-identification associated with modernity at the turn of the century, was always an urban imposition, or that it did not gain a different significance in rural contexts.⁴⁰

The local and regional organization of the tourist industry had begun as early as the 1880s.⁴¹ In 1881 a group of businessmen and hoteliers in

39 For these and annual statistics by province, see Franz BARTSCH, *Einfluss der Wanderbewegung und des Fremdenverkehrs auf die Zahlungsbilanz Österreich-Ungarns*. In: *Mitteilungen des k. k. Finanzministeriums* 17 (1911), pp. 125–183. According to the Finance Ministry, the annual number of tourists in Austria as a whole grew from two-and-a-half million in 1903 to over four-and-a-half million in 1910.

40 See for example Michael BURNS, *Rural Society and French Politics. Boulangism and the Dreyfus Affair*. Princeton 1984, for a nuanced account of peasant initiative in the rural modernization process in nineteenth century France.

41 On the early organization of the tourism industry in Cisleithania see Josef STRADNER, *Der Fremdenverkehr, Graz 1917*, and Arthur MÜLLER, *Das Problem des Fremdenverkehrs in Österreich. Psychologisch-propagandistische Betrachtungen*, Vienna 1909, and more recently Günther BURKERT, *Der Beginn des modernen Fremdenverkehrs in den österreichischen Kronländern. Föderalistische und nationale Elemente als bestimmende Faktoren*. In: *Schriftenreihe der Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte*, Graz 1981, pp. 1–72.

Graz, along with representatives of local tourist associations had organized the Verein zur Förderung des Fremdenverkehrs in Steiermark, the first of many regional Landesverbände designed to promote the growing tourism industry (the Tyrol followed in 1889).⁴² Later, the Austrian government created a section devoted to tourism that gave subsidies to the individual Landesverbände, first under the aegis of the railway ministry, and subsequently in the ministry for public works.⁴³ In several crownlands (Styria, Carinthia, the Tyrol) the dominant German linguistic position was politically so well normalized, that the Landesverbände, in all essentials German nationalist organizations, never had to name themselves as such. To read the guidebooks published by the Tyrolean or Styrian Landesverband, for example, one would never guess that more than a third of each crownland's population did not use German as its Umgangssprache, according to the decennial census.⁴⁴ Furthermore, the men who ran the Landesverbände often played an important role in local German nationalist associational life, as was the case with Josef Taschek, Mayor of Budweis (Czech: České Budějovice), Vice President of the Landesverband für Fremdenverkehr in Deutschböhmen, and leader of the Deutscher Böhmerwaldbund. Bohemia naturally represented a specialized case (although the Tyrol was clearly moving in the same direction). In Bohemia, both Czech and German nationalists were so well politically organized that this crownland sported two Landesverbände. One, situated in Prague, represented so-called Bohemian interests, and another located in Karlsbad (Czech: Karlovy Vary) represented the interests of the region that styled itself Deutschböhmen.⁴⁵ As it did in other policy matters such as schooling, in Bohemia the state gave tourist subsidies to two organizations, based on linguistic difference. This, however, reflected the exceptional nature of the nationalist political struggle in Bohemia, the relatively equal political influence wielded by both so-called national groups. Neither the Slovene nationalists in

42 By 1914 almost all the crownlands (including Galicia, the Bukowina, and Dalmatia) had organized such Landesverbände. BURKERT, *Beginn des modernen Fremdenverkehrs*, pp. 14–26; STRADNER, *Fremdenverkehr*, p. 96.

43 STRADNER, *Fremdenverkehr*, pp. 90–96; Cole, *How Modernity Came to the Alps*, p. 3; Alois Lässer, *100 Jahre Fremdenverkehr in Tirol. Die Geschichte einer Organisation (Tiroler Wirtschaftsstudien 40)*, Innsbruck 1989.

44 See, for example, *Tiroler Verkehrs- und Hotel-Buch*, Herausgegeben vom Landesverband für Fremdenverkehr in Tirol, Innsbruck 1905; *Nach Steiermark! Jahrbuch des Landesverbandes für Fremdenverkehr. Achweisung von Sommerstationen in Steiermark*, Graz 1904; *Steirisches Verkehrsbuch*. Herausgegeben vom Landesverband für Fremdenverkehr in Steiermark mit einem Vorworte von Peter Rosegger, Graz 1912/13.

45 See *Fremdenverkehrs-Nachrichten des Landesverbandes für Fremdenverkehr in Deutschböhmen 1* (1905). Both Czech and German organizations were officially recognized by the Austrian government. On the situation in Tyrol, see BURKERT, *Beginn des modernen Fremdenverkehrs*, p. 16.

Styria nor Italian nationalists in the Tyrol wielded the kind of political power enjoyed by the Czech nationalists in Bohemia. And neither the Slovene nor Italian nationalists had developed a united program that presented an unambiguously united front on linguistic issues. Although demands for the creation of a Slovene University in Laibach (Slovene: Ljubljana) or the addition of an Italian-language Faculty to the University in Innsbruck dominated nationalist debate, local groups were not always unambiguously opposed to the institution of local German schools, for example. Many Slovene speakers in southern Styria, for example, continued to see German language schools as a vehicle for social advancement, decades after Czech nationalists had abandoned this idea.

If the official guides published by the Landesverbände usually ignored the existence of Italian or Slovene speakers, extreme German nationalists like Rohmeder or the Südtirol authors tried to draw attention to them. Rohmeder's guide to the Südtirol did not simply direct tourists to inns, hotels and restaurants owned by supposedly reliable German nationalist, or German-friendly natives. Rather, Rohmeder went so far as to warn German tourists against the supposed underhanded efforts of the enemy to mislead them. In one case he reported of a Gasthaus in Kampidell [sic!] that its owner, one Felix Valentini, was "ein Agent der Italia irredenta; [er] hat zur Irreführung deutscher Reisender ein grosses metallenes Edelweiss an seinem Hause angebracht." According to Rohmeder, appearances inside the hotel could be equally deceiving. He named several restaurants run by reputed Italian nationalists that displayed German-language newspapers and German-language menus in order to fool an unsuspecting German clientele into spending its money in enemy establishments.⁴⁶

Not surprisingly, neither the Tyrolean tourist industry nor even a nationalist organization like the Tiroler Volksbund accommodated comfortably the kind of extreme nationalist tactics demanded by a Rohmeder. The mature tourism industry there required a secure environment in which to flourish. Extreme nationalists on both sides who wanted to wage war at the local level of the hotel and restaurant, threatened to disrupt the entire industry. In a region like the Tyrol that had already come to depend so heavily on a successful tourist industry for its economic survival, nationalism had to remain moderate and positive in tone in order not to scare away potential tourists of all backgrounds. In 1907, the same year in which Edgar Meyer led his ill-fated tour to the Trentino, a local paper reported that in municipal elections in the region around Lake Garda,

46 ROHMEDEER, *Gasthäuser in den sprachlichen Grenzgebieten*, p. 10.

moderate Italian and German nationalists had banded together to oust radical nationalists from the town halls. Why? The paper reported that the tourist trade had clearly suffered (with hotel bankruptcies in both Arco and Trient) from the lamentable intrusion of nationalist activism into local society. Moderates on both sides wished to signal to tourists that the area was once again safe for vacationers. The German *Bozener Zeitung* opined that economics (if nothing else) would teach those radical "Italians" the importance of welcoming German guests.⁴⁷ The more successful the tourism industry it seems, the less successful the radical nationalism.

Ironically radical nationalists used the same statistics about the tourist trade cited above to urge the opposite course. Not only should Germans stop patronizing Italians, but the Italians should understand just how much their financial survival depended on the goodwill of the Germans. "Die Deutschen buhlen um die Freundschaft der Welschen; sie feiern deren Kultur und schwärmen für die Sonne des Südens. Alljährlich geht ein Heer von Wanderern nach Welschland und füllt Wirten und Kaufleuten die Taschen. Es ist daher zumindest unvorsichtig, diese deutsche Freundschaft mit verstecktem Hass zu lohnen. In einem Jahre zählte der Fremdenverkehr im welschen Südtirol beiläufig 36,232 deutsche Besucher, während Italien nur 27,793 stellte. Sollte da nicht erwogen werden, diesen Fremdenstrom in deutsche Gebiete zu lenken? Die irredentischen Deutschfeinde, die dort unten Deutsche überfallen und verprügeln, sollen es einmal am Geldbeutel spüren, was deutsches Geld wert ist. Vielleicht kühlte dieser Ausfall an Einnahmen die Hetz- und Hitzköpfe der Italianissimi etwas ab!"⁴⁸

Beyond questions of economics, there were other ways in which the dominant forms of German nationalism in the Empire did not engage well with local populations in the Tyrol. Radical anti-Semitic groups like the *Südmark* that tried to set down roots in the south Tirol enjoyed little success. Not only were they considered to be outsiders, but the *Südmark* agitators were also strongly anticlerical, and had gained a reputation for promoting Protestantism and anti-Catholicism. In Styria, with its long tradition of anti-clericalism this presented fewer problems for recruitment, but in the Tyrol, where religion and provincial tradition largely defined Germanness, the *Südmark* found little indigenous support, despite the fact that it pursued several projects there, including the renovation of the Burg Persen (Ital.: Castel Pergine).⁴⁹ Finally, the *Tiroler Volksbund*

47 *Bozner Zeitung* (*Südtiroler Tagblatt*), 10. Jänner 1907, p. 3.

48 *Mitteilungen des Vereins Südmark* (1911), p. 56.

49 For an excellent, wide-ranging examination of the history of German nationalist identity in Tyrol, see COLE, "Für Gott, Kaiser und Vaterland."

occasionally listed the encouragement of tourism as one of its goals, but it did nothing to pursue that goal.⁵⁰ Clearly the tourist industry already had a strong basis in the Tyrol, and a nationalist organization like the Volksbund concentrated its energies elsewhere.

An effort like that of the Böhmerwaldbund to promote nationalist tourism for primarily economic purposes resulted in a high degree of engagement with the needs of the local population. The fact that the Bohemian Woods had no tourist industry to speak of made the efforts of the nationalists all that much more important, unlike the situation in the Tyrol where their efforts had to remain more rhetorical than real. The success of activists in the Bohemian Woods in building a modest tourism industry did not imply, however, that local activists who worked with the Böhmerwaldbund to promote tourism to their villages did so for transparently nationalist reasons. Rather, as Cole implies for the Tyrol, and as we will see below, it seems that in many of those villages a nationalist agenda was often linked to a series of other local modernizing agendas that had little to do with nationalism as such.⁵¹

The promotion of a nationalist tourism did not always mean that visitors to the region came away with a stronger sense of national identity, nor even that they made their decision to travel there on the basis of nationalist concern. The example of Hörtitz and its Passion play is particularly instructive in this regard. The play certainly fulfilled the ambitions of local and regional nationalist activists by bringing more tourists to the region. And in their public statements, at least, both German and Czech nationalist leaders did treat the play's nationalist significance as self-evident. Yet whether tourists themselves actually returned home with a more distinct consciousness about the national struggle on the so-called Sprachgrenze is harder to evaluate.

The Passion play may have brought more tourists to the Bohemian Woods, but nothing about it (including the international theatrical style in which it was performed) appears to have reinforced a German national identity among visitors or performers. Personal testimonies of visitors to Hörtitz instead emphasized the profoundly moving emotional quality of the experience rather than its particularly Germanic qualities (whatever

50 For a detailed history of the Tiroler Volksbund, see Alois THALER, *Der Tiroler Volksbund. Wollen und Wirken*. Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Innsbruck, 1962.

51 For a nuanced and suggestive consideration of the ways in which tourism impacted social life and economic structures in Austrian small towns, see Hans HEISS, *Tourismus und Urbanisierung. Fremdenverkehr und Stadtentwicklung in den österreichischen Alpenländer bis 1914*. In: *Stadt – Strom – Strasse – Schiene. Die Bedeutung des Verkehrs für die Genese der mitteleuropäischen Städtelandschaft*, ed. Alois NIEDERSTÄTTER, Linz 2001, pp. 217–246.

those might have been). Visitors do not seem to have left believing they had witnessed something particularly German, but rather an example of folk art, impressive in its rural simplicity. Visitors rarely commented on the play as a national event until after the First World War when the area became part of the new Czechoslovak nation state, and the play developed a new significance.⁵²

We might well ask whether the institution of the Passion Play increased the nationalist consciousness of the Hörtizers themselves? Actually, the play seems rather to have strengthened the villagers' consciousness of themselves as Hörtizers more than as anything else. Recollections and anecdotes confirm that their participation in the Passion play was indeed of central importance to the villagers' lives. Already in the 1890s, for example, male Hörtizers were known to wear extremely long hair and full beards in order to recall old testament scenes, especially in years when the play was not performed. The village did everything in its power to market itself as a kind of goal for cultural pilgrims, especially in those off years. Nor did the fact that the nationalist Böhmerwaldbund had contributed so much to Hörtiz's newly found fame create a stronger sense of nationalist identity there. Rather, as elsewhere in southern Bohemia, villagers seem to have considered the Böhmerwaldbund to be something of a local welfare organization, its German nationalist identity secondary to its important economic self-help functions.

The nationalist promotion of tourism also looks different when viewed from the perspective of the interaction between the urban groups promoting it and the village activists who took up the cause locally. In the first place, the tourism question seems to have caused several unanticipated problems for the urban nationalist organizations. In the second place, the nationalist agenda when adopted at the local level served different functions than it did at the level of high politics.

Böhmerwaldbund leaders learned a surprising lesson early on: that villagers did not always appreciate the benefits tourism might bring them. Nationalist vacationers who visited their persecuted German brothers and sisters deep in the Bohemian Woods were often shocked by the low standard of accommodation the natives provided. Many complained about sanitary conditions both to the Böhmerwaldbund and to the Landesverband in Deutschböhmen. In the winter, tourists complained that villagers

52 On the development of a passion-play tourism in the Tyrol, see COLE, "Für Gott, Kaiser und Vaterland", pp. 276 and 338.

reported temperatures and snow conditions so intermittently, as to make it impossible to plan winter sport vacations.⁵³ And when surveyed about what their district could offer outside visitors, some local activists expressed a deep frustration with the unwillingness of their fellow villagers to comprehend the potential economic benefits tourism offered to them.⁵⁴

The Böhmerwaldbund leadership walked a difficult line between defending the quality of village accommodations to the outside world, and urging local organizers to do a better job. In 1904, Taschek wrote optimistically that local tourist accommodations had generally improved in the twenty years since the founding of the Böhmerwaldbund.⁵⁵ Nevertheless in another report a year later Taschek had to admit that “Der grösste Teil der Gastwirte ist jedoch zu keinem Opfer bereit, um die Öffentlichkeit auf die Annehmlichkeit der Reisen im Böhmerwalde aufmerksam zu machen.”⁵⁶ In 1908, a local Böhmerwald newspaper chided the merchants of Prachatitz (Czech: Prachatice) for undermining German tourism there. According to the paper, German hoteliers and restaurateurs had charged far too much for meals and rooms compared to their Czech counterparts. Even worse, the editorial claimed that customers received far more polite service in Czech shops than in German shops. Wares also needed to be displayed more attractively and shopkeepers should watch out for cleanliness.⁵⁷

The question of clean and higher quality accommodations for visitors became more pressing once the Passion play in Hörtitz received international attention. That attention was not always flattering. The 1910 Baedeker advised visitors to the Passion play to avoid spending a night in Hörtitz if possible.⁵⁸ And in 1908, a feuilletonist for Vienna's *Neue Freie Presse*, Raoul Auernheimer, published a scathing account of his visit to Hörtitz. Although he praised the simple intensity of the play's performers, Auernheimer denounced the unacceptable level of accommodation and general boredom that he found characterized life in the surrounding region. Of the highly touted Krumau he wrote: “Was aber die Langeweile ist, die richtige, die lernt man nur in der Kleinstadt kennen [...]”. Although this

53 For complaints to the Landesverband, see for example *Fremdenverkehrs-Nachrichten des Landes-Verbandes für Fremdenverkehr in Deutschböhmen* 3 (1910), pp. 5–7.

54 See, for example, the complaints of activists in the village of Kirchschatz who bemoaned their lack of a post office, a physician, and a population at all interested in taking advantage of the opportunities of tourism or even participating in basic associational life. *Mittheilungen des Deutschen Böhmerwaldbundes* 10 (1887), p. 128, 11 (1887), p. 155.

55 TASCHEK, *Rückschau*, p. 12.

56 Bericht über die Hauptversammlung des Deutschen Böhmerwaldbundes am 27. August in Prachatitz. In: *Mittheilungen des Deutschen Böhmerwaldbundes* 48 (1905), p. 9.

57 *Gewissensforschung*. In: *Deutsch Böhmerwald (Prachatitz)*, 13. September 1908, p. 5.

58 Karl BAEDEKER, *Österreich (ohne Galizien, Dalmatien, Ungarn und Bosnien)*, Leipzig 1910, p. 328.

sarcastic depiction of rural life drew angry protests from all kinds of Böhmerwaldbund supporters, including Heimat author Peter Rosegger, it nevertheless reflected an image that local promoters of tourism could not easily change.⁵⁹

Those villagers who did embrace tourism as potentially beneficial to their community were themselves relatively recent arrivals to the rural world. The rapid growth, first of a uniform imperial school system, and later of transport, communications, commercial, and administrative networks, had brought a real invasion of teachers, civil servants, and generally lower-level white collar employees to many formerly isolated rural regions. The presence of such people in small towns and villages often changed social relations substantially. These outsiders brought with them traditions of voluntary association as a way to gain economic, cultural, or political ends. Often themselves of rural background, they usually had acquired some schooling in a larger town or city, and had frequently already joined some professional or nationalist organizations when posted to rural districts. In general they tended to view the interests of the local village in a larger regional, provincial or even nationalist context. In combination with local professionals and innkeepers, these invaders worked to expand local economic connections to regional and interregional commerce, often through the development of tourism. They also tended increasingly to provide leadership in local village branches of nationalist organizations.⁶⁰

Issues like the quality of accommodation became a field for such local activists, usually teachers, civil servants, innkeepers, small businessmen or railway employees, to impose their specific nationalist vision on their fellow villagers. In many Böhmerwald towns I have studied, those who promoted nationalist tourism consistently used nationalist arguments to justify a wide range of modernizing projects to their fellow villagers. Their rhetoric explicitly connected German identity to progress, and progress to tourism. Using reports from local newspapers, we can easily trace the specific content of this nationalist message and the role tourism played in its construction. Local German activists expressed pride at local accom-

59 Raoul AUERNHEIMER, *Auf der Reise nach Höritz*. In: *Neue Freie Presse* (Vienna), 2. August 1908, p. 2; *Böhmerwald-Zeitung* (Krummau), 21. August 1908, p. 271.

60 For a discussion of the earlier period, see Hanns HAAS, *Postmeister, Wirt, Kramer, Brauer, Müller und Wundarzt. Trägerschichten und Organisationsformen des Liberalismus. Das Salzburger Beispiel – Vom frühen Konstitutionalismus bis zum Kulturkampf*. In: Ernst BRUCKMÜLLER [et al.] (eds.), *Bürgertum in der Habsburgermonarchie, Wien/Köln 1990*, pp. 257–273. By 1900 this rural social group had largely been displaced in its leadership of local political and nationalist associational life by white-collar workers, civil servants, and teachers, especially in Bohemia.

plishments and impatience with what they considered to be the lingering vestiges of backwardness. Progress and modernity were defined in both moral and nationalist terms; backwardness, however, derived either from ignorance or from local Czech politics. The invaders defined German nationalism by its very modernity, and thus promoted tourism.⁶¹

Conclusion

In 1910 the *Südmark* published a debate under the title “Soll der Deutsche die slawischen Küstengestade des Südens besuchen?”⁶² The authors each represented German nationalist points of view, but they based their affirmative conclusions on extremely different assumptions. One writer, who considered Istria and Dalmatia highly unpleasant in comparison to the Italian Adriatic, nevertheless argued for the necessity of visiting any region where a German population might be threatened by Slavs, no matter how unpleasant such a visit might be. The other argued for the necessity of extending a German cultural influence to Dalmatia, since Austria, as a great Empire, must maintain a coastal presence. The first defined Germanness narrowly in ethnic terms, linking endangered populations to particular places. The other defined Germanness in expansive cultural terms, claiming the entire coast for this culture. One focused on a politics of boycotts. The other urged cultural interaction as a way to spread German influence in strategic regions like Trieste or Pola. Both, however, urged German speaking tourists to visit the regions in question.

The varied uses of the growing tourism industry by nationalist activists clearly depended on the particular nature of nationalist politics and the level of development attained by the tourist industry in any given region. This seems obvious, and yet historians have a disquieting habit of slipping into easy generalizations, especially when it comes to a discussion of nationalist politics in the Monarchy. Viewed through the lens of tourism it seems even less possible to speak of a singular German culture, German nationalist politics or even of a German interest in Cisleithania. Nationalists, of course, did their best to deny this reality. Those who attempted to use tourism for their purposes always asserted that in fact there did exist that kind of singular, trans-regional set of “German” interests that united German speakers in Central Europe. Yet in the real world of village or

61 For a more detailed discussion of this local link between modernity and nationalist activism in the Böhmerwald, see Pieter M. JUDSON, “Every German visitor has a *völkisch* obligation he must fulfill.” Nationalist Tourism in the Austrian Empire, 1880–1918. In: Rudy KOSCHAR (ed.), *Histories of Leisure*, London 2002 (forthcoming).

62 *Mitteilungen des Vereins Südmark* (1910), pp. 36 and 103.

urban life, nationalists rarely achieved this hoped-for unity. German nationalists remained as frustrated about the unwillingness of German speakers to see themselves as German nationalists as they were about the supposed gains made by so-called rival nationalities in the Habsburg Monarchy. Nationalists' aggressive assertions, reflected in the Rohmeder quotation cited at the outset, suggest that German national self-identification was a far more fragile and contingent phenomenon than either historians or nationalists were likely to admit. It also suggests, that while nationalists believed they had found in consumerism a promising new instrument to spread their beliefs, consumer behavior too often followed a logic dictated by something other than the nationalist imagination.

Pieter M. Judson, *Tourismus, Reisen und nationaler Aktivismus im Böhmerwald, in Südtirol und in der Südsteiermark um 1900*

Hatten österreichische städtische Kleinbürger, die um 1900 ihre Koffer packten, um die Alpen zu bewandern, die gute Luft und die schöne Aussicht zu genießen, in der Adria zu schwimmen oder Städte zu besuchen, die Absicht nationalistische Aktivitäten zu setzen? Dieser Aufsatz untersucht die unterschiedlichen Versuche österreichischer Nationalisten in Cisleithanien, die wachsende lokale Tourismusbranche um die Jahrhundertwende für ihre nationalistischen Absichten zu nutzen.

In Westeuropa bemühte sich eine sprießende Tourismusbranche um eine stärkere Reintegration regionaler Kulturen in den Nationalstaat. Reiseführer und volkskundliche Literatur zelebrierten lokale Identitäten, obwohl sie gleichzeitig partikulare Elemente zu einer großen nationalstaatlichen Erzählung verschmolzen. Die nationalen Bewegungen in Österreich, Deutschland und Böhmen erkannten im Tourismus ein zentrales Mittel zur Propagierung ihrer politischen Programme. Dennoch hatte der Versuch der nationalistischen Funktionalisierungen in der multikulturell angelegten Gesellschaft Österreichs vielmehr eine fragmentierende als einigende Wirkung auf die breite Öffentlichkeit. Aktivisten organisierten Reisen in „national umkämpfte Regionen“ (für Deutschnationale lagen die wichtigsten an der „Sprachgrenze“ in Tirol, Böhmen und der Steiermark), um das nationale Bewusstsein zu wecken und die Kassen der lokalen nationalen Gemeinschaften zu füllen. Deutsch-österreichische, tschechische, (und manchmal auch italienische) nationalistische Organisationen ermunterten Touristen, ihren Teil zum schwelenden nationalen Krieg beizutragen, indem sie sich bei der Auswahl von Unterkunft und

Verpflegung an der nationalen Zugehörigkeit des Hotel-, Restaurant- und Wirtshausbesitzers orientierten und andere Touristen zur selben Haltung anhielten. Zeitweise bedienen sich diese Kreise derart feuriger Aufrufe, als wollten sie die Gäste physisch dazu zwingen, die Einheimischen anderer Nationalität einzuschüchtern. Vor allem aber erhob der nationalistische Tourismus Anspruch auf die nationale Zugehörigkeit des jeweiligen Landes.

Seit den 1890er Jahren stellten deutsch-österreichische und tschechische nationalistische Bewegungen das Reisen in einen fundamentalen politischen Zusammenhang. Die wachsende Freizeitbranche schien den Nationalisten neue Möglichkeiten zur Umsetzung ihrer Ziele zu gewähren. Der richtige, nationalbewegte Tourist suchte nicht mehr in erster Linie Entspannung, Revitalisierung oder kulturelle Anregung; er hatte nun durch eine vorsichtige und bewußte Auswahl des touristischen Angebots die Möglichkeit, der Nation zu dienen. Genauso wie Nationalisten die Ergebnisse der in der Österreichischen Monarchie in Zehn-Jahresabständen durchgeführten Volkszählungen als nationalistische Indikatoren interpretierten, wurden nun die Zahlen der die eigene Sprache sprechenden Touristen, der Hotel- und Restaurantbesitzer als Maßstab für die Stärke der Nation herangezogen. Zusammengenommen prägten sie die nationale Identität eines Landes.

Anhand konkreter Beispiele aus verschiedenen Regionen der Monarchie (dem Böhmerwald, Südtirol und der Südsteiermark) untersucht dieser Aufsatz das komplexe Zusammenspiel von nationalistischer Politik, städtischer Modernisierung und der Bevölkerung, die sich vom Aufschwung des Tourismus ökonomische Vorteile versprach. Zunächst werden drei Wege skizziert, womit Nationalisten den Tourismus für ihre Zwecke nutzten: erstens räumten sie dem Tourismus auf der diskursiven Ebene eine Schlüsselrolle zur Verankerung nationaler Identität im Bewußtsein der einzelnen Konsumenten ein. Zweitens funktionalisierten sie den Tourismus gezielt zur Behauptung des nationalen Charakters eines Landes. Drittens nahmen manche deutsche Nationalisten den Tourismus zur ökonomischen Stärkung der angeblich durch italienische oder slawische Einwanderung gefährdeten Bevölkerung in Anspruch.

Wie reagierte die ländliche Bevölkerung auf diese Versuche, über den Tourismus ihre Lebenswelt zu nationalisieren? Folgten sie der Führungsspitze des Böhmerwaldbundes, der Südmark oder des Tiroler Volksbundes? Meine These lautet, daß – während die Nationalisten einem nationalen Aktivismus im Tourismus zunehmend aggressiv das Wort redeten – die

ökonomischen Vorteile, die sich die Bevölkerung vom Tourismus versprach, die Bedeutung der nationalen Unterschiede auf unerwartete Weise relativierten. Nationale Bewegungen provozierten soziale Konflikte in der städtischen Gesellschaft der Monarchie und nahmen häufig die gesetzgebenden Organe für ihre agitatorischen Anliegen in Beschlag. Sie setzten den Tourismus zur Anheizung nationaler Konflikte ein, was zwar einerseits im ländlichen Kontext Erfolg versprechend war, andererseits aber stärkten die offensichtlichen ökonomischen Vorteile eine konziliante Haltung gegenüber Touristen unterschiedlicher Herkunft und schufen längerfristig ein wirksames Gegengewicht gegen die Vorstellung nationaler Reinheit.

Pieter M. Judson, *Turismo, viaggi e attivismo nazionalista nella Selva Boema, nel Tirolo meridionale e nella Stiria meridionale intorno al 1900*

La piccola borghesia urbana austriaca, che ai primi del Novecento passava le proprie vacanze sulle Alpi per respirare la salubre aria di montagna e ammirare le bellezze del paesaggio, sulle coste dell'Adriatico per i bagni di mare o a visitare città, era forse mossa da intenti nazionalistici? Il presente saggio analizza i molteplici tentativi dei nazionalisti austriaci in Cisleithania di utilizzare il turismo locale, in piena espansione all'epoca, per i propri fini politici.

Un settore molto dinamico del turismo dell'Europa occidentale perseguiva il progetto di una maggiore integrazione delle culture regionali nello stato nazionale. Le guide di viaggio e la letteratura etnografica celebravano le identità locali, attente però al tempo stesso a ricomporre i particolarismi locali nell'abbraccio unificante dello stato nazionale. In Austria, Germania e Boemia, i movimenti nazionali individuavano nel turismo un fondamentale strumento di propaganda per i propri programmi politici. Tuttavia, nell'ambito della società multiculturale austro-ungarica, l'azione dei circoli nazionalisti ebbe sull'opinione pubblica un effetto più disgregante che non unificante. Gli attivisti organizzavano viaggi nei "territori contesi" (per i nazionalisti tedeschi, quelli principali sorgevano lungo i "confini linguistici" in Tirolo, Boemia e Stiria) allo scopo di risvegliare la coscienza nazionale e di far affluire denaro nelle casse delle comunità locali appartenenti alla propria nazionalità. Le organizzazioni nazionalistiche austro-tedesche e ceche (e talora anche italiane) incoraggiavano i turisti a contribuire in prima persona alla guerra nazionale che covava sotto le ceneri, incitandoli a una scelta mirata di albergatori e ristoratori, basata su criteri

di appartenenza nazionale, e suggerendo loro di persuadere i propri connazionali a comportarsi nello stesso modo. Queste cerchie militanti ricorrevano a tratti a parole d'ordine e a slogan molto aggressivi, quasi volessero costringere fisicamente i turisti a intimorire la popolazione locale di altre nazionalità. Obiettivo primario del turismo di matrice nazionalistica era comunque quello di rivendicare l'appartenenza nazionale dei territori visitati.

A partire dagli anni Novanta dell'Ottocento, i movimenti nazionalistici austro-tedeschi e cechi diedero all'atto del viaggiare un'impronta fortemente politica. L'espansione di un nuovo settore economico – il turismo e l'organizzazione di ciò che va sotto il nome di tempo libero – parve offrire ai nazionalisti nuove possibilità per il perseguimento dei propri fini. Per il turista mosso da un autentico spirito nazionale lo svago, il riposo e la ricerca di stimoli culturali non erano più motivazioni primarie; grazie ad una scelta oculata e consapevole di mete e infrastrutture turistiche, egli poteva invece rendere un servizio alla nazione. E come i nazionalisti interpretavano in chiave politica i dati scaturiti dai censimenti decennali effettuati sul territorio della monarchia austriaca, così le statistiche relative al numero dei turisti, degli albergatori e dei ristoratori che parlavano la propria lingua venivano lette come metro di misura della forza della nazione. Complessivamente, tali dati forgiavano l'identità nazionale di un paese.

Attraverso il ricorso ad esempi concreti, riferiti a diverse regioni della monarchia (Selva Boema, Tirolo meridionale e Stiria meridionale), il saggio analizza la complessa interazione che si venne a creare fra la politica nazionalistica, la modernizzazione urbana e quella parte di popolazione che sperava di ottenere dei vantaggi economici dall'espansione del turismo, individuando tre strategie adottate dai nazionalisti per far leva sul settore. In primo luogo, al turismo fu assegnato un ruolo chiave per il radicamento dell'identità nazionale nella coscienza dei singoli consumatori. Poi ci fu una consapevole funzionalizzazione del movimento turistico ai fini dell'affermazione del carattere nazionale di un territorio. Infine si può rilevare il tentativo, da parte di alcuni nazionalisti tedeschi, di utilizzare il turismo per rafforzare economicamente la popolazione di lingua tedesca, che si riteneva minacciata da un crescente afflusso di immigrati italiani o slavi.

Come reagì la popolazione rurale al tentativo di nazionalizzazione della propria realtà attraverso il turismo? Aderì o meno al disegno politico dei leader del Böhmerwaldbund (Lega della Selva Boema), della Südmark (Marca meridionale) e del Tiroler Volksbund (Lega popolare tirolese)? La

tesi sostenuta in questo saggio è che, mentre sul piano dell'attivismo politico si assistette ad una progressiva accentuazione della violenza verbale messa in campo, i vantaggi economici che la popolazione si attendeva dallo sviluppo del settore relativizzarono in maniera del tutto inaspettata il significato delle differenze nazionali. I movimenti nazionali riuscirono a scatenare conflitti sociali nelle realtà urbane della monarchia, e spesso condizionarono gli organi legislativi, strumentalizzandoli ai fini delle proprie rivendicazioni politiche. Il tentativo di far leva sul turismo per fomentare i conflitti nazionali sembrava prospettare buoni risultati in ambito rurale, ma gli evidenti vantaggi economici derivanti dall'espansione del settore finirono con l'avvalorare un atteggiamento conciliante nei confronti dei turisti delle più disparate provenienze, configurandosi pertanto, sul lungo periodo, come un contrappeso all'ideologia della purezza della nazione.