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IMMIGRATION OF CZECHS AND SLOVAKS TO CANADA

(bakalářská práce)

Studijní obor: Angličtina se zaměřením na aplikovanou ekonomii

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Prohlašuji, že jsem tuto bakalářskou práci vypracovala samostatně a uvedla úplný seznam citované a použité literatury.

V Olomouci dne.....

Podpis

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1 INTRODUCTION

Migration of people and nations has always been significant for the development of mankind throughout history. Even though immigration of Czechs and Slovaks to Canada is much narrower scale, it is important for these nations as well. I chose this topic because I am amazed by the courage of people who began a new life in such a distant country, often without any financial support. They had to learn a new language in order to find an adequately paid job. They left their homes – voluntarily or involuntarily – to live a better life in Canada. Apart from the material difficulties mostly from the beginning of immigrants' new lives abroad, there was also an inevitable psychological struggle – feeling homesick or not accepted by the rest of the Canadian society. The stories of how Czech and Slovak community tried to earn its place in Canada are amazing and worthy of studying.

The goal of this bachelor thesis is to map the immigration of Czechs and Slovaks to Canada mostly in the 20th century until the fall of communism in 1989 and to find whether the immigrants were rather beneficial to Canadian culture or a burden. The thesis is divided into four parts. In the beginning I will give a brief historical background concerning mass immigration in general, including the reasons of leaving the home country and theoretical approaches, such as push and pull factors of immigration. I will also try to describe main milestones in Canadian immigration policy because it surely was connected with the number of Czechs and Slovaks in Canada, as well as with the atmosphere and the way nature-born Canadians felt about them.

The second part is concerned with the four waves of mass immigration of Czechs and Slovaks held chronologically – the immigration before the World War I, between the two world wars, after World War II and after the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. In each of these subdivisions I will discuss the reasons for leaving one's home country. Every one of these waves was distinctive as for the profile of immigrants – their age, status, education or the reasons of immigration. In this part I will also focus on areas of Czech and Slovak settlements in Canada.

The third part of this thesis is focused on the new life, culture and problems the immigrants had to face in the new country. The themes in this subsection include religion, language barrier, the problem of finding jobs and integration to a new community. Despite the struggle Czechs and Slovaks went through at the beginning they worked hard and a lot of them became respected members of their communities. The part about learning English language will be based – among other sources – on a short questionnaire I sent to several immigrants of Czech or Slovak origin, asking if they knew English language before they immigrated to Canada and what tools they used to learn it, whether it was a Canadian school, self-study or other. The questionnaire sample will be a part of the Appendices.

The last part is dedicated to famous Czechs and Slovaks in Canada and the compatriot organizations and media which were the logical output of the immigration. Despite living in the exile, the community preserves some of its traditions and people still need to be in touch with their home country somehow. In this part I would like to show whether those organizations of various types were a benefit to all society, not only to the immigrants. I will focus on the organizations in bigger cities – Toronto or Montreal – because that is where most of the immigrants live now. Even though I would say Toronto is the center of Czech and Slovak communities, some of the organizations have its branches all over Canada.

2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Mass immigration in general – the reasons of leaving

Mass migration of people has played a significant role in a culture of a particular country. From the half of the 19th century and during the 20th century this phenomenon occurred quite often that it is called “the age of mass migration”, meaning mostly transatlantic migration from Europe to United States and Canada.

According to Everett S. Lee’s theory on the causes of migration, we distinguish two basic types of those reasons – push and pull factors.¹ Push factors include religious oppression in the home country, the lack of job opportunities, political oppression, famine or drought, war, discrimination, disagreements between different cultural groups or any kind of negative feelings of fear and insecurity.²

Whereas push factors make a person dissatisfied with their situation, therefore they encourage them to migrate, the pull factors seem to be more positive. They are the attraction that makes people want to move to another country. As for the examples of pull factors of migration, political and religious freedom are the ones most significant, followed by more job opportunities, better education, medical care and living conditions in general or feeling secure.³

Taking into account the immigration of Czechs and Slovaks to Canada, both push and pull factors can be found. The immigration from the beginning (the second half of 19th century) until World War II is characterized mostly by the pull factors – immigrants came to seek a better life, higher standard of living and wealth.⁴ By contrast, the immigration during and after World War II until 1989 is influenced by

¹ Guido Dorigo and Waldo Tobler. “Push-Pull Migration Laws.” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 73 (1983): 1, accessed March 29, 2012, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2569342>.

² “National Geographic Human Migration Guide,” National Geographic, accessed April 18, 2012, <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/lessons/09/g68/migrationguidestudent.pdf>.

³ National Geographic Human Migration Guide.

⁴ “Migration, Arrival and Settlement,” Multicultural Canada, accessed March 26, 2012, <http://www.multiculturalcanada.ca/Encyclopedia/A-Z/c15/2>.

the push factors. The political situation forced the waves of mass emigration from Czechoslovakia, thus the causes were political and religious.⁵

Another theory, “The Laws of Migration”, was introduced by Ernst Ravenstein in 1885. The laws are presented in seven points, dealing with geographical aspects of immigration (larger cities grow by immigration rather than naturally, long-distance immigrants prefer to live in a city than in rural areas, etc...) as well as the demographic aspects – it says that women are more migratory within their country but as for the long distances, men are more migratory.⁶

2.2 Why Canada? – Canadian Immigration Policy

Immigration policy of Canada changed throughout the century according to global political situation. The first legal document regulating immigration – Immigration Act – was passed by Canadian government in 1869. It established an “open door” policy. For its development and economic growth, Canada needed immigrants to settle in an unoccupied lands. Even though the policy was said to encourage immigrants to come, it was, in fact, associated with discrimination. Apart from banning criminals to enter the country, restrictions were also put on disabled, ill and poor people.⁷

“In addition to passing the Immigration Act, the federal government also opened immigration offices in Great Britain, continental Europe, and the United States. The purpose of these offices was to advertise Canada as destination for migration and to help facilitate the process for immigrants. The federal government also passed the Dominion Land Act to attract immigrant settlers to the west. Under

⁵ “Migration, Arrival and Settlement,” Multicultural Canada, accessed March 26, 2012, <http://www.multiculturalcanada.ca/Encyclopedia/A-Z/c15/2>.

⁶ Ravenstein, E.G., “The Laws of Migration,” *Journal of the Statistical Society of London* 48 (1885): 198-199, accessed March 29, 2012, www.jstor.org/stable/2979181.

⁷ “Immigration Policy in Canada: History, Administration and Debates,” Mapleleafweb, accessed March 30, 2012, <http://www.mapleleafweb.com/features/immigration-policy-canada-history-administration-and-debates#history>.

the Act, free land was provided to male immigrants if they agreed to cultivate the land and build a permanent dwelling within three years.”⁸

The immigration policy changed during World War I – 1914 War Measures Act set restrictions on people of German or Slavic origin, which led to obligatory registration with the government, confiscation of their property, moving to internment camps or even to a forced deportation.⁹ The tendency to reduce the number of immigrants to Canada continued after World War I with the Immigration Act of 1919. It banned the immigrants from the countries that fought against Canada from entering.¹⁰

Another important document is the Immigration Act of 1952. The discriminatory tendencies still occurred, for example the act included prohibited and preferred classes of immigrants and it also set the right of their examination.^{11 12} The great power in decision making was given to Minister and his officials. Ministers had total authority over admissions or deportation and “were deluged with individual cases on which their personal decision was required”¹³, which later was the object of criticism.

The 1960’s introduced two significant reforms in Canadian immigration policy. First, the White Paper issued in 1966. Its main point lies in recognizing the need for skilled immigrants, therefore it places the sponsorship offer to immigrants and their relatives if they were literate or were qualified occupationally.¹⁴ Secondly, the limitations to the number of immigrants were replaced by the Points System

⁸ “Immigration Policy in Canada,” Mapleleafweb.

⁹ “War Measures Act,” The Canadian Encyclopedia, accessed March 29, 2012, <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/articles/war-measures-act>.

¹⁰ “Immigration Policy in Canada,” Mapleleafweb.

¹¹ “Immigration Policy in Canada,” Mapleleafweb.

¹² Freda Hawkins, *Canada and Immigration: Public Policy and Public Concern* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1988), 101-102.

¹³ Freda Hawkins, *Canada and Immigration*, 102-103.

¹⁴ Freda Hawkins, *Canada and Immigration*, 160.

(1967). Prospective immigrants were required to take a test which considered whether they knew the language or had proper education and training, etc.¹⁵

According to Hawkins, the Immigration Act of 1976 is “a excellent piece of legislation”. The way of deciding whether the immigrant can enter the country or not changed by this act – prohibited classes and the list of undesired people were removed and the restrictions were set on people who might have been viewed as a danger to welfare or security.¹⁶ It also includes the new categories of immigrants – family class, humanitarian class (refugees and otherwise persecuted people) and a class of independent applicants and assisted relatives.¹⁷

Despite the limitations on entering the country during the wartime, Canadian government either accepted or even encouraged immigration. Czechs and Slovaks were also attracted by the multicultural atmosphere, in which they could preserve their own traditions. Another reason why the immigrants (mostly from the communist Czechoslovakia) chose Canada could be because of already existing Czechoslovak communities in which they had relatives.

¹⁵ “Immigration Acts,” Canada in the Making, accessed April 17, 2012, http://www.canadiana.ca/citm/specifique/immigration_e.html#1967.

¹⁶ Freda Hawkins, *Canada and Immigration*, 377-378.

¹⁷ “Immigration Policy in Canada,” Mapleleafweb.

3 THE WAVES OF IMMIGRANTS

3.1 Immigration from the beginning until World War I

The immigration of Czechs and Slovaks in late 19th century was not mass yet. The majority of the immigrants were farmers and miners, whose employer – among others – was Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR).¹⁸

Slovaks suffered worse economic situation than Czechs, thus they came to Canadian west in larger groups, seeking the improvement of their financial state. The end of 19th century is the breaking point of the immigration boom due to the immigration policy of the new minister of the interior, Clifford Sifton. At that time, there were advertisements in newspapers and agents recruiting immigrants all over Europe – the goal was primarily to draw skilled farmers to settle Canadian prairie regions.^{19 20} However, the first Czech and Slovak settlers did not come directly from continental Europe but rather from the United States.²¹

Probably the first settlement was formed in Assiniboia, which is now an area in present day's Saskatchewan. Four Czech families – the Juneks, the Pangrác's, the Doležals and the Skokans – came to Canada and established a hamlet called Kolin.²² "The settlement at Kolin was established in 1884, followed by settlements at Derald, Glenside and Dovedale."²³

More organized settlement started with the work of Count Paul Esterhazy. He founded the First Hungarian-American Colonization Company and connected with the Canadian Pacific Railway. He even went to see the lands in Manitoba, so that he could start planning the settlement of that region.²⁴ Due to a recession in coal-mining

¹⁸ John Gellner and John Smerek, *The Czechs and Slovaks in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968), 68.

¹⁹ Gellner, *The Czechs and Slovaks in Canada*, 67.

²⁰ Lenka Rovná a Miroslav Jindra, *Dějiny Kanady* (Praha: Lidové noviny, 2000), 143.

²¹ Josef Čermák, *It all started with Prince Rupert: The story of Czechs and Slovaks in Canada* (Luhačovice: Ateliér IM Publishing Company, 2003), 125.

²² Gellner, *The Czechs and Slovaks in Canada*, 61.

²³ Paul R. Magocsi, *Encyclopedia of Canada's Peoples* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 399.

²⁴ Čermák, *It all started with Prince Rupert*, 126.

in Pennsylvania many miners lost their job. Esterhazy sent them with their families to Minnedosa, Manitoba, in 1885. Since they were of Hungarian origin, the hamlet was given the name Hun's Valley. Although they probably had some experience in learning English from their time in the United States, their leader, John Doery, was – apart from being the cattleman – the English teacher of this prosperous community.²⁵

Another community connected with Esterhazy (and also named after him) is the one founded in Assiniboia district in 1886. Esterhazy's generous plan of transferring over 3,000 families did not take place and only 35 families went there but because of the unfavorable climate only 11 families stayed.²⁶

Esterhazy's last attempt to settle the west was the hamlet of Kaposvar. The immigrants had to survive very hard conditions which they did not expect at their arrival since Esterhazy misrepresented the nature of the new settlement. Apparently, he failed to inform immigrants about really cold winters and that first they would have to clear the forests in order to have a piece of land suitable for farming.²⁷ Apart from Esterhazy's work in settling Canadian west, Canadian Pacific Railway still recruited Czech and Slovak immigrants both from Europe and the United States. They settled mostly in Saskatchewan:

“In 1901 George (Juraj) Zeman, an American Slovak, was appointed as a CPR colonization agent. Anxious to help get his people out of dangerous, unhealthy work in mines, mills and refineries (especially in Pennsylvania) and back into farming, he introduced Czech and Slovak families to the central region in Saskatchewan around Davidson, Kenaston, Hanley, Glenside, Broderick, Hawarden, Strongfield, and Milden. Other Czech families settled further west around Marriott in the Valley Centre district in 1902.”²⁸

²⁵ Gellner, *The Czechs and Slovaks in Canada*, 62-63.

²⁶ Gellner, *The Czechs and Slovaks in Canada*, 63.

²⁷ “Kaposvar: The faith of Lajos Nagy,” *A Scattering of Seeds – The Creation of Canada*, accessed April 26, 2012, <http://www.whitepinepictures.com/seeds/iii/37/index.html>.

²⁸ Alan Anderson, “Czech and Slovak Settlements,” *The Encyclopedia of Saskatchewan*, accessed April 26, 2012, http://esask.uregina.ca/entry/czech_and_slovak_settlements.html.

As for the other Canadian provinces, I would like to mention the communities in Lethbridge, Alberta and Fernie, British Columbia. New coal mines in Lethbridge needed miners to work there, so a group of Slovaks from Montana set out and arrived in Lethbridge in 1885.²⁹ A place called Fernie, originally named Crow's Nest Camp (based on the Crow's Nest Coal Company), is known for tragedies. In May 1902 there was an explosion which killed over 120 men.³⁰ ³¹ In April 1903, 90 million tons of limestone fell from the Turtle Mountain and about seventy people were killed.³²

Another significant settlements were founded in the beginning of 20th century, namely Prague in Alberta (1904), Fort William in Ontario and a community in Winnipeg, Manitoba, which was "the most significant urban settlement of the Czech and Slovak group".³³ During World War I, a great number of Czechs and Slovak enlisted in the army and in Winnipeg it was a mass issue. The Czecho-Slav Benevolent Association was formed in 1913 and when the war broke out, Czechs and Slovak joined the Bohemian Detachment of the 223rd Battalion of Canadian Expeditionary Force.³⁴

Eventually, there were around 3,500 Czechs and Slovaks in Canada by 1911. However, we do not know the exact numbers since there was an unclear situation around the nationality. Officially, Czechoslovakia or the two separate republics as they are now had not existed yet. Czechs and Slovak often listed themselves as "Austrians" or "Hungarians", it is difficult to find out the real number of immigrants of that time then.³⁵

²⁹ Gellner, *The Czechs and Slovaks in Canada*, 65.

³⁰ Gellner, *The Czechs and Slovaks in Canada*, 66.

³¹ for more information see the newspaper article about the explosion from May 29, 1902 available at this website: <http://www.crowsnest.bc.ca/fernie01.html>

³² Diana Wilson, *Triumph and Tragedy in the Crowsnest Pass* (Surrey: Heritage House Publishing Co. Ltd., 2005), 10.

³³ Gellner, *The Czechs and Slovaks in Canada*, 69.

³⁴ Čermák, *It all started with Prince Rupert*, 149.

³⁵ Gellner, *The Czechs and Slovaks in Canada*, 66.

3.2 Immigration between the two world wars (1918-1938)

Situation in the heart of Europe was getting stabilized for Czechs and Slovaks. The new republic was established in 1918 and Czechs and Slovaks were independent for the first time. New jobs were created and there was also a good standard of living.³⁶ Thus, leaving one's home country was not a matter of necessity or survival anymore and the number of immigrants from Czechoslovakia right after the war declined.

Also, the profile of the immigrants changed – prior to the war, the majority of them were farmers and miners, less educated, whole families. Whereas the post-war immigrants from Czechoslovakia (mostly from Moravia and Slovakia) would travel as individuals and they started settling in the bigger cities as well as in the rural areas. If they settled down in countryside, they worked with local farmers on the sugar beet or tobacco fields.³⁷ In conclusion, the reason why they came to Canada was still the economic one – to improve one's standard of living, to gather the wealth they could not gather in Czechoslovakia for various reasons.

As for the numbers, at the end of the World War I about 6,000 immigrants of Czech or Slovak origin were in Canada.³⁸ In 1921, the census reported 8,840 people of Czech origin and in 1931 the number increased to 30,401.³⁹ For the first time we can talk about mass immigration of Czechs and Slovaks to Canada.

A group of immigrants from Czechoslovakia settled down in Chatham, Ontario in 1924. Canadian Pacific Railway made an attractive offer for them so a lot of them worked in the sugar beet fields at first. Later, they became more independent and switched to tobacco or tomatoes.⁴⁰ Another area in Ontario which attracted Czechoslovak immigrants was Windsor, the Ford Motor Company in particular. In 1923 a group of Czechs (from Moravia) and Slovaks came there and despite initial

³⁶ Magocsi, *Encyclopedia of Canada's Peoples*, 399-400.

³⁷ Čermák, *It all started with Prince Rupert*, 151.

³⁸ Gellner, *The Czechs and Slovaks in Canada*, 72.

³⁹ "Czechs," *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, accessed April 26, 2012, <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/articles/czechs>.

⁴⁰ Gellner, *The Czechs and Slovaks in Canada*, 77.

difficulties, they worked as shopkeepers or building contractors or for the Ford Motor Company.⁴¹

As mentioned above, the larger part of inter-war immigrants tended to settle in bigger cities as well. Apart from the community in Winnipeg, in both Montreal and Toronto the Czechoslovak population dramatically increased from 1920's to 1930's. Gellner says:

“How quickly they grew can be shown by the example of Toronto, where the Czech and Slovak community numbered just 30 souls in 1923, but around 2,500 ten years later. In Montreal the growth was even more spectacular: hardly any Czech and Slovak residents at the census time of 1921, and 3,643 according to the 1931 census.”⁴²

Other areas of immigration between the two world wars are for example Regina and Henribourgh in Saskatchewan, Kenora in Ontario or Edmonton in Alberta. The farmers concentrated around Lethbridge in Alberta, in Raymond or Taber, to work in the sugar beet fields or coal mines.⁴³

The breaking point in this period was connected with the immigration policy of the United States. The United States saw the need to regulate the numbers of immigrants because there were too many of them. In 1924, the US government introduced the Immigration Act of 1924, which set quotas on how many immigrants from a particular country can enter the United States that year.⁴⁴ Prior to this legislation, European immigrants, including Czechs and Slovaks, preferred the United States to Canada. After the Act was released, the immigration to Canada increased rapidly. According to a research of the Applied History Research Group of

⁴¹ Čermák, *It all started with Prince Rupert*, 150.

⁴² Gellner, *The Czechs and Slovaks in Canada*, 77.

⁴³ “About Slovaks and Slovak Immigration – Part I: Canada,” Slovak Cathedral of the Transfiguration, accessed April 26, 2012, http://cathedral.latorica.com/en_a_slovaks_1.htm.

⁴⁴ “Immigration Act of 1924,” United States History, accessed April 26, 2012, <http://www.u-s-history.com/pages/h1398.html>.

the University of Calgary, the total number of immigrants who entered Canada between 1919 and 1931 was 1.2 million immigrants.⁴⁵

However, the Great Depression came in 1929 and for several years it practically stopped immigration because Canadian government could not handle that many immigrants and guarantee the jobs to them. Also, as the crisis spread all over the world, people in Czechoslovakia did not have the money needed for the journey and creation of the new home in Canada.

The noticeable group of the Czechoslovak immigrants is connected with Bata Shoe Company from Zlin. Thomas J. Bata founded Batawa in Ontario and moved here from Czechoslovakia before the World War II broke out. During the war, the company – having more modern machinery than Canadians – produced also weapons.⁴⁶

This period of immigration ended with an event that shocked Czechoslovakia – the Munich agreement signed in September 1938, which allowed the annexation of the frontier regions of Czechoslovakia to Nazi Germany. For the immigrants in Canada it meant the separation to two groups – the Czechs and the majority of Slovaks were pro-Czechoslovakian, while the smaller group of Slovaks supported the independent Slovak Republic, even though it was a collaboration with the Nazis.⁴⁷

3.3 Immigration during and after World War II

With the annexation of Sudetenland to German Third Reich the borders of Czechoslovakia closed and it was practically impossible to get out of the country during the war years until 1945. Since people did not expect such a surrender in 1938 and 1939, they did not emigrate and after the Munich agreement there was not enough time to arrange for immigration. Thus the numbers of Czech and Slovak immigrants during the World War II significantly decreased. According to John

⁴⁵ “Canada in 1921,” The Peopling of Canada: 1891 – 1921, accessed April 26, 2012, http://www.ucalgary.ca/applied_history/tutor/canada1891/7frame.html.

⁴⁶ Josef Čermák, *Fragmenty ze života Čechů a Slováků v Kanadě* (Zlín: Ateliér IM, 2000), 20.

⁴⁷ Čermák, *It all started with Prince Rupert*, 154.

Gellner, “in March 1939 the borders [...] shut tight, letting through only the occasional adventurous escapee.”⁴⁸

Also, the nature of immigrants changed. Until the World War II, the immigrants came to Canada mostly because of the economic situation, seeking better life. They were blue-collar workers. Whereas the post-war immigrants from Czechoslovakia and other eastern- and southern-European countries were political refugees.⁴⁹ After the war the Communist Party took over Czechoslovakia (putsch in February 1948) and for many people a time of oppression started. Some of them gathered in the refugee camps in Europe and waited for an opportunity to emigrate. The Iron Curtain made it very dangerous to cross the borders.

The situation in Communist Czechoslovakia became horrible for certain groups of people. Among the most persecuted were intellectuals, as well as Christians from different denominations. Those who did not support the new regime were often not allowed to study a university or they were forced into a particular field of profession they were not interested in. During the Communist era the refugees emigrated because otherwise they could be oppressed, imprisoned or even killed. We can divide the enemies of the regime into three main groups – the members of the Sokol organization, the legionaries and wealthy people.⁵⁰

World War II brought a new term – displaced person (abbreviated “DP”). A displaced person – in a post-war context – was a refugee forced to leave his or her home country. In Czechoslovakia it meant the people who did not agree with the new Communist regime – students, philosophers, artists, businessmen, writers, believers, politicians, etc. DP camps for such refugees existed throughout Europe until 1950’s.⁵¹

⁴⁸ Gellner, *The Czechs and Slovaks in Canada*, 80.

⁴⁹ “Migration, Arrival and Settlement,” Multicultural Canada, accessed April 22, 2012, <http://www.multiculturalcanada.ca/Encyclopedia/A-Z/c15/2>.

⁵⁰ Jakub Hodbod’, “Útěk z vlasti,” in *Neviditelné oběti komunismu v zemi javorů – sborník studentských prací*, ed. JakubHodbod’, Mgr. Jan Goll and Mgr. Václav Ulvr (Liberec: Gymnázium F.X. Šaldy, 2006), 16-21.

⁵¹ “Displaced Persons Camps,” Donauschwaben History, accessed April 23, 2012, http://www.dvhh.org/history/ds_camps/.

In 1949, a group of DP's from Europe arrived in Halifax, Canada. They were given a chance to study at Canadian universities with the aid of special scholarship program designed for them. Nine of these refugees came from Czechoslovakia.⁵²

The inter-war and post-war immigrants from Czechoslovakia were different from the immigrants who came to Canada before the World War I because they lived in a national country, whereas before it was just Austria-Hungary. It is logical that inter-war and post-war immigrants were the ones that started establishing compatriot organizations, Czech and Slovak communities that served to immigrants and helped them during the difficult transition. The people who came to Canada before World War I did not have the need to gather in national organizations simply because Czech or Slovak states had not existed yet.

As for the numbers of Czechs and Slovaks in Canada at that time, according to 1961 census 35,743 people originally born in Czechoslovakia lived there.⁵³ The number of Czechs and Slovaks who came to Canada between 1948 and 1950 is uncertain, however it is estimated that tens of thousands managed to flee from Czechoslovakia.

3.4 The wave of immigration after the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968

In the 1960's the political situation in Czechoslovakia slowly started to loosen and the government saw the need for reforms, such as increased freedom of speech or movement or the possibility of letting other parties than the Communist one participate in the government. The criticism of Czechoslovak government in media grew since the abolishment of censorship in June 1968.⁵⁴

Other countries under the rule of Communists were concerned about the amount of freedom Czechoslovakia had gained during the first half of 1968.

⁵² Čermák, *It all started with Prince Rupert*, 183-184.

⁵³ Gellner, *The Czechs and Slovaks in Canada*, 83.

⁵⁴ "Právní úpravy kolportáže v českých zemích – Zákon č. 84/1968 Sb. Zákon, kterým se mění zákon č. 81/1966 Sb. o periodickém tisku a o ostatních hromadných informačních prostředcích," Kolportáž.cz, accessed April 27, 2012, http://www.kolportaz.cz/legislativa/1968_84_zmena_tz.pdf.

Eventually, the countries of the Warsaw Pact – Bulgaria, the Soviet Union, East Germany, Poland and Hungary invaded Czechoslovakia in August 1968. Until the autumn of 1969 it was possible to cross the borders. Until July 1969 over 8,000 people emigrated from Czechoslovakia to Canada (with Austria as a transfer station).⁵⁵ Soon after the invasion the delegation from Czech and Slovak Association of Canada called Canadian government for help.⁵⁶ Canadian government realized the opportunity to gain highly skilled immigrants, real professionals in their particular fields, so the attitude to Czechoslovak immigrants was forthcoming. Altogether, 11,943 people from Czechoslovakia entered Canada between 1968 and 1969.⁵⁷

Concerning the differences between this wave of immigrants and the previous ones, I should mention two. First, post-war immigrants and 1968 immigrants definitely preferred to settle in the urban areas rather than in countryside (which was preferred by the early immigrants). Secondly, since people who immigrated to Canada after 1968 were skilled professionals, they did not have much trouble finding a job right after they settled down.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Silke Stern, “Československá emigrace v letech 1968 - 1969 – Rakousko jako první azylová země emigrantů,” in *Česko.Rakousko – rozdělení – odloučení – spojení: Sborník a katalog Dolnorakouské zemské výstavy*, ed. Stefan Karner and Michal Stehlik (Schallaburg, 2009), 128-131.

⁵⁶ Čermák, *It all started with Prince Rupert*, 189.

⁵⁷ “The Czech/Slovak Community by Eva Marha,” The Czech/Slovak Community, accessed May 4, 2012, http://www.mhso.ca/ggp/Exhibits/Safe_Haven/straznicky/czechslovak.html.

⁵⁸ Čermák, *It all started with Prince Rupert*, 190.

4 TRANSITION TO A DIFFERENT CULTURE

4.1 New language vs. native language

Learning a new language is a highly significant part of such transition which immigration is. It takes time, it takes a great effort of people who have to learn it. It is necessary to know the basics in order to get a job but this is just a tip of the iceberg. Not knowing the language properly, and even having the foreign accent, was and still is a kind of a handicap during the process of integration into a new country, new community. People get suspicious when they hear people speaking with an accent.

On the other hand, there was also a need and a want to preserve their own culture, language and traditions the immigrants were used to. The conflict between two different worlds had strong psychological impact on immigrants. If they did not understand English language at all at the time of their arrival to Canada, they had worse position on the job market. They were not perceived as Canadians yet and they did not feel at home in Canada but they also lost their home in Czechoslovakia. This could lead to an identity crisis. Moreover, the assimilation to a different culture was even worse when it was a forced immigration (political refugees).

Canadian immigration policy, no matter how open to immigrants from Europe, preferred those who know English or French, which was clearly defined in 1967 Points System.⁵⁹ The early immigrants, who came to Canada mostly from the United States, knew a little English already but they still had to learn. Often they used a mediator for communication with Canadian government and for arranging jobs and other things important for the immigrants' survival in the new land. The best example of this is Count Paul Esterhazy. The early communities also did focus on preserving their native language and wanted their children to know about their original culture and history, therefore they created weekend schools. The first one was a Protestant school in Kolin, Saskatchewan, established in 1902.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ "Immigration Acts," Canada in the Making, accessed April 27, 2012, http://www.canadiana.ca/citm/specifique/immigration_e.html#1967.

⁶⁰ "Education and Culture," Multicultural Canada, accessed April 24, 2012, <http://www.multiculturalcanada.ca/Encyclopedia/A-Z/c15/5>.

The immigrants of the inter-war period (1918 – 1938) had experienced democratic Czechoslovakia and knew the feeling of having their own independent national state (contrary to the pre-1914 immigrants from Austria-Hungary). They were proud of their origin and wanted to preserve at least a part of it despite the assimilation to Canadian culture. In 1930's Czech and Slovak language was taught in the building of Church of all nations in Toronto. Also, in 1969, a Czech and Slovak literature and language course was opened at the University of Toronto.⁶¹

The 1968 wave of Czechoslovakian immigrants differed from the previous ones in the language area. Since they were often skilled people of various professions, they knew at least a little English, some of them spoke English quite well and therefore had a better chance of finding a well-paid job.

The best way to learn a new language is to speak it – so immigrants learned from conversations with neighbors and friends from school or colleagues. Additionally, they learned English from reading English books or newspaper, listening to English songs, or from media. Language barrier is something immigrants expect and know they have to work on language skills hard. According to Dr. Oberg (anthropologist) the proper knowledge of the language lessens the inevitable culture shock.⁶²

4.2 Immigrants and new jobs

In the late 19th century and at the beginning of 20th century the main goal of immigrants was to make their financial situation better, they sought wealth and prosperity. One of the first thing they had to do when they arrived to Canada was to find how to earn a living. This first wave of immigrants (as mentioned above in this thesis) were mostly workers in coal mines or farmers in Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Alberta. Canada encouraged immigration and welcomed new settlers of the west,

⁶¹ Čermák, *Fragmenty*, 48.

⁶² Lalervo Oberg, "Culture Shock & The Problem Of Adjustment To New Cultural Environments," WorldWide Classroom, accessed April 16, 2012, http://www.worldwide.edu/travel_planner/culture_shock.html.

attracting them to fertile land. Between 1881 and 1885 immigrants were allured also by building of Canadian Pacific Railway.⁶³

During the Great Depression prosperous farms faced problems too and many of the Czech and Slovak immigrants had to look for new opportunities in different areas of Canada. For example, the families of Vaclav Moravec, Vilem Jersak and Karel Andrs, originally from Esterhazy, travelled to Saskatoon to see if they could gain a new fertile land for their farming but they found failure everywhere.⁶⁴ Finally, the situation got better:

“However, shortly thereafter hope arrived in the form of letters from friends in Minitonas. The land held great promise there. The drought did not seem to reach the Valley. As a consequence, the families of Vilem Jersak, Karel Andrs, and Vaclav Moravec moved to Minitonas that fall arriving there just before harvest.”⁶⁵

The later waves of immigrants tend to prefer bigger cities than countryside, so there were also more job opportunities. They were not only farmers but the professions differed. Canadian immigration policy after the World War II changed because Canadian government realized the need of highly educated immigrants who could contribute to the technical and intellectual development of Canada.

Czech and Slovak immigrants who came to Canada in the third wave (1948-1968) had difficulties at the beginning because Canadian government was not prepared for them. However, they adapted and later many of them became successful in their particular fields; from science, arts and film, to politics and social work.⁶⁶ Some of them had to have several jobs to earn enough money to settle down properly and then they were able to get a job in their field. Czechs and Slovaks also worked in

⁶³ “Calgary & Southern Alberta: Immigration and Settlement,” The Applied History Research Group, University of Calgary, accessed April 16, 2012, http://www.ucalgary.ca/applied_history/tutor/calgary/immsettlement.html.

⁶⁴ Jerry V. Marek, “Czech immigrants of the Swan Valley,” *Český Dialog* 9 (2002), accessed April 27, 2012, <http://cesky-dialog.net/clanek/548-czech-immigrants-of-the-swan-valley-2>.

⁶⁵ Jerry V. Marek, “Czech immigrants of the Swan Valley,” *Český Dialog* 10 (2002), accessed April 27, 2012, <http://www.cesky-dialog.net/clanek/591-czech-immigrants-of-the-swan-valley>.

⁶⁶ For more information see Čermák, *It all started with Prince Rupert*, chapter 5 – Profiles.

numerous compatriot organizations, as a hobby or a career. As for the fourth wave of immigrants from Czechoslovakia after 1968, they had less trouble finding a job if they spoke English and were educated. Canada was also better prepared for them with “the government-funded language classes and other programs.”⁶⁷

Finding a job in a foreign country is always difficult but Canada’s attitude towards immigrants was rather open in this area. Emerging Czech and Slovak communities were also helpful to the fellow newcomers. Such organizations and communities helped them psychologically – the newcomers felt they belonged somewhere in a foreign country – and socially – they met with other people of the same nationality and they made new acquaintances with other immigrants and Canadians. Once they found a job, they began their own contribution to Canada’s economic and cultural development.

4.3 Religion of the Czechoslovak communities

The immigration from Austria-Hungary and Czechoslovakia to Canada was also motivated by religion. Seeking religious freedom, Czechs and (generally more religious) Slovaks moved to Canada and started establishing their denominations. Even though freedom of religion was not the main cause of the immigration for some, the communities were still being created because it was also the matter of preserving something of one’s national identity and it had a social function.

According to Gellner, about 80% of Czech and Slovak immigrants were Catholic.⁶⁸ The rest of them are protestant, mostly Baptist and Lutheran.⁶⁹ The very first church of people of Czech or Slovak origin was Roman Catholic and it was founded in 1907 in Fort William, Ontario.⁷⁰ As mentioned above, the families of Vilem Jersak, Karel Andrs and Vaclav Moravec came first to Esterhazy, and then

⁶⁷ Magocsi, *Encyclopedia of Canada’s Peoples*, 400.

⁶⁸ Gellner, *The Czechs and Slovaks in Canada*, 87.

⁶⁹ “Religion,” Multicultural Canada, accessed April 27, 2012, <http://www.multiculturalcanada.ca/Encyclopedia/A-Z/c15/3>.

⁷⁰ Gellner, *The Czechs and Slovaks in Canada*, 87.

moved to Swan River Valley to join the Czech and Slovak Baptists in Minitonas. Vaclav Moravec later became the pastor of the Baptist church in Toronto.

The first Greek Catholic communities were founded in Lethbridge, Alberta and Montreal, Quebec, followed by Toronto, Windsor, Hamilton, Oshawa, Sudbury and Welland in Ontario. One of the significant Roman Catholic churches is the church of Saint Cyril and Method.⁷¹

Since this thesis is focused on the immigration from the late 19th century and 20th century when a greater number of Czechs and Slovaks came, I did not mention the very first group that came to Canada – Moravian brothers. It was a group of missionaries who wanted to share the Gospel among the native people. They came in late 18th century and established several hamlets in Ontario and Manitoba, for example the hamlet of Farfield and Moraviantown.^{72 73}

Because of these early Protestant immigrants Czechoslovak Baptist Church in Toronto has a unique bond to Canada's history and culture – first they came to Manitoba but then a group of them moved to Toronto. In 1932 the Bethlehem Chapel of the Czechoslovak Baptist Church in Winnipeg was opened.⁷⁴ Czech and Slovak Baptists in Canada are very active. The first congregation was established in Windsor, Ontario and was followed by many other communities, for example in Chatham, Blenheim, Minitonas, Glenside, Winnipeg, etc. Additionally, “the Czech and Slovak Baptists [...] are united in the Czechoslovak Baptist Convention of the United States and Canada.”⁷⁵

The last church – the Church of Saint Wenceslas – was built in Toronto in 1963.⁷⁶ As mentioned, the church communities also had social and cultural function

⁷¹ Čermák, *Fragmenty*, 38.

⁷² Čermák, *Fragmenty*, 17.

⁷³ “Religion,” Multicultural Canada, accessed April 27, 2012, <http://www.multiculturalcanada.ca/Encyclopedia/A-Z/c15/3>.

⁷⁴ “Religion,” Multicultural Canada, accessed April 27, 2012, <http://www.multiculturalcanada.ca/Encyclopedia/A-Z/c15/3>.

⁷⁵ Gellner, *The Czechs and Slovaks in Canada*, 94-95.

⁷⁶ Čermák, *Fragmenty*, 36.

for immigrants. Moreover, it also helped immigrants with settling down in the new home, particularly in the matter of finances. A woman who answered my questionnaire said that during the time her family spent in Canada, they attended the Czechoslovak Baptist Church in Toronto. They met with other Czechoslovak immigrants and the church as an institution helped them get jobs and acted as sponsor.

As for the Slovak Lutherans, the churches of this denomination were established in the inter-war period or later mostly in Manitoba and Ontario. Since they had problems with finding Slovak preachers, in many cases the Slovak priests originally from the United States communities (Missouri synod) served in these Lutheran churches in Canada.⁷⁷

Apart from spiritual and social function, the church communities also served as a place where immigrants could hear their mother tongue, although some of the churches later accepted English language due to increasing number of members who were not even born in Czechoslovakia. However, to preserve the language, many of these communities had their own language schools or ways to learn at least the basics of the language of their ancestors. The churches played significant role in the lives of immigrants because it enabled them to “hold together” in difficult times.

⁷⁷ Magocsi, *Encyclopedia of Canada's Peoples*, 1175.

5 CULTURAL INFLUENCE OF CZECHS AND SLOVAKS

This last section of the thesis is concerned with cultural impact of Czechoslovak immigrants on Canadian society. Melting two cultures into one certainly influences both of them. The aim of this section is to introduce organizations that Czech and Slovak immigrants in Canada established – to introduce their cultural life in the new land – and to analyze whether it had positive or negative impact on Canadian society. Such organizations began to appear mostly in the inter-war period because the immigrants came from the independent Czechoslovakia – they were the first to have a real nation and wanted to preserve something of their Czechoslovak identity. I will present a number of compatriot organizations and describe their development and purpose. At the end, I will list several Czechoslovak immigrants who became famous in Canada and/or have contributed to Canadian social life.

5.1 Czech and Slovak Association of Canada (CSAC)

Formerly National Alliance of Slovaks, Czechs and Carpathian Ruthenians or Czechoslovak National Association of Canada was established in Toronto in 1939. The need to be organized and help Czechoslovakia during the Second World War overcame different interests of various clubs and groups.⁷⁸ It was established as rather political organization with its own structure – the first President of this organization was Štefan Rudinský, the Honorary President was František Pavlásek and “the vitally important position of Secretary-General was entrusted to Karel Buzek.”⁷⁹

At the end of 1942 the Association consisted of 91 branches⁸⁰ throughout Canada (thanks to persistent recruitment efforts of Buzek) with the total number of members over 6,500.⁸¹ Czechoslovak patriotism lead the immigrants together. One of

⁷⁸ See official website of CSAC, section Head Office, sub-section History.

⁷⁹ Čermák, *It all started with Prince Rupert*, 155.

⁸⁰ See Appendix 1.

⁸¹ See official website of CSAC, section Head Office, sub-section History.

the activities the Association did during the war was money collection in favor of Czechs and Slovaks back at home, collections for Red Cross, etc. An interesting story happened in 1939 in Toronto. After the invasion of Czechoslovakia by Nazi Germany a group of Germans came to Czechoslovak embassy in Montreal to take it over, the members of CSAC and Sokol opened the door and asked them rigidly what they wanted. Montreal police supported compatriots and was present at the embassy too. The Germans got scared and left.⁸² In 1945 the “Victory Congress” took place in Toronto, defining three main goals of the Association for the post-war times: supporting Canadian citizenship, preserving the national heritage of Czechs and Slovaks and financial support for post-war Czechoslovakia.⁸³ The significance and respect of Canadian authorities towards Czechoslovak community was also shown when Karel Buzek became the director of the Canadian United Allied Relief Fund. Today, the Association lost its original political focus and organizes various events, including picnics, New Year’s Eve parties, Easter celebrations or hog-killing (zabíjačka).

Having been asked how their organization contributes to Czechs and Slovaks in Canada and if it also contributes to natural-born Canadians as well, the Toronto branch of the Association answered: “The Association helped with enlisting Czech Canadians to be active in World War II. [...] We make Canada richer by sharing and showing our culture when opportunity arises. We work together with other Canadians of different ethnic backgrounds thus helping to increase harmony in Canada. We help in increasing business between Canada and CR.”⁸⁴

Another area of activities of the Association is the Masaryk Award. Established in 1985, the award is the highest recognition of the Association and it is given to Czechoslovak Canadians who were somehow important in various fields of Canadian society or who contributed to the independence of Czechs and Slovaks.

⁸² Radmila Locher from CSAC Toronto, e-mail message to author, May 7, 2012.

⁸³ See official website of CSAC, section Head Office, sub-section History.

⁸⁴ according to personal e-mail correspondence with Mrs. Radmila Locher from the Toronto branch of the CSAC; for the whole text see Appendix 2.

Among the awarded people are for example Václav Havel, Josef Škvorecký, Josef Čermák, Joe Schlesinger, Tomáš Baťa or Milada Horáková (in memoriam).⁸⁵

5.2 Masaryktown

One of the most important organizations was Masaryk Memorial Institute Inc., situated in Toronto, Ontario. In 1944 a house – Masaryk Hall – was purchased in order to meet the need of a permanent culture centre for immigrants in Toronto and Gustav Přístupa was elected the first President of this organization. However, people living in Toronto soon felt that they want to spend time in the countryside too. In 1948, the organization purchased a farm in Scarborough, currently known as Masaryktown. At that time the farm needed a lot of work – and thanks to many volunteers and generous donations (system that preserved to this day) cottages and a swimming pool were built there during the following year. Summer camps for children took place there along with other recreational activities.⁸⁶

In 1960 the name of the organization was changed to Masaryk Memorial Institute Inc. and the administration centre moved to Masaryktown. From its beginning in 1950's it played a significant role in education too. A library of Masaryktown consists mostly from gifts (according to the inscriptions inside) and is a valuable source of books about Czechoslovak history.⁸⁷ In 1991 the library was moved to another building and the collection was enriched with video recordings.⁸⁸ Also, Czech school was (and still is) a part of Masaryktown educational programs, currently sponsored by Czech Foreign Ministry.⁸⁹

⁸⁵ For more information about people who were given the Masaryk Award see the official CSAC website, section Head Office, sub-section Masaryk Award.

⁸⁶ "History," Masaryk Memorial Institute, accessed April 25, 2012, http://masaryktown.ca/?page_id=231.

⁸⁷ Alena Čechová, "Masaryktown," in *Neviditelné oběti komunismu v zemi javorů – sborník studentských prací*, ed. JakubHodboď, Mgr. Jan Goll and Mgr. Václav Ulvr (Liberec: Gymnázium F.X. Šaldy, 2006), 104.

⁸⁸ For more information read Julie Novotná: *Masaryktown – 50 let českého a slovenského národního parku v Kanadě*, Toronto, 1998.

⁸⁹ "Czech School," Masaryk Memorial Institute, accessed April 25, 2012, http://masaryktown.ca/?page_id=108.

The importance of current Masaryktown lies in the atmosphere it has and the memories it can recall. It provides homes for people of 55 years of age or more – immigrants of advanced age can live there and use some of the facilities, surrounded by their fellow countrymen and nature similar to the Czech one they remember.⁹⁰ Masaryktown is a cultural centre for people of all ages and its facilities can be used by all people, not just those of Czechoslovak origin. The park, for example, is often used for wedding ceremonies or can be rented for other purposes.

5.3 Sokol

The first Sokol units in Canada were founded in Frank, Alberta in 1912 and in Michel, British Columbia in 1913.^{91 92} As the number of immigrants in Canada grew, the number of Sokol units increased too. The ones in Frank and Michel were followed by Regina in Saskatchewan, Winnipeg in Manitoba or Montreal in Quebec. As for Ontario, Sokol was established in Toronto, Windsor, Kitchener, Rouyn-Noranda, Batawa and Ottawa. Every year Canadian Sokol Organization organized Slets – gymnastic performances and festivals – which took place in Masaryktown.⁹³

During Nazi occupation and in Communist Czechoslovakia Sokol organization was greatly oppressed. The philosophy and moral values that were presented and shared by the members of Sokol were not convenient for these totalitarian governments. As Gellner states: “Although basically it was a gymnastic organization, it had the higher aim of moral regeneration of long-oppressed people.”⁹⁴ Thus, the contribution of the Sokol organization lies far beyond physical health of the members. As an institution, it is one of the ways of preserving national

⁹⁰ “Masaryk Park Homes,” Masaryk Memorial Institute, accessed April 25, 2012, http://masaryktown.ca/?page_id=253.

⁹¹ Čermák, *It all started with Prince Rupert*, 249.

⁹²For further reading see the article “Josef Čermák: Celebration of the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Michel Sokol unit”, available at <http://czechfolks.com/2011/11/02/celebration-of-the-100th-anniversary-of-the-establishment-of-the-michel-sokol-unit/>.

⁹³ Čermák, *It all started with Prince Rupert*, 249.

⁹⁴ Gellner, *Czechs and Slovaks in Canada*, 111.

heritage and enriching Canadian culture.⁹⁵ Jan Waldauf, a man who gave a great part of his life to Sokol organization, died in September 2011. He wrote several books about Sokol.⁹⁶ Although currently Sokol is losing the influence it had in the half of the 20th century, it still runs in bigger cities, for example Toronto or Montreal.

5.4 Other Czech and Slovak organizations in Canada

As mentioned earlier, there were compatriot and other organizations of Czechs and Slovaks of various kind – political (CSAC), religious (Czech and Slovak churches throughout Canada), focused on culture (Masaryk Memorial Institute), but also financial (Czechoslovak Credit Union Ltd.), charitable (scholarships) or gender distinctive (Women’s Committee). Despite advanced age a great number of people are still active in these organizations.

Before and after World War I a lot of support groups and organizations were established. The very first of this groups – Czecho-Slav Benevolent Association – was created in Winnipeg, Manitoba, in 1913 thanks to František Dojáček.⁹⁷ The boom of the support organizations came in 1920s and 1930s. Czech and Slovak immigrants felt the need to gather together and to help each other. In 1924 Czechoslovak Mutual Benefit Society in Montreal was established, followed by the First Slovak Mutual Benefit Society in Alberta in 1928 and the National Slovak Mutual Benefit Society of Canada in 1932 in Kirkland Lake, Ontario. These groups later united into one called Canadian Slovak Benefit Society. Among the activities of this organization were for example building culture houses or publishing the magazine *Slovenský hlas*.⁹⁸

A popular way of maintaining traditions in Canada was folklore dancing. A number of smaller dancing groups occurred in Czech and Slovak settlements, and folklore dancing became a part of such events as Czech and Slovak Days at

⁹⁵ See Appendix 2.

⁹⁶ Josef Čermák, “Zemřel Jan Waldauf,” *Satellite 1-146*, September 15, 2011, accessed April 27, 2012, <http://zpravy.org/1/2011/14/Waldauf.html>.

⁹⁷ Čermák, *Fragmenty*, 21.

⁹⁸ Čermák, *Fragmenty*, 22.

Masaryktown or Congress of the Czech and Slovak Association of Canada. For example Czecho-Slovak Benevolent Association in Manitoba organizes Folklorama, a two-week-long festival of Czech and Slovak folk dancing, beer, food and entertainment.⁹⁹ The groups that dance there are called Furiant and Venecek.¹⁰⁰ Another significant organization which is known for its folk dance group is Beseda in Montreal. Originally just a dance group, Beseda evolved into a cultural centre for Czech and Slovak immigrants and its folk dancers participate in many events in Quebec and Ontario. Other activities held by this organization are Czech and Slovak language lessons or ballroom dancing classes.¹⁰¹

Other activities immigrants enjoyed and still do is acting. New Theatre in Toronto is another way Czech and Slovaks immigrants preserve their culture. The tradition of performing a Czech or a Slovak play started in 1933 but it was not much organized. The performances and rehearsals took place in different locations, even in a church.¹⁰² The formation of the name New Theatre did not officially appeared until 1970 when a group of immigrants performed for their fellow countrymen Alois Jirásek's play *Lucerna*. Concerning the level of quality, Josef Čermák states: "Because many of the members of the ensemble were back in Czechoslovakia professional actors or amateurs of professional quality, the standard of the performances was quite high."¹⁰³ Moreover, New Theatre hosted a number of well-known actors, such as Jiří Voskovec, Milan Lasica or Stella Zázvorková.

⁹⁹ "The Heart of Europe – Czech and Slovak Pavilion 2005: Folklorama," Folklorama, accessed April 27, 2012, <http://www.members.shaw.ca/folklorama/html/about.html>.

¹⁰⁰ Čermák, *Fragmenty*, 33.

¹⁰¹ "About Beseda," Beseda – Canadian Czech and Slovak Culture Centre, accessed April 27, 2012, http://www.beseda.ca/english/about_e.htm.

¹⁰² Čermák, *It all started with Prince Rupert*, 240.

¹⁰³ Čermák, *It all started with Prince Rupert*, 241.

5.5 Czech and Slovak compatriot media in Canada

One of the ways of keeping in touch with people in Czechoslovakia (Czech republic and Slovakia, respectively) was publishing newspapers or magazines. It also keeps the immigrants updated about what happens in their former homeland.

The first newspaper – Slovak Word, Slovenské slovo – was released in 1910 in Alberta. It was followed by Slovenské bratrstvo, Naše slovo or Hlas ľudu. The last one was strongly leftist. Another Slovak newspaper is Kanadský Slovák published under Canadian Slovak league, the separatist organization which, in times of Czechoslovakia, was strictly for separation of Slovaks from Czechs.¹⁰⁴

The most known compatriot magazine which continues until today is Nový domov (The New Homeland), a bi-weekly magazine published by Masaryk Memorial Institute, Inc. It is in printed version, as well as available online. Since there are English-speaking spouses of immigrants and children or grand-children who don't speak English, the magazine also has English Supplement Issues published every few months.¹⁰⁵

Another well-known magazine is Satellite 1-416, owned and lead by Aleš Březina, with important contributors Josef Čermák or Antonín Cekota.^{106 107} Český dialog (Czech Dialogue), available printed and online, is also concerned – among others – with stories of Czechs and Slovaks in Canada.¹⁰⁸ Additionally, the branches of CSAC have their own newsletters with past and future events.

As for television, I will mention the one in Toronto – Nová vize, established in 2003. It airs in Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia and its main goal is to inform Canadians of Czech or origin about activities within Czech communities in those provinces. It also monitors the visits of politicians or celebrities. Apart from

¹⁰⁴ Čermák, *Fragmenty*, 53-54.

¹⁰⁵ See official website of Nový domov, available at <http://www.novydomov.com/>.

¹⁰⁶ Čermák, *Fragmenty*, 55.

¹⁰⁷ See official website of Satellite 1-416, available at <http://zpravy.org/>.

¹⁰⁸ See official website of Český dialog, available at <http://www.cesky-dialog.net/>.

finances from Czech businessmen in Canada, the TV station receives a donation from Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs.¹⁰⁹

5.6 Famous Czechs and Slovaks in Canada

Finally, this last part is dedicated to famous people of Czech or Slovak origin in Canada (whether they were famous at the time of their immigration or whether they became famous within the Czech and Slovak communities by being active in various fields). I cannot list every Czech or Slovak who was a good influence on Canadian culture and society, I will mention just several people who became famous somehow.

Tomas Bata Jr., the son of famous Czech shoemaker Tomas Bata, moved to Canada after the invasion of Nazi Germany to Czech lands in 1939. He and a hundred of skilled workers and managers (with their families) from Zlin settled near Trenton, Ontario. He founded the new headquarters of Bata Shoe Company – the community of Batawa. The beginning was hard as Zlin was a modern city at that time and it was a shock for some of the workers to come to the Canadian countryside, then underdeveloped.¹¹⁰ During WWII, the company made also weapons for Canadian army and Mr Bata himself fought in the Canadian army. The contribution of this company is non-negotiable. “While the company invested in developing the Canadian business as well as in rebuilding traditional markets in Western Europe, its greatest success came in regions where factory-made shoes had made few inroads.”¹¹¹

Josef Čermák is a kind of a “renaissance man” – lawyer, publicist, amateur actor, President of Sokol Canada, historian and poet. He came to Canada in 1949 and became active in various areas of Czechoslovak community life. He is the author of

¹⁰⁹ “About Us,” Nova Vize – Czech TV Toronto, accessed April 28, 2012, <http://www.novavize.com/aboutus.html>.

¹¹⁰ “BATAWA, nejúspěšnější „malý Zlín“ v Novém světě,” BataStory.net, accessed April 28, 2012, <http://batastory.net/cs/info/batawa-nejuspesnejsi-maly-zlin-v-novem-svete>.

¹¹¹ Ian Austen, “Thomas Bata, ‘Shoemaker to the World’, Dies at 93,” *The New York Times*, September 2, 2008, accessed April 28, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2008/09/03/business/worldbusiness/03bata.html?_r=1.

several books (two of them are a valuable source for this thesis) and is known for his remarkable work in Czech and Slovak Association of Canada.¹¹²

Maria and Otto Jelinek are famous figure skating partners (brother and sister). Their family emigrated in 1948. “Fourteen years later, Otto Jan Jelinek and his younger sister Maria dazzled the world when they returned to their native land to skate in the World Figure Skating Championships. Wearing Bohemian folk costumes, they skated to music by Smetana and Dvorak in Prague's Sportovni hala - a routine that won them the gold medal for 1962.”¹¹³ Otto Jelinek also worked in politics as a member of Progressive Conservative Party.

Josef Škvorecký, a Czech author, came to Canada after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. He worked as a professor of English at University of Toronto.¹¹⁴ With his wife Zdena Salivarova he established a publishing company – 68 Publishers – in 1971.¹¹⁵ It is thanks to this company that many books of Czech and Slovak authors were published (in Czechoslovakia some of the writers were banned from publishing their work).

Dan Tölgyesi is a businessman of Slovak origin. His family came to Canada with nothing and he step by step worked his way from ordinary miner to a post of President of the Quebec Mining Association.¹¹⁶

Joe Schlesinger is one of the most respected Canadian journalists. Born in Bratislava, he became endangered by the Nazis because of his Jewish origin. Fortunately, he was one of the hundreds of children Nicholas Winton saved and

¹¹² “Email interview: Jan Kavalír interviews Josef Čermák,” CzechFolks.com, accessed April 28, 2012, <http://czechfolks.com/2010/04/05/email-interview-jan-kavalir-interviews-josef-cermak-emailovy-rozhovor-jan-pelikan-zpovida-josefa-cermaka/>.

¹¹³ Christine Kilpatrick, “Otto Jelinek: ‘bad boy’ on ice returns,” *The Prague Post*, February 3, 1999, accessed April 28, 2012, <http://www.praguepost.com/archivescontent/29997-otto-jelinek-bad-boy-on-ice-returns.html>.

¹¹⁴ Čermák, *It all started with Prince Rupert*, 310.

¹¹⁵ Joseph Brean, “The life of Josef Skvorecky: A testament to the written word, the futility of censorship,” *National Post*, January 3, 2012, <http://arts.nationalpost.com/2012/01/03/the-life-of-josef-skvorecky-a-testament-to-the-power-of-the-written-word-the-futility-of-censorship/>.

¹¹⁶ Pavel Novotný, “Slovák čo vládne baniam v Kanade,” *Slováci vo Svete*, accessed April 28, 2012, <http://www.slovacivosvete.sk/1842/slovak-co-vladne-baniam-v-kanade.php>.

survived WWII in England.¹¹⁷ He began his career at Prague Associated Press but after 1948 putsch he fled to Austria and came to Canada in 1950. He worked for CBC and became an international correspondent:

“He reported on wars in Vietnam and in the rest of Indochina, the '71 war between India and Pakistan, the guerrilla wars in Nicaragua and El Salvador of the eighties, the Israeli-Arab conflict at various times, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in '80, earthquakes in Italy, Iran and Romania, haute couture and haute cuisine in Paris, revolutions in Portugal, Iran and Mao Zedong's Cultural Revolution in China. Finally, 50 years after he first left Czechoslovakia as a refugee, he was privileged to return to Prague to witness the Velvet Revolution that overthrew the communist regime in his homeland.”¹¹⁸

Oskar Morawetz is one of the most performed Canadian composers. Born in Czechoslovakia, he fled the country in 1939, arriving to Canada in 1940. His contribution to Canadian culture is obvious – he wrote over 100 compositions, including *Piano Concerto*, *From the Diary of Anne Frank*, *Memorial to Martin Luther King* or *Sinfonietta for Winds and Percussion*.¹¹⁹

Hana Gartner is a investigative journalist who worked for CBC station in several programs, for example she was a host of television newsmagazine “The Fifth Estate” or “Prime Time News”. She has won five Gemini Awards – prestigious television broadcasting awards in Canada.¹²⁰

¹¹⁷ See *The Power of Good: Nicholas Winton*, 2002, directed by Matej Mináč.

¹¹⁸ “Joe Schlesinger Biography,” Jewish Federation of Ottawa, accessed April 28, 2012, <http://jewishottawa.com/page.aspx?id=205808>.

¹¹⁹ “Oskar Morawetz: His Music,” Oskar Morawetz, accessed April 28, 2012, <http://www.oskarmorawetz.com/Tabs/TabMusic/index.php?webpage=Explore&search=none>.

¹²⁰ “CBC’s Hana Gartner retires,” CBC News, accessed April 28, 2012, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/arts/story/2011/05/11/gartner-retires.html>.

6 CONCLUSION

The goal of this bachelor thesis was to cover immigration from Czech and Slovak lands to Canada from the last quarter of 19th century until the fall of communism in 1989 and to analyze the impact the immigrants have had on Canadian culture and society. I focused mostly on organizations in which Czechs and Slovaks joined together and if the benefit was not only for the Czechoslovak immigrants but also for immigrants from other countries and natural-born Canadians.

The initial part of the thesis is dedicated to history and chronological approach to immigration of Czechs and Slovaks to Canada, which I divided into four waves – from around 1880's until WWI, between the world wars (1918 – 1939), during and after WWII and after the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. The first wave was not mass immigration yet – it was mostly farmers with their families or miners who were not directly trans-Atlantic immigrants but they came mostly from the United States. Canada became the main destination of immigrants (from various countries) after 1924. The immigration Act 1924 was the restrictive change of American immigration policy and lead hundreds of thousands of immigrants to Canada.

The waves of immigrants differ from each other in some aspects – whether in the reasons why people moved to Canada, in demographic aspects (individuals/families, farmers/skilled professionals, etc.) or in the chosen area of Canada. The majority of immigrants of Czech or Slovak origin settled down in four provinces: Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. The early wave of immigrants from Austria-Hungary settled mostly in the west since they were promised a cheap fertile land and a fresh start at their own farm. One of the first settlement were in Kolin, Esterhazy, Windsor, Kaposvar, Fernie or Lethbridge. The inter-war immigrants still came to Canada in order to better their economic situation but the tendency to stay in bigger cities started to appear. The two waves of post-war emigrants were political refugees or people who did not agree with the Communist regime, highly skilled specialists or intelligentsia and they mostly settled in or near big cities like Toronto, Winnipeg or Montreal.

Sources for this part of the thesis were scarce. I found few books concerned with this topic, written by people who moved to Canada and wanted to preserve some of their origin. Also, it is not easy to find reliable statistics about the number of immigrants from Czech and Slovak lands since the first wave of immigrants came from Austria-Hungarian monarchy and naturally the nationality box on their travel documents stated “Austrian”. Thus the numbers from Gellner’s book are an educated guess. However, the exact numbers of immigrants were not the main purpose of this thesis – I focused more on the life and cultural entertainment of Czech and Slovak immigrants of the third and fourth wave – people who came to Canada after 1948, still live there and are active in their community.

Compatriot organizations of various orientation started to appear around WWI and the boom came in 1920’s and 1930’s. Czechs and Slovaks in Canada were not indifferent to the situations of their compatriots in Czechoslovakia and it was because of them that several organizations were created – for example Czech and Slovak Association of Canada (then Czechoslovak Association of Canada) helped to get people from Czechoslovakia and helped them with their initial struggles in the new country. The representatives of the Association also interceded with Canadian government for Czechoslovak people – and Canada accepted thousands of Czechoslovak immigrants at that time.

The influence of Czech and Slovak compatriot organizations, in the past and present, is positive. Getting together with people from the same country who speak the same language had enormous positive psychological effect on some of the immigrants – they felt at home. Although immigrants of 1950’s and later years were not directly encouraged to come like the first wave and partly were a burden for Canadian economy, they were grateful to the country that provided them with a new home, they worked hard and many of them became very successful and some of them even famous in various fields. Czech and Slovak communities also share their traditions with other nationalities and natural-born Canadians and, in its own way, make Canadian culture richer. The contribution does not necessarily lie in those who made themselves visible; it is in the way Czechs and Slovaks behaved to other members of Canadian society and the way of everyday life.

This thesis gives an overview of Czech and Slovak immigration to Canada and their impact on Canadian culture and society. As a person who cannot fully understand the atmosphere and situation in the communities and organizations, I included personal email correspondence with several compatriots currently living in Canada as resources. The topics mentioned, e.g. exact numbers of the early wave of immigrants, overcoming language barrier, the contribution of particular organizations, the role of religion in immigrants' lives and the individual stories of immigrants could be a subject for further study and more detailed research. This thesis also gives tips for literature and other sources for such studies.

7 APPENDICES

7.1 Appendix 1 – Czech and Slovak Association branches in 1968 and 2012

1968:

Branch number	Location	Province
1	Kirkland Lake	Ontario
2	Sarnia	Ontario
3	Niagara Falls	Ontario
4	London	Ontario
5	Port Colborne	Ontario
6	Windsor	Ontario
7	Chatham	Ontario
8	Welland	Ontario
9	Calgary	Alberta
10	Timmins	Ontario
11	Duparquet	Quebec
12	Oshawa	Ontario
13	Temiscaming	Quebec
14	Iron Springs	Alberta
16	West Toronto	Ontario
17	Kenora	Ontario
18	Vancouver	British Columbia
19	Alvinston	Ontario
20	Regina	Saskatchewan
21	Edmonton	Alberta
22	Lethbridge	Alberta
23	Nampa	Alberta
24	Toronto	Ontario
25	Kitchener	Ontario
26	Michel	British Columbia
27	Valley Centre	Saskatchewan
28	Val d'Or	Quebec
29	Margo	Saskatchewan
30	New Toronto	Ontario
31	Fort William	Ontario
33	Frank	Alberta
34	Hamilton	Ontario

35	Evergreen	Alberta
36	Noranda	Quebec
37	Arvida	Quebec
38	Blairmore	Alberta
39	Tilley	Alberta
41	Shaughnessy	Alberta
42	Coleman	Alberta
43	Nacmine	Alberta
44	Rosedale	Alberta
45	Bellevue	Alberta
46	Viking-Prague	Alberta
47	Nordegg	Alberta
48	Gerald	Saskatchewan
49	Sudbury	Ontario
50	New Waterford	Nova Scotia
51	Montreal	Quebec
52	Winnipeg	Manitoba
53	Steinbach	Manitoba
54	Tupper Creek	British Columbia
55	Glenside	Saskatchewan
56	Enderby	British Columbia
57	New Westminster	British Columbia
58	Ladysmith	British Columbia
59	Flin Flon	Manitoba
60	Batawa	Ontario
61	Esterhazy	Saskatchewan
62	Cranford	Alberta
63	Orono	Ontario
64	Saskatoon	Saskatchewan
65	Ruthven	Ontario
66	Prescott	Ontario
67	Toronto 2	Ontario
68	St. Ann's	Ontario
69	Springhill	Nova Scotia
70	St. Catherines	Ontario
71	Bradlo	Ontario
72	Woodstock	Ontario
73	Nanaimo	British Columbia

74	Fort Erie	Ontario
75	St. Walburg	Saskatchewan
76	Loon River	Saskatchewan
77	Dominion City	Manitoba
78	Minitonas	Manitoba
80	Henribourg	Saskatchewan
82	Port Arthur	Ontario
83	Morden	Saskatchewan
84	Goodsoil	Saskatchewan
85	North Battleford	Saskatchewan
86	Galt	Ontario
87	Kingston	Ontario
88	Delhi	Ontario
89	Ottawa	Ontario
90	Canmore	Alberta
91	Victoria	British Columbia

Source: John Gellner and John Smerek, *Czechs and Slovaks in Canada*, 107-108.

2012:

Branch	Province
Calgary	Alberta
Edmonton	Alberta
Kitchener – Waterloo – Guelph	Ontario
London	Ontario
Montreal	Quebec
Ottawa	Ontario
Toronto	Ontario
Vancouver	British Columbia
Winnipeg	Manitoba

Source: official website of Czech and Slovak Association of Canada

7.2 Appendix 2 – Emails from Josef Čermák and Radmila Locher

“How would you describe the contribution of this organization to Canadian culture/society? Does it benefit not only the people of Czechoslovak origin but Canadians as well?”

The contribution of Sokol organization:

- Email from Mr. Čermák on April 19, 2012

Dear Ms. Špačková,

an interesting question. My response:

Canadian society obviously has different needs than the Czech society had in 1862, when the Sokol organization was founded in Prague to foster the national aspiration of the Czech people. The Sokol emphasis on discipline does not particularly appeal to the diverse structure of the Canadian population. Even so, the contribution of Sokol organization is remarkable and in many respects surprising. While the number of Canadians of other than Czechoslovak origin who joined the Sokol organization is small (one notable example: Fred M. Pearson, a native of London, England, a veteran of both the British and Canadian armies, served as president of the Rouyn-Noranda Sokol unit and eventually became president of Sokol Canada), its members played important part in the life of the country: Jan Waldauf served as a member of the Canada's National Council on Fitness and Amateur Sport; Jerry Kasanda ended his career as the Commandant of the Canadian Forces School of Physical Education at Borden and was awarded the Order of Military Merit, Maria and Otto Jelinek won the World Figure Skating Championship, Slava Corn served as a member of the Canadian Olympic Committee. In the view of the National Leader of the New Democratic Party of Canada, T.C. Douglas "Sokol represents a splendid group of Canadians dedicated to the principles of physical fitness, democracy and human brotherhood."

Good luck.

Regards,

Josef Čermák

The contribution of the Czech and Slovak Association:

- Email from Mrs. Radmila Locher from Toronto branch of CSAC, April 20, 2012

Mila Pavlo,

I forwarded your request to several of our members, but in the meantime this is my answer:

The Association helped with enlisting Czech Canadians to be active in World War II. The Association helped with fundraising for the Second World War effort.

We make Canada richer by sharing and showing our culture when opportunity arises. We work together with other Canadians of different ethnic backgrounds thus helping to increase harmony in Canada. We help in increasing business between Canada and CR.

There is now a new program "Working Holiday" where Canada invites young Czechs and Slovaks to come for a year either to work or travel. We have been helping these young people to establish themselves here and are trying to inform young Canadians of this program, so that they can go to Czech Republic and Slovakia for a year.

[...]

Moc pozdravuje

Radmila Locher

President of Toronto Branch of Czech and Slovak Association

- Email from Edward Brabec from Edmonton branch of CSAC, April 19, 2012

Czech And Slovak Association of Canada, Edmonton branch is a major organization in Alberta for associating immigrants from Czech Republic and Slovak Republic. Our organization respect the heritage of country of origin, providing courses of Czech and Slovak languages, folks dances and other patriotic remembrance. We do

projection of Czech and Slovak movies, we arrange expositions of Czech and Slovak artist. We manage the Czech & Slovak Choir of Edmonton. We providing for our children annual gathering to remember folks heritage and habits. Our organization exist (under different names) since 1939 and it is registered as non profit organization in Alberta. We have almost 200 members in Edmonton.

Regards,

Edward Brabec

President of CSAC Edmonton

The contribution of Kanadský Slovák:

- Email from Paul Carnogursky from Kanadský Slovák, May 2, 2012

Dear Pavla,

[...] To respond to your question, Canada is a multicultural country where the preservation of one's heritage is encouraged and supported by the government and society in general. Thus, our newspaper also informs the broad Canadian society about our community, our organizations, activities, our heritage, important personalities in our community, as well as publishes reflections and editorial content about our history as well as modern Slovakia. The content of Kanadský Slovák is approximately 40% in English.

Kanadský Slovák is available at several leading libraries in Canada and its existence is well-known among the governments and their institutions, which send us Press releases and invitations on equal footing with any other newspaper in Canada, big or small. Leading politicians, including the Prime Minister of Canada are aware of the most important events and anniversaries in the Slovak Canadian community and send us greetings, or personally attend such events. Thus, there is a significant awareness in the broad Canadian society about Slovak Canadians, also thanks to our newspaper as well as the outreach work of many organizations and institutions from within our community, such as the Canadian Slovak League and its branches across Canada,

Slovak Canadian Heritage Museum, Chair of Slovak Studies and Culture at the University of Ottawa, TV Slovenský svet, and many others. Slovak community in Canada is strong, active and well recognized in multicultural Canada.

In general, most Canadian Slovaks did not accept the idea of czechoslovakism in the subjugated form imposed by former President Eduard Beneš, and Kanadský Slovák throughout its 70-year existence has actively promoted Slovakia's independence, and its focus remains to primarily report on the Slovak community in Canada.

Nevertheless, Kanadský Slovák and most Slovak organizations in Canada have good and cordial relations with the Czech community in Canada, as long as both are treated in an equitable manner, just like the Slovak and the Czech Republics are now good friends and partners.

[...]

With Best regards,

Paul Carnogursky,

Volunteer Administrator www.kanadskyslovak.ca

7.3 The questionnaire sample

1. When did you or your family come to Canada?
 - a) before World War I (1914)
 - b) 1914 – 1938
 - c) during or after World War II
 - d) after the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968

2. Where are you or your family originally from?
 - a) Czech
 - b) Slovakia

3. Do you still live in Canada or did you move back to Czech republic or Slovakia?
 - a) I still live in Canada.
 - b) I live in Czech republic/Slovakia.
 - c) None of these.

4. If you still live in Canada, please write where (which region/province):

5. Where were you born?
 - a) Canada
 - b) Czech/Slovakia
 - c) Other country

6. At the time of your or your family's emigration, did you speak English?
 - a) No.
 - b) Yes, but very poorly.
 - c) Yes, I understood but I need to work hard on my English.
 - d) Yes, I spoke fluent English.

7. How did you learn English?
 - a) Canadian school
 - b) private tutor
 - c) language school
 - d) media (TV, radio, movies)
 - e) self-study from books
 - f) other (write down more about it): _____

8. Do you speak Czech/Slovak?
- a) Yes, but poorly.
 - b) Yes, I understand but I can't speak much.
 - c) Yes, I can speak Czech or Slovak very well.
 - d) No.
9. How often do you speak Czech or Slovak in your home (if you live in Canada)?
- a) Every day.
 - b) A few times a week.
 - c) A few time a month.
 - d) Occasionally.
 - e) Never.
10. What was the reason why you or your family came to Canada?
- a) political reasons
 - b) seeking religious freedom
 - c) seeking job opportunities
 - d) other: _____
11. Have you ever been in Czech (Czechoslovakia) or Slovakia?
- a) Yes, in Czech.
 - b) Yes, in Slovakia.
 - c) In both.
 - d) No.

12. Are you in touch with other Czech/Slovak immigrants (compatriot organizations, communities, church...)?

a) Yes. If you want to, write their name(s): _____

b) No.

13. Are you in touch with your family in Czech republic or Slovakia?

a) Yes, we talk often.

b) Yes, we talk/write from time to time.

c) No.

8 SUMMARY

Cílem této práce je zmapovat imigraci Čechů a Slováků do Kanady zhruba od poslední čtvrtiny 19. století do pádu komunistického režimu v roce 1989 a zhodnotit, jak jejich přítomnost v Kanadě ovlivnila tamní kulturu a společnost – zda byli spíše přítěží či přínosem pro ostatní obyvatele této země.

V úvodu práce jsem stručně popsala faktory ovlivňující migraci, charakter kanadské imigrační politiky a její nejdůležitější milníky, tzn. imigrační zákony z let 1919 či 1952. Ačkoli se kanadská imigrační politika vždy zdála být spíše vstřícná a otevřená imigrantům, určitá diskriminační omezení zde byla – například nepovolení ke vstupu do země trestancům, ale i chudým či handicapovaným lidem a preferování anglicky mluvících osob. Zpočátku byla imigrace velmi podporována z důvodu nutnosti osídlení západu a získávání kvalifikovaných dělníků a farmářů. V Evropě existovaly kanceláře společnosti Canadian Pacific Railway, jejíž agenti aktivně vyhledávali potencionální imigranty. Během obou světových válek byla přijata ochranná opatření, po první světové válce to byl například zákaz vstupu do země osobám z nepřátelských států. Po druhé světové válce se do kanadské imigrační politiky začala promítat potřeba přivést do země vzdělané specialisty ve svých oborech, aby pomohli Kanadě v rychle se rozvíjejícím světě. Pro československé imigranty Kanada nebyla primární destinací až do roku 1924, kdy Spojené státy americké zavedly kvóty pro imigranty.

Podle historických událostí na českém a slovenském území rozlišujeme čtyři imigrační vlny: od počátku do první světové války, období mezi válkami (1918 – 1939), emigrace po únorovém komunistickém puči v roce 1948 a po invazi Československa vojsky Varšavské smlouvy v roce 1968. Každá z těchto vln je v práci podrobněji popsána z hlediska oblasti Kanady, kam imigranti v jednotlivých vlnách směřovali, tak i z hlediska jejich charakteristiky.

Pro první vlnu imigrantů je typické usazování spíše na západě – byli to většinou farmáři či horníci, kteří do Kanady nepřicházeli přímo z Evropy, ale ze Spojených států amerických. Osady často pojmenovávali po místech z rodní země, čehož je příkladem první osada Kolín. Dále byla založena osada Esterhazy, Fernie nebo Lethbridge.

O masové imigraci lze hovořit až od dvacátých let dvacátého století – po první světové válce proudili imigranti z Československa do Kanady také za cílem zlepšení své finanční situace, ale v tomto období začal trend usadit se spíše ve městech jako například Winnipeg, Toronto, Edmonton, Montreal či Calgary. V meziválečném období také začaly hojně vznikat podpůrné spolky a krajanské organizace a také krajanský tisk, v dnešní době dostupný i v online podobě.

Profil imigrantů se po druhé světové válce změnil – zatímco předtím do Kanady mířily hlavně celé rodiny, které se usazovaly spíše na venkovských farmách, imigranti po roce 1948 spolu s vlnou imigrantů po vtrhnutí vojsk Varšavské smlouvy do Československa v roce 1968 často vycestovali i sami a usazovali se ve větších městech, ve kterých už fungovaly krajanské organizace a podpůrné spolky. Byli to političtí uprchlíci – převážně mladí lidé, kteří nesouhlasili s komunistickým režimem, a byli jím více či méně perzekuováni. S těmito vlnami nastal pro Československo tragický odliv vzdělaných lidí, odborníků ve svých oborech, který se ovšem v mnoha případech projevil jako přínosný pro kanadskou společnost.

V začátcích se imigranti potýkali s nemalými překážkami, jako byla například jazyková bariéra či nedostatek financí. K tomu, aby měli lepší práci, museli umět angličtinu, případně francouzštinu. Mnoho z nich (vyjma imigranty po roce 1968 a v pozdějších letech) neměli s těmito jazyky vůbec žádné zkušenosti. Zpočátku se museli naučit základní fráze potřebné při denní komunikaci, dále byla jejich jazyková schopnost závislá na jejich vlastním úsilí při samostudiu. Další způsoby, jak se imigranti učili překonávat jazykovou bariéru v nové zemi bylo také poslouchání kanadských médií či čtení knih v angličtině.

V oblasti hledání zaměstnání či vysokoškolského studia byly imigrantům nápomocné krajanské organizace, které vytvářely speciální stipendijní programy či vypomohly imigrantům s jejich finanční situací v těžkých začátcích. Takovou podporu někdy poskytovaly i náboženské organizace, které také hrály velkou roli v životě českých a slovenských komunit. Jedním z významných důvodů, proč lidé opouštěli Československo (resp. Rakousko-Uhersko) byla i náboženská svoboda. Více než tři čtvrtiny českých a slovenských imigrantů v Kanadě se hlásilo ke katolické víře. Dále byla zastoupena i řeckokatolická víra či protestantismus –

převážně baptisté a slovenští luteráni. Jako první vznikl v roce 1907 katolický kostel v osadě Fort William v Ontariu. V roce 1932 byla otevřena Betlémská kaple (Bethlehem Chapel of the Czechoslovak Baptist Church) ve Winnipegu. Dále byl postaven i kostel sv. Cyrila a Metoděje ve Westminsteru v Britské Kolumbii či kostel sv. Václava v Torontu, který je zároveň zatím posledním českým kostelem postaveným v Kanadě. Křesťanské komunity vytvářeli pro imigranty prostředí přijetí a zajišťovaly i kontakt mezi nimi – plnily kromě duchovní i sociální funkci.

Další část práce je věnována krajanským organizacím a tomu, jakým způsobem ovlivnili čeští a slovenští imigranti kanadskou kulturu a společnost. Vybrané nejvýznamnější organizace popisují blíže i za využití osobní korespondence jako zdrojů. Kompletní e-mailové zprávy s vyjádřením členů krajanských spolků k přínosu jejich organizace jak pro české a slovenské komunity, tak i pro kanadskou společnost jsou dostupné v Příloze č. 2. Krajanské organizace sdružují Čechy a Slováky v Kanadě prostřednictvím různých aktivit a oslav, a tak napomáhají udržovat tradice i mimo vlast. Tyto organizace také například skrze vystoupení folklorních tanečních souborů nebo účast na různých festivalech představují naši kulturu dalším obyvatelům Kanady.

Pravděpodobně nejznámější krajanskou organizací je České a Slovenské sdružení v Kanadě (anglicky Czech and Slovak Association of Canada), které bylo založeno v roce 1939 v Torontu. Prvním předsedou byl zvolen Štefan Rudinský a tajemníkem se stal Karel Buzek. Právě díky jeho cestování po Kanadě byly založeny desítky poboček Sdružení. Tato organizace se aktivně zapojovala do dění v Československu – čeští a slovenští imigranti vstupovali do kanadské armády, aby mohli bojovat za vlast ve druhé světové válce, a ostatní krajané například přispěli do sbírky, která byla finanční pomocí poválečnému Československu.

Velmi významnou organizací je Masarykův ústav (Masaryk Memorial Institute) i se svým sídlem v Masaryktownu v Ontariu. V Masaryktownu nalezneme knihovnu s českými a slovenskými knihami, pořádají se tu kurzy českého jazyka pro děti a k dispozici je i krásný park a bazén, které si vybudovali imigranti vlastními silami. Každý rok v červenci se v Masaryktownu koná Český a Slovenský den (dříve Československý den), kde se sejde několik set krajanů. Součástí programu je i

přehlídka Sokola, další velmi důležité krajanské organizace v Kanadě. První sokolské jednotky byly v Kanadě založeny v Albertě v roce 1912 a v Britské Kolumbii v roce 1913. Nejvýznamnější osobností kanadského Sokola byl Jan Waldauf, který o této organizaci napsal několik knih. Mezi další krajanské organizace, které působily či stále působí v Kanadě patří například Czecho-Slav Benevolent Association, Canadian Slovak Benefit Society, organizace Beseda v Montrealu a také Nové divadlo (New Theatre) v Torontu.

Rozšířenou formou komunikace mezi československými komunitami byla i média, dříve tisk, v současnosti i torontský televizní kanál TV Nová Vize. Mezi jinými sem patří časopis Nový domov, který vydává Masarykův ústav (tištěně i online), separatistický časopis Kanadský Slovák či Satellite 1-146.

Mnoho krajanů se proslavilo ve svých oborech a přineslo užitek Kanadě a jejímu rozvoji. Mezi imigranty byli významní vědci, spisovatelé, podnikatelé, sportovci, herci nebo politici. Tomáš Baťa ml. odcestoval do Kanady v roce 1939 a založil zde město Batawa. Zařídil imigraci do Kanady i pro zhruba stovku svých zaměstnanců s rodinami a přesunul výrobu firmy Baťa do Kanady. Dalšími osobnostmi, které se v Kanadě proslavili, je i Josef Čermák, aktivní člen Českého a Slovenského sdružení v Kanadě, hudebník Oskar Morawetz, sportovec a politik Otto Jelinek či reportér Joe Schlesinger. Nicméně takovýchto osobností je samozřejmě mnohem více.

Cílem práce bylo zmapovat imigraci Čechů a Slováků do Kanady a analyzovat, jestli nějakým způsobem přispěli ke společenskému, kulturnímu či technologickému rozvoji Kanady. Z mých závěrů vyplývá, že organizace, které řídí krajanský život v Kanadě, pozitivně ovlivňují jak české a slovenské komunity, tak i kanadskou společnost, kterou informuje o vlastních tradicích a kultuře dodnes. Češi a Slováci v Kanadě, i když často přišli „bez ničeho“, neparazitovali na kanadské společnosti, ale tvrdě pracovali, aby si vydobyli své místo. Některá témata zmíněná v této práci – role náboženství v krajanském životě, překonávání jazykové bariéry nebo přesnější čísla imigrantů v době do první světové války – by mohly být předmětem detailnějšího studia.

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10 ANNOTATION

Cílem této práce bylo zmapovat imigraci Čechů a Slováků do Kanady od poslední čtvrtiny 19. století do pádu komunismu v roce 1989 a analyzovat přínos a kulturní vliv českých a slovenských komunit v Kanadě. Zvolila jsem chronologické rozdělení imigrace do čtyř hlavních vln. Každá z těchto imigračních vln je blíže popsána z hledisek profilů imigrantů, důvodů odjezdu či útěku z vlasti a oblastí Kanady, kde se tito krajané usadili. Také jsem se zabývala počátečními potížemi imigrantů, například jazykovou bariérou, hledáním práce či jejich náboženským životem. Závěr práce je věnován kulturnímu vlivu českých a slovenských společenství na kanadskou společnost.

The aim of this thesis was to map the immigration of Czechs and Slovaks to Canada from the last quarter of 19th century until the fall of communism in 1989 and to analyze the contribution and cultural influence of Czech and Slovak communities in Canada. I divided the immigration chronologically into four major waves. Each of them is described concerning the profile of the immigrants, the reasons for leaving home country and the areas of Canada where they settled down. I also focused on the problems at the beginning, such as language barrier, finding new jobs or religious life of the immigrants. The end of the thesis is dedicated to the cultural influence of Czech and Slovak communities on Canadian society.