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**The History of Immigration to America and Czechs in the United
States**
Bakalářská práce

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Prohlašuji, že jsem závěrečnou práci vypracovala samostatně a použila jen uvedených pramenů a literatury.

V Olomouci

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Abstract

This bachelor thesis is divided into three main parts. The first part is dealing with the history of immigration to America till the end of the 19th century. The second part is focused on the period at the turn of the 19th century, which is considered to be the peak of immigration to America. The thesis also discusses individual waves of immigration, reasons and assimilation of people in a new country. The third part is aimed at the Czech people that started came to America in the middle of the 19th century, their assimilation and lives.

Introduction

I have chosen this subject to find something new and explore the formation of the American nation. I think it is interesting to discuss to whom America belongs and learn about the stories of people that came to live to America. They came with the hope of better life, freedom, wealth, richness, the American Dream, and some succeeded, but some experienced hard times. As a proud patriot I was also interested in Czech people's lives in America, how many people experiences America, how did they live and how they prospered in America.

Dr. Allan Nevins described the American Dream in "Forces That Will Change America" in Think Magazine as: "Beneath the American faith in the future lie two main concepts, one material, the other at least potentially spiritual. The first is what James Truslow Adams called the American Dream. It is the hope of a better life than older lands and ages ever afforded: more security, more comfort, more money, wider horizons. No one should sneer at this concept just because it is necessarily material, for seekers of the American Dream performed prodigies of courage. Often they performed them unselfishly, thinking of their children, rather than themselves." (Peck, 2002, p.30)

1. The beginning of immigration

The first immigrants started to come to America only a few decades after Columbus discovered America.

It is very important to realize that all the inhabitants of America have always been immigrants that came to the land to settle down. It is quite sad to see how some of the groups of immigrants got treated because all the people of America should have the same conditions and chances to assimilate. Ones of the first and successful immigrants were the White Anglo-Saxon Protestants (WASP) who made themselves the ruling majority. This meant that all the future people moving to America will be minorities and will have to conform and will be manipulated by the will of the majority.

The first settlers are known as Native Americans or Indians. It is believed that they crossed the land bridge called The Bering Strait that connected Eurasia with America between sixty thousand and twenty-five thousand years ago. They spread throughout the whole America in many different tribes and nations.

The first European immigrants coming to America were the Vikings in the 11th century and colonized Greenland for several centuries.

(De Roo, 1900)

After the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus in 1492, the European countries started to explore and colonize the new land.

1.2 Thirteen colonies

The first English colony in America was Jamestown, Virginia, established in 1607. It was forty-eight gentlemen who came to form an American colony that was to be “the chosen adobe of liberty” as Barnes states. Within six months many of them suffered and died. A hundred and twenty of the new immigrants brought hope for improvement of poor conditions, but it showed that they came to dig gold from the ground. In this “old immigration”, economic matters are considered to be the reason for settlers. They openly came to America to improve their material condition. (Barnes, 2010)

The Pilgrims of New England left England for civil and ecclesiastical reasons. In 1620 the Pilgrims established a settlement near Plymouth, Massachusetts and established self-government without a charter.

In 1628 settlers from the Massachusetts Bay Company came. With other Puritans in Boston they founded the first town of their colony Salem.

Barnes (2010) says immigrants also settled in Connecticut, Rhode Island and New Haven and the Plymouth colony, where they went for free citizenship and religion.

Under the sovereignty of the West India Company, the colony on Manhattan became New York with peoples’ free choice in all public affairs.

Dutch settlers came to Delaware in 1631. Swedes and Finns arrived there seven years later and named the area New Sweden. In 1664, they submitted and let England take the Atlantic coast territory.

The colonies of Massachusetts, Plymouth, Connecticut and New Haven united in 1643 and formed the United Colonies of New England to provide common security and welfare.

South Carolina was very attractive to the people that were not content in Europe for the religious liberty. The Scottish and the Irish also came because of the richness of the soil and they hoped for the peace they did not have in their lands. Furthermore, a big amount of Huguenots escaping from France for the religious reasons settled in South Carolina.

Georgia, founded in 1732 as the last of the thirteen colonies, became a home especially for English prisoners guilty for debt.

At the beginning of the 19th century, new regions of America were discovered, such as Columbia River and other places southwest. It meant that the known area of America doubled. (Mary Clark Barnes, 2010)

1.3 New immigration

In the middle of the 19th century, opening of new huge areas for settlers attracted new immigrants from Europe. It was because Florida was acquired from Spain in 1821, Texas was annexed in 1845 and California added in 1850.

The flow of migration was limited during the time of the French revolution and Napoleonic wars, Barnes (2010) describes. However, several years afterwards the first era of mass immigration started. America was developing in industry and there was land that was cheap, but on the other hand, work force was precious. This attracted the immigrants who came to work in agriculture or in town. It was also political and religious freedom that immigrants moved for. Assurance of education, new roads and canals between different parts of the country, bridges and street lighting were things that increased people's lifestyle.

In 1848 the discovery of gold in America was announced and one hundred thousand of gold-seekers came to America within the first year.

As more and more immigrants were coming, Americans started to feel endangered by their unknown languages, customs and religions, especially Catholicism professed by Irish and German immigrants. This aversion was strengthened by the fight for jobs in towns. The opposition to immigrants started in the 1830s. The opponents formed into groups and showed their antipathy to foreigners and Catholics. In 1854, the American party, called Know Nothings, was established and urged for immigrants and foreigners not being allowed to hold office in public service. The Congress did not do anything to limit the immigration, either.

This period is also known for small numbers of Chinese immigration and the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882.

1.3.1 Immigration from Germany

The motivations of German immigration were economic reasons. The wave of Germans coming in the 1830s brought many free farmers, qualified workers and businessmen and even intellectuals who were able to find a job or buy land. They settled round Missouri, Illinois, Texas and in Wisconsin.

Since 1839 German-language schools were established in a number of American states. In Ohio the law allowed exclusively a German-language school, while in Cincinnati or Saint Louis two systems, English and German, were established. The pupils had a right to decide which language they want to be instructed in. The protest against German instruction began in 1880 when the use of German was regulated. The Wisconsin's Bennett Law of 1890 provided that English language should be taught at least sixteen weeks a year.

Daniels (1990) writes that a third of German workers had jobs in brewery and skilled trades in 1870. Germans also worked as bakers, butchers, cigar makers, machinists or tailors. German women worked as nurses, peddlers, saloon and hotel keepers, domestic workers or laundry workers. In Daniels' opinion, they quickly learned the English language and adopted American dress and attitudes.

At the beginning of the 20th century, German immigrants started to fade out as a result of new industrial improvement and therefore opportunities for a job in Europe.

1.3.2 Immigration from Ireland

According to Daniels (1990), Irish immigration can be divided into three periods: the years to 1844, before the Irish famine, 1845-1855, the period of the famine, and the years up to the 1920s, after the famine. Daniels says that Ireland was an unfree country and the one that remained away from the Industrial Revolution. Ireland was also losing population due to the famine. It is important to mention that those immigrants who came to America, stayed. Only a fraction of them returned home. In the 1840s, the Irish were almost a half of all immigration to America. The biggest percentage of immigrants in 1860 was of Irish nation, nearly 1 600 000. The reason for moving of the Irish people was an agricultural failure at the beginning of the century, followed by a famine in 1845 caused by epidemic of late blight of potato. Simultaneously with the potato blight, diseases carried by ticks and lice spread. More than a million of Irish moved to America. They used to work as workers for building canals and railroads, some of them moved

south and settled in towns near to harbors, where they worked as servants or unqualified workers. They lived in poor colonies or in the neighborhood of catholic churches.

For Irish people moving to America was an escape, a rescue, but it was not like that for many of them in reality. People traveled across the North Atlantic in small ships that were not intended to transport people, and many ships sunk on their way. Immigrants also took typhus disease, cholera or dysentery disease on the ships and thousands of people died on the sea or after the landing.

1.3.3 Immigration from Scandinavia

In the 1840s and 1850s, there were two new national groups moving to America. Those were the Scandinavians, who were religiously prosecuted people. They usually settled down in Wisconsin and Minnesota, for the climate reminded them of home.

Thörnberg, expert on the immigration subject, stated about Scandinavian immigration that since the middle of the 19th century more than one million and one hundred thousand people left for America and other countries. In 1638, Sweden founded a colony on the area of Delaware. He says that the attraction of the adventure, opportunities and experiencing something new brought many young people of Sweden to America. (Barnes, 2010)

1.3.4 The immigration from the United Kingdom

There were many intellectuals, free farmers and qualified businessmen among British immigrants settling in America. The government of Great Britain tried to encourage immigration towards the lands of the Commonwealth. The immigrants of British nationality were even offered special inducements by colonial governments in Canada, Australia, New Zealand or South Africa. In Canada and Australia a person with a labor contract was imported freely, while in America it was punished.

1.4 Forced immigration

People from Africa were imported to America as slaves since 1619. That year, a Dutch warship sailed into the James River and offered twenty black people for sale.

In 1772, the Colonial Assembly in Virginia sent a manifestation to the king and designated the imports of slaves as a trade of big barbarity and emphasized the risk of the American dominions' being in danger. "We are sensible that some of your majesty's subjects in Great Britain may reap emoluments from this sort of traffic; but when we consider that it greatly retards the settlement of the colonies with more useful inhabitants, and may in time have the most destructive influence, we presume to hope that the interest of a few will be disregarded, when placed in competition with the security and happiness of such numbers of your majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects." (Barnes, 2010)

Barnes (2010) writes about other colonies as Maryland, New Jersey, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, New York that were of the same opinion. Massachusetts rejected the condition of slavery and the sale of slaves. In 1780, Massachusetts became a free commonwealth and black people got a fellow-citizenship. In 1776, Delaware adopted its constitution as an independent state and the article prohibiting slavery was not to be infringed. When New York adopted the constitution in 1777, the article against slavery was lost. In 1778, Virginia finally achieved the ban of slavery and attempted for emancipation and deportation of the slaves but it was not successful.

In the time of the adoption of the Constitution of the United States in 1788, Thomas Jefferson and others that had the same belief were successful in making the "Northwest Territory" safe, where slavery were considered a crime.

As a result of that, Northern states that were free of slavery attracted many more immigrants than the farming states of the South.

Disagreements between the representatives of the slave-holding states and the free states were one of the reasons that led into a Civil War in 1860. The Union, supported by twenty free and five border slave states, won the war against eleven slave states in the South that separated and formed The Confederacy.

2. The peak of immigration

The era between the years 1880 – 1920 is considered to be the peak of immigration of all times. It is called the “New Immigration”. It was provoked by the Industrial Revolution which took place between 1820 and 1870 and helped to increase the growth of America.

People came for the most part from Central and Southern Europe, that means Austria-Hungary, Balkan countries, Russia, Poland, Turkey, Spain and Italy.

Daniels (1990) states that the immigrants coming after the 1880 were people from different ethnicities, who talked strange languages and professed foreign religions. It was more difficult for them to assimilate in comparison with the “old immigrants”, who came from the United Kingdom and the north and the west of Europe.

Daniels also points out four periods of oppressed immigration in the 19th and 20th century. Besides those four periods, immigration was increasing though. The immigration was inhibited by the Civil War in 1860s, then by the depression of the 1890s. World War I restricted immigration in the 1910s and in the 1920s it was inhibited by immigration legislation. He also sees the significance of this period in the international peace between the end of the Napoleonic Wars and the start of World War I.

Immigration to the United States 1881-1920 (Daniels, 1990)

period	Amount of immigrants
1881-1890	5,246,613
1891-1900	3,687,564
1901-1910	8,795,386
1911-1920	5,735,811

Colton (1832) writes about the romantic expectations the immigrants came to America for. According to him, America should be represented honestly, with all the worthy and unworthy things. He says that many people moving to America had a very good reason to emigrate, or had not one at all. It was very dependent on the situation of the family, on the amount of wealth, profession, the connections and the difficulties of the move and so on.

In Savage’s (1819) opinion, big amount of people that decided to emigrate to America never considered carefully the consequences and the changes they had to undertake. In many cases, the results of their hasty decisions were poverty and discontent and they had to return to their homelands; only a few succeeded in assimilating.

2.1 Immigration during the time of the biggest immigration

2.1.1 Immigration from the United Kingdom

Barnes (2010) states that immigrants from the United Kingdom started to move to America in the 16th century and their group has been one of the most numerous. In the 1890 the biggest communities of the English were in New York, Massachusetts and Illinois. After this year there were few job opportunities for handicraftsmen though, and the immigration decreased. In the period between 1820 and 1920 there were about two million and five hundred thousand people.

2.1.2 Immigration from Italy

Italy was one of the leading countries of immigration. Approximately eighty percent of Italian immigration was from the South of Italy where more than a half of the immigrants were illiterate. Nearly seventy percent of the North Italy immigrants returned back to their land eventually but only forty percent of the South Italians returned. The families moved, even though they loved Italy, in the hope for better life for their children.

In consequence of the struggle of the state and the church in Italy, the church lost a lot of intelligent people and patriots. The people from Italy believed in their imagination more than in the Pope. The people coming to America lost their devotion to the Roman church and with that also their ideals of the religious life. (Barnes, 2010)

2.1.3 Jewish Immigrants

Gallers (2005) presents another nationality that mostly came from Russia was Jewish. A fraction of them came from Austria-Hungary and Rumania, too. They started to emigrate to America because of the anti-Semitic riots that began in 1881.

Jews have very specific language and mental and physical customs. More than one million and eight hundred thousand of the Jew moved to America and settled mainly near the metropolis of America. Many of them started as itinerant peddlers selling small goods. By the end of the 19th century, about sixty per cent of Jewish people in New York worked in clothing factories or sweatshops and other trades as bookbinding or cigar-making. They aspired to move to self-

employment soon and open grocery, candy or butcher shops. They worked their way up to estate business and building trades. Some of them came from families that had already been established bankers in Europe. Most of them did not make a big success, but more of Jews came to business than any immigration group in the 19th century. (Gallars, 2005)

They were a significant element in the America immigration. In Barnes (2010) opinion they are known as tenacious and hard-working, very philanthropic and successful people in business, they occupied posts at universities.

2.1.4 Immigration from Austria-Hungary

Austria-Hungary was considered to be a complicated social mix of all modern nations. Different nations in the country never united politically or socially.

According to Roberts (2009), there are similar reasons of the nationalities of the Austria-Hungary for emigration. He says that they are never satisfied with the government of their country, each nationality hates at least one another adjoining nationality and they all want to go to America. In 1907, when the immigration was at its peak, people went for the opportunity of earning money easily in America, being attracted by the agents offering jobs in mills in America that seemed wonderful to poor peasants. Many people were receiving letters from relatives that were already in America, telling about the easy money, lights in the streets, pretty clothes; and that made people want to go.

Barnes (2010) points out that the Slovaks did not get along with the Hungarians and the Germans as they remembered the conflict they had with the Hungarians and the power in law and administration. Even after the immigration to America, these two nations did not succeed in getting on well with each other.

The Hungarians found a good use in the finance section. They became controllers of public and private finances and they were encouraged to come to America to seek for new opportunities for economic advantage.

Except for the Jews which typically settled in cities, other people living in Austria-Hungary were farmers and woodmen who loved their homes in the old country. Unfortunately, bad conditions in towns and too high prices for ownership and for rental made them look for better conditions somewhere else.

Others came from rich European countries to work in public works that were not influenced by American education, recreations or religion. There were no authorities. People worked in mines, forests and heavy construction work, where there were terrible working conditions. Workmen lived crowded in hovels where they had very little space for sleeping and keeping their things. (Barnes, 2010)

2.1.5 Immigration from Poland

In this era, approximately one million Poles emigrated to America. They escaped from the country that was under the dominion of Russia to find freedom in America. Barnes (2010) states that Poles were very religious, hard-working, but also illiterate in more than thirty percent of cases.

Large percentage of the Poles moving to America were Jews who saw America as an image of all the good things in the world.

The first places to settle in were Illinois and Wisconsin and later in Minnesota, the Dakotas and the Lake states. They were very popular immigrants in America. (Barnes, 2010)

2.1.6 Immigration from the Balkan countries

Barnes (2010) shows that in the years between 1888 and 1910, approximately 780,000 people came from South-East European countries. It involved Bulgarians, Serbians and Montenegrins, Rumanians, Dalmatians, Bosnians and Herzegovinians, Croatians and Slovenians, Greeks and Turks.

Barnes (2010) points out that the percentage of illiteracy of people of these nationalities was high; between 27 and 59 per cent. They typically worked in iron and steel industry and are characterized as thrifty people, religious and passionate for education.

2.1.7 Immigration from Scandinavia

Daniels (1990) points out that the Scandinavian immigration was significantly smaller in comparison to Ireland and Germany. People from Sweden, Norway and Denmark were mostly rural, and almost totally Protestant. They focused on the farther Middle West and the Great Plains. He also mentions that the earliest immigrants were not farmers, but middle-class people and adventurers, former soldiers or technicians. Later, they came to look for more and better land and also for religious freedom. Barnes said the Scandinavian immigration reached its maximum in the period between the years 1881-1890. In 1880s, more than nine percent of the Norwegian population moved to America. In Sweden it was seven percent in the same period and in Denmark it was four per cent. After that it actually increased even more. Barnes shows that in 1901-1910 it was twenty percent bigger number of people that came to find work opportunities in industry.

Immigrants started to come from cities and towns rather than countryside and at the same time single men and women came rather than families as it was before. The biggest motive for them was the economic improvement. Although the typical picture of a Swede is a farmer in Midwest, Chicago became the second biggest city of Swedish population and nine percent of the Windy City's population was Swedish, too. (Barnes, 2010)

Sweden established many institutions in America, such as churches, schools and newspapers. The churches were Protestant, dominated by Lutheranism.

2.1.8 Immigration from Asia

Armenians, one of the leading Western Asia group in America, were driven from their country by the barbarity of the Turks. They hoped to find liberty and opportunities in America. Turks also emigrated to America, especially between the years 1907 and 1912 when six thousand four hundred Turks came. (Barnes, 2010)

Barnes also writes that Chinese people, who were firstly welcomed, spread about the whole country. According to the census there were about seventy thousand Chinese people in 1910. Similar number of Japanese immigrants lived in America in the same year.

Asiatic people used to work in agriculture, as for example growing berries, grape-vine or sugar. A part of them even owned lands or did business.

For the immigrants it was difficult to assimilate due to several differences that were so apparent. There was also the fact that many of Asian immigrants came to America only for a temporary time. Americans interblended with Asians very little, unlike Americans and Africans did. Even though large numbers of people came back to their mother lands, they learned about the prosperity of the country and the character of the people. Some were treated kindly by true Christians but there was also evil they observed.

To Christianize the Oriental people living in America, many missions were organized. Local churches organized Sunday schools or Bible classes for Orientals, denominational missions that took place since 1852 and in addition to that, evening schools were opened and rescue homes and boarding homes were established.

2.1.9 Immigration from Mexico

Small amounts of Mexicans were escaping to America since the late 19th century. Because of the Mexican Revolution that took place 1910-1917, approximately one million people came to America in the beginning of the 20th century. An agreement between the USA and Mexico allowed Mexicans to come to search for jobs. They mainly worked in agriculture, railroad construction and mining in the South-West America. Later, “Bracero Program” took place, which meant that millions of Mexicans came to the USA to satisfy labor demands of America and at the same time to improve the economic situation of Mexicans.

In 1965, Immigration and Nationality Act set limitations on the amount of immigrants that could come to America and therefore restricted immigration of Mexico and other Latin American countries.

Since the 1980s, Mexican immigration has increased again. The main reasons for the Mexican immigration were economic crisis, unemployment and devaluation of the peso. (Lacy, 2007)

2.2 Control of Immigration

Vellos (2001) says that the federal government started to be concerned with the immigration when large groups of colored people started to move from developing countries. Another problem was that the society did not accept the Irish Catholics and Germans who were coming between 1820 and 1880. The first law to be enacted was The Immigration Act of 1875 that excluded groups of people from the United States.

Harvey (2002) says that the law also dealt with the Chinese labor in the West where the tension between the Chinese workers and the European workers was very high. The Chinese Exclusion Act was adopted 1882. It is considered to be the first racist immigration law. It prohibited Chinese workers for ten years and Chinese women for the purposes of prostitution. This law was repealed in 1943.

In 1903 the immigration law excluded any women and girls of any nation for the purposes of prostitution and in 1910 any person for other immoral purposes were forbidden and it was strengthened by the Mann Act and White Slave Traffic Act that punished those who would transport women for immoral purposes. (Harvey, 2002)

The Naturalization Act was a law passed by the United States Congress in 1906 and it demanded immigrants to speak English in order to be able to become naturalized citizens.

The Gentleman's Agreement took place in 1907. It was a contract between the United States and Japan to end the importation of the Japanese. Japanese people were forbidden to own a property in America. (Johnson, 2001)

The Congress created the Immigration Commission in 1907, also known as the Dillingham Commission. It was supposed to study the impact on the national life in America caused by immigration. (Barnes, 2010)

In 1917 the Chinese exclusion was expanded and prohibited immigration from the Asiatic zone and in 1924 a quota system was created that disabled non-citizens to naturalize as they could not get the citizenship. (The Library of Congress, 2010)

Barrientes (2011) summarizes the Emergency Quota Law of 1921, an act that was to limit the immigration of aliens into the United States: "The objective of this act was to temporarily limit

the numbers of immigrants to the United States by imposing quotas based on country of birth. Annual allowable quotas for each country of origin were calculated at 3 percent of the total number of foreign-born persons from that country recorded in the 1910 United States Census.“ This act ended the massive waves of open immigration.

2.3 The Ellis Island

In the 1890 the United States handed the control of immigration to the Federal Government and the first Federal immigration station on Ellis Island was built. During the construction the Barge Office in the Battery was used as the immigration reception. It was officially opened on January 1st 1892 and that day seven hundred immigrants went through the gates of Ellis Island.

Approximately half a million of immigrants passed through the Island in the first year. The Island experienced its peak year in 1907 when more than a million immigrants arrived.

The Island was closed in 1954. During the fifty-four years of its activity more than twelve million people entered the Ellis Island. (Ellis Island Foundation, 2011)

People had to go through many tests that examined them for diseases and checked whether they are not mentally ill or criminals. Those, who did not pass the test were forced to return to their home land. In the records, different causes of rejection can be found, like “Idiots”, “Imbeciles”, “Feeble-minded”, “Likely to become public charges, including paupers and beggars”, “Criminals”, “Prostitutes and Procurers of prostitutes” or “Contract laborers” and other. Alcoholism was also a big problem as Barnes (2010) described.

2.4 The Immigration Problems

Poor people were not allowed to America either. The report from 1912 of The Secretary of Commerce and Labor says “The total amount of money shown to inspection officers by arriving aliens during the past fiscal year was \$30,353,721, or an average of about \$36 per person.” (Barnes, 2010, p. 87)

The Immigration Commission also dealt with the question of the agricultural pursuit and inquired into many rural groups of immigrations in nineteen states.

Speaking of criminality, The Immigration Commission was aware of the problem that immigrants were not often able to understand the language and therefore they were not able to read laws and prohibitions, understand the orders from a policeman and many other things. That could cause that many immigrants would be sentenced to imprisonment wrongly. According to the great Federal Commission immigrants were not more criminal than native Americans. (Barnes, 2010)

Another problem was, according to Barnes, to deal with the church. It is said that four-fifths of the immigrants coming to America did not know the English language. It was important to familiarize them with the language so that they would be able to communicate among each other and join the daily life.

3. Immigration from the Czech lands

In this chapter I am going to deal with the history of the Czech immigration to America since the beginnings to the end of World War II. I think it is important to realize that among all the nations in America, Czechs are an important part of it and they were able to achieve significant things.

Emigration from the Czech lands started in the 50s and 70s of the 19th century, after the revolutionary year of 1848. The immigrants were mainly political opponents and peasants that moved after the abolition of serfdom. They settled in New York, St. Luis, Milwaukee, Chicago and in the countryside of Iowa, Minnesota, Texas and California. (Barnes, 2010)

The nationalities of Bohemia were influenced by the conflicts they had among them and Barnes considered them bitter people. Native Americans had to get to know them well to appreciate their value as American citizens. Only less than one percent of Bohemian immigrants were illiterate, which was a smaller number than that of illiterate Americans.

3.1 The first Czechs in America

Polišenský (1996) claims that the first documented Czech-American man was Augustin Herman, who left his country during the thirty years war and went to the Netherlands and then to America to New Amsterdam. He worked as a cigar-maker and producer and later as a map maker. Around 1660-1661 Herman established a farm that he called “Bohemian Manor”.

Dubovický (2003) completes the knowledge about Herman with the notes about him working for the Dutch West India Company, for which he discussed buying a land near Philadelphia from the Indians.

Another well-known Czech immigrant was Frederick Philipse (Bedřich Filip), who, with his protestant family, left Bohemia for the America. He made his fortune by running business although he came as a poor man.

The Moravian Brethren, descendants of the Czech Brethren, came to America in 1735 and settled in Georgia. Because of troubles with other settlers they had to move to Pennsylvania five years later. The Brethren built their common house Gemeinhouse and a church. Later it was given a name Bethlehem. It became a centre of missions to Indians. The Brethren also established the first women residence. (Dubovický, 2003)

Dubovický (2003) considers John Gottlieb Ernestus Heckewelder, a missionary of the Moravian Brethren church, the most famous Americans of Czech origin. He worked foremost in Pennsylvania, Ohio and Canada. His knowledge of the native Americans of the northeast America was very appreciated. Another immigrant, Antonín Dignovítý traveled through twenty-six American states and studied the language and customs of the Creek Indians. He participated in the struggles for the independence of Texas. His book titled *Bohemia under the Austrian Despotism* was the first anti-Austrian piece published in America.

Karel A. Postl was an important writer originally from Moravia. He traversed America and wrote several books about his experience. *The United States of North America as They Are* is one of them. Other publishing is *Tokeah or the White Rose*, *The Cabin Book*, or *Life in Texas or Nathan, der Squatter-Regulator*. (Dubovický)

Dubovický (2003) writes about the first Czech written work about America. It was “*Spis o nových zemích a o Novém světě, o němžto jsme prve žádné známosti neměli ani kdy co slýchali*” (in English: “An account of the new lands and the New World of which we have no knowledge and have heard nothing”). It was a translation of a letter of Amerigo Vespucci to Lorenzo de Medici.

3.2 The beginnings of Czech immigration to America

According to Vaculík (2009), the period of mass emigration to America was between 1848 and 1914. The first wave was around 1851- 1852. Only those people, who had enough money for the travel could take the journey. The main causes of leaving the motherland were economic reasons and personal dreams. After the abolition of the villainage in the Czech lands, people needed money to buy themselves out. People rushed to America, the land of unlimited opportunities, to get rich by searching for gold in the middle of the 19th century. If the family was poor, it was the father or the oldest son who traveled, and later bought tickets for the rest of the family from the money they earned in America. (Dubovický, 2003)

3.2.1 The transportation of immigrants

Polišenský (1996) writes that at the beginning of the 19th century, the transport from Europe to America cheapened. The ships transporting wood from America realized that it would be advantageous to transport people on the way back to America than travelling with empty ships. The conditions were bad though. During the journey one percent of the passengers died. The ships were nicknamed floating coffins and were recognized by a terrible smell. In the middle of the century new steamship was designated only for people to be transported.

Dubovický (2003) adds more interesting facts. He claims that the people had to get themselves blankets and all the food for the voyage until 1848. Since that year, the sailing companies had to provide food for the passengers. It usually consisted of cabbage, crackers and prunes, as the meat rotted in a few weeks.

The immigrants took all important things with them, like for example tools, axes, choppers or hammerlocks, but also duvets and corn for the first sowing, some dishes and at least one book – The Bible.

Vaculík (2009) deals with the transport of the immigrants, too. He shows that the A. Meyer Company transported immigrants every Wednesday and Sunday by steamships from Bremen to New York. Sailing ships were put to sea always the 1st and the 15th of every month. The Hamburg-American steamship was believed to be the most comfortable, the quickest, the safest and the cheapest. The journey lasted for two weeks at the longest, while by sailing ship it took eight to twelve weeks. Another company was Lloyd in Bremen, which had its own agencies. It

was not possible to ban the immigration by law, but it was possible to prosecute the agents. The agents attracting new passengers got a free ticket for every ten sold tickets, and later even money for every immigrant.

The immigrants traveled to America through New Orleans and later Galveston, where they turned into a smaller ship aiming to Houston. The first groups of people settled in plantations where German people lived already. Later, they went northward and many plantations with Czech names were founded.

After the arrival to America, the emigrants were taken to the state institution for the protection of the emigrants at first. At that time there was still a lot of free land in America and every emigrant had a right to ask for allocation of 160 acres of the state land. (Polišenský, 1996)

3.2.2 The conformity of immigrants in a new country

Vaculík (2009, p.152) describes the motto of immigrants “urgency, diligence, thrift, fairness and truthfulness”. The brochures advertising America characterized it as a land where immigrants could get rich easily, buy land cheaply, pay low taxes, profess any religion and be equal among each other. Anyhow, the government did not give any advantages or help to immigrant, so they had to take care of themselves. The most successful in finding jobs were handicraftsmen and peasants. Most of the immigrants stayed for good. They had better chance to assimilate than other nationalities thank to the adaptability, diligence and intelligence, despite the fact they did not know the language. Because of that, they settled near to Poles and Germans who they could understand, and established breweries there. Milwaukee and Saint Louis are the most significant centers of beer production up to the present.

Polišenský (1996) shows how hard times did the Czech immigrants have while settling down in a new country. At first, the climate was completely different from the climate in Europe. People had to build their houses from chopped trees. To work on their fields they had to make their own primitively handmade tools. They needed to learn how to cultivate the stony soil and grow cotton. In addition to that, from time to time they were attacked by Indians or had to face natural disasters like hurricanes. Not everyone could bear it and this caused that some of them returned back home in 1855.

3.3 Cultural life of Czech Americans and Czech American Press

The Czecho-Slavonic Benevolent Society was the first Czech association in America. It was founded for the needs of Czechs in case of illness or death and it still exist today as an insurance company with its headquarters in Chicago.

Dubovický (2003) also mentions the Sokol organization, brought from the homeland, which was founded in 1865. On the incentive of Vojta Náprstek “Slavan Amerikánský” (the American Slav) and “Národní noviny” (the National Gazette) started to be published. František Matouš Klácel moved to America to write for the the American Slav and become the speaker for the rationalist movement called The Voice of the Association of Freethinkers. He published a newspaper “Svojan” for them, but not many people followed him. Anyhow, the American Slav and the National Gazette had too few readers to be able to survive and so they merged into one, “Slavie”, in 1861. Polišíenský (1996) says that “Slavie” had only about four or five hundred readers, but it was very important Czech magazine and it was published for eighty-five years and it ceased in 1946.

After that, many entertainment weeklies, as “Zábavné listy” (The Entertainment Paper), “Šotek” (The Imp) or “Díblík” (The Little Devil) appeared. There were also pictorial monthlies and specialized magazines of practical content. People could read The Household or The Farmer. Since 1868 the first weekly The Catholic Newspaper was published, after a few years changed into The Voice. In 1875, the first Czech daily Concord (Svornost) started to publish, and after the arrival of socialist leaders from Bohemia, papers like “Dělnické listy” (The Worker’s Papers), “Budoucnost” (The Future) or “Dělník Americký” (The American Worker) appeared. The first Czech publications were related to the new way of living. People were instructed about the right methods of farming, women were acquainted of new commodities for cooking and especially the system of weights and measures. Other than that, there were also Czech-English dictionaries and textbooks. However, it was also important for the immigrants to retain their Czech language and Czech culture. They could read books about the American and Czech history and also educational literature in novels or short stories. (Dubovický, 2003)

3.4 The Czech settlements

Polišenský (1996) points out that one third of Czech immigrants lived in Wisconsin in 1860. They usually came by the cheap ship transport through Liverpool, Saint Lawrence River and the big lakes. Wisconsin was a new state that could offer them cheap lands, but people had to earn it by hard work and cutting the woods. The important cities in Wisconsin were Milwaukee and Caledonia, later called Tabor by Czechs. The life in Wisconsin was not very easy for Czechs though and some of them moved to Iowa, Nebraska or Minnesota. The climate there was as rough as back in Wisconsin, so west Illinois seemed to be a better place to settle.

There are documents that confirm there were Czechs in Texas in the middle of the 19th century who studied the history of Czechs in Texas and who established Czech training centre at the University of Texas. Texas was one of the farmer areas of Czech immigrants.

The most important town areas were Saint Louis, New York and Chicago. Around 1867 people worked in Saint Louis in coal pits. The town became a significant Czech centre and at the beginning of the 20th century eight thousand of Czech people were expected to live there. The first benefit club was established in 1854 and a Czech Catholic church was build the following year. (Polišenský, 1996)

3.4.1 Chicago

The beginnings of Chicago were also modest. The poor immigrants had nowhere to move if they did not want to work as farmers. They established Bohemian Squatters Town. People found jobs in tailor workshops, wood-working factories and in slaughters. After the fire in Chicago in 1871 Czechs participated in repairs and built up the biggest Czech settlement as the centre of life of all Czech immigrants. There were a lot of Czech shops, different institutions, such as schools, a theatre, a bank, a cathedral or a brewery. The rise of Chicago came in the 1870s and the 1880s. Besides the Catholic parochial schools, Chicago had also liberal schools. Catholic schools taught all basic subjects and civil schools also provided education in Czech and English languages, sometimes even of the Czech history. These kinds of schools were usually open on Saturdays. (Polišenský, 1996)

The first immigration wave of Czechs was ended by the American Civil War in 1861 – 1865 as Polišíenský described.

As most of the European incomers, Czechs were opponents of slavery and followers of the republican party of Abraham Lincoln. Czech immigrants cooperated with German, Polish and Irish immigrants and a part of them participated in warfare. The numbers of Czech people fighting in the Civil war was estimated to be six hundred at the most, with two thirds fighting for the Union and the rest for The Confederacy.

After the war, some of the journalists of “Slavie” supported the idea of moving to Russia and creating “New Czechia” there. The plan did not work out at the end.

Some of the immigrants made a profit after the war. They knew a bit of America, learned English and after returning home they could earn money as interpreters or translators.

3.4.2 Iowa

The third considerable area of Czech settlement in the middle of the 19th century was Iowa. First people of Czech origin moved there in 1852 and made it a cultural center of American Czechs. Iowa was also told to have more pleasant climate and for that reason people from Ohio or Cleveland or Chicago moved there as they believed that not knowing the language will not be a big handicap on the farms. From their homes in Europe they were used to grow cereals and they felt unsure switching to growing corn. They did not believe in one crop system so they grew also flax to make themselves clothes, and vegetables. Polišíenský (1996) believes that one hundred and thirty-six Czech families lived there in 1856. The Cedar Rapids was said to be the town of the biggest population density. Polišíenský claims that a museum of the Czech immigration can be found there. Another settlement was Spillville on the Turkey River on the northeast of Iowa. The settlers were not rich there but they cared for a good education of their children. Seventy-two families were counted there in 1860 and around eight hundred and eighty-eight people in 1888.

3.4.3 Kansas and Nebraska

The second immigration wave arrived in the 1870s and 1880s. The wave was focused on the Nebraska and Kansas territories. People had opportunity to acquire a land that would become theirs in several years. That was why the majority of settlers lived on farms.

Polišenský (1996) writes about Frank Mareš, a fellow worker of the Czech-American magazine “Hospodář”, who traveled from one farm to another between 1891 and 1895. Mareš recorded the origin of the inhabitants, which part of Bohemia or Moravia they came from, how big the family was, how old the members were and how much of the land they owned. For instance, he found that most of the people from Saline County came from south-west and south Bohemia, or all Czech farmers living in Saunders were from south-west and south Moravia.

Approximately three hundred of Czech settlers established a Czech club, called “Slovania” in the middle of the seventies in Omaha. Their aim was to found a pure Czech settlement and call it “Czech Settlement”. Preserved documents show the problems the settlers had to face. The railway companies occupied the land of better quality and settlers had to cultivate the worse land. Moreover, the farmers spent a lot of money on the tools, seed and cattle. Some families paid off a debt in twenty years.

Polišenský (1996) writes about Josef Novinský, Czech contemplator and an agent of a railroad company, who searched for new settlers from Iowa and even Czech lands for the company. He made broadsheets and brochures in order to attract settlers to the empty areas along the railroad. Novinský’s activity had success especially in middle Moravia, from Konice across Litovel and Uničov to Dlouhé Loučky. These people were peasants wishing for a larger piece of land or young boys whose family wanted to get rid of them.

3.4.4 New York

Big waves of Czech immigrants came to New York as well. They lived well when they could work as handicraftsmen or run a business in a shop or a pub, otherwise they took inferior and occasional jobs or produced cigars.

Polišenský (1996) regards the case of establishing the colony on the Long Island called “Bohemian Village” quite curious. The settlers worked as cigar-makers there and they were very successful in production of pearl buttons. They made their living as tailors, watchmakers and cabinetmakers. People started to run their own pubs, shops, law offices and doctors’ surgeries.

3.4.5 California

In the times of the “gold rush” between 1848 and 1850, first Czechs came to California to search for gold. Polišíenský (1996) has some information about the Korbel brothers, students from Prague, who actually arrived when the fever was over and they did not get rich on gold. They caught their notice on the local forest’s good quality wood and built up a settlement they called “Bohemian Grover”. Later they also started viniculture.

Beside the San Francisco, another Czech settlement also came to existence in San José. Today, California is expected to have the biggest amount of people of the Czech or Slovak origin.

The new immigrants coming after 1880 differed from the older ones at better education. They learned the language more easily and read the American newspaper, they asked for the American citizenship and to get registered to electoral rolls. According to Polišíenský (1996), they were considered to be the most politically conscious new American citizens. Slovak immigrants coming in the 1880s, in contrast to Czechs moved to America as individuals and were not well-prepared for the American reality. They ended up working as laborers in textile factories or as miners and metallurgists in Pennsylvania.

At this period the immigration from Czech lands still increased. Czechs settled around the whole America, for example in Louisiana, Virginia, Florida, Indiana, North Dakota and Arizona. They made an effort to buy convenient farming land and people in town wanted to have their own house. Trade unions fought for better salaries, which earned around 330 \$ a year. However, a four-member family needed about 800 \$ a year, which meant that all adults and even children had to work to earn money. (Polišíenský, 1996)

At the turn of the century Americans still had a misrepresented imagination about Czechs and Slovaks. They were still called “Bohunks”, Bohemians and Hungarians, and were ranked as less-welcomed, new immigrants who did not suit the white Anglo-Saxon protestants’ ideal. This situation changed at the beginning of the 20th century.

3.5 The 20th century

Czech immigration experienced its peak in 1907. Thirteen thousand people left their homes. The year before World War I it was about eight thousand. Vaculík's (2009) statistics say that ten thousand of cigar-makers from the neighborhood of Kutná Hora lived in New York. Industrial workers came from Plzeň and Klatov regions and miners came from Duchcov and Mostec regions.

In the population census of 1910 approximately five hundred and forty thousand of Czech people were counted in America. They mainly settled in Illinois, Nebraska and Wisconsin. In cities, most of Czechs could be found in New York, Chicago and Cleveland. (Barnes, 2010)

During the first decade of the twentieth century nearly one hundred thousand people came from the Czech lands. In the homeland it was difficult to find a good job that earned. It was also the fear of war that compelled people to run away to America to avoid military service. Dubovický (2003) writes about Bohdan Reiner, an agent, who was known for procuring transportation even to people who did not get the permission the authorities. He published manuals for the immigrants informing them about life in America and especially what they needed to do to get there. Immigrants were even given information how to avoid legal and passport regulations.

Polišenský (1996) claims the biggest concentration of Czechs was in Chicago, New York and farming states of Texas and Nebraska. The first wave of Czech brains came from these places, not only teachers and journalists, but also lawyers, doctors and university professors. Some Czech students from America also moved back to Europe to study in Prague.

Until World War I, more than three hundred and fifty thousand of Czech people emigrated to America. The immigration was limited after the quota system after 1921. In the time of war, thirty-five thousand people found a new home in America. About twenty-three thousand people came after 1948, which was considered to be politically motivated immigration; and between the 1968 and 1989 about thirty thousand of Czech escaped the bad political and economic conditions of their country. By that Vaculík (2009) deduces that more than a half million Czech people came to America in one hundred and fifty years. (Vaculík, 2009)

3.6 Immigration during the wars

3.6.1 World War I

During the war, Chicago became the center of the first revolt. Vojta Beneš organized liberational gatherings. The Czech national association that was established in 1914 supported T.G. Masaryk the independent movement abroad and organized American propaganda against the Triplice. In 1916 the association published a manifest where the members presented the aims of the Czechoslovak revolt.

Anti-Hungarian and anti-war organizations were founded, like Czech-American press-agency in Chicago, and since 1914 Czech-American national council and Czech-Slovak benefit club.

America stayed neutral until 1917 and still in 1918 the Washington government did not have the division of the Austria-Hungary in its plan. During the warfare, two thousand three hundred and nine American Czechs and Slovaks fought. They were trained in an army camp in Connecticut. Two hundred and thirty of them were injured or killed and approximately six hundred of them stayed in their homeland after the war and never returned back to America. (Polišenský, 1996)

During the war, compatriots started a project called Relief Action to provide help for the people suffering in their homeland and for the Czech and Slovak legionnaires. They sent huge consignments of food supplies, clothes, medicines and medical equipments. Czech women worked hard on this campaign, they joined the Bees groups – in Cleveland they had 1840 members. They continued in the assistance after the war to modify the aftermaths of the hostilities for the people in their homeland. They donated two million dollars.

After the war, Czech and Slovak immigrants were expected to return back to their homelands. According to the Czechoslovak Commercial Corporation of America, more than a hundred thousand people wanted to go back. (Polišenský, 1996)

In the years 1914 – 1920 only about a thousand of Czech people emigrated to the United States. The population census of 1920 counted six hundred and twenty-two thousand of Czechs and Slovaks of the first generation of immigrants and three hundred and eighty-eight thousand of the second generation. Polišenský (1996) claims that two thirds of immigrants lived in towns and only one third of them lived in countryside. After the new immigration law from 1924, the Czech quota only allowed three thousand and seventy-three people to move to America. Some of the

immigrants tried to refrain that by moving to Cuba for a short time with a plan to return to America later. (Vaculík, 2009)

3.6.2 The post-war years

After World War I, about one hundred schools were in service in the United States, where the instruction in Czech language was emphasized. The teaching took place on Sundays and in the afternoons on working days. Pupils learned the basics of Czech language and Czech singing and theatre. (Vaculík, 2009)

Those immigrants who returned back to their homeland were really disappointed by the situation in the Czech Republic. They regarded the conditions in their native country too little advanced. Those American Czechs, who had merit in setting their country free, felt they were not awarded as they deserved. American Slovaks complained about the promises included in the Pittsburgh Agreement not being adhered. The Czech-American Catholics were also not satisfied with the Czechoslovak Church. (Polišenský, 1996)

3.6.3 World War II

After the occupation of the Czechoslovak republic in 1939, President Masaryk pronounced the start of a new independent movement abroad. The Czech-American Union was revived and the Czechoslovak National Counsel organized help for the exile government in London.

During the war, the Czechoslovak National Counsel tried to obtain money to support refugees and to finance the independent movement abroad as Dubovický (2003) describes. It collected nearly six hundred thousand dollars till July 1945.

After the war, Czechoslovakia got a big help from organization called The American Relief for Czechoslovakia, institutions like CARE (Co-operative for American Relief n. Rehabilitation Administration) or UNRRA (Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration). The Masaryk Club organized exchange stays for students.

After the war, the Prague government first accepted the offer of help of the Marshall plan, but commands from Moscow led to its refusal and confusion of all people. (Dubovický, 2003)

3.7 Czech assimilation in America

Vaculík (2009) also considers the success of the assimilation of Czech immigrants in America. He says that school was a significant agent in the assimilation of Czechs. Vaculík claims that people who studied at an American school, were no longer able to behave as Czechs. Parents of the pupils communicated to them in Czech language, but their children answered in English. Parents were influenced by their children, the second and the third generation of the Czech immigrants talked in English in ninety-nine percents. The Czech youth asked for preachments and newspapers in English. Czech communities were isolated and dependent on themselves and their own associations. After World War I, the amount of Czech newspapers and readers decreased, as the immigrants of the first generations died and the younger immigrants rejected to read in Czech. They even preferred to make their names seem more English. Mixed marriages also advanced the assimilation, even though the first three generations still preferred women of the Czech origin. Dubovický (2003) describes a system, so called “mail-order bride”. Czechs settled in America sent advertisements looking for a bride. They promised to pay the transport of their future bride, which they did not know at the time. People also chose partners of the same religion and profession, for example in New York, Czech women married Cubans from cigar factories or Swiss farmers married Czech women coming from farmsteads. (Vaculík, 2009)

Conclusion

The project's aim was to learn about the formation of the American nation and society. While studying for the project I started to think that America did not belong to any particular nation. In my opinion, America belongs to the whole world. Even though some countries discovered America earlier than others, it does not mean that they had the right to appropriate the land and decide about whether other nations can come to America.

America was described as the freest and promising country people could possibly want, but immigrants often found prejudices and discrimination there. Especially for people of different races it was difficult to merge in the society. There were several laws, precautions and exclusionist movements that made it even more difficult.

It is important to realize that America would not be America without immigrants. All the nations have important roles and make a unique whole.

I was surprised and pleased to read about Czech Americans that founded many plantations in various places in America and made themselves prospering living by hard work. The Czech presence in America was also very important during both World Wars, as Czechs were a significant part of the independence movement abroad and the help after the wars.

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Anotace

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Název práce:	Dějiny přistěhovalectví do Ameriky a Češi ve Spojených Státech Amerických
Název v angličtině:	The History of Immigration to America and Czechs in the United States
Anotace práce:	Cílem této práce je ukázat na Ameriku jako zemi, kde se mísí všechny národy světa. Práce se také zabývá příčinami přistěhovalectví, podmínky, ve kterých lidé žili a jak se přizpůsobili životu v Americe. Část práce se také zaměřuje na Čechy, kteří se přistěhovali do Ameriky a čeho zde dosáhli.
Klíčová slova:	Imigrace, Amerika, Češi, přistěhovalectví, asimilace, životní podmínky v Americe, přistěhovalécké zákony
Anotace v angličtině:	The aim of this thesis is to show America as a country where all nations of the world mix. The works considers the reasons that made people travel in a new country, the conditions they lived in and how they assimilated in America. Part of the work also focuses on Czechs that moved to America and what they achieved there.
Klíčová slova v angličtině:	Immigration, America, Czechs, assimilation, living conditions in America, immigration laws
Přílohy vázané v práci:	
Rozsah práce:	43
Jazyk práce:	angličtina