NATIONAL ENDOGAMY AND DOUBLE STANDARDS:
SEXUALITY AND NATIONALISM IN EAST-CENTRAL
EUROPE DURING THE 19TH CENTURY

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During the “long nineteenth century,” nationalism came to permeate all aspects of European society, including attitudes toward human sexuality. Both sexuality and nationalism are complex phenomena that overlap in myriad ways. However, national endogamy may be the most characteristically national of all possible sexual attributes: qualities such as chastity or fidelity, while frequently claimed as typical of a given national group, have religious and social dimensions independent of nationalism. An individual who makes nationality a decisive factor in selecting sexual partners, however, not only makes some concept of the nation a defining feature of sexual virtue, but implicitly defines the nation in sexual terms.

This essay examines national sexual endogamy in Central and Eastern Europe during the nineteenth century. It discusses patriots who promoted national endogamy: their ideals, their sexual lives, and their attempts to reconcile the frequent discrepancies between the former and the latter. Several patriots defined the nation through sexuality, but female sexuality played a special role. The nation may have been a “national brotherhood,” but its survival depended on female sexuality: as Yuval-Davis and Floya Anthias observed, women were “biological reproducers of ethnic collectives.” National motherhood presupposes sexually-active national women, so the extensive literature on national motherhood implicitly recognizes national sexuality as a prelude to national child-birth and child rearing. Few scholars, however, have examined the nationalization of sexual desire in its own right. This analysis restricts its attention to texts that discuss sexuality, including marriage, ignoring the nationalization of parenting or childhood.

Rhetoric on national sexuality concerned itself primarily with female sexuality: the national woman was expected and encouraged to find a partner of the same nationality. Nevertheless, male sexual choices also acquired national meanings. Specifically, several authors justified and celebrated male national exogamy by suggesting that patriotic men would be able to nationalize foreign women: sexual conquests were also national conquests. Both male and female sexuality helped define the porous boundary between the national and the foreign, but a national-sexual double standard enabled or even encouraged men to cross national boundaries in both theory and practice, while attempting to restrict the sexuality of women.

Central and Eastern Europe provides a useful setting for examining these questions, because so many national concepts coexisted and interacted within the region. East-Central Europe generally, and the Habsburg Empire in particular, was remarkable both for its ethnic heterogeneity and for complex federal political structures that underwent frequent reform and reconstitution, particularly
during the nineteenth century. The ever-changing kaleidoscope of central European politics produced several sophisticated definitions of “the nation.” The mish-mash of different ethnicities, furthermore, provided multiple opportunities for cross-national sexual encounters, however an individual patriot understood the nation.

The many permutations of nineteenth century Central European nationalism cannot be analyzed here, but a few key points deserve emphasis. First, central European nationalists often invoked different types of “nation” simultaneously. When writing in German, several authors distinguished the Volk, defined through language or ethnicity, from the Nation, typically defined through political structures; other thinkers juxtaposed the Sprachnation [“linguistic nation”] with the Staatnation [“state nation”]. In Hungary, political theorists often contrasted the politikai nemzet [“political nation”] with the nemzetiségek [“nationalities”] that inhabited it. South Slavs distinguished the narod/народ (similar to the German Volk) from the nacija/нација (German Nation), and both from narodnost/народност (“nationality”). Czechs and Slovaks lacked any equivalent for nacija/нација, but modified the word národ with appropriate adjectives. All of these terms and distinctions have their own idiosyncratic history, as successive generations of national thinkers reinterpreted national terminology in light of their political challenges and traditions.

Modern scholars tend to see these dichotomies in terms of Michael Ignatieff’s much-discussed distinction between “civic” and “ethnic” nationalism. Ignatieff’s dichotomy has turned out to be problematic, but I will use his terms as a generic shorthand. Central European nationalists thus used words translatable as “nation” (narod, nemzet, Volk, etc.) to describe both (1) civic nationalism, uniting the citizens of a political unit and (2) ethnic nationalism, encompassing a group defined by ethnicity, language, race, culture, or some combination thereof. Since, as Dominique Schnapper so eloquently put it, “a definition of the nation is in itself already a theory of the nation,” the endless terminological arguments about the “correct” definitions of these terms were actually claims to political status, and thus access to power. When seeking to understand the thought of historical actors, therefore, one should avoid taking sides in their debates. One must also guard against the danger of oversimplifying complex and frequently inconsistent beliefs. Nineteenth century historical actors frequently invoked multiple national loyalties, and contemporary scholars should not assume that devotion to an ethnic, linguistic, cultural or racial nation (narod, Volk, etc.) prevented loyalty to the political nation (nacija, Staatsnation, etc.). While some nineteenth century “ethnic nationalists” did seek statehood for their nation, many others used “national” rhetoric to further cultural or literary goals.

This point deserves emphasis because several scholars have chosen to define nationalism in terms of the desire for political independence. The non-state-seeking nationalism of the nineteenth century declined considerably in the twentieth: the Wilsonian principle of national self-determination, which transformed Central European political geography after the First World War, strengthened the already powerful associations between the “nation” and legitimate statehood. This essay, however, restricts its focus to the pre-1918 period, and thus discusses a pre-Wilsonian mental universe. When scholars of
nineteenth-century Central Europe define nationalism as a quest for statehood, they invite misunderstanding: several historical actors explicitly rejected the high-political definition while struggling for the good of their “nation.”

But all Central European national thinkers, whether leaning toward a “civic” or an “ethnic” definition, imagined the nation as an “inherently limited” group. A political or “civic” nation defined through laws or by membership in a political structure excluded people from other political units; cultural or “ethnic” nations defined by language or religion similarly excluded those speaking other languages or professing other religions. All national concepts in nineteenth-century Central Europe excluded from the nation large numbers of people living in close proximity; “ethnic” definitions frequently excluded people settled in the same region or town. This raised the possibility of cross-national sexual relations, potentially transforming sexuality into a national issue.

When nationalist men discussed the sexuality of “their” women, they typically boasted about sexual fidelity. An 1821 anecdote about “female honor”, printed in Wiburgs Mancherley, a German-language magazine from the Baltic, claimed chastity as a national virtue: “A German girl was scornfully asked by her playmate what she would bring to her groom [as a dowry]? Chastity, she replied with dignity.” Hungarian poet Józef Gvádány, in an ode Hungary’s glorious past, similarly praised the fidelity of the Hungarian woman:

In those ancient days when once she pledged her troth
A lady lived contented with her better half.
[...]
Her head was always covered, no matter where she went,
To church, or on the street, for this was her intent,
That everyone should know her marriage-vows were meant.

In 1866, an anonymous but presumably Serbian contributor to the Slavisches Centralblatt similarly ascribed Serbian marriages an unusually durable character: “Serbian married couples seem to understand each other well, divorces are very rare, and I only once heard of a man whose wife ran away from him.” In 1910, German author Albert Friedenthal, in his Das Weib im Leben der Völker (“Woman in the life of Nations”), mixed incredibly blunt racial chauvinism with his claim to superior national marriage: “the true Germanic German remains faithful to her spouse for life. When the opposite is claimed about the middle-class or lower-class women of Berlin, this is because of the strong Slavic interbreeding. The same phenomenon in Austria has the same cause.” Slavic authors, of course, rejected such slanders: Ján Čaplovič claimed that Slovaks had the best sexual morals in Hungary: “one finds among other nationalities many more illegitimate children.”

Boasts about the superior sexual virtues of one’s own nation are ubiquitous, and constitute the most basic form of sexual nationalism. Patriots similarly denigrated foreign sexuality, and sometimes blamed foreign sexuality for various social ills, e.g. marital infidelity in rapidly urbanizing Vienna and Berlin. Hysteria about sexual immorality intensified as the nineteenth century wore on: Gvádány, Friedenthal and Čaplovič boasted about the superior sexuality of their national women without specifically addressing national endogamy, while
Friedenthal's text is filled with fears of corruption and biological taint. Andrew Lees estimated that hysteria over national sexuality "became increasingly pronounced during the mid-1880s, and [... ] remained at a high level of intensity during the next three decades." This development has multiple causes: ethnic tensions themselves became increasingly important in political life, while the emergence of international feminism generated a paranoid backlash. The most important theme, however, was probably the rise of social Darwinism and racist thinking, which focused attention on biological reproduction. Patriots at the end of the century saw exogamy as national degeneration, while their predecessors had described it as merely undesirable.

Warnings against cross-national liaisons, however, had always been a prominent theme in popular culture, as several folk songs illustrate. The Hungarian song "Csak azért szeretem [I only love for this]" promised Hungarian men that they will only eat well if they are nationally endogamous:

Csak azért szeretem
A magyar menzecskét
Hogy meg tudja fözni
A borsos levecskéd valaha

The Magyar maid alone should be
The wife of Magyar man
For she can cook, and only she
Our soup of red cayenne.

Polish school children across the border in Imperial Germany sang the praises of a nationally endogamous Polish queen:

Wanda leży w polskiej ziemi
B nie chciała Niemca
Trzeba tylko wziąć rodaka
A nie czuziemca!

Wanda lies in Polish earth
because she did not want a German man.
A girl should always choose a compatriot
And never a foreigner for a husband.

A Galician folk song described Polish women with Ruthenian husbands as having been "compelled into slavery." Ukrainian national poet Taras Shevchenko similarly predicted that women who entered into a relationship with "Muscovite" lovers would fare badly in his 1838 poem "Kateryna":

Кохайтеся, чорнобриві,
Та не з Москалів;
Бо Москалі — чужі люди,
Роблять лихо з вами.
Москал любить жартуючи,
Жартуючи кине.

O lovely maidens, fall in love,
But not with Moskaly,
For Moskaly are foreign folk
They do not treat you right.
A Moskal will love for sport
And laughingly depart.

National endogamy was thus a common thread in national folklore; further examples will follow below. Note, however, that these songs suggest an essentially "ethnic" definition of the nation. Shevchenko's Ukrainian maidens live under the same Romanov monarch as the Moskal'; and while Wanda predated the partitions of Poland, Polish schoolchildren who sang this song were citizens of Imperial Germany.

A marriage across political frontiers, therefore, could still be nationally endogamous if the match occurred within the ethnic group. According to Keely Stauter-Halstead, Polish folk songs from Galicia make the ethnic understanding
of the nation explicit: Ukrainians, Germans or Jews from a neighboring village were foreign and stigmatized, but marriage to a Pole from the Russian or Prussian partitions was “within the realm of possibilities.” Romanian historian Nicolae Iorga also illustrates the primacy of ethnic nationalism. While his 1894 marriage to Maria Tasu, the daughter of an appellate court judge from Iasi, was endogamous both ethnically and civically, his second marriage to Catinca Bogdan, who came from what Nicholas Nagy-Talavera described “a typical Romanian intellectual family from Transylvania,” constituted civic exogamy, since Transylvania was still part of Austro-Hungary in 1904. Both marriages, however, counted as proper national matches.

East European patriots encouraged marriage, extolling love and sexual pleasure. Shevchenko, recall, explicitly rejected chastity (“O lovely maidens, fall in love”), even though he personally remained a bachelor. A Hungarian folk song similarly encouraged women to take lovers, so long as the lover was of the proper nationality. Edward Butler’s translation understates the endogamy of the text by rendering tót, a pejorative word for “Slovak,” as “slave”:

Nyisd ki, babámn, az ajót, magyar kopogtat, nem tót.

Open the door, my maiden brave, 'Tis a Magyar knocks, no slave.

Ján Kollár, a Slovak Lutheran pastor and Pan-Slav polemicist, even invented a pious national “Slav Kiss,” which Robert Pynsent described as follows: “One kisses down one’s sweetheart’s face from brow to chin, then across it from ear to ear, and both times the lips meet, soul meets soul. Eroticism fuses with the sign of the cross.”

This celebration of sexuality, however, had limits: only nationally-endogamous sexuality would be pleasurable for women. Patriots denigrated the sexuality of foreign men, particularly from national groups living in close proximity. Shevchenko’s diatribe against the Moskal’ targeted the men most able to tempt Ukrainian women; the Polish songs attacked the German overlords. Kollár’s poem about “Národnost w láse [Nationality in Love],” published in his Národné zpiewanky ili pěsni svtiske Slovakow w Ubrách, (“National Songbook, or secular songs of the Slovaks in Hungary”), attacked Hungarians and Germans. Interestingly, Kollár put his ideas in the mouth of an imaginary female narrator.

Žáden nový gak ge mnē
ke ma Slovák obegme:
Akoby som cukor gedla
Muš piľa a w perj sedla
Tak ge mnē, tak ge mnē
Ke ma Slovák obegme.

Žáden nový gak ge mnē
ke ma [Němec / Mađar] obegme:
Akoby som kysel gedla
Ocet piľa, w trnj sedla
Tak ge mnē, tak ge mnē
Ke ma [Němec / Mađar] obegme.

Nobody knows how I feel
when a Slovak embraces me:
as if I have eaten sugar
drunk cider and sat in feathers,
that’s how I feel, that’s how I feel
when a Slovak embraces me.

Nobody knows how I feel
when a [German/Hungarian] embraces me:
as if I have eaten something sour
drunk vinegar and sat on thorns,
that’s how I feel, that’s how I feel
when a [German/Hungarian] embraces me.
Kollár would have women believe that foreign men are interchangeable: the Slovak woman must choose between sweet Slovaks and sour foreigners.

Despite Kollár's evident preoccupation with national endogamy, he personally chose to marry a German woman. The story is complicated. Since the Habsburg Empire strongly promoted Catholicism, Lutherans such as Kollár could only attend university in Protestant Saxony. While studying in Jena, Kollár met and fell in love with Minna Schmidt, a monolingual speaker of German. Since both Schmidt and Kollár were Lutheran, their marriage posed no confessional difficulties. However, Ján Jakubec reports that Schmidt, even after their marriage, "always said of herself that she was a German." Kollár nevertheless managed to convince himself that Schmidt descended from Slavic ancestors: Schmidt's father owned a Lusatian grammar and told Kollár that his ancestors had once "had some sort of Slavic name." Kollár's courtship was long and initially unsuccessful. Schmidt's mother rejected Kollár, partly because she disapproved of Kollár's foreign origin, and the couple married only after Schmidt's mother had died. Kollár's frustrated love, mixed with his patriotism, inspired the epic poem Slávy dcera ["The Daughter of Sláva"], a literary sensation that established Kollár's reputation. Slávy dcera, a classic in its own time, fused patriotic love of the nation with romantic love for an allegorical Slavic goddess, Sláva. There is no small irony in the fact that a German muse inspired the most important work of Pan-Slavic poetry, but Kollár experienced no contradiction, since he had, in Peter Black's words, transformed Schmidt into "the daughter of the blonde, blue-eyed goddess, 'Slavia'." Yet Kollár spoke German not only with his wife but also with their children, a fact which scandalized Slavic patriots who visited Kollár at home.

Despite Kollár's apparent indifference to Schmidt's national feelings, Kollár elsewhere encouraged Slovak women to feel genuine patriotism. Consider how the female narrator from "Maďari a Slowenka [Hungarians and the Slovak Girl]," another song in the Národní žiwanka, rejects her Hungarian suitors:

Maďari, Maďnari, gá chcem byť Slowenka Magyars, Magyars, I want to be a Slovak girl
nebola, nebudem gë waža fragerka I was not and will never be your girlfriend.

This text implicitly assumes that a Slovak woman would lose her nationality by taking a Hungarian lover. This may explain the apparent contradiction of Kollár's marriage: even granting that Schmidt's Slavic credentials were imperfect, Kollár may have felt that her marriage to a Slavic patriot had Slavicized her. Additionally, Kollár's repeated tendency to discuss national sexuality through a female narrative voice perhaps derived from a sincere belief that he could speak for women. He spoke for Schmidt in his capacity as a husband, for his flock in his capacity as a pastor. Why could he not speak for national women in his capacity as national poet?

Female authors similarly suggested that an educated, high-status man could convert women to the national cause. Czech patriot authoress Berta Mühlsteinová, whom Wilma Iggers characterized as "a not particularly well known poet," described the denationalization of a German woman in an 1864 story about a dashing Czech professor.
Friäulein Louise is a pretty red-haired German of blue eyes and a slender stature. She cannot bear to speak Czech, a language she finds crude and simple—she just speaks a few words with the cook or the saleslady—but such a language has no place in the salon.—But one day a young professor comes to replace one who has just passed away. He is also blue-eyed and red-haired—but a Czech—and his name is Košt’ál.

On his first appearance at a ball he causes a sensation among the girls.

Though Louise N. and Košt’ál are instantly attracted to each other, neither initially wishes to cross national lines. Louise N. asks for information about the handsome stranger:

“Friäulein Rosa, do you know that nice-looking blond standing there by the column?”

“That one, Friäulein Louise? That’s the new professor, he’s a Czech and his name is Košt’ál.”

“Košt’ál!” Miss Louise turns up her little nose and surely thinks about salesgirls and cabbage and lettuce—How can such a good-looking person be named Košt’ál and be a Czech?

Košt’ál is equally concerned with the national affiliation of the beautiful Louise:

“Excuse me, Sir, who is that slender blonde?”

“That one, wearing the light green tarlatan dress? That’s miss Louise N.”

“Is she Czech?”

“No, German.”

“That’s too bad.”

Despite these initial reservations, the two dance the quadrille, fall into conversation, and are soon taking walks in the park together. In the end, Košt’ál teaches Louise how to speak proper Czech and thus de-Germanizes his bride:

“Professor, will you marry a German?”

“God forbid! I am teaching her Czech three times a week, and I assure you, that she is making great progress in the art. In less than a year, her Czech will be perfect.”

Mühlsteinová concluded that “such blond professors are very dangerous for the Germans, so they fear them; they Czechicize more than schools and literature.” For a sexual nationalist, German fears would appear justified: the de-Germanized Louise N. was indeed lost to the German cause: Košt’ál converted her to the Czechs.

Bosnian folk songs assumed that women in cross-national marriages would adopt the nationality of their husbands. Bosnian religious divisions encouraged this attitude. The main ethnic groups in Bosnia were associated with distinct religions and religious conversion was a usual precondition for marriage, so marriage implied both religious and national conversion. In the poem “Ženidba bega Omerbega, su Anicom od Janoka [The Marriage of Omerbeg bey to Ann from Janok],” a Hungarian woman loses her nationality by marrying a Muslim. Note that the verb “poturčiti [to make into a Turk]” conflates religious and national conversion:
They made a Turkish girl out of Ann the Magyar maid, And wed her to the Bey as well.46

Kollár was also familiar with Slavic literature from the Balkans, and may have been influenced by its themes. His poetry unsurprisingly treated Turkish marriage as a fate worse than death, at least for a Slovak girl. The titular heroine of his poem “Katarína” (not to be confused with Shevchenko’s “Kateryna”), after being abducted by the Turks, curses her beautiful hair and drowns herself in the Danube.47

Theoretically, a Serbian man might also convert to Islam to marry a Turkish woman, but in the poem “Ženidba Stojana Jankovića [The Marriage of Stojan Janković],” the Serbian hero proudly refuses to consider this possibility, despite the temptations of a rich dowry and Hajkuna, a beautiful Muslim bride:

„A ne luduj, Hajkuna đevojko! “Don’t be foolish, Hajkuna!
Boga mi se ne bih poturio My God is my witness, I will not become a Turk.
Da mi dadu Liku i Udbinju. “ Even if I were given [Croatian regions] Lika and Udbinja.”

This text leaves ambiguous whether Janković’s fidelities lie with his religion or his nation, but the two concepts were most likely conflated. In the end, Janković baptizes Hajkuna, thus converting his bride to Serbian nationality as well as Orthodoxy.

The patriotic man described in Balkan folk songs differs considerably from Mühlsteinová’s Czech professor, and this difference reflects different ideas of the nation. Balkan folk songs equated religion with nationality and glorify military masculinity. Mühlsteinová, by contrast, emphasized the patriotic man’s education and language: Louise’s seduction and national conversion depended on Koštál’s erudition and refinement. Mühlsteinová ignored confessional questions, and given the overwhelmingly Catholic population of Bohemia, both Koštál and Louise can be safely presumed Catholic. Both erudite professors and Balkan warriors, however, possess the ability to nationalize a foreign bride. Cross-national relationships thus endanger the nationality of female patriots, but constitute an opportunity for sexually attractive patriot men.

Hungarian patriots also claimed the ability to convert foreign brides, but public debate about the relative virtues of erudite and military masculinity complicated their claims to sexual attractiveness.48 Hoping to ensure that his countrymen would be able to take advantage of every opportunity, István Széchenyi, popularly remembered and ubiquitously described as “the greatest Hungarian,”49 sought to boost Hungarian social skills. The sexual attractiveness of national men was important to the Hungarian national cause, because it alone ensured patriotic women:

If we wish our ladies to become Hungarianized, then let us make what is Hungarian acceptable, pleasing. [. . . ] We cannot expect that our beauties would love to be in the company of a patriot, who, I daresay, would visit in greasy boots and fill up the house with pipe fumes.50

Széchenyi took little interest in spontaneous female patriotism: “Let us not accuse our women,” he wrote, “because the fault is ours. Let our nationality and our
Hungarian-ness stand in so beautiful a light that the chaste virgin, though blushing before the entire world, [would] share her life with ours.\textsuperscript{51} While Kollár wanted Slovak women to feel patriotic before selecting sexual partners, Széchenyi apparently felt that only a patriotic man would cause a woman to feel patriotism.

Széchenyi’s disinterest in female patriotism is striking, given that he himself married an explicit female Hungarian patriot. The Moravian-born Crescente Seilern married Károly Zichy, a Hungarian nobleman patriot, in 1819, a time when the predominant Hungarian national concept, known to Hungarian scholars as the \textit{natio hungaria}, equated membership in the Hungarian nobility with membership in the Hungarian nation. Seilern’s marriage thus legally transformed her into a Hungarian noblewoman, and thus into a “Hungarian.” Seilern subsequently developed a sincere Hungarian patriotism, which in turn led her to develop a relationship with Széchenyi: she sympathized with his reform efforts and recognized his extraordinary talents. The two eventually married in 1836, after Zichy’s death.

At least one other Hungarian nobleman succeeded in nationalizing a German bride. Therese Pulzsky, wife of liberal politician Ferenc Pulzsky, admitted in her memoirs that she had taken no interest in Hungarian affairs before meeting her husband in Vienna, but described her memoirs as those of “a Hungarian lady.”\textsuperscript{52} In this context, the title “Lady” is no mere honorific, but denotes her aristocratic status, and thus membership in the \textit{natio hungaria}.

Indeed, Hungarian noblemen had so much success nationalizing their foreign brides that they attempted to contract strategic foreign marriages. In 1857, for example, Széchenyi sent his son Béla to the United Kingdom, instructing him to “find an English girl of 12 or 14 of a wealthy aristocratic family, whom he could marry eventually.” The elder Széchenyi was a passionate Anglophile who had visited England several times, and many of his celebrated reforms had been inspired by English example. He may also have considered by the example of John Paget, author of an important book on Hungary, whose love for Hungary stemmed partly from his Hungarian bride, Polixena Wesselényi.\textsuperscript{53} Béla unfortunately fell in love with Anne Stafford, an unhappily married mother of four whose husband was indifferent to her infidelity.\textsuperscript{54} Stafford may have been an unsuitable bride for a young Hungarian nobleman destined for national greatness, but it was not her foreignness that disqualified her in the elder Széchenyi’s eyes, but her previous marriage and four children. Széchenyi had, after all, sought an English daughter in law “by calculation,” believing that “an English alliance”\textsuperscript{55} would best serve the Hungarian cause.

Hungarian men also tried to use sexual attractiveness as a means of persuasion. During the Revolution of 1848, patriotic men wanted women to donate clothing, care for wounded soldiers, and perform other feminine tasks. In April 1848, 4,000 Hungarian men hoped to harness Hungarian women for the national cause with an ingenious scheme that the \textit{Wiener Abendzeitung} described as a “Hungarian curiosity.”

In Pest, 4,000 young candidates for marriage have united in a national plot against—the ladies. They had three books made in Hungary’s national colors: green, silver, and red [the colors of the Hungarian flag]. In the last, the write the
names of every lady who failed to sacrifice for the Fatherland in the moment of
danger, and who could amuse themselves when the territory of their homeland is
in danger. The silver book contains the names of those daughters who prove their
attachment to the cause of freedom and their readiness to sacrifice for the fame
and glory of the fatherland with their words, actions, and feelings. In the green
book, the men write their own names when they oblige themselves with a sacred
oath not to make acquaintance of any lady entered into the red book, nor dance
with her at a ball, nor look at her in the theater (!), to start any liaison with her, or
to take her to the altar. None who do not love the fatherland should know love!  

Though this article appeared at a time when the liberal Viennese press ex-
pressed sympathy for the Hungarian cause, the Weiner Abendzeitung’s correspon-
dent could not contain his amusement, writing that his Hungarian “brothers”
had turned patriotism into coquetry. Toward the end of the First World War,
however, Austro-German patriots founded a similar league in Innsbruck, which
took as its goal “to beat publicly those dishonorable girls who had entered into
relations with prisoners of war.”  

Several patriots, then, believed that men could use their sexual attractive-
ness to further national ends. Patriotic women, however, could still serve the
nation by helping their husbands to be better patriots. Seilern described her pa-
triotic ambitions to Széchenyi as follows: “Our country must rise through you.
I will help you in this endeavour, I want to gain distinction myself in serving
our beloved Hungary.”  

Love for a patriotic women could also prevent male
denationalization. The Slavic protagonist of Ivan Danylovych-Korytnians’kyi’s
1867 satirical play Semeinoe prazdenstvo (“The Family Celebration”) is on the
brink of Magyarization, but the love of a patriotic woman pulls him back to his
Slavic loyalties. Magda, the tragic heroine of Henryk Sienkiewicz’s 1882 short
story Bartek Zwycie ˛zca (“Bartek the Conquerer”), berates her Germanized hus-
band Bartek for his lack of patriotism and piety: “He’s forgotten God and he’s
forgotten Polish [ . . . ] People, people, he’s not a Catholic, not a man anymore.
He’s a cursed German—he jabbers in German and laughs at human suffering.”
Bartek is ultimately a cautionary figure: he refuses to listen to his sensible wife,
loses his property and ends a pauper. For Korytnians’kyi and Sienkiewicz, female
patriots serve the nation by being good spouses.

Accepting their assigned role as sexual partners for patriotic men, several pa-
triotic women expressed their patriotism by proclaiming their sexual endogamy.
Consider the 1843 poem “Hlas Nitranky [The Voice of a Nitra Woman],” which
Norma Rudinsky claims was written by a Slovak woman:

\begin{verbatim}
Šwarni jsau mladenci
Ča Slávu miluji
A tito wlastenci
Lášku zasluhují.
\end{verbatim}

Handsome are the young men
Who love Sláva
And these patriots
Deserve love.

A similar poem by Ľudmila K. encouraged Slovak women “to love only men
who stand by their nation.” In 1869, Mária Praisinger urged Slovak women to
“become the noble-minded young brides of the nation!” While Mühlstineová
made Koštál reluctant to court a German woman, Slovak poets only had eyes
for Slovak men, much as Kollár would have wanted. Indeed, “Hlas Nitranky”
even tried to link male patriotism with sexual desirability.
Hungarian patriotic nobleman Miklós Wesselényi, a close friend of Széchenyi and cousin of Paget’s bride Polixena, recommended patriotism as a beauty aid for Hungarian women.

Oh women of my fatherland, take this to heart! Believe me, nothing can make up the face more attractively than the enthusiastic expression of zeal for the fatherland and nationality, and nothing can inspire as this, radiating out of the eyes, or gushing out from the lips.\textsuperscript{64}

Wesselényi wrote this passage with patriotic goals, but only seemed able to imagine the national women in sexual terms, complete with radiant eyes and gushing lips. Wesselényi’s own marriage, furthermore, contradicted his claims: when he was almost fifty years old, he married Anna Lux, a sixteen year old weaver’s daughter from Austrian Silesia whom he had met while taking the cure in Lázeně Jeseník. While this exogamous marriage did not harm his reputation as a Hungarian patriot,\textsuperscript{65} it raises questions about the repeated discrepancy between central European proclamations of national endogamy and exogamous national marriages.

Despite the ubiquitous rhetoric about national endogamy, surprisingly few Central European patriots actually married a woman from their own nation. Kollár, Pulszky, Wesselényi, and Széchenyi married German-speaking women born outside the Kingdom of Hungary. Wesselényi’s cousin, furthermore, married an Englishman.\textsuperscript{66} This list of exogamous marriages could easily be lengthened. Croatian politician Stjepan Radić married a Czech schoolteacher whom he met as a student in Prague; Marija Radić (née Dvořaková) incidentally assisted her husband’s national work, even enduring a brief imprisonment.\textsuperscript{67} Rusyn leader Adolf Dobriansky married a Slovak woman.\textsuperscript{68} Tomaš Garrigue Masaryk, Czech philosopher and political leader, took his middle name from his American wife Charlotte Garrigue. While Croatian author Antun Matoš married a fellow Croat (and childhood schoolmate), he only settled down to married life after contracting a “Franco-Croatian alliance”\textsuperscript{69} with a woman he met on a Geneva park bench and having an affair with a Belgrade chambermaid. Eugene Pantzer further claims that Matoš only broke off a romantic liaison with a Bavarian governess only because he lacked the money to buy her coffee.\textsuperscript{70}

Several other patriots remained bachelors. Shevchenko’s attempts at courtship were presumably hindered by penal exile, but Hungarian politician Ferenc Deák, the “wise man of Hungary,” remained single by choice, as did Slovak patriot Ľudovít Štúr. France Prešeren, Slovenia’s national poet, never married, and was furthermore intimate with several non-Slovene women over the course of his life. Henry Cooper, furthermore, claims that his most serious relationship was his 1829–32 liaison with the German Maria Khluin from Graz: “never again […] was Prešeren to be so close to marrying.”\textsuperscript{71}

Still other patriots were themselves the product of a cross-national marriage. Ljudevit Gaj, a disciple of Kollár, language codifier and Croatian patriot, descended from a Slovak and a German who spoke German with each other.\textsuperscript{72} Gaj’s interest in Croatian culture came neither from his German-speaking parents, nor from his Latin schooling supplemented by a semester of Hungarian, but from the family priest.\textsuperscript{73} Sándor Petőfi, famously, descended from a Slovak
family.74 Masaryk was half Slovak and half Czech, which made him the physical embodiment of Czechoslovak unity without damaging his Czech credentials.

Despite the popularity of cross-national marriage, Serbian philologist, dictionary-writer and language reformer Vuk Karadžić may be the only Central European to explicitly reject national endogamy as a value. Karadžić himself had married an Austrian German: while studying in Vienna in 1816, he fell in love with Anna Kraus, the daughter of his Catholic landlord, and his nurse during an illness. Kraus’s parents disapproved of the marriage, and withheld their consent until advanced pregnancy threatened them with illegitimate grandchildren: the couple wed only one month before the birth of their first child.75 The free-thinking Karadžić was open-minded not only about marrying a German woman, but about the nationality of his favorite daughter’s husband. Mina Karadžić’s first suitor was Flor Ognev, a Russian physician. Vuk approved of the marriage, but Anna (née Kraus), whom Duncan Wilson described as “a devout and narrow-minded Catholic,” objected both to an Orthodox son-in-law and Ognev’s slightly humped back.76 She convinced Vuk to make unreasonable demands: the Ognev family was to provide Mina with a flat, carriage, coachman, cook, housemaid and two teachers. The engagement was broken off in June 1848 and Mina eventually married a Serbian teacher.

Vuk had also entertained hopes that a Croatian publicist, Imbro Tkalac, would become his son-in-law. Tkalac reported in his memoirs that after his marriage to a German woman, Karadžić reproached him: “It’s odd. I’d always thought that you’d ask for Mina’s hand.” Tkalac awkwardly responded that he viewed Mina “as a sister,” and doubted that she had romantic feelings for him. This did not console Karadžić, so Tkalac made the following argument:

“Vuk, it seems that we Panslavists are fated to marry Germans. Look at you, Šafařík, Kollár, Palacky, all with German wives! Is it any wonder that I followed your example?” Vuk smiled and said “You’re absolutely right! Yes, Mein Gott, when you fall in love, you don’t ask what is the girl’s nationality. We’re all like that in our youth.”77

Széchenyi desired a cross-national match for his son from conscious national motives: he sought to create political ties between the Hungarian and British elites. Karadžić, by contrast, rejected nationalized sexuality as a romantic: the heart has its reasons.

While love-struck patriots were willing to cross national lines, romance occurs in a social environment, and women faced public censure for cross-national sexuality. Adam Müller-Guttenbrunn, an ethnic German from southern Hungary, nationalized the Romeo-and-Juliet theme of forbidden love in his novel Die Magárin [The Hungarian Woman]. The story takes place in Hungary just after Habsburg soldiers have crushed the Revolution of 1848 and occupied the country. The heroine, Julcsi, is “the most proud Hungarian woman [Magárin] that can be imagined, her love for her people almost bordered on fanaticism.” As an expression of this patriotism, “she wore a thin iron band, a Honi-ring (a fatherland ring). This ring was a sign, recognizable to every Hungarian, that she had vowed to give her hand only to a Hungarian.” Julcsi began adopted this habit at school, where her entire class wore Honi-rings. Julcsi, in short, begins the story a sexually-endogamous female patriot.
Inevitably, Julcsi falls in love with an Austrian Lieutenant billeted in her house, one Ferdinand Waller. At a crucial moment, she betrays her family and the Hungarian national cause to save Ferdinand, but she still rejects Ferdinand’s amorous advances: “Never! I have sworn it. This ring tells you that.” When Ferdinand accuses her of not loving him, she responds:

“You horrible man, I don’t love you! What then drove me here to you, what then made me forget everything, parents, friends, fatherland? What more do want?”

“You ring. How can you wear it now, after you have kissed a German man”

With bowed head, she stretched out her hand, he took the band from her finger and threw it into the distance. He covered the hand with stormy kisses.

Hungarian patriots eventually kill Ferdinand; and when Julcsi confesses all to her family, she is promptly disowned and commits suicide. Another Austrian officer, however, insists that Julcsi and Ferdinand be buried together in a single grave: the nationally exogamous lovers are united in death. This story, published in 1896, could be read as a German interpretation of the Austro-Hungarian Ausgleich: a German officer seduces beautiful, proud, feminized Hungary.

Patriotic attitudes toward national sexuality are thus more complex than the self-glorification one might expect. National endogamy enjoyed universal respectability, but male national exogamy could be excused under a variety of circumstances. A double standard gave men greater freedom to be exogamous: exogamous marriage denationalized women, but men could swell the nation’s ranks by converting foreign brides. Furthermore, a patriot who married a woman from an admired nation might create valuable national/sexual alliances. Széchenyi made this desire explicit, perhaps reflecting aristocratic familiarity with strategic marriages.

This double standard remains surprisingly stable across many different national concepts. Zichy and Pulszky bestowed Hungarian nationality their German brides thanks to their social privilege as aristocrats. Stojan Janković took his Muslim bride to church and converted her to Serbian Orthodoxy. Koštál gave Louise N. language lessons three times a week and thus won an elegant lady of German society to the Czech cause. Kollár symbolically transformed Schmidt into a Slavic goddess with his poetic gifts. In each case, however, the woman’s nationality changed and the man’s nationality remained the same.

All these cases, however, concern “ethnic nationalism”: sexual relations with members of a different “civic nation” were unproblematic if they were ethnically endogamous. Iorga from Romania could marry a Romanian from the Habsburg Empire, and Poles from Germany could marry Poles from Austria. Ethnic endogamy, in short, trumped civic exogamy. This confirms Yuval-Davis’s claim that “those who are preoccupied with the ‘purity’ of the race would also be preoccupied with the sexual relationships between members of different collectives.”

Patriots discussing national sexuality proved surprisingly willing to accept female sexual desire. The nineteenth-century cult of female chastity is conspicuous by its absence in these sources: Kollár nationalized the kiss, Wesselényi provided a patriotic guide to cosmetics, and Shevchenko encouraged women to fall in love. Sexual patriots not only tolerated female sexuality, they celebrated it—provided that women were nationally endogamous. Some evidence even suggests that the national women could retain her national credentials.
after having sexual experiences with non-national men, provided those experiences were sufficiently unpleasant: the female narrator of Kollár’s “Národnost v lášce” recounts negative sexual encounters with both German and Hungarian men.

Carol Pateman’s theory provides an explanation for this unexpected celebration of female sexuality: women claimed membership in the nation by entering into a romantic relationship with a male member of the “national brotherhood.” The point was made explicit not only in Seilern’s letter to Széchenyi, but by the female Slovak poets who proclaimed their romantic attraction to patriotic men. The nation, however imagined, was a brotherhood of men, and male nationality was inalienable. Women, on the other hand, would gain or lose their nationality through sexual choices.

The nationalization of Central European sexuality reflects the gender asymmetry of nationalist ideology, but also that sexuality was an integral and constitutive part of nations defined on “ethnic” grounds. “Civic” nations, as Pateman showed, could and often did attempt to exclude women entirely, because they frequently denied citizenship to many of their members.81 An ethnic nation could not exist without women, yet women only belonged to the nation insofar as they had a sexual relationship with a male patriot.

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ENDNOTES


NATIONAL ENDOGAMY AND DOUBLE STANDARDS


5. The most famous nineteenth century text to draw this distinction is the nationalities law of 1868, law XLIV, reproduced in Gábor Kemény, Iratok a nemzetiségi kérdés történetéhez Magyarországon a dualizmus korában, vol. 1, (Budapest, 1952), 49–52, but János Varga’s history dates a class-inclusive Hungarian “political nation” to Gusztáv Szontágh’s Propylaemok a társasági philosophiához, tekintettel hazánk helyzetit (Introduction to Social Philosophy, with Special Reference to Conditions in Hungary), published in 1843; see János Varga, A Hungarian Quo Vadis: Political Trends and Theories of the Early 1840s, trans. Éva Pálmai (Budapest, 1993). Note that the nineteenth-century “political nation” should be distinguished from the eighteenth-century concept of the natio Hungarica, which was restricted to the nobility. See Peter Sugar, “The More It Changes, the More Hungarian Nationalism Remains the Same,” Austrian History Yearbook 31 (2000): 130; Moritz Csáky, “‘Hungarus’ or ‘Magyar,’ Zwei Varianten des ungarischen Nationalbewußtseins zu Beginn des 19. Jahrhunderts. Annales: Sectio Historica, 22 (1982): 71–84. For a treatment that extends to the twentieth century, see George Barany, “Hungary: From Aristocratic to Proletarian Nationalism,” in: Nationalism in Eastern Europe, ed. Peter Sugar and Ivo Lederer (Seattle, 1969), 99–120.


7. Zmertych, a Slovak politician, for example, distinguished between “linguistic nationality” and “political nationality,” while Samuel Hojč attempted to differentiate the diplomatic nation, homeland, uncapitalized národ and the capitalized Národ. See Karl von Zmertych, Rhapsodien über die Nationalität (Skalice, 1872), 7; Samuel Hojč, Apologie des ungrischen Slawismus (Leipzig, 1843), 17–23.

8. While Hungarians used the term “political nation” to justify Magyarization, Hungarian non-Magyars used the same term to resist assimilationist policies and defend the collective rights of their linguistic group. Compare the Hungarian Nationalities law of 1868, Gábor Kemény, Iratok a nemzetiségi kérdés történetéhez Magyarországon a dualizmus korában, vol. 1 (Budapest, 1952), 49–52; with a Slovak counter-proposal Viliam Pauliny-Toth, ’Návrh zákona o urovnoprávnení národností,’ (23 October, 1870), printed in Ján Beňko, Dokumenty slovenskej národnej identity a štátnosti, (Bratislava, 1998), 1:367–68. Also consider the contrast between Alexander Pusztay, Die Ungarn in ihrem Staats- und Nationalwesen von 889 bis 1842 (Leipzig, 1843), 1:12 and Daniel Lichard, Rozhovor o Memorandum národa slovenského (Buda, 1861), 8.


16. The narrator of the poem travels from the countryside to the capital, encountering a variety of people. At each encounter, the narrator ruminates on the problems Hungary faces, usually advocating a return to traditional values as a solution. The quotation is an idealized description of past Hungarian women, and thus also depicts an ideal for contemporary Hungarian women to emulate. Józef Gvadány, "Egy Falusi nótárius budai utazása [The Village Notary's Journey to Buda]" English translation as Document 20, Margaret Ives, Enlightenment and National Revival: Patterns of Interplay and Paradox in Late 18th Century Hungary (Ann Arbor, MI, 1979), 168–175. The quotation is from page 171.


23. This poem appears in John Bowring's 1830 collection of Hungarian folk songs in English translation, and the English translation given here also dates from 1830. Bowring, an English linguist, found the literal translation of this poem's title unsatisfactory, and presented it as “The Magyar Maid.” See Poetry of the Magyars (London, 1830), 296. The Hungarian text can be found at Sulinet, a Hungarian educational site. To make the layout of the two texts match, I have taken the liberty of deleting the nonsense word “tyuhaha” from the end of Sulinet's third line, and removed Bowring's indentations. WWW document, URL <http://www.sulinet.hu/tart/ncikk/md/0/15246/csakazert.html>, accessed 30 September 2005.


31. Very few songs in the *Národnié zpiewanky* were attributed, and “Národnost w lásce” was not one of them. However, Kollár, an accomplished and prolific poet, contributed several songs, and the assumption that he wrote this unusually polemical song is not unreasonable. “Národnost w lásce.” Jan Kollár, ed., *Národnié zpiewanky ili pjesni svetské Slovákow w Útriech* (Buda, 1835), 2:138.


35. If transforming a German-speaker into the daughter of Sláva seems bold, consider that Kollár also claimed Latin as a Slavic dialect. Peter Black, *Kollár and Štúr, Romantic and Post-Romantic Visions of a Slavic Future* (New York, 1975), 6.


37. Slovak feminists might prefer me to render the word *Slovenka* as “Slovak woman,” but I felt that “Slovak girl” better reflected the attitude of the original text. “Maďari a Slovenka,” in: Jan Kollár, ed. *Národnié zpiewanky*, 2: 137.

38. Schmidt did indeed develop some sympathy with the Slavic cause, as shown in a letter of 10 October, 1869: “I sometimes feel angry at the Germans, who always want to rise higher and think it’s possible to erase a nation with the stroke of the pen. If only Nemesis would pay them back, and while I’m still alive to see it.” Cited from Rudinsky, *Incipient Feminists*, 23.

39. Despite Mühlsteinová’s German surname and knowledge of German, she belonged to a salon of women who “identified with Czech nationalism” to the point that in 1864, when a German lady identified only “Fräulein X” sought to visit the salon, Mühlsteinová felt the need to declare “I am not afraid of her.” Wilma Iggers, *Frauenleben in Prag: Ethnische Vielfalt und kultureller Wandel seit dem 18. Jahrhundert* (Vienna, 2000), 18.


Anti-Muslim sentiment led some western observers to a partisan stance on Islamic conversions in the Balkans. During the First World War, when British anti-Muslim feeling was presumably at its peak, one English author wrote that “though one seldom hears of a Christian man who has embraced Islam for the sake of Muslim love, it has been by no means a rare occurrence that a Christian peasant girl, prompted by vanity of ambition, has renounced the faith of her fathers in order that she might marry a Turk who has flattered her by his attentions.” Lucy M.J. Garnett, Balkan Home-Life (New York, 1917), 96.


In 1843, for example, Miklós Wesselényi suggested that Hungarian masculinity exchanged military virtues for education in a discussion of aristocratic privilege: “Who in previous times chopped off Turkish heads with a sinewy hand, who distinguished himself through courage, was ennobled, i.e. brought into the number of those, who could exercise privileges.—That was useful back then, because the Fatherland needed sinewy arms and courage. Now, we are most in need of understanding heads and intelligence.” See Miklós Wesselényi. Eine Stimme über die ungarische und slawische Nationalität (Leipzig, 1844 [1843]), 203. (Wesselényi’s Hungarian original appeared in 1843; this quotation was taken from a German edition published the next year.)

Széchenyi received the title “legnágyobb Magyar” from his political rival Lajos Kossuth. In memory of Széchenyi’s diverse accomplishments, historians of Hungary have been repeating it ever since. Kossuth, however, was free with the moniker, and described Miklós Wesselényi with the same words. See George Barany, Stephen Széchenyi and the Awakening of Hungarian Nationalism (Princeton, 1968), 372.

Széchenyi devoted much effort to promoting Hungarian manners, partly for the benefit of Hungarian ladies. In a letter to the countess Hunyadi, he wrote: “I can assure you that I have already caused some of them [to] quit spitting on the rug.” See Barany, Stephen Széchenyi and the Awakening of Hungarian Nationalism, 173.

Therese Pulszky, Aus dem Tagebuche einer ungarischen Dame (Leipzig, 1850).

54. The elder Széchenyi, addressing Stafford as an “adorable daughter of that sublime Great Britain,” asked her to break off the affair, since he hoped his son would “establish himself in the heart of Hungary at Pest, to create a centre there, for that is indeed what we lack.” Letter of 17 November 1858. Cited from Ervin Fenyő, “Another English Connection,” Hungarian Quarterly, vol. 42, no. 163 (Autumn 2001), 65–86.


57. Amazingly, the organization called itself “the cowards’ league.” The quotation is the summary of German sexologist. See Magnus Hirschfeld, The Sexual History of the World War (New York, 1937), 48.


62. This quotation is Norma Rudinsky’s summary of “Žalost a potčeha Nitranky.” See Incipient Feminists, 49.


64. Wesselényi, Eine Stimme, 158.

65. In 1848, the National Defence Committee of the Hungarian parliament published a list of “traitors” who had left the country in the hour of need. Though Wesselényi left for Silesia at this time, his name was stricken from the list. Wesselényi was almost blind, and was taking a spa cure in Lázně Jeseník because Austrian imprisonment had destroyed his health. See Zoltán Főnagy, “Miklós Wesselényi,” in: András Gerő, ed. Hungarian Liberals (Budapest, 1999), 241.


70. Pantzer, Anton Gustav Matoš, 22, 50–51.

71. Prešeren also preferred to speak German with Ana Jelovšek, who bore him three children, because he did not like her Ljubljana accent. Henry Ronald Cooper, Franc Prešeren (Boston, 1981), 27, 35.

72. Describing Gaj as “Croatian” is actually problematic; he saw himself as an “Illyrian,” a national concept that foreshadowed Yugoslavism. Gaj’s father Ivan/Johann had been born in Slovakia. The family of Gaj’s mother, Julijana Schmidt, were German immigrants; since Gaj’s grandfather was named “Friedrich Wilhelm Schmidt,” Despalotović plausibly suggests that he came from Prussia. See Elinor Despalotović, Ljudevit Gaj and the Illyrian National Movement (Boulder, 1975), 28–29.

73. Despalotović, Ljudevit Gaj, 32.


77. Wilson, The Life and Times of Vuk Stefanović Karadžić, 338.

78. This conversation was recorded in Tkalc’s memoirs, which apparently spelt the names of Czech and Slovak scholars in the Serbian fashion. I harmonized the spelling “Šafarik, Kolar, and Palackí” with the rest of this paper. See Wilson, The Life and Times of Vuk Stefanović Karadžić, 338.


80. Yuval-Davis, Gender and Nation, 27.