In this essay I examine the conceptual foundations of history seminars in Austria as they were developed by the Czech historian Wáclaw Wladiwoj Tomek at the beginning of the 1850s at the behest of the Viennese Ministry for Culture and Education. These conceptual premises were developed before the foundation of the Austrian Institute of Historical Research, so I discuss the indirect influence of Tomek's ideas on the Institute when it was founded. I also touch on interconnections between politics and educational and university reform, the concept of a supra-national Austrian patriotism, and the situation within the Monarchy after 1849. I consider in particular the link between Tomek's political loyalty to the Austrian state and his attachment to the Czech national movement, as well as the Czech and Bohemian political backdrop. From Tomek's perspective and the perspective of the Ministry, this link seemed to involve an ambivalent tension between federalism and centralism. I examine Tomek's engagement with the issue of instruction in history in the Austrian grammar schools and his “synchronic” method against this backdrop.

Keywords: historiography, nationalism, patriotism, politics of history

As has often been noted, the reforms of the Austrian educational system in the 1850s had a decisive influence on the further development of fields of study at the universities. The reforms ushered in a new understanding of university studies and the functions of universities in the Habsburg Monarchy. One could even go so far as to contend that the universities in Austria adopted or sought to adopt the much-touted Humboldtian model, i.e. the notion of a holistic unity.
between research and teaching. One important aspect of the reforms involved a fundamental insistence on the methodologically consistent, scientific nature on scholarly inquiry on three levels: the scientific foundation of instruction, the establishment of the universities as research institutions, and the reorientation of the fields of study not simply as forums for the training of jurists, theologians, physicians, and schoolteachers, but also as institutions entrusted with the task of educating scientists, who would pursue research in their given fields of inquiry. This unmistakable push in the direction of the modernization of the universities in Austria, which clearly entailed a restructuring of the courses of study and the functions of the schools, was accompanied by new forms of institutionalization. The study of history was by no means spared by these trends. On the contrary, with its growing importance and its increasing relevance in the Historicist era, not to mention its potentials as an implement in the toolbox of Austrian history politics (or “Geschichtspolitik,” which is sometimes translated as politics of memory), which was focused on nurturing state and dynastic patriotism, the study of history almost “naturally” was the subject of considerable attention, especially since the aforementioned reforms in the Habsburg Monarchy during the period of neo-absolutism clearly had implications for identity politics and were intended to further the emergence of a supra-ethnic “Austrian” nation. In connection with the conceptions of positivist methods of source criticism and interpretation and strivings to standardize these methods, and also with consideration of the development of the subject itself (the study of history) in


France and Prussia, it was clear that the individual university chairs, which had been independent of one another, needed to be brought together into a single institutional framework.

At first, the section of philosophy and history founded at the Imperial Academy of Sciences in Vienna in 1847 seemed to be heading in the right direction towards a scientific institutionalization of the study of history, or at least an institutionalization oriented in part around research, but this institution did not serve as a forum where future researchers could be trained, and it was not able to achieve the sought-after coupling of research and instruction. The Academy furthered one of the goals of Habsburg identity politics in that it built on conceptual considerations of Austrian history as a supranational history of the Habsburg lands (one might think in particular of historian and archivist Josef Chmel), ideas which soon found a spokesman in historian Wácslaw Wladiwoj Tomek. The museums, which had begun to pop up in the first half of the nineteenth century—on the territory what became known as Cisleithania after 1867, one may name the museum in Graz (1811), Opava (1814), Brno (1817), and Prague (1818)—offered only a very limited alternative. They were, rather, potential destinations for the people who had completed their university studies in the subjects which were increasingly focused on scientific methods. They were also focused, both territorially and from the perspective of their scholarship, on their own immediate, local context (meaning the communities in which they were found), and they were not state institutions, but rather usually institutions of the region or country in which they were found. Initially, they were under the oversight of the individual Estates and the management of a board recruited out of them or by them. Thus, the museums made the decisions concerning their orientation, points of emphasis, and programs, which in the neo-absolutist period was more likely to awaken suspicion of government. In this context, they


offered a complementary and even potentially competing alternative to state identity politics because they focused on the traditions and conditions of the countries or lands in which they were found. The Bohemian Museum in Prague, with the establishment of Matice Česká (1841), and the Galician Ossolineum in Viennese (1817) and later in Lwów/Lemberg (1827) began to make the promotion, either directly or indirectly, of, respectively, Czech and Polish national identity an increasingly important part of their missions. In particular in Prague, with the development of the museum boards and the aforementioned Matice Česká, the foundations were laid for a new institutionalization—which would constitute an alternative to the universities—of the study of history, as well as, sooner or later, the study of language and literature, the natural sciences, archeology, and art history. By the 1850s, the contours and trajectory of this process were already relatively clear.

However, the state politics of scholarship, education, history, and identity (which were intricately intertwined with one another) focused on the foundation of institutionalized forms in the study of history that were oriented around Austrian history politics and addressed the calls for research-oriented qualifications. In the neo-absolutist era, these inclinations and endeavors were pursued by the Vienna Ministry of Culture and Education, which was under the direction of Count Leo von Thun-Hohenstein. Against the backdrop of Austria’s experiences of revolution and discord, these efforts were in part an attempt to craft a historical foundation for an inclusive (supra-national) understanding of the Austrian fatherland and nation. These foundations consisted of the establishment of professorships of Austrian history, attempts to introduce history seminars at the universities, and, as of 1854, the foundation of the Institute for Austrian Historiography (Institut für österreichische Geschichtswissenschaft), as well as the systematic rethinking of instruction in history in the grammar schools and other education institutions.

In the implementation of these steps, the various tendencies on various levels (university and educational reforms, history politics, state and national identity) typically spilled over into the spheres of various actors in politics and

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One of the prominent figures in this process, who has remained on the margins of the scholarship on the subject, was a historian whom Thun sought out personally and entrusted with important tasks: as a scholar who held a new chair for the study of the history of the Monarchy, the young professor Wacław Władysław Tomek (1818–1905) was supposed to promote and exert a decisive influence on the transformation of the study of history into a rigorously methodical science and the reform of instruction in history. He was supposed to serve as an expert who would devise an effective way to introduce historical seminars as institutionalized forms of scientific inquiry at the universities and prepare future generations of scholars with a firm grounding in the scientific nature of their subjects of study. As the author of textbooks on Austrian history, he was a direct participant in the new, systematic history and identity politics. In the 1850s, Tomek also seemed politically suitable for these tasks. However, he was also active as an open representative of the Czech national movement, and he exerted a formative influence on the emerging national study of history and was an important actor in the national institutionalization of historiography and other subjects of study through the Bohemian Museum and Matice Česká. In this sense, the following inquiry offers an important new and broader perspective that complements the existing scholarship: examines the career of a figure who represented both the tendencies and aspirations towards decentralization and Vienna’s efforts towards centralization. He stood on the threshold between a supra-ethnic, “Austrian” patriotism, a regional patriotism, and the blossoming Czech national movement. Even from a later perspective, he seems as if he were predestined to be “Thun’s man.”

Tomek had a number of political, biographical, and professional qualifications that made him ideally suited to play a role in the much sought-after introduction and institutionalization of history as an independent subject of study in the

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11 See also Lentze, *Die Universitätsreform*, 250.
12 In the 1990s, Zdeněk Šimeček examined the role Tomek played in the introduction of the history seminars in Austria, with many references to the ties between his activities and the creation of the Austrian Institute of Historical Research. Šimeček also made references to the role of the familiar links between Tomek and Vienna (for instance in the person of Helfert) in this context, though he focused on analyses of the historical seminar exercises that Tomek offered in 1852–1854 at the university in Prague. See Zdeněk Šimeček, “Seminární cvičení k českým dějinám V. V. Tomka v letech 1852–1854”, in *K poctě Jaroslava Marka: sbornik prací k 70. narozeninám prof. dr. Jaroslava Marka*, ed. Lubomír Slezák and Radomír Vlček (Prague: Historický ústav Akademie věd České republiky 1996), 49–72. In contrast with Šimeček, I focus more on the interconnections among university and educational reforms, the identity politics and history politics of the state (and the Ministry of Culture and Education), the political situation in Austria in the neo-absolutist period, the Czech national movement, and Tomek’s and Thun’s political attitudes.
early 1850s. As an utterly typical representative of the Czech Bildungsbürgertum, which constituted itself as a social and also Czech national elite, he had a first-class education in history. He had been a student of František Palacký, a scholar who by then had gained international recognition as a leading authority in the science of history. (Unlike Palacký, Tomek was Catholic, and this was not insignificant.) Under Palacký’s guidance, he had learned the basic methods of critical interpretation of historical sources, and he had proven his ability to make use of them in independently written works of history. Since he was active in the work of the Bohemian Museum and Matice Česká, he had plenty of experience with scholarly institutions. In the 1830s, he began to write texts of his own, and in the 1840s he started to write works of serious scholarship, both articles (first and foremost for Zeitschrift des Böhmischen Museums – Časopis Českého Museum) and books. However, he did not have a permanent position anywhere. In 1850, at 32 years of age, Tomek was a mature and experienced scholar, but also young enough to seem full of potential. In his publications, for instance in his 1845 attempt to present a narrative of the history of the Habsburg Monarchy as a historically formed unity, he offered the first history of the Habsburg Monarchy to be published in Czech. It was issued as part of the series of the Bohemian Museum entitled Small Encyclopedia of the Sciences (Malá encyklopedie nauk), which was inspired by the ideal of popular education. Tomek’s history, however, lacked a clear methodology and conception of Austrian history, and it is not at all clear whether or not or to what extent the work was indebted to earlier (J. F. Schneller) or contemporary (J. Chmel) efforts to write a history of the Monarchy as a whole. But it went in a similar direction, which in the 1850s seemed desirable to the government because it contributed (or was seen as contributing) to the

13 For an almost exhaustive survey of Tomek’s publications, arranged chronologically, see Václav Novotný, “Bibliografický přehled literární činnosti V. V. Tomka,” in V. V. Tomek (1818–1918): Na památku jeho stých narozenin (Prague: Historický Spolek, 1918), 49–71.

14 Although towards the end of his life Tomek completed work on a two-volume memoir (Wáclaw Wladowoj Tomek, Pamětí z mého žiwota, 2 vols. (Prague: F. Řivnáča, 1904–1905) and many texts were published on his career and life (in particular at the beginning of the twentieth century), as of yet no modern, comprehensive biography on this important figure of educational reform has been written. Various aspects of his activities as a scholar and politician are analyzed in the published proceedings of a conference that was held in Hradec Králové (Tomek’s birthplace) in 2005 on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of his death. Miloš Řezník, ed., W. W. Tomek, historie a politika (1818–1905) (Pardubice: Univerzita Pardubice, 2006).

15 W. Wladowoj Tomek, Děje mocnářství Rakouského (Prague: Calve, 1845).
formation of an Austrian patriotism that transcended sentiments of territorial or national loyalty.\textsuperscript{16}

In 1845, he emphasized the need for a perspective on the history of the Habsburg Empire since the sixteenth century that included all of its regions and provinces. This was in his eyes “a subject necessary for every Czech person for a full understanding of his fatherland, the history of which has been fused ever since then with the history of the entire family of different peoples into a whole.”\textsuperscript{17} Vienna in the 1850s could hardly have hoped for a better project than this proposed unification of the individual regional and national histories with an overarching “Austrian” history with the aim of fostering a sense of shared identity, especially since this proposal came from someone who was also a spokesman for one of the ethnic (or national) movements. In its emphasis, on the one hand, on individual, regional traditions (including considerations of language, culture, and ethnicity) and, on the other, the cohesion and unity of the state (the Habsburg Monarchy), Tomek’s position corresponded with that of Leo von Thun-Hohenstein, although Tomek was much more conspicuous as a member and representative of one of the national communities. Thun had emerged as a spokesman for this position in the Vormärz period. He was open in his support for the Estates opposition in Bohemia and showed understanding for and active interest in the Czech and Slovak languages and Czech and Slovak literature (Thun spoke fluent Czech).\textsuperscript{18} From the convergence between Bohemian patriots and Czech activists, with Palacký at the vanguard, it was a small step to personal acquaintanceship between Thun and Tomek, and this acquaintanceship grew into trust and friendship. At Palacký’s suggestion, Tomek


\textsuperscript{17} Tomek, Děje mocnářství, Preface (not paginated).

temporarily traveled to the to Tetchen (Děčín), a town in the northern part of Bohemia where Thun family had a residence, to organize the extensive family archives. The two remained in contact until Thun’s death in 1888.

These contacts between the two men grew stronger during the Spring of Nations (the revolutions of 1848), during which Tomek was active in his support of the Czech national liberals under the leadership of Palacký and in his opposition to liberal-democratic radicalization. When Thun came to Prague from Galicia in the spring of 1848 as the new provincial governor, he found allies in Palacký and, in particular, in Tomek. At Palacký’s suggestion, at the beginning of June 1848 he instructed Tomek to edit a new newspaper entitled *Pokrok* (Progress), which was supposed to serve as an organ of the press of the provincial government and counterbalance the influence of the increasingly radical press in the Bohemian capital. Although only a few issues of *Pokrok* were published (the periodical did not survive the June uprising in Prague), Tomek’s firsthand experience of the radical-democratic uprising and its suppression brought him into closer contact and a closer relationship with Thun. Tomek blamed the radical democrats first and foremost for the collapse of the liberal and national hopes in the spring of 1848. In subsequent years and in particular in the first phase of neo-absolutism, he pleaded for a Czech movement that was not political in nature and also for cooperation with the government in order to avert threats to the progress that had been achieved with regards to the Czech language and Czech institutions. As a consequence of this, in the 1850s, he was seen as a conservative who was loyal to the regime, and against this backdrop for almost a decade Palacký’s and Tomek’s (and Thun’s) paths split. Palacký was seen by the political authorities and the police as a politically unreliable person, and he was soon compelled to withdraw from public life, in part because of steps taken by Tomek.19

Thus, from the perspective of the government, Tomek seemed like a welcome alternative to the liberal Palacký. At the same time, he became the main protagonist in Prague of the so-called Government Party, which began to emerge in the early 1850s and consisted of Czech activists around Thun, mostly scholars and prominent figures of cultural life. The center of this party was first

and foremost the Ministry of Culture and Education in Vienna. It is possible that Thun sought to use the emergence of a Czech political party to strengthen his position in the government cabinet and gain legitimacy for his views, which showed an inclination towards decentralization.

Since this development came during Thun’s reform endeavors, one can identify clear interconnections between some fields and areas of politics, such as domestic politics, politics with regards to the status of Bohemia, educational policy, and history and identity politics. Thun’s decision to support and promote Tomek as a figure in public life seems plausible and understandable from the perspective of his understanding of the exigencies of all four areas. He offered Tomek a position as the holder of a new chair to be established in Austrian history at the university in Prague, and Tomek was indeed given this position as associate professor. He then asked Tomek to come up with a plan for the establishment of the seminars in history in Austria. Parallel to his counterpart in Vienna (Albert Jäger, the future founding director of the Austrian Institute of Historical Research, who was appointed to a similar professorship in the capital), he was supposed to work out the introduction of a new form of professional education in history that would be scientific in its methodologies and institutional form.

In order to achieve this aim, Tomek was supposed to travel to the most important institutions in Europe that were promoting the specialized, scientific education of historians, namely the École des Chartes in Paris and some of the universities in Prussia where seminars in history were being held. Tomek made both trips in 1850. After having spent one month in Paris, he attended seminars in Breslau, Berlin, and Göttingen, and he also met with the heads of the programs. It seemed important that it was Tomek’s and not Thun’s idea to travel to Paris and learn more about the school there, although the Ministry had originally assumed he would only travel to Germany and then England, where the institutions

21 Tomek was brought up by the government as a possible candidate for this position for the first time in April 1849, in other words before Thun was given the portfolio, and he was suggested specifically as an alternative to Palacký. Jiří Kořalka, František Palacký (1798–1876) (Prague: Argo, 1998), 325.
23 Joseph Alexander von Helfert to Wacław Władysław Tomek, Vienna, 8 February 1850: “I have told the Minister that you are considering going to Paris; he has given his approval of your idea—as long as you
were familiar both to Thun and his Undersecretary of State, Joseph Alexander Helfert. In the end, however, he did not include England in his travel plans, in spite of the official announcement in the *Österreichische Correspondenz*.\(^{24}\)

Since over the course of his long life Tomek only rarely undertook long trips (his investigative trip to Paris and Prussia in 1850 was the only time he left the Monarchy), his journey to Paris, Breslau, Berlin, and Göttingen was an important station for him, because he was able to meet personally with important representatives of his field and share ideas about the seminars. In Breslau he met with Gustav Stenzel, in Berlin he met with the very influential Leopold von Ranke, Wilhelm Wattenbach, Wilhelm von Giesebrecht and Georg Heinrich Pertz (among others), and in Göttingen with Georg Waitz. He also met Johann Friedrich Böhmer during a break in his travels in Frankfurt am Main.\(^{25}\) These meetings with prominent figures of the field were supposed to give him new ideas and exert a direct or indirect influence on the conceptual foundation and development of the Austrian Institute of Historical Research.\(^{26}\)

While he was traveling, Tomek informed his friend Josef Jireček,\(^{27}\) the concept adjutant in the Ministry, of his first impressions, and Jireček passed his observations on to Thun. Only after having returned to Prague did Tomek compose a special report in August 1850 for the Ministry (in Czech), in which he again summarized his observations and offered a brief account and comparative assessment of the institutions he had visited. He proposed some basic principles do not forget the other universities.” Archive of the National Museum, Prague, Bequest of V. V. Tomek, Carton 5, Inv.-Nr. 254. See also Tomek, *Paměti I*, 336.

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\(^{24}\) Šimeček, “Seminární cvičení,” 51.


\(^{26}\) Lhotsky, *Geschichte*, passim.

\(^{27}\) In the 1850s, Josef Jireček (1821–88), a Czech patriot, literary historian, and liberal-conservative politician was a member of the circle around Thun. As a young student of law in 1848, he worked for the aforementioned periodical *Pokrok*, where he established close ties with Thun and a close friendship with Tomek. In the end, he chose the career at the Ministry. He played a very significant role in the formation of the Czech “Government Party” and ensured communication between the party and Prague, and in particular with Tomek. In 1871, he was appointed Minister of Culture and Education in the cabinet of Hohenwart. Most of the written communication between Tomek and Thun went via Jireček. A critical edition of the correspondence between Tomek and Jireček (some of which was political in nature) unfortunately is oriented around the year 1860: Magdaléna Pokorná et al., eds., *Spolihám’ se dovela na zkoušené přítelství Váše...: Vzájemná korespondence Josefa Jirečka a Václava Vladivoje Tomka z let 1838–1862* (Prague: Academia, 2008). The voluminous correspondence between the two men is found in the Literary Archive of the Museum of Czech Literature (Literární archiv Památníku národního písemnictví), the bequest of Josef Jireček, in the Archive of the National Museum in Prague (Archiv Národního muzea), bequest of W. W. Tomek, and in the Archive of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, Prague, bequest of Hermenegild Jireček.
for the introduction of the seminars in Austria, though he also emphasized that it was not his task to offer a comprehensive proposal for seminars on history in the Monarchy.  

28 He discussed the document again with Helfert and Jireček during a trip to Vienna at the beginning of September 1850 and presented it personally to Minister Thun in the course of a longer conversation.  

Tomek emphasized in this report the institutional and the programmatic and content-related differences between the institutions in Paris and Prussia. The most striking difference was simply the fact that the École des Chartes was a relatively large, formally institutionalized school with many professorships, while in the case of Berlin, Breslau, Göttingen, and Königsberg, where a seminar in history was also offered, the seminars were private initiatives of professors who had only very limited resources. From this point of view, the institution in Paris seemed far more advantageous to Tomek. Even when he took into consideration the fact that, given the high costs, the creation of such an institution in Austria hardly seemed possible, he still warned against limiting the seminars to the Prussian model, given its “private” nature. In a letter to Jireček that he had written two months earlier he noted emphatically and candidly his view according to which “in all of Germany there is nothing that would earn the title of a seminar in history.”  

29 With this contention, Tomek was referring to the fact that the seminars in Germany were merely the product of the personal initiatives of individual professors with no formal structure or standardization. However, the content of the seminars in Germany seemed more practical to him. In contrast with the seminars at the École des Chartes, in Germany the seminars focused not simply on theoretical and methodological questions, but also on the actual processes of research projects. While in France students only began to pursue research after having completed their studies, in Prussia active research was the focus of the seminars. On the basis of these paradigms, Tomek spoke in support of giving a central role to the use of sources and the auxiliary historical sciences. From the perspective of content, the focus should be the Middle Ages and Austrian history. His emphasis on the centrality of Austrian history corresponded with the government’s expectations, expectations that were closely tied to identity politics: in order to present the Habsburg state as an unified whole, the foundation of an understanding of the fatherland meant, from the perspective of the study of history, first emancipating it as the subject of

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29 Ibid., 1:362.  
The emphasis on the importance of the Middle Ages was tied to the inclination—widespread in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries—to adopt methods and approaches that focused on the study of sources.

Tomek used his exposé as part of a direct polemic against another conception of historical seminars that had been proposed and published in the summer of 1850 by Heinrich Wilhelm Grauert, the newly appointed professor at the University of Vienna. Grauert’s proposal may well have been an unpleasant surprise for Tomek, especially since he saw that an institution was being envisioned before he had been able to present his report on his trip to France and Prussia. Grauert, a classical philologist and historian, belonged to the group of professors who had been brought from German-speaking lands outside of the Monarchy following Thun’s takeover of the Ministry in order to establish the universities as scientific institutions oriented around research (among Tomek’s colleagues at the university in Prague, philologist Georg Curtius, who had been brought from Berlin, and professor of history and critic of Palacký Constantin Höfler were among this group). Grauert, who had graduated from the philology seminars in Bonn and had been a student of historian Barthold Georg Niebuhr, brought a distinctive notion of the history seminar from Münster to Vienna, which broke from Tomek’s basic principles on two decisive points. In Grauert’s assessment, the seminars should not be designed to prepare scientists and scholars who would pursue research, but rather they should be structured to prepare grammar school teachers, and the focus should be placed not on history, but rather on classical philology, which should play a central role in the Austrian grammar schools.

With regards to the issue of the seminars, Grauert had been engaged by Hermann Bonitz, who was responsible for the grammar school reforms. Furthermore, his ideas had been published in the Zeitschrift für Oesterreichische Gymnasien, which had been created with the introduction of the reforms. These two facts suggest that there had been a fundamental misunderstanding. Grauert was thinking of instruction at the grammar schools and the training of grammar school teachers at the universities, while Tomek was thinking of research and the

sciences. These two perspectives, however, were by no means entirely separate from each other, since the reorientation around scientific methods of the study of history at the universities and the reform of the schools were two interrelated aspects of the identity politics of the government and its efforts to foster a sense of a supra-ethnic “Greater Austrian” national identity. However, Tomek’s and Grauert’s approaches were irreconcilable, because they worked on different levels and had different concrete goals. Thus, Tomek was unwilling to support Grauert’s vision, in spite of the fact that Thun wished the two men to work together.\(^{34}\) Another cause of misunderstanding between Grauert and Tomek was the fact that Grauert was thinking more of a seminar in classical philology, since this kind of seminar was also one of the goals of the reforms. A seminar in classical philology had been introduced in an institutionalized form (taught by Curtius, who was the founding director) at the university in Prague in 1849, i.e. before Tomek had even been given his assignment to examine the institutions abroad.\(^{35}\) Grauert managed to have his seminar introduced at the University of Vienna, and he taught there until his death in 1852.\(^{36}\)

In the spring of 1850, Jireček had assured that Tomek would be the director of the history seminar and the seminar would not be founded without his counsel.\(^{37}\) However, by the summer of 1850 this reassurance seemed to have little meaning, although before the year’s end Tomek managed to achieve the most important goal, i.e. he was appointed associate professor at the university of Prague. However, no history seminar was introduced, neither the one proposed by Tomek nor any other variant. Thus, in the 1852/53 academic year, Tomek felt compelled to hold this seminar in the form that he earlier had characterized as regrettable, i.e. as private initiatives. He began holding his facultative seminars in Prague at the same time as Constantin Höfler. In contrast to the courses held by Höfler, which were more speculative in nature, Tomek strove to prepare interested students for careers as scholars and to introduce them to the study of history as the study of sources. In his selection of themes and sources, he concentrated on Bohemia in the Middle Ages, thus remaining true to his conviction and tenet


that the Middle Ages and the history of the fatherland should be the focus on study. However, for Tomek the “fatherland” clearly meant Bohemia, while both the government and Thun (as a representative of the government) sought to foster an understanding of the term as referring to the whole Habsburg state.

In accordance with the fundamental principles of his report from the summer of 1850, Tomek oriented his seminars around the examples he had seen in Germany and the programs of the École des Chartes. He wanted the participants in the seminars to submit term papers, which at the time constituted a novelty. However, because of the absence of an institutional framework for the seminars, the declining numbers of students, and the foundation of the Austrian Institute of Historical Research (which also had to struggle with a dearth of seriously interested students), in 1854 Tomek stopped holding his seminars and never attempted to introduce this form of instruction again. Indeed, for the next three decades (he retired in 1888), Tomek kept his distance in his work as a university professor from all forms of seminars and courses with a focus on active student participation and left this (later) to his younger colleagues, though he did devote himself to an introduction to scientific research methods on the individual level with individual students. However, Tomek’s and Höfler’s seminars exerted an influence on some of the students, who later came to play important roles both in the discipline of historical studies and in other areas.

In the end, the Austrian Institute of Historical Research was founded and developed without any direct participation by Tomek, and his contacts with the important circles at the Institute were anything but direct. For this reason, he is rarely mentioned in connection with the Institute. Even so, it is remarkable that his name is mentioned only once in the detailed and voluminous monograph on the history of the Institute by Alphons Lhotsky, and only by chance. However, Tomek’s views and in particular the information he had gathered seem to have had an influence on the form and evolution of the Institute, even if they did not play any decisive role. In the end, the point of conflict between Tomek

39 On the content of the seminar exercises see Šimeček, “Seminární cvičení,” 59–70.
41 Lhotsky, Geschichte, 147. Lhotsky even confuses Tomek with the later scholarship holder and Church historian Ernst Tomek (ibid., 421). Even in Berger Waldenegg’s “Vaterländisches Gefühl,” which focuses on the central perspective of the government, Tomek’s name only comes up once, in a footnote (footnote 213, p. 167).
and Grauert (the question as to whether or not the seminars that had been envisioned should focus on research or on the education and training of the next generation of grammar school teachers) was decided in Tomek’s favor. Surely Thun’s decision to make Albert Jäger, the Professor from Innsbruck, the first director of the school and the Seminar (at the time the institution was referred to as a seminar; it only began to be called an institute in 1856/57) suggested otherwise, since Jäger’s views bore more affinities with Grauert’s ideas and Jäger had won the minister’s notice with his successful reform of the grammar school in the city of Meran in South Tyrol. But all of the other concrete provisions and regulations concerning the task and mission of the Institute suggested an institution that focused purely on the sciences. Thun’s presentation to the Emperor in September 1853 on the temporary formation of a provisional school at the University of Vienna unambiguously identified “the education of young men for deeper research on Austrian history” as its goal and the acquisition of knowledge of the auxiliary historical sciences and training in the methods of historical research and source criticism as two of the main pillars of the program from the perspective of content. Mutatis mutandis it borrowed the phrasing of the Institute statutes of 1853 (a preliminary proposal written by Jäger), 1854, and 1857 (presumably a joint proposal made by Jäger and his successor, Theodor Sickel).42 One finds no mention of any teaching program for grammar school instructors and also no trace of any dominant role of classical philology in the presentation (which again suggests that in 1850 Grauert conceived of seminars in a completely different manner and for a different subject of study, and he only used the unfortunate term “history seminar” for them as a matter of convenience, causing at the very least temporary confusion by doing so). Even the three focal points—the history of the fatherland (Austria), the study of the Middle Ages, and the auxiliary historical sciences—corresponded essentially to Tomek’s suggestions and observations.

The École des Chartes, however, played an important role as a model for the Institute. In its equipment and organization it remained well behind the Parisian institute, but given its foundation as an institution of the state which, in spite of its close ties to the University of Vienna, was directly underneath the Ministry of Culture and Education, it was hardly comparable to the privately held seminars in Prussia. Thus, the character of the new institution in Vienna, which resembled a university, corresponded closely with Tomek’s notions of a history seminar. In

42 All three documents are reproduced in their entirety in Lhotsky, Geschichte, 25–27, 29–33.
its provisional statute from 1853/54 and its curriculum the Institute more or less adopted the structure of the École des Chartes.\textsuperscript{43} This configuration was correlated with the publication entitled \textit{Über Nationalgeschichte und den gegenwärtigen Stand ihrer Pflege in Oesterreich}, which was written in connection with the founding of the new institute. The author, the aforementioned Undersecretary in the Ministry for Culture and Education Joseph Alexander von Helfert, was one of Thun’s close political allies (and like Thun, the owner of a land estate in Bohemia) and one of Tomek’s friends, with whom he had fled Vienna in 1848 because of the upheavals of the revolution. He was active in the Ministry as a central figure in the foundation of the Institute and the creation of professorships. Helfert, who alongside Jireček was the second main contact person between Tomek and Thun and also presumably mediated the special role of Tomek for the Ministry in 1849,\textsuperscript{44} had no firsthand knowledge of the École, but rather relied on Tomek’s reports and comments.\textsuperscript{45} Lhotsky is of course correct in his observation that the decision to entrust Jäger with the position as head of the new institution and the task of further developing its conceptual foundation was made long before the appearance of the publication by Helfert, and this publication thus had no causative effect on the foundation of the Institute.\textsuperscript{46} Certainly by the time Thun had appointed Jäger to a position at the University of Vienna the Ministry had known of Tomek’s reports from August 1850 (on which Helfert’s text was based) for at least nine months. Helfert, who first visited the École in person in 1856, drew heavily on extensive comments that Tomek had given in a letter to Jireček immediately after his return from Paris in April 1850.\textsuperscript{47}

The reason for which Tomek remained distant from the undertakings in Vienna, was not able to take over any of the seminars in Prague, and held his seminar courses for only two academic years is in all likelihood to be sought in the political circumstances. In his vision of an institutionalized seminar he always thought in the plural. His understanding of scholarship and research on the history of the fatherland, which the seminar was supposed to promote, was closely tied to the notion of a supra-national history of the Austrian “Gesamtstaat,” loyalty to the state, and allegiance to the dynasty. However, this was tied in his mind to

\textsuperscript{43} Lhotsky, \textit{Geschichte}, 34–35.
\textsuperscript{44} Kučera, “Historik a politika,” 60.
\textsuperscript{47} Šimeček, “Seminární cvičení,” 51.
the protection of the individual regional and national patriotisms and senses of attachment. This view corresponded entirely to the federalist idea that in the Vormärz period had been advocated by the Bohemian opposition (including Thun), and which later, after some modifications to the idea had been made, had the support of Czech representatives (including Tomek) and the conservative nobility (including Thun again). The August 1850 plan for history seminars is clear proof that Tomek knew that it would be impossible to adopt the École model in its entirety primarily because of the costs involved (and both Thun and Helfert confirmed this).48 However, he still recommended the introduction of history seminars at all of the universities and in all of the crownlands, since “given the diversity of the nationalities, one can hardly content oneself with the establishment of one such institute for the entire empire.”49 In his view, the seminars should have been founded with a modest breadth and linked to a university pulpit in history at each of the individual universities. If Tomek expected to be given a key role in the establishment of a history seminar, he was clearly thinking of a seminar at the university in Prague, and not at a central institution in Vienna. But this is where Tomek’s vision collided with the wishes of the government: the Institute in Vienna was intended to serve the notion of a united, supra-national state and foster loyalty to this state, not promote any kind of regional identity or particularism.

Apart from the matter of the costs of the idea as envisioned by Tomek, it was also quite unimaginable in the 1850s because of the suspicions concerning aspirations for federalization, which the Czech liberals had brought on themselves with their 1848 proposal for a federal restructuring of the Monarchy, and even Thun would not have been able to push it through (nor did he want to). His earlier or later federalist ideas, his local patriotism and attachment to Bohemia, and his sympathies with the Czech and Slovak national movements notwithstanding, in his presentation to the Emperor in September 1853 Thun not only recommended a strongly centralist solution, he also argued in favor of such a solution in candid opposition to regionally patriotic history politics:

this school will only be able to come close to meeting its goals if it brings together younger talents from the various crownlands of the Empire and bring them out of the narrow circles of views which not rarely distract even talented minds under the influence of national

48 Ibid., 54.
49 Tomek, Paměti, 1:356.
strivings from the proper goals of the study of history and make them mere party loyals.\textsuperscript{50}

Thus, Thun was in complete accordance with the standpoint that the education of historians by the state should be linked with the history and identity politics of a supra-national Austria.

Thun’s position was not in complete opposition to Tomek’s desire for some emphasis on the distinct traditions of the individual crownlands. On the contrary, he supported Tomek and entrusted him with tasks that allowed the professor in Prague to realize some of his ideas. Somewhat paradoxically, this took place precisely in the area which, in his polemics with Grauert, Tomek had characterized as less relevant to his conception of seminars in history, namely grammar school history courses. As a professor of Austrian history, he was supposed to compose an appropriate textbook that would be used all over the Monarchy, and so he was engaged to play an important role as a textbook author in the implementation of the grammar school reforms. The Ministry’s goal was to introduce a unified, comprehensive interpretation of history that was oriented around the entire Habsburg Empire and, in doing so, to promote the creation of a political Austrian nation. Tomek’s textbook was completed in 1852 and was translated from Czech\textsuperscript{51} into German and other languages of instruction used in the Habsburg lands.\textsuperscript{52} Tomek turned away from focusing on the history of the Austrian core lands since the Middle Ages, and thus had to face the objections of the censorship and his critics,\textsuperscript{53} who insinuated that his textbook gave expression to a tendency that was federalist, nationalist, and therefore potentially threatening to the unity of the state (Albert Jäger was one of the censors, and although he raised a few objections, he responded very positively

\textsuperscript{50} Joseph Alexander von Helfert in the name of Minister Count Leo Thun-Hohenstein to Emperor Francis Joseph I., September 14, 1853, cited in Lhotsky, \textit{Geschichte}, 26.

\textsuperscript{51} Wácslaw Wladiwoj Tomek, \textit{Děje mocnářství Rakauského ku potřebě na gymnasiích} (Prague: Calve, 1852). The textbook presents a version of his aforementioned Austrian history from the 1840s revised for the grammar schools. Wácslaw Wladiwoj Tomek, \textit{Děje mocnářství Rakauského: Druhé školní wydání} (Prague: Calve, 1851).

\textsuperscript{52} Wenzel Wladiwoj Tomek, \textit{Geschichte des oesterreichischen Kaiserstaates: Zum Gebrauche an Gymnasien und Realschulen} (Prague: Calve, 1853); V. Tomek, \textit{Storia dell’impero austriaco da uso di Gimnasi e delle scuole reali compilata} (Vienna: Gerold, 1854); V. Vladivoj Tomek, \textit{Az Austriai birodalom történelme a gymnasiumok s reáliskolák használatára} (Pest: Heckenast, 1856).

to Tomek’s work). Tomek did not hesitate to ask the Minister to bring an end to the criticism, and he did indeed get some help from Thun, who had to come out in disagreement on some points with the Ministry of Police. But after the personal decision of the Emperor, Tomek was obliged to give into the pressure of the censors.

In the early 1850s, considerations regarding the introduction of history seminars in Austria, the creation of professorships for Austrian history, and the writing of history textbooks for grammar schools prompted Tomek to develop his own conception of Austrian history in the form of a “synchronic method.” As he had done in his work on the history of Austria composed in the 1840s, Tomek emphasized the importance of studying, narrating, and teaching the history of the Habsburg lands since 1526 as a whole, while also being attentive to the specific aspects of the histories of the individual regions or crownlands. In his view, this approach was important both for teaching and for the writing of synthetic narratives of the history of the Habsburg Monarchy. With regards to history before the election of Ferdinand I as King of Bohemia and Hungary (1526), Tomek was opposed to what he referred to as the “Stammlandmethode,” which focused exclusively on the lands under Habsburg rule, while other lands and regions, including Hungary and Bohemia, only became a part of the historical narrative after they had become part of the Habsburg Monarchy. Tomek felt that Bohemia, Hungary, and the other lands should be accorded the same attention in the discussion of the history of the Middle Ages. In this regard, he continued and developed the propositions of Josef Chmel and Karl Johann Vietz, which had been ventured in the 1840s, and even with the conceptual considerations of Joseph von Hormayr as well as of Julius Franz Schneller, a historian from Graz, from the early nineteenth century, and he also agreed with the basic

54 Tomek, Pamětí, 1:387–89.
58 Julius Franz Schneller, “Geist der Geschichtsschreiber des Kaiserthums Oesterreich,” Hesperus (1818): 17–23, 27–29, on which he then builds his work: Julius Franz Schneller, Staatsgeschichte des Kaiserthums Oesterreich von der Christi Geburt bis zu den neuesten Zeiten, 7 vols. (Stuttgart: Hallberg’sche Verlagshandlung, 1837–1841); before Schneller, the Gothaer historian Galletti made a—less programmatic—attempt to draw attention in equal shares to Austrian, Hungarian, and Bohemian history: Johann Georg August Galletti,
proposals of Helfert.\textsuperscript{59} Tomek was putting forward for the first time—at the same time as Helfert—this fundamental transformation consequently, even at the level of history lessons in the schools (the grammar schools and secondary schools) all over the Monarchy. His ideas unquestionably acquired new political relevance in the 1850s.

Tomek’s “synchronic” approach of the 1850s,\textsuperscript{60} which was the basis of his history textbooks, and in particular the arguments that he made in support of this approach awoke the suspicion that his views were part of a federal vision of the restructuring of the Monarchy, or at least a vision in which the individual regions would gain a larger degree of autonomy. At the same time, the contention was also made that his method served to underpin the notion of a Habsburg patriotism and thus buttress Thun’s identity politics with history politics. Indeed, the main argument of his tersely presented methodology corresponded to this line of thinking. Tomek argued in support of the premise that the formation of the Habsburg Monarchy as an enduring whole consisting of different historic lands was not simply the result of dynastic coincidences and political constellations. Rather, in his assessment, the bonds that joined these lands were the products of historical development, and in earlier phases the lands themselves had shown an inclination towards closer cooperation and unification. From this perspective, Tomek saw the historical emergence of the empire as a natural expression of a historical logic, as the culmination of forces that were the very basis of the spirit of history. In other words, the unification of the Habsburg crownlands was the result of an inclination towards integration that was intrinsic to their historical development. Had Tomek presented his ideas in a less terse and more thoroughly elaborated manner, one would hardly have been able to imagine a better historical legitimization for the Empire and also for the individuality of its constituent parts. This was particularly true for the Ministry of Culture and Education. If the grammar schools were intended to become important instruments in the crafting of an education that was oriented around


\textsuperscript{59} Helfert, \textit{Über Nationalgeschichte}, 2.

\textsuperscript{60} Two versions of his programmatic article were published, one in German and one in Czech. The Czech version was addressed to the general educated public, while the German version was addressed specifically to people involved in grammar school education. Wenzel Wladiwoj Tomek, “Über die Behandlung der oesterreichischen Gesammtggeschichte,” \textit{Zeitschrift für Oesterreichische Gymnasien} 4 (1853): 824–33; Václav Vladivoj Tomek, “O synchronické methodě při dějepise rakouském,” \textit{Časopis Českého museum} 28 (1854): 375–406.
the idea of a single, inclusive Austrian state and also play a meaningful role in the integration of the state through the cultivation of a supra-ethnic, supra-national patriotism, the question nonetheless remained: to what extent would it actually be possible to construct such a state identity, a “Gesamt-Österreichertum,” given the historical and cultural diversity of the components of which it consisted. With regards to history politics, which was understood as a crucial tool in the creation and affirmation of identity, Tomek strove to reach a notable balance, which would correspond to the views of Thun, who was oriented around state and regional patriotism.

At roughly the same time as the founding and the beginnings of the actual work of the Austrian Institute of Historical Research (1854–56) all of Tomek’s activities having to do with the institutionalization of history seminars in Austria came to an end, as did his work concerning a methodical approach to the history of the Monarchy and his attempt to influence the instruction of history at the grammar schools and secondary schools. He did not write any more grammar school textbooks, he stopped attempting to propagate the synchronic method (or at least no longer did so with the intensity he had shown initially), developed no more ideas for the seminars, and even stopped holding his seminar exercises in Prague. Though there is no proof of an explicit link between these changes and the opening of the institute, the connection seems rather obvious. Presumably, Tomek was disappointed not because he was not given any direct role in Vienna, but rather because corresponding institutions were not founded in the other university centers, for instance in Prague. As noted, he regarded private courses like the ones that he had seen in Prussia as a less than adequate solution, and he brought them to an end as soon as it became clear that there would be no institutional framework for them. Presumably, Tomek realized only later the real extent to which the state wished the notion of a supra-national

62  Tomek was only in occasional, indirect contact with affairs at the Institute. For instance, in 1858 he corresponded with Jireček in this regard (he made recommendations concerning scholarships). He emphasized, however, that he was not informed about the requirements at the Institute. Pokorná, Spoléhámť se docela, 70. We also know that Theodor von Sickel was one of his political opponents at the time. Ibid., 204, 211, 218. Tomek and Jäger enjoyed a positive relationship from the start, even if it remained only occasional. They met during his stay in Vienna in 1851. They were introduced to each other by Helfert. Tomek, Paměti, 1:379.
63  Later (1858), he mentioned his “historical exercises,” which focused on direct work with sources, but which were met with little interest and thus always remained “my private amusement.” Pokorná, Spoléhámť se docela, 70.
Habsburg realm (and identity) to figure in the understanding, study, and teaching
of history.

In the following years and decades, Tomek concentrated almost completely
on research and publishing. Teaching was relegated to the background, and he no
longer played any central role in political circles. However, as a representative of
the conservative-liberal line in Czech national politics, he remained a convinced
dynastic and Austrian patriot, an ally of Leo Thun, in regional politics and the
politics of the empire, and he met his responsibilities as a professor of Austrian
history (he held his courses exclusively in Czech, which in the 1870s made him
seem unsuitable for an appointment at the University of Vienna, where he
would have been Jäger’s successor). However, as of the 1860s he was active
as an engaged proponent of a history politics as a means of creating identity
exclusively in support of Czech national movement and political representation.

Conclusion

For professional, political, and personal reasons, Wáclaw Wladiwoj Tomek
seemed a particularly well-suited agent for the Ministry of Culture and
Education, who could be entrusted with the task of developing the foundations
of a new history politics that would serve to cultivate a new identity, namely a
supra-national Habsburg (Austrian) identity. This included, in the context of the
university and educational reforms, the desired reorientation of the universities
towards scientific methods, the linking of research and teaching, and the
professional training of historians and archivists. He was sent by the Ministry
of Culture and Education to universities in Prussia and the École des Chartes in
Paris and charged with the task of developing the fundamental principles on
which the seminars would be based. Although the ideas and models with which
he came into contact in Prussia influenced his vision and proposal (first and
foremost the practice of expecting the participants in the seminars to submit
written research papers), he unambiguously presented the École des Chartres,
which he preferred from the outset, as the ideal model on the basis of which to
found similar institutions in Austria. Accordingly, he placed central importance
on the study of medieval sources, the auxiliary historical sciences and the history
of the fatherland, which he understood both as the history of the Monarchy

64 Lhotsky, Geschichte, 147. At the end of the 1850s, Thun contemplated having Tomek leave Prague and
be given an appointment at another university in Austria in order to speed up the process of making him
and the history of the individual lands and regions. His roughly outlined idea was by no means a detailed plan with precise organizational and programmatic guidelines, and it served more to provide the Ministry with basic principles and information concerning the creation of the envisioned Austrian Institute of Historical Research. Even when some of Tomek’s suggestions were put into practice, this was presumably not a direct result of his proposals, and certainly the ideas he had sketched were not the only factor. In any event, one of the most important aspects of Tomek’s vision was not adopted. The Institute was created as a central part of the University of Vienna, and no similar institutions were created at the universities in the other crownlands of the Empire. Thus, ultimately Tomek played no direct role in the institutionalization of a program for the education and training of professional (scientific) historians. His seminar exercises in Prague remained a temporary, private initiative that he undertook as a professor of Austrian history. In connection with his role in the early 1850s, he was engaged in other activities through which, either as a direct or indirect assignment of the Ministry, he provided support for the government’s history politics (the aim of which was to create and foster a supra-national identity) by writing history textbooks and developing a “synchronic” method of historical inquiry, though in his work he linked the notion of the unified Habsburg state and Habsburg history with the perspectives of the individual crownlands.

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