

Introduction

The Czech Republic lies in what is called “The Heart of Europe.” Roughly the western half of the country – Bohemia – has played a significant role in the history of Europe politically, socially, and musically. The 18th-century English traveler and observer, Charles Burney, wrote that he, “had frequently been told, that Bohemians were the most musical people of Germany,\(^1\) or, perhaps, of all Europe.”\(^2\) In the southern region of Bohemia is an area called Blata. It is named for the marshlands that once existed there. Today, the term also identifies a region where distinctive folk traditions in architecture, costumes, dance, and music still exist to some degree. In Blata, bagpipes have a venerable history, based on evidence from extant bagpipes, publications, and the living tradition.

In this thesis, the Blata region will be described; a brief history of bagpipes and their use in Bohemia will be presented; the historic role of bagpipers in society in Blata and the transfer of these roles to rural 19th-century Nebraska and Minnesota will be described; the historical instruments either found in the Blata region or thought to have originated there will be described; a short synopsis of some Blata folklore groups utilizing bagpipe will be given; and, the creation of a replica bagpipe will be documented.

In this study, the map of Blata (p. 9) by the cartographer, Karel Zpěvák, defines the geographic limits. It is also necessary, however, to include material from outside of the region, especially in regard to the historical setting of bagpipes in Bohemia as a whole and in the examination of mouth-blown bagpipes thought to have originated in Blata.

\(^1\) Burney lived in a period of time when Bohemia was part of Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation that was dissolved in 1806. The King of Bohemia was one of its electors since 1356.

Blata can be differentiated from other regions having bagpipe traditions in late-19th-century Bohemia because the mouth-blown bagpipe was still the standard. In other regions, bellows-blown bagpipes were either already prevalent or becoming more common. This can be supported chiefly by observing what bagpipes have survived, by viewing historic photographs and other iconographical materials, and by surveying the literature.

Much is owed to the researchers who came previously and gathered and preserved data. The single most important work written to date about bagpipes in South Bohemia and Blata is Jaroslav Markl’s *Dudy a dudáci: O jihočeských písních a lidové hudbě*, published in 1962. Enough cannot be said for the work that Josef Režný of Strakonice has done to recognize the bagpipe. In recent decades, he has published invaluable books about the bagpipes of central Europe and Bohemia in particular. Much of Bohemian culture would have been lost without the work of Čeněk Zíbrt and Čeněk Holas; Zíbrt collected data on many topics and Holas’s collection of folk songs is among the most authentic and consequently important. Karel Weis also contributed a great deal, documenting and promoting South Bohemian and Blata culture in particular. A school teacher, Emilie Fryšová, must also not be forgotten. She moved to Soběslav, fell in love with Blata, and wrote one of the most important texts about the region. She preserved much of what otherwise would have been lost.

Works by all of those mentioned above have served, and will continue to serve, as the basis for studies in folklore, music, and dance in Bohemia.

A feature of Markl’s book is František Kopšík (1822-1915). Kopšík, who was trained as tailor, was probably the most accomplished bagpiper that the region has
produced. He was born in Čeraz and later lived in Klenovice. Both villages are located in what may be described as a core area for bagpipers in Blata, the villages surrounding Soběslav. Historical wax cylinder recordings that survive at the Etnologický ústav Akademie věd České republiky (Department of Ethnology of the Czech Academy of Sciences) in Prague document his talent. Mr. Kopšík’s life and the lives of other bagpipers show the social positions and contributions of bagpipers.

Kopšík played the mouth-blown bagpipe and these seem to have been used nearly universally in Blata. The majority of the bagpipes that survive from this region appear to be from the same workshop. Unfortunately, the maker’s name and precise location of the workshop is unknown; but, through systematic investigation, it is still thought that many of the bagpipes that survive in Blata, Bohemia, and other parts of Europe, originate from the same workshop or at least the same school of bagpipe making.

The book, Komárov: A Czech Farming Village by Zdenek Salzmann and Vladimír Scheufler, is the most notable book in English in which the social conditions and habits of the Blata area in the 19th century are discussed. This has been an aid in describing the bagpipe in a cultural context.

At least two bagpipers immigrated to America from Blata in the 19th century. The best documented is Bartoloměj Brt, who left Rybova Lhota to settle near Crete, Nebraska, in 1874. Especially noteworthy is the possible association that Brt may have had with Kopšík. Brt’s, village, Rybova Lhota, is only three kilometers from Kopšík’s Klenovice. In addition, Brt and Kopšík were contemporaries, differing in age by only three years. The other pioneer bagpiper known to have left Blata is Frank Kaiseršat, who left Vlkov to settle near Veseli, Minnesota. Both Brt and Kaiseršat are known to have played exactly
the same variety of instrument as Kopšík. This is easily shown by comparing extant instruments and photographs (See photos 15, 23, 72, and 73). The Brt bagpipe is in the collection of the Nebraska State Historical Society located in Lincoln, Nebraska. The Kaiseršat (Kaisersatt) bagpipe is believed to have perished in a house fire; but, fortunately, a photograph survives.

The krátkokrké housle (short-necked violin) was created specifically to be played with bagpipes in Bohemia. While this practice seems to have been much more common in the northwestern part of Bohemia, one of these instruments survives in the Blatské muzeum v Soběslavi (Blata Museum in Soběslav), a division of the Husitské muzeum in Tábor. Another one is in the Jihočeské muzeum v Českých Budějovicích (The South Bohemian Museum in České Budějovice).

Today no one is playing the type of mouth-blown bagpipe that was played by Kopšík and immigrants such as Brt and Kaisershatt. Pavel Číp, a master instrument maker in Zubří in the Wallachia region of Moravia, was commissioned to reproduce this model in the summer of 2006 (see Chapter Eleven). Folklore groups and festivals have played a vital part in keeping at least a superficial face on what life was like in the past. In Blata, while not having had as many folklore groups as other regions, short histories of some of the most important, the Blaťácký soubor Ševětín and Javor, are included.

These observations were made during a five-month stay in Blata. Previous to that, a one-year study period was spent, primarily in other regions of Bohemia, investigating the Bohemian bagpipes in their environs.
Chapter One

Defining the Blata Region

Blata is located within the political district of South Bohemia. It is a region where people have a reputation for being conservative and perhaps as “patriotic” as Czechs can be. It is also nebulous and not so easily defined. In some characterizations, a particular village is included, while in others it is not included. It is the region that is most associated with having a certain type of architecture, *selské baroko* (peasant Baroque), its own folk costumes, and conservative-thinking people that have had a long association with agriculture. Land, obviously, is very important to farmers and the land of Blata, certainly in part, shaped the people of the region.

Photo 1  The Blata region near the village of Borkovice (2006)
The term, *blata*, may be translated as marshland, swamp, moors or moorland\(^3\). A description of Blata follows:

The area lies in the northern part of the Třeboň Basin, whose origin dates back to the Tertiary period, during which the Alps and Carpathians were formed. The mountain-making movements profoundly affected the Bohemian Massiff, shattering it by faults and lifting some portions while depressing others. In time, the floors of the depressions leveled out and began to fill with deposits. During the Miocene, a recent epoch of the Tertiary, the floor of the Třeboň Basin became a freshwater lake, whose remains were in evidence until early historic times.

No doubt the character of the land has been responsible for the relatively sparse settlement of the Třeboň Basin. Compared to Bohemia as a whole, the population density of the basin continues to be low, even though it has been slowly increasing since the beginning of historic times. Noticeable growth occurred during the Middle Ages, when some of the densely forested areas were cleared and brought under cultivation, and much of the unproductive wetland was converted to fishponds. The setting of lakes and the development of fish-farming, concentrated in the Třeboň area, became exceptionally advanced as early as the sixteenth century.

The Blata itself is a gently undulating plain lying at an average altitude of 1300 feet (400 m) above sea level, with the highest elevation at about 1570 feet (475 m). . . Because of the slowly declining watercourse of the Lužnice River, which drains the entire basin, the rather humid climate, and the largely impermeable surface soil, fairly extensive peat bogs and swamps remain in the region to the present day. Peat bogs developed in those depressions of the prehistoric lake which were floored with a layer of impermeable clay. Decayed vegetation, consisting primarily of pine, mosses, lichens, and whortleberry shrubs, sank slowly beneath the surface and eventually changed into peat. Taken together, the peat bogs cover an area of nearly three and a half square miles (900 hectares), with an estimated volume of 27 million cubic yards (21 million cubic meters) and a maximum thickness of twenty-seven feet (8.25 meters)\(^4\).

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One can still visit this area today, as it is a protected area called Borkovická blata. It is a place where a person can feel as they are walking on a stiff sponge. There is a also a constant hum of insects, and the aroma of peat reminds the visitor of a lawn and garden center. All of this nature may be experienced, along with a healthy dose of mosquitoes.

Since the end of the Middle Ages, the appearance of the Blata has changed somewhat. As the population of the region increased and farming techniques became more efficient, it became necessary to clear more and more of the woodlands for cultivation, thereby reducing the extent of the forests. The portion of the Blata covered with swamps and peat bogs remained fairly extensive until 1906, when draining the region was undertaken, and unprofitable or exhausted peat bogs were brought under cultivation. A second large conversion of bogland to farmland was accomplished in the mid-1920s, but enough of it remained for each of the Blata villages to continue to have one particular peat bog on which to draw. The largest of these were located near Klečaty and Borkovice. Since the 1950s, extraction of peat has assumed an industrial character. This is evident on the face of the countryside,

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5 Karel Weis, Český jih a Šumava v písní, Volume 10 (Prague: Karel Weis, 1928-1941), 27.
where there are extensive areas from which the soil overlying the peat deposits has been stripped. Periodically the surface soil is restored and the land readied for subsequent cultivation . . . .

The only mineral resource of the area is a whitish clay, almost pure kaolin, found in certain places of the bogland. During the last century, it was used by ceramic works in the nearby town of Bechyně and also in Prague.

The Blata is drained by Bechyně Brook (Bechyňský potok) and its tributary, which is referred to by various local names, and by the Blata Canal (Blatská stoka), begun in 1906 and completed in 1925. The only bodies of water of any size are near Komárov. Nearly half of the region is still covered with woods.

Because the sediments deposited in the southern Bohemia during the Tertiary period are low in lime content, the soil of the Blata does not especially favor the cultivation of certain crops; as a result, legumes, potatoes, and fruit trees are not found to any great extent. However, the soil is suitable for the cultivation of grain crops, and these have been rather profitable.6

The Ottova encyklopedie is one the most respected reference works in the Czech language. Its definition of Blata includes the territory between the towns of Bechyně, Soběslav, Veselí, and Kardašová Řečice.7 Some have set similar boundaries of greater Blata expanding the territory to included Týn nad Vltavou and Ševětín.8 The confluence of the Lužnice and Vltava rivers is just to the west of the town of Týn nad Vltavou, and these two rivers that flow in a southerly and northerly direction, respectively, create a natural western boundary for the focus of this study. For the authors, Salzmann and Scheufler, bohatá or rich Blata proper is a much more strictly defined region that consists of the villages, Komárov, Vlastiboř, Svinky, Záluží, Zálší, Klečaty, Mažice, Borkovice, and Sviny.9

For this study, a more general definition will be used that suits the topic of the bagpipe tradition well. It is from the Ethnographic Atlas published by the Ethnographic

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6 Salzmann, 17.
8 Jan Linter, “Národopisné oblasti na Soběslavsku,” Staré i nové zvěsti ze Soběslavě a okolí (Soběslav: Městské muzeum v Soběslavi), 48, 1933.
9 Salzmann, 4.
Division of the Czech Academy of Science. It is within the shaded area labeled as Blata that a great amount of bagpipe activity took place.

Map 1 Defining the boundary of Blata (Map by Karel Zpěvák, 2004)

Although analogous to other regions within South Bohemia, Blata has a sort of stately ambiance that seems not to be present in other locales. A lot of this has to do with the architecture of the farmhouses. This architecture is referred to as *selské baroko* or peasant baroque. These complexes in the Blata region may be reasonably larger than farms in the surrounding areas. The designers and masons who built these farms were

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highly trained and very familiar with what was happening in the Austrian capital, Vienna. Many Bohemian masons would go to the capital city for seasonal work from about March to November, and the styles and techniques learned there were applied to the peasant dwellings in Blata.\textsuperscript{11}

In comparison to other parts of Bohemia, the courtyards are of larger proportions, as are the facilities for storing grain and hay. The barns and stables for cattle and horses are in the same fashion, substantial as well. Most of the people who lived here were not merely peasants, but \textit{sedláci} (farmers). They were more prosperous than other rural Bohemians, especially those living in the mountainous, forested border areas of Šumava to the south.

Before World War II there was a large minority of German-speaking people in Bohemia. After the War, most of these people were forced to leave, destroying centuries-old cultural traditions. One reason why Blata is still an identifiable ethnic region is that it escaped this disruption because it had very few people for whom German was their mother language. The region, at least in recent centuries, had been predominantly Czech, with a minority of Germans and Jews. This is substantiated by statistics from the major towns and cities in the region. In 1930 the population of Soběslav was 16,930 Czechs, 23 Germans, and 123 others. The population of Veselí nad Lužnicí was 15,447 Czechs, 38 Germans, and 90 others. In contrast, not far from these smaller towns the larger regional centers had significant German minorities. The capital of South Bohemia, České Budějovice (Budweis), reported a population of 67,469 Czechs, 10,981 Germans, and

\textsuperscript{11} Salzmann, 28.
1,121 others, while the town of Jindřichův Hradec (Neuhaus) reported 28,016 Czechs, 7,446 Germans, and 245 others.¹²

These figures illustrate that a Czech-German/Austrian relationship existed and figured into every issue. Consequently, when considering the topic of bagpipes in Blata, the practices of its ethnic neighbors and/or the mixing of cultures must be taken into account.

¹² Emil Meynen, *Sudetendeutscher Atlas* (Munich: Association for the Protection of Sudeten German Interests, 1955), 7. Although not specifically stated, it can be inferred that the term “other” applies to Jews and Gypsies.
Chapter Two

Bagpipes

Bagpipes are wind instruments that typically consist of a melody pipe or chanter, a drone pipe, and an air reservoir that supplies pressurized air to the various sorts of single and double reeds. The reservoir or bag may be filled and pressurized by one of two methods: mouth-blown or bellows-blown. Bagpipes have an extensive and broad history, particularly in Europe, but its origins are vague:

There are a few references to bagpipes in ancient literature (Aristophanes, Suetonius, Martial, Dio Chrysosotom; see Baines, 1960) but no surviving instruments, or unambiguous depictions. Popular writings on bagpipes over the last two hundred years have given a different impression about this ambiguity, but on re-examination, such claims may all be discounted, notably the persistent belief that the bagpipe had military use in the Roman army (Askew, 1940; Collinson, 1975).13

A handful of works have also attempted to describe the general history of the bagpipe, and some specific historical texts such as Sebastian Virdung’s (born ca. 1465) Musica getutscht (1511) and Michael Praetorius’ (1571-1621) Syntagma Musicum 2, De Organographia (Wolfenbüttel, 1619), with plates of illustrations issued separately as Theatrum Instrumentorum (1620), provide helpful visual information about the early state of bagpipes in Europe.

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As with any topic, an attempt to explain a multifaceted topic and reduce it to simple assumptions is seldom helpful in developing a full understanding of the topic. In many cases, more misinformation is spread and authors may later be discredited. Each culture that has bagpipes deserves to have its tradition studied in depth. A general history of bagpipes will not be included here, as adequate descriptions may be easily found in other sources. Such a general history about the development and use of bagpipes is better left to scholars such as Fritz Schneider, Krefeld, Germany, who has perhaps the largest collection of early bagpipe iconography, and Josef Režný, whose book, 5000 let s dudami (2004), is perhaps the most significant contribution to the general history of bagpipes in recent years.

It is also important not to create an unnecessary injustice by presenting simplified views, or worse yet, repeat erroneous information, as some other general histories have done. The topic of bagpipes is a complex one that would be better served by studies similar to this one, where small slices of the spectrum are examined in detail.

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Chapter Three

Bagpipes in the Bohemian Crownlands

The focus of this thesis is to place bagpipes and bagpipers within the cultural context of 19th-century Blata. This is being done for a number of reasons. First, it is an identifiable ethnographic region. Second, most written information and objects that pertain to a genuine living bagpipe tradition are from this period. Third, a particular tradition - the use of mouth-blown bagpipes - seems to have stayed intact longer in Blata than in other regions of the Bohemian Crownlands.

How these particular customs were practiced in the 19th century is difficult enough to discern, let alone to find accurately the origins of the practices. Nevertheless, a brief general look at the history of bagpipes in the Bohemian Crownlands will be helpful in putting the 19th-century Blata practice into context.

As useful information about bagpipes began to appear in the Middle Ages, it is possible to put Bohemia’s role into perspective during this period. Iconography indicates the use of the bagpipe during religious functions. The universality of the bagpipe as a musical instrument in Bohemia is understandable, since contact with other crucial parts of Europe was not uncommon. Much of Bohemia’s contacts were with religious partners in other parts of Europe:

We should also be aware that in the Middle Ages the borders between states were not as unambiguous or closed as they are today and that there were other “borders” and “cross-border” communities that undoubtedly had a great influence on the diffusion of culture in Europe. These included the boundaries of church territories (dioceses, and archdioceses), and the spheres of influence of religion organized at [an] international level. Close contact between the monasteries of

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15 The Bohemia Crownlands for the purposes of this work can be considered to equal the current territory of the Czech Republic, plus historic Silesia and Lusatia. See Hugh Agnew, The Czechs and the Lands of the Bohemian Crown (Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press, 2004), for a historical description of the Bohemian Crownlands.
individual orders definitely played a major role in the “transmission” of cultural influence over great distances, while on the other hand geographically neighboring areas might have different kinds of liturgical music. The Cistercians and Premonstratensians were quite tightly bound to their centers in France (Citeaux, Prémontré), the Minorites and Poor Clares in the Bohemian Lands belonged to Bavarian-Bohemian-Polish provinces, while the Benedictines had looser ties and so on.¹⁶

Monarchs and the nobility had close relations with the clergy, and indeed the earliest information found regarding bagpipes in Bohemia are connected to key noble personae and their property:

The earliest known references to bagpipes in the Szech [Czech] lands are to be encountered in medieval literature as far back as the close of the thirteenth century. The wall painting at the Karlštejn Castle, the oldest iconographic monument, dating from the middle of the fourteenth century, depicts an angel playing the bagpipe. It is an instrument consisting of an inlet pipe, a conical melody pipe, and a drone pipe which, supported on the shoulder, protrudes upwards. Starting with the fourteenth century there is increasingly frequent evidence on the existence of bagpipes predominately as one of the popular instruments. Isolated references to the bagpipe used in military band music date from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries.¹⁷

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The earliest written accounts of bagpipes in Bohemia appear in the 14th-century Zbraslav Chronicles, written in Latin on the occasion of the crowning of King Václav II in Prague in 1297 and the arrival of King John of Luxemburg (Jan Lucemburský) and his wife Elisabeth (Eliška Přemyslovna) in Prague in 1311. The chorus – probably an early form of bagpipe – is mentioned among the festive instruments. Czech abbreviations of chorus, such as kór or kořec (pronunciation: korzhets), are known.19 Another scholar, Lukáš Matoušek, has recently published information about an even earlier event, although apparently from the same source:

The Abbot of the Zbraslav Monastery, Petr Žitavský, described in the Zbraslav Chronicle how people rejoiced when the young heir to the throne Wenceslas returned to Prague from the imprisonment in Sacony [sic] on the 24th of May 1283. Naturally the occasion could not have lacked music, and so apart from the leaping jesters, drums were beated, citharas played, the voice of the trumpet rang out melodiously, the lyre was plucked, the bagpipes exulted and the organ sang. (Tympana tanguntur, cytharae quoque percuntiuntur, voxque tubae resonat sonitum, lyra tacta resonat, mox mimi saltant, gaudet chorus, organa cantant).20

Further specific information exists that connects bagpipes to one of the most central figures of central European history - Charles IV of the House of Luxemburg – who is claimed by both Germans and Czechs as a crucial figure in their history and identity: “In the instrument collection of a famous Czech king and Emperor Charles IV (1316-1378), there were bagpipes from the castle of Prague.”21

Bagpipes were mentioned by Guillaume de Machaut (1300-1377), secretary of John of Luxemburg, the King of Bohemia, under the French names chevrettes and cornemuses.22 “It was in this court, in the service of King John, that Guillaume de

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19 Josef Režný, 5000 let s dudami (Prague: Aula, 2004), 222.
22 Ibid.
Machaut, the greatest figure in French ars nova and one of the great figures of musical history, found his inspiration."23

Although unclear as to the meaning of the word “piper,” it is written in two modern sources that at the court of Charles IV, “The King and Emperor keeps pipers (Svach,24 Mařík) . . . .”25 and “Around 1352 the Emperor Charles IV had two pipers, Svach known as the Golden Hand and Mařík, both referred to as masters (possibly they were only the best musicians from a larger ensemble) . . . .”26

23 Paul Henry Lang, Music in Western Civilization (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1941), 153.
24 The uncommon surname, Cwach, has had over the centuries various spellings, such as Cvach, Cwach, Zwach, Czwach, and Swach. Swach, being the oldest (1675) variation, is the same surname as Svach, the name of Charles IV’s piper, “Golden Hand.” Based on the examination of records in archives in Bohemia the use of “w” in the Czech language lasted until the middle of the nineteenth century; therefore, the spelling of Svach with a “v” in the current resources is simply because Czech names in current publications are written in their modern form. Even though it cannot be proven, since surname standardization did not occur until later times, “There was practically no standardization until 1918” (Ivan Dubovický, professor of ethnography at Charles University, Prague), there is a possibility that there is some connection between the piper, Swach, and people having the surnames of Svach, Cvach, Cwach, and Zwach.
Figure 3 A bagpiper accompanying the dance of the Queen and her courtier. An unglazed clay tile found in Prague possibly from the first quarter of the 15th century.  

Further written and iconographical evidence in the Czech lands are not lacking:

More historical documents concerning the existence of bagpipes in Czechoslovakia are as follows: (1) a picture of a piper in the Bible of Olomouc (1417); (2) a bronze figure of a jester performing with pipers (fifteenth century) placed in the Neuberk collection in Prague; (3) a picture of an old Czech piper in a Hussite hymnbook of 1480; (4) a picture of a piper in the University Collection (Erlangen) of the fifteenth century; and (5) in the manuscript XVII A/2, of the

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Prague University Library, dating from the beginning of the sixteenth century with engravings of Mairus of Landshut (1499).  

Figure 4 Drums, fiddle, horn, triangle, lute, and bagpipes in a miniature from the Olomouc Bible, 1417.  

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28 Podnos, 71.
The Czech term, *dudy* (bagpipes), was cited for the first time in the fifteenth century in *Mammotrek* (‘a medieval dictionary’).\(^{30}\) Today, it is a general term used the same way as bagpipe(s) are in English, but there were other terms used previously:

A Latin-Czech dictionary from the 1360s specifies *buccina*\(^{31}\) as a Latin term for bagpipe and provides *kozyczye* (kozicie = goat) as the Czech equivalent. The use of this expression in other contemporary sources suggests a fixed definition. Therefore, *kozyczye* has been the Czech term for a bagpipe since the 13th century or even earlier.

The term *dudy* occurs in Czech sources for the first time in the 15th century. The widely accepted idea that the term *dudy* is an etymological derivative of the Turkish word düdük may well be a fallacy. The nouns derived from the Slavonic radical dud- (such as *duda*, *dudka*, *dudky* etc.) and associated verbs are found among all Slavs, not least in conjunction with the morphology of the verb *dut’* and *douti* (»to blow«). The old Polish words *dudy* and *dudki* serve as generic terms for the internal organs (particularly the lungs) of animals and humans. In the second half of the 16th century, the term *kejdy* and its variants *kajdy* and *gajdy* began to occur. Both terms were used in Bohemia until 1700. Later, *dudy* prevailed in Bohemia, while *gajdy* was used in Moravia and Slovakia.\(^{32}\)

It has also been theorized that the term *dudy* meant mouth-blown bagpipes and *gajdy* referred to bellows-blown bagpipes in some regions or vice versa.\(^{33}\)

Gajdy and similar terms used in European languages provide evidence of the influence of the Arabic gaita. Bagpipes, bagpipe music and bagpipers associated with Czech history are documented in a wide variety of historic sources. These sources illustrate how deeprooted [sic] the bagpipe tradition has been in Bohemia and Moravia, document the course of development, and show what is still in existence today.\(^{34}\)

\(^{30}\) Podnos, 71.
\(^{31}\) A Latin-Czech dictionary from 1894 by Dr. Gustav Zába defines bůčina as horn or shawm.
\(^{32}\) Režný, *5000 let s dudami*, 222.
\(^{33}\) Pavel Číp collected this information while interviewing old bagpipers and related it to the author on a visit in September 2006.
\(^{34}\) Režný, *5000 let s dudami*, 222.
The bagpipe was found not only in Bohemia, but also in other parts of central Europe, including Austria, Bavaria, Saxony (including a tradition of bagpiping that survives in the area where the Wendish, a Slavic minority live), Poland, Moravia, and Slovakia. While it is true that most of what we know about bagpipes in Bohemia comes from the 19th century or later, there are sometimes entertaining accounts of earlier times that provide a bridge between the medieval and later eras:

Zikmund Winter, a Czech historian and novelist, writes in his Cultural Pictures (Kulturní obrazy), imitating the old Czech idiom:

‘It is 1588 A.D. Let us peep into a tavern near the Horská brána. They call it “Under the Balcony”, but it is a house of ill fame where itinerant louts like to stop and carouse. It belongs to John of Rome (Ján Římský), a gentleman and official at the Public Records. [The] Female sex is never lacking and there is always a hell of noise, gambling, piping and bagpiping. The inn-keeper told Blažek the piper, alias Hawker, to come in with the bagpipes and fiddle. He says: “I came and was just looking at the merrymaking, die-casting and jumping when the Mayor’s clerk appeared. And they took away from me both my bagpipes and the fiddle. And I had not even blown the bagpipes.”’

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In the following legend, a contemporary of Blažek, living in Pilsen, was more fortunate, as he apparently was left alone in the tavern; however, his luck changed after he left:

In 1598, the plague lasted through the entire summer until St. Martin’s day (November 11) in Pilsen. The plague killed 60 clergy and more than 1400 citizens. Inasmuch, not even the gravediggers, and cemeteries were enough to handle this, they decided to make a large pit near the church of St. Margaret by the Black monastery in which to throw the dead bodies. This was located between the hospital and the doors in the direction of the church.

One night, a drunken bagpiper, walked in the direction of the pit. He took a bad step and fell into the pit amongst the corpses.

Since it was very dark, he did not see where he was, so he just sat there and fell asleep. When he awoke he took his bagpipes that he had with him when he left the pub, and started to play. Meanwhile people in the area were very afraid and apprehensive; that is each was full of fear to the point of shaking since they didn’t know why the plague victims played so merrily on the bagpipes. When daybreak came, people went to look where the dead were lying. They found the bagpiper, who was still drunk from the day before, and gladly pulled him out.36

While today it is not impossible to see a drunken bagpiper in Bohemia, the previous episode has little probability of being repeated.

Perhaps one of the most noteworthy iconographical objects in Bohemia is a fountain in Prague that dates from the 16th century. It is located in the garden of the Belvedere palace. Here some distinguishing features of later Bohemian bagpipes may be observed, including a goat’s head and a chanter resonator made from cow horn.

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36 Jaroslav Schiebl, Plzeň v pověsti, legendě, tradicí a škádiece díl I. n.p., 87. This legend is very similar to the legend, set in Vienna, Austria, of the bagpiper Augustin and lives on in the song, “Oh du lieber Augustin.”
Photo 4 Singing fountain, ca. 1564-1568, designed by Italian, Francesco Terzo and realized by bell maker Tomáš Jaroš. Located in the garden of the summer castle, Belvedere, in Prague. The fountain was made functional in 1574.

A less known iconographical representation of a bagpiper, perhaps the earliest found to date from South Bohemia, may be found on the façade, dated 1605, of a renaissance house no. 215 in the town of Kaplice (Kaplitz). This façade features sgraffito decoration on its upper portion. In the lower right corner of the façade is a representation of a bagpiper.
Photo 5  Renaissance house no. 215 in Kaplice

Photo 6  Sign of butcher’s guild and bagpiper
Jan Amos Komenský (1592-1670) was a Protestant leader of the 17th century who had many positive attributes, including being a champion of universal education. One of his books, *Orbis Pictus* (The World in Pictures), was first published in Latin and German in Nürnberg in 1658. As the title suggests, the book contained pictures of objects in the world, including musical instruments. One of these instruments was a bagpipe.
Figure 5  Musical instruments from Jan Amos Komenský’s *Orbis Pictus*37

There are various editions of *Orbis Pictus*. While this illustration is not particularly helpful in describing bagpipes, it does demonstrate that bagpipes (#26) were among the more common instruments of the time, simply by being included.

In the contemporary Czech Republic, čerti (demons) are still often included in children’s stories. Today’s čerti are not necessarily evil, but mainly mischievous and sometimes even helpful. There is at least one supernatural account of a demon playing a bagpipe in South Bohemia. The event communicated to someone who must have been a central regional figure of the period.

When the cardinal and 13th archbishop of Prague, Arnošt Vojtěch Graf von Harrach (1623–1667), was traveling from České Budějovice on April 5, 1646, he spent the night at the old monastery near the town of Milevsko and was told of a strange oak tree near there. He was told that in broad daylight, a demon sat there near the tree’s top playing a bagpipe. Below him were witches and demons of both sexes dancing in a circle. Since

37 Jan Amos Komenský, *Orbis Pictus* (Prague: František Borový, 1941), 165. It is not clearly stated which edition of *Orbis Pictus* is reproduced by Borový. It is recommended that different editions of *Orbis Pictus* be consulted, as a sort of “development” may be seen in the engravings of later editions.
that time, where the feet of hell’s dancers touched the ground, the grass never grew again, and next to this path the grass never turned green but stayed black.  

Photo 8 The Monastery near Milevsko, South Bohemia as it appeared in January 2007. While traveling through here in 1646, the Archbishop of Prague was told that there was an oak tree in the region, in which a demon sat and played the bagpipes.

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38 This story was mentioned in Čeněk Zíbrt, Hrál y dudy: dějiny starodávné selské muziky české (Prague: Československá akciová tiskárna, 1917), on page 19. Mr. Zíbrt wrote the date of the event as April 8, but this is incorrect. A handwritten copy of the account is kept in the National Archives of the Czech Republic, třída Milady Horákové 133, Praha 6 – Dejvice, of von Harrach’s diary and it is certain that the date was April 5, 1646. A transcript of the document follows: “Müllhausen 5. April 1646 der heutige Weg ist umb ein gutes ebener u. leidenerlicher, wiewohl sehr tieff wässerig u. lestich gewesen. sein deswegen auch umb 3 Uhr gleich alher ankommen...Wir sein da im Kloster des Abten v. Strahoff gehörig einkhert, da man uns gar gern gesehen. Ein paar Zimmer neues Gebeues khünnen passiren aber das übrige ist alles im sehr altes Wesen u. der Markht meistes voll oeder eingefal-lener Heuser durch den Krieg aufs ergste zuegerichtet. Nahend hieherumb ist ein Aichbaum zu sehen, umb welchen einmal die Teuffel oder Zauberinnen beim hellen lichten Tag herumb danzendt u. einer zuhochst oben sitzendt u. auf der Sackpfeiffen darzue aufmachendt gesehen worden, seithero wachset an dem Ort, wo sie die Füßhingesetzt, gantz kein Gras mehr u. ein Handbreit weiter auswerts lauter schwarzverbranntes Gras.”
Although the 17th-century South Bohemian demons may not have chosen to use other instruments, there is evidence that bagpipes were not played alone, but have had a long association with bowed string instruments:

A comparison of the research results attained by the author (Josef Režný) in Bohemia with those of Hans Commendas (Austria) and Walter Hartinger (Upper Palatinate and Lower Bavaria) reveals a number of similarities and common characteristics. The results clearly indicate that violins and bagpipes were dominant in 18th-century folk music in these regions.³⁹

A recently discovered (May 2006) painting from the 18th century illustrates this point well. Previously unknown in the bagpipe world, the painting exemplifies what can be called a “long” bagpipe and a violin. The artist, Jan Kupecký, lived in both Vienna and Nürnberg, and musicians in either city could have provided the inspiration for this masterful work.

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³⁹ Režný, 5000 let s dudami, 224.
⁴⁰ Pavel Číp, and Rudolf F. Klapka,  Dudy v Čechách, na Moravě a ve Slezsku  (Brno: Salve Regina, 2006), 75. Other works of the artist, Jan Kupecký, are well known and have appeared in books by
Approximately a decade before the proposed date of this painting, the composer and violinist, Franz (František) Benda, was born in November 1709 in Staré Benátky in Northern Bohemia. Regarding his first arrival to Dresden in order to be the discant at the Catholic Church, he said, “I found some of my future colleagues playing ball. As I could not speak German, I addressed them in Czech.”\(^{41}\) Later this Bohemian became the well-known violinist, who performed in more than 10,000 performances over a forty-year period for and with Fredrick the Great of Prussia.\(^{42}\) It may be assumed that Benda apparently would have known the bagpipe as a child, based on the account of Charles Burney, the famous traveler and observer of musical practices: “The father of M. Benda was a linen manufactuer, but not less musical than other Bohemians, his countrymen; for he played a little on several instruments, particularly the hautbois, bagpipe, and dulcimer.”\(^{43}\)

Other art music composers that lived and worked in either the Bohemian Crownlands or nearby Austria either included bagpipes in their works directly or imitated them in their works.

Leopold Mozart (1719-1787) included bagpipes in “Die Bauernhochzeit” (Peasant Wedding), a divertimento in D major, where, besides bagpipes, other effects, such as shouting and gun reports, are included. His son, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791), introduces the character, Colas, bagpiper and village soothsayer, with a musical


\(^{42}\) Nettl, 234.

\(^{43}\) Burney, 140.
imitation of the bagpipes in his opera, *Bastien Und Bastienne* (K. 50-46b).\(^{44}\) The “Parthia auf Bauerninstrumenten” (Partita for Rustic Instruments in B flat major)\(^{45}\) of Georg Druschetzky (1745-1819), court composer, includes a bagpipe. Druschetzky ( Jiří Družec) was born in Družec by Kladno, an industrial city located in Central Bohemia, west of Prague.

North of Jindřichův Hradec and east of Soběslav is the chateau, Červená Lhota, that was owned by Count von Stillfried. Near there the famous composer, Karl Ditters von Dittersdorf (1739-1799), spent his last days in service of the Count. Dittersdorf was buried in Deštná, a village in the northeast corner of Blata. He may or may not have had any contact with bagpipes and bagpipers during his stay in Bohemia, but he worked at Schlosshof, near Vienna, as "musical chamberlain" for Prince Joseph Frederick William of Saxony-Hildburgshausen in 1754. He writes about the preparation for a ballet, which had been planned for the visit of a member of the Imperial House of Habsburg:

... the prince said: ‘Now we have to think about an orchestra as comical as the ballet.’ He called for the ensemble and asked every single one to express his opinion - even Gluck and Bonno were consulted ... I said that I had been riding for pleasure to the village Hof an der March a year ago (1753); and when had come into the inn, there had been a marriage celebration, where two bagpipes had been playing; the big one, which is usually called a “Polish Buck,” had been tuned one octave below the small one and both had been playing the same melody. . . . \(^{46}\)

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\(^{45}\) Recordings of both the Mozart “Die Bauernhochzeit” and Druchetsky’s “Partia auf Bauerninstrumenten” may be heard on the Hugaroton CD HCD 12874 “Musica Curiosa.” The Druschetzky composition was edited by Eszter Fontana Gát.

“Further, he reports about having organized two pipers with small bagpipes and two with big bagpipes. This story is interesting, because it makes a difference between “Dudelsack” and “Polnischer Bock . . . .”  

Franz Krommer (František Vincenc Kramář) (1759-1831) was born in Kamenice, Moravia. Kramář became the court Kapellmeister to Austrian Emperor Francis I in 1818. In the fourth movement of a Harmoniemusik “Partita in Eb” by Kramář, ca. 1800, the bagpipe is wildly imitated and “. . . each instrument gets its chance to show off, especially in the section entitled dudelsack.” A most convincing performance is presented by Eric Hoeprich and Nachtmusique on their CD, “Bohemian Winds.”

More than four hundred years later than the accounts of bagpipes being used at the court of Charles IV, some of the most noteworthy accounts of bagpipes being played in Bohemia come from events involving his successors, including Franz II (Francis II) who would later have Franz Krommer in his service.

“In 1792 and 1836, Emperor Franz II and Emperor Ferdinand I respectively, were crowned Kings of Bohemia in Prague. The festivals held on these occasions gave folk musicians – including bagpipers – an opportunity to perform before a large audience.”

At the 1792 celebration, it is known that more than 8,000 country people were in attendance for the coronation of the last Holy Roman Emperor, featuring plenty of food

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47 Email from Michael Vereno to the author, December 7, 2006. Vereno is a well-known bagpiper in Austria and studies historical linguistics at the Paris Lodron University of Salzburg.
50 After the fall of the Holy Roman Empire in 1806, he became Franz I, Emperor of Austria.
51 Ferdinand I was the last to be crowned King of Bohemia, Ferdinand V of Bohemia. He was known as Ferdinand Dobrotivý or Ferdinand the Kind.
52 Režný, 5000 let s dudam, 225.
and drink, including 200 kegs of beer. Everyone was dressed in their specific attire from his or her region for this unquestionably festive event. This was an affair that must have stayed in the memories of its participants for some time:

In 1792, national costumes again made a show at the coronation festival organized in honour of Emperor Leopold II, who was then crowned King of Bohemia. The festival was organized for August 12 in the Royal Deer-park (Stromovka) in Prague. Representatives from all parts of the Kingdom of Bohemia were asked to take part in the programme, of which the chief item was a grand procession of sixteen bridal pairs, accompanied by their customary retinue of wedding functionaries and guests, dressed in the splendour of their different local costumes. They were mostly real bridal pairs and the wedding ceremonies were duly performed for them in church. The second outstanding feature of the programme was a magnificent harvest procession, in which allegorical groups – the fashion of the day – added to the more-than-usual splendor of the national costumes prepared specially for the occasion. The Czech nobleman and diarist, Jan Jeník of Bratřice, kept a record in his memoirs of the festivities, in which no doubt he took part

‘For the greater glory of this coronation, it was also decreed that from each region in the Kingdom of Bohemia several young peasant couples be despatched, attired in the old traditional costumes which had been most commendably preserved in use. It was natural for every head of the district to select the best-looking boys and girls in the area under his administration. Each group of these handsome young people had their own band of musicians with them, playing instruments common in their part of the country: thus bagpipes and violins, pipes and other instruments were to be heard coming from all directions....’  

Another source concurs that during this celebration in 1792 the representatives from each region brought their own musicians with them, and that in one place could be heard bagpipe and violin, in another dulcimer, and again in other places strings and wind instruments fooling around.

Almost twenty years later, near the capital of the empire, Vienna, a similar observation was recorded. As might be expected, perhaps the traditions were not much different:

Carl Rabl from Kematen am Innbach (Upper Austria), medical student, made an important remark about the feast of St. Brigitt near Vienna in 1809, ‘Here one could see the peasants dancing in a circle under the trees to bagpipe music, and there, sitting on the green grass, a hurdy-gurdy player was playing something to a group of joyful people and along with that he was singing sentimental songs, elsewhere people were dancing to whistles, violins, hurdy-gurdy, shawms, and bagpipes in the way of neighbours – Germans, Hungarians and Czechs [Bohemians]. The princes themselves were watching this spectacle.’

It is worth noting that the peasants were dancing in a circle. Perhaps this was a simple circle dance, known in Czech as the kolečko, that is often danced practically anywhere that a group of people is gathered.

As stated earlier, a second coronation event, this time for Emperor Ferdinand V, took place in 1836:

Magnificent festivities were organized to celebrate the coronation of Emperor Ferdinand and his wife Marie Anne as King and Queen of Bohemia, and an attractive and decorative item of the programme once again included the wedding and harvest processions and dances of the Czech peasantry, brought to Prague from all parts of the country. The show was held on the 14th of September, on the fields beyond the “Invalidovna” in Karlín, at that time still an outlying suburb of Prague.

This event is well documented. From this event and its preparation we find some of the most significant iconographical documentation that illustrates seemingly universal use of mouth-blown bagpipes in Bohemia during this period. Josef Režný has gathered some fascinating information about the organization of this event and specific details about the selection process in the Práčeň region. To more fully appreciate the preparation for this event an extensive quote follows:


58 In Karel Wies’s series, *Český jih a Šumava v písni*, volume 11, (p 21-29) there is detailed information, including some of the participants names, village, and even descriptions of clothing.
In the spring of 1836, it became known that the coronation of Emperor Ferdinand I as King of Bohemia was to take place in September of the same year in Prague and that a grand festival was to take place to mark the event. Sixteen regional councils in Bohemia were commissioned to arrange presentations of folk culture traditions typical of the respective regions, including a procession of locals donning folk costumes. This also applied to the Práčeň region. The Maltese Knights of Strakonice and the neighboring Štěkeň dominion decided to jointly present a harvest festival and provided appropriate allegoric equipment, such as a crop wagon and costumes for the reapers. Since the city of Strakonice and the surrounding countryside were famous for their bagpipe tradition, the Governor of Strakonice was commissioned to select suitable musicians. His extensive correspondence with the Imperial and Royal Council of the Písek Region reveals a wealth of detailed cultural and historic information concerning this region.

The Governor appears to have taken his duties very seriously. Initially, any musician who wanted to participate in the procession had to apply in person at his office in the Maltese castle of Strakonice. In August 1836, there were extensive bagpiping rehearsals, featuring the customary bagpipe and violin ensembles. At the closing stage of the rehearsal period, a well-matched bagpipe, violin and clarinet trio appeared. The Governor provided the regional council with a detailed report elaborating on each individual musician, many of whom came from villages 20 km or further away from Strakonice . . .

At the coronation festivities in Prague on September 14, 1836, the Práčeň district presented two painstakingly rehearsed folk custom themes: a wedding and a harvest procession. On six decorated wedding carriages accompanied by horsemen, the bride, groom, witnesses and 50 wedding guests from the various Práčeň dominions traveled in traditional order. A violinist and a clarinetist performed on the first carriage. This was followed by the harvest procession organized by the Štěkeň and Strakonice dominion councils. The harvest procession consisted of two wagons decorated with sheaves of grain. Male and female reapers and a village mayor rode on each wagon. A bagpiper and a fiddler played on the first wagon. Following the procession, a separate dance square was prepared in Prague for each region so that all four musicians could play together.59

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59 Josef Režný, 5000 let s dudami, 227-228. See also Figure 7.
On the second wedding wagon the following slogan was placed, seeking the approval of the King and Queen of Bohemia.

Od vltavy přicházíme krále a královnu velebíme  
Contemporary Czech: Od Vltavy přicházíme, krále a královnu velebíme 
English equivalent: We come from the Vltava and we praise the King and Queen

Figure 7  Wedding Wagon #8 from the Prácheňsko region with bagpiper, Matěj Šálek, from Tálín and the violinist, Jakub Kassa, from Paseky, 1836.61

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60 Karel Weis, Český jih a Šumava v písni, Volume 11, 22.
61 The illustration is from Jitka Staňková, Lidové umění z Čech, Moravy a Slezka (Práha: Panorama, 1987), 33. The information about the musicians is from, Josef Režný, Po stopách dudáků na Práčeňsku (Strakonice: Muzeum středního Pootaví Strakonice, 2004), 303. The description of this wedding wagon, identified as wedding wagon #7 on page 305 of Režný’s book, matches Režný’s text for wedding wagon #5, found on page 303.
According to Karel Weis, this watercolor is from an unknown artist depicting the bagpiper from the Písek regiment mentioned in 1820. As shown in Josef Režný’s work, it is described, possibly more accurately, as a work by Antonín Zellerin of the bagpiper from the Práčení region who was involved in the parade and activities surrounding the coronation in Prague in 1836. Therefore, it could be Matěj Šálek from Tářín.

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62 Karel Weis, Český jih a Šumava v písní, Volume 11, 2: Josef Režný, 5000 let s dudami, 173. According to Karel Weis, this watercolor is from an unknown artist depicting the bagpiper from the Písek regiment mentioned in 1820. As shown in Josef Režný’s work, it is described, possibly more accurately, as a work by Antonín Zellerin of the bagpiper from the Práčení region who was involved in the parade and activities surrounding the coronation in Prague in 1836. Therefore, it could be Matěj Šálek from Tářín.
Some illustrations from the 1836 coronation festivities exist from different artists and regions. What is common between all of these is the exclusive use of mouth-blown bagpipes.

Figure 9 Musicians and representatives from Domažlice

Figure 10 Representatives from the Klatovy (Klattau) Region in 1836. Likely the same musicians as depicted immediately above from Domažlice, as Domažlice was included in the group from Klatovy.

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63 Drahomíra Stránská, Lidové kroje v Československu; Díl I. Čechy (Prague: J. Otto, 1949), Tab. 1.

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Figure 11 Processions to Prague from the Pilsen Region, 1836

Figure 12 This is the group from the České Budějovice region. The bridal couple sitting immediately behind the musicians included Jan Strejček from Lhotice and Anna Říhová from Hosín.

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64 Jiřina Langhammerová, České lidové kroje (Prague: Vydavatelství a nakladatelství Práce, s.r.o., 1994.), 17.
65 Karel Weis, Český jih a Šumava v písni, Volume 11, 27.
In Bohemia, bagpipes were usually played by civilian men from various walks of life, but there are instances where the bagpipe played a part in Austrian military music. Bagpipers do not seem to have been a regular part of the Austrian Military’s musical corps, however, and it is not clear how a bagpiper became associated with the 25 k.k. Linieninfanterieregiment (Line Infantry Regiment 25) based in Písek. The regiment recruited its soldiers, including military pipers, almost exclusively from the Prácheň area located west of Blata. One of these pipers played a large, bellows-type bagpipe in the regimental band, with a bag constructed from an entire ram, along with a “folded” drone much like those used today. This type of bagpipe was indeed unusual, since in that

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67 Jiřina Langhammerová, Lidové zvyky (Prague: Nakladatelství Lidové noviny, 2004), 118.
68 Karel Weis, Český jih a Šumava v písni, Volume 11, 23.
69 Ibid., 24-25.
region they were universally using mouth-blown bagpipes. Here follows an account of one of these bagpipers and his successful encounter with the Empress of Austria:

In 1820, when Austrian Empress Caroline Augusta took a rest at Strakonice post office on a journey from Prague to Vienna, the commander of the Písek regiment ordered his military band to stand in formation in front of the post office at noon in order to play table music for the pleasure of the Empress. A young, handsome and neatly dressed bagpiper who caught the attention of the Empress was asked to perform a few solos, for which he received a reward of 20 ducats. The Empress was so impressed that she asked for a portrait of the bagpiper and arranged for the portrait to be sent to her destination. The portrait was painted by the Strakonice artist, Antonín Zellerin. The Písek regimental band eventually performed in Linz, Prague, and other cities. However, the name and exact origins of the young bagpiper remain unknown.

The special uniform or costume worn by this bagpiper consisted of a green coat with red trim, yellow knee-length pants, white socks, and a black hat, and it resembled the local fashion. This would have stood out in contrast to the regular Austrian uniform, which consisted of helmets, white uniforms with sea green cuffs, and black leggings to the knee.

As was mentioned previously, this bagpiper had a bagpipe that was bellows-blown. This apparently was not the norm in South Bohemia at the time, but was known in other parts of central Europe:

Around the end of the 17th century, the bellows, probably from France via Germany, made its way into the western Slavic lands, where it has prevailed since the beginning of the 18th century, particularly in the Lausitz region and in Poland. In Moravia, the bellows has been known since the turn of the 18th century. Its migration to Bohemia probably commenced somewhat later and appears to have been rather slow.

In a discussion with the bagpipe maker, Pavel Číp, he expressed a divergent opinion; i.e., that perhaps the bellows-bagpipes were spread with the migration of

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70 Režný, Po stopách dudáků na Prácheňsku, 247-248.
71 Režný, 5000 let s dudami, 227
72 Režný, 5000 let s dudami, 224
Croatian shepherds that moved through present-day Hungary, Slovakia, Poland, and eventually, Moravia. Bagpipes with bellows were known in Poland well before their appearance in Bohemia, and it is possible that bellows-blown bagpipes traveled a northern route and were used in Saxony and Bavaria before their arrival in the western part of Bohemia.\(^{73}\)

Bellows-blown bagpipes, although known already in other parts of central Europe, brought a distinct advantage over the mouth-blown version.

“The bellows gradually made its way to southern and southwestern Bohemia in the first half of the 19th century. Enabling the piper to sing, while playing the instrument, the bellows provided a new impetus to traditional bagpiping.”\(^{74}\)

Another highly respected musician in the Chodsko region, Vladimír Baier, agrees that in the area around the town of Domažlice it is believed that the bellows-blown bagpipes, named německé dudy (German bagpipes), came from neighboring Bavaria in the middle of the 19th century.\(^{75}\) They are sometimes labeled as “Bock:”

The chanter head of the western Slavic bagpipes usually features a symbolic goat head. In the Czech lands, this bagpipe design was known as kozlík or pukl (a derivative from the old German word Böckl; i.e., male goat).

In some parts of southern and southwestern Bohemia, the bellows-blown bagpipe was called německé dudy (German bagpipe), indicating the direction from which the bellows migrated to these parts and implying that this bagpipe type was played on the German side of the border. However, archival sources from Oberpfalz (Upper Palatinate) and Niederbayern (Lower Bavaria) provide evidence of mouth-blown instruments commonly known as Böhmischer Dudelsack or Böhmischer Bock. The German word, Dudelsack, derived from the Czech or Slavonic terms such as dudy, duda, dudeya, etc., gradually replaced the older word Sackpfeife. In any case, both types – the older mouth-blown bagpipe and the

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\(^{73}\) Conversation with Pavel Číp, Zubří, Czech Republic, September 6, 2006.

\(^{74}\) Režný, 5000 let s dudami, 224.

bellows-blown design – used to rank among the most popular folk instruments in the bagpipe zone of central Europe.\textsuperscript{76}

The arrival of the bellows-blown bagpipe in Blata was very gradual. No evidence exists - written, iconographical or otherwise, with the exception of a single Wolfgang Šteffek bagpipe made in Újezd by Domažlice, which survives in the Jindřichův Hradec museum - that the bellows-blown bagpipes were used during a period that can be called a living bagpipe tradition.

\textsuperscript{76} Režný, \textit{5000 let s dudami}, 224.
Chapter Four

The Cultural Significance of the Bagpipe in Blata

The bagpipe or *dudy* in Blata is something that has been dealt with by only a few specialists and there is negligible information available in English. Regrettably, this matter is of seemingly little interest even to the vast majority of the contemporary inhabitants of the region. This may partially be due to the reality that today's Blata residents are completely unaware of to what extent and degree this venerable performance practice existed. Moreover, the bagpipe in contemporary Czech society is more readily identified with other regions of Bohemia. Already in the early 1940s two small regions, centered around the towns of Domažlice and Strakonice, were considered the bagpiping centers:

In Bohemia the bagpipe was very popular and until now they have kept the practice of playing on them in the areas of Domažlice and Strakonice, but it is essentially a folklore peculiarity. The old bagpipers are dying out and the youth are more interested in *dechovka* (brass band) or jazz, than the original bagpipe music.\(^77\)

These regions mentioned above, Chodsko (Domažlice), Prácheňsko (Strakonice), plus Plzeňsko (Plzeň), have deep-seated bagpipe traditions, but these regions are not any more historically important than Blata. These other regions simply had more opportunities to become identified with bagpipes.

For example, the status that Strakonice has received is due primarily to two factors. First, Josef Kajetán Tyl (1808-1856), Czech-nationalist playwright and the author of the words of the Czech national anthem, *Kde domov můj*, wrote a play, *Strakonic ký dudák*

\(^77\) Antonín Modr, *Hudební nástroje* (Prague: Edition Č. H., 1943), 130. It is curious that the Egerland (Chebsko) region of German-Bohemians is not mentioned. When this was published in 1943, the region is thought to have still had a genuine bagpipe tradition, likely declining as well, due to competition from new forms.
anan Hody divých žen (Schwanda the Bagpiper or The Feast of the Wild Women) in 1847. Based on a legend about a particular bagpiper from Strakonice, named Švanda, it popularized the legend of the “Strakonický dudák” or “The Bagpiper of Strakonice” in theatrical form. As a result, the town of Strakonice is still foremost in the psyche of present-day Czechs as their bagpipe “Mecca.” Second, it is not only due to their familiarity with Tyl’s play, but also due to Josef Režný’s efforts in the mid-20th century to document the old songs. Perhaps more importantly, his folklore group, Práčeňský soubor písní a tanců (The Práčeň Ensemble of Song and Dance), founded the South Bohemian Folklore Festival that later evolved into the International Bagpipe Festival held every other year in Strakonice. This festival, perhaps more than anything, has cemented the impression amongst most of the country’s citizens that Strakonice is the center of bagpipes in the Czech Republic.

Plzeň, a major city located in West Bohemia, was at one time closely identified with bagpipes, an observation based on the relatively rich use of bagpipers in architectural elements and the survival of some fine bagpipes in the ethnographic museum located there. Today, if Plzeň is at all thought of as having an association with bagpipes, it is probably due to the proficient promotion of folklore programming at Rádio Plzeň by Zděnek Bláha. Bláha is one of today’s most accomplished Czech bagpipers. His prerecorded segments are still being broadcast, and bagpipes can be heard on the radio in the Plzeň region on almost a daily basis.

Many consider Chodsko, an ethnographic region in extreme southwest Bohemia with Domažlice at its center, as the only region in Bohemia where a genuine folklore tradition survives. It is hard to repudiate this statement, although it may not be entirely
correct. It is without doubt that in this region the most spirited performances of Bohemian folklore are presented. And, in this region, it can safely be estimated that the greatest number of highly accomplished bagpipers live today.

Today, in Blata, there are relatively few bagpipers in comparison to other regions; but, in the 19th century, the region was relatively dense with bagpipers. Moreover, František Kopšík, arguably the most accomplished bagpiper of the era, was from Blata.

Happily, bagpipes have not been completely forgotten in Blata by those who are not directly interested in folklore. On July 9, 2006, in a hospoda (pub) called “Na Blatech” in Komárov, a village located in the heart of the Blata region, Jan David, a well-known flugelhorn player of the region who plays with Babouci, the oldest and currently most popular brass band (dating from the 1860s) in South Bohemia was listening to another dechovka (brass band) called Vlachovka. A conversation being carried out over some beers included observations about the group performing. While a play-by-play commentary is considered rude, if not impossible, to carry out in a formal concert setting, when done in a pub in South Bohemia, it seemed somehow appropriate. Most of time the comments included something in the spirit that a passage was played nicely or that Babouci played it somewhat differently. But, a thrilling episode occurred when David became somewhat agitated as the vocalists of the band, Vlachovka, began to sing the lyrics to the song, “Kdyby byly moje,” and said, “Those are not the old lyrics! The old song goes like this, zadudal bych na dudy (I would like to play on the bagpipes), not kde muzika hraje (where the music is playing). They should sing the old lyrics, because our musical traditions are contained within.” Here in a pub in South Bohemia, listening to a
Czech brass band, a genre of music that, without a doubt, was responsible for the demise of an authentic bagpipe tradition in South Bohemia - it was ironic to be speaking with a current member of a band that traces its roots back to the era of the “beginning of the end” of the bagpipe tradition and probably was partially responsible for the near extinction of the bagpipe in South Bohemia.

Songs, such as “Kdyby byly moje,” were indeed in Blata for some time. It is one of the songs that refer to bagpipes. In this version, collected by Karel Weis in the 1890s in the village of Horusice near Veselí nad Lužnicí, it contains a slightly different version. It was sung to Weis by M. Dvořák.

Song # 18 Hdyby byly moje… Karel Weis, Błańacke písně, Volume 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hdyby byly moje,</th>
<th>If they were mine,</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ty slukovcký pole</td>
<td>The Slukovký fields</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>snadno bych se vožení</td>
<td>I would get married easily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>šel bych do hospodý</td>
<td>I would go to the pub</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>koupil bych si dudy</td>
<td>I would buy a bagpipe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>holku bych si namluvíl</td>
<td>I would find a girlfriend</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

78 “The first evidence of a folk brass-band in Bohemia dates from 1820. The revolutionary year of 1848 welcomed several such bands, however, and they multiplied greatly during subsequent years. In the sixties, such bands both marched and participated in popular festivities, and from the end of the century onwards they even dominated the musical life of villages with vigorous traditions of folk music.” Jaroslav Markl and Vladimír Karbusický, “Bohemian Folk Music: Traditional and Contemporary Aspects,” Journal of the International Folk Music Council, Vol. 15 (1963), 27.
Another Blata song that places the bagpipe in a positive light is *Zlatý dudy*.

**Song #8  Zlatý dudy...** Karel Weis, Blaťácké písně, Volume 1.

---

*Zlatý dudy,*  
to jsou dudy,  
hdyž já je uslyším,  
celej se potěším,  
všechn všudy s těma dudy  

Golden bagpipes,  
they are bagpipes,  
When I hear them,  
I will be completely delighted,  
everything and everywhere with those bagpipes

---

Zahrajte mi  
a Zlatý dudy,  
a ty zase  
a ty housle,  
zahrajte mně oba dva,  
Že ste hodný hovada  

Play for me  
on those bagpipes,  
And you again  
on the violin,  
Play for me the both of you,  
That you are good beasts

---

Perhaps the Blata region is not as identified with bagpipes as other regions of Bohemia, but there is still ample evidence that it played an important role in the life of village citizens.

Musical instruments are not of any more value than what can be gained by the use of them to foster an individual’s condition and culture as a whole in a positive way. The following is testimony that shows that the bagpipe was used in various capacities and certainly played a significant role in Blata culture.

In Blata the bagpipe tradition was strong, and one of the earliest first-hand accounts comes from the town of Veselí. The parish priest, Antonín Polák, wrote in 1824 that: “All villagers entertain themselves with singing, accompanied by a bagpipe and a fiddler, who reinforce the tune by gaily stamping their feet in time with the music.”

Often the music making was associated with a yearly festival, often closely related to the Roman Catholic Church’s calendar, or some other occasion. “The most important single event in the life of a Komárov [a village in the heart of Blata] villager has always

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79 Salzmann, 125.
been the wedding.\textsuperscript{80} After receiving the parents blessing there were toasts made to the wedding couple:

Once the toasting was completed, the wedding party was loaded onto decorated wagons – the bride and her bridesmaids in the first, the groom and the groomsmen in the second, the remaining older guests and the musicians in the rest – and the party proceeded to the church, followed by the younger members and some of the onlookers on foot. Along the way, musicians – at the very least a fiddler, bagpiper, and usually a clarinetist – played songs appropriate to the melancholy occasion of the bride’s leaving her home. The wedding party sang the first stanza of each song in two- or three-part harmony, the musicians then repeating the tune without the voice accompaniment… After the church ceremony the party returned to Komárov, again with the musicians accompanying them.\textsuperscript{81}

A little-known article, deemed significant enough to include in its entirety, that addresses the activities of the bagpiper, Antonín Bosák, including a detailed account of a Blata wedding and other feasts, is included in Appendix 6.

Another event to which the people in Blata surely looked forward was masopust (carnival). Although it is not celebrated to the extent it once was, in recent decades it has experienced a small revival in Blata, mainly in the town of Ševětín. The most famous bagpiper of the Blata region was František Kopšík, and in his obituary it is mentioned that he played for carnival festivities.\textsuperscript{82} These were events that involved the entire community:

The entire carnival season was marked by feasting and dancing. Until the 1880s the frequent dances were attended by all of the villagers and followed a fairly fixed pattern. The farmwives and older women sat along the walls of the largest rooms of the inn, while the boys stood together in one corner and the girls in the opposite. The farmers sat at a table in the small adjoining room or in the main room where the dancing took place. Until 1848 the evening’s dancing was opened by the village head, who first admonished the boys not to get into fights and then wished everyone a good time. Later this function was performed by the mayor or, if he happened to be unavailable, by the first alderman. The music was simple: two fiddlers, a fiddler and a bagpiper, or a fiddler, a bagpiper, and a clarinetist. The

\textsuperscript{80} Salzmann, 88.
\textsuperscript{81} Salzmann, 93-94.
\textsuperscript{82} Staré i nové zvěstí ze Soběslavě a okolí, 1915, 60.
dances played were short, with individual stanzas repeated several times. The first ones to dance were the farmers and their wives. Later on, when spirits had become high, boys one at a time would step before the musicians, throw them a coin, and then sing a tune, which the musicians would pick up. Soon everyone was dancing, and the second time around all joined in singing the whole song or the refrain. The greater the swaggerer, the more money he threw. While the usual amount was a silver coin, amounting to twenty kreuzers (100 kreuzer = 1 gulden), there were those who put up as much as a gulden or two.\footnote{Salzmann, 107.}

This account paints an active evening of fun and perhaps mischievous behavior.

What were some of the specific dances? There are seemingly few descriptions of dances in Blata. Likely, it was similar to neighboring regions in Bohemia. In Emilie Fryšová’s book, Jihočeská Blata (1913), there is a short description from a period after the general demise of the bagpipe, but apparently similar practices continued:\footnote{Alice Janotová of Strakonice, specialist in Bohemian folk dance, made the associated footnoted comments immediately below. She is a graduate of HAMU (Academy of Music and Performing Arts) in Prague.}

Since the bagpipes were silenced the dances of our folks have changed. People learn new dances, of extraneous origin, and forget the old dances inherited from their ancestors. Fortunately, musicians almost everywhere in Blata respect the bagpipe music and still play tunes in minor keys for the dances in the pubs. These minor key tunes do not allow dancers to use many skipping dances. The names of the contemporary dances, except for polka, \textit{tajč}, \textit{štajryš} etc.,\footnote{“tajč”, “štajryš - these names refer to dances of German /Austrian origin and it is possible they were imported (for example by seasonal workers) to the Czech region and since there were no Czech names for the dances, the Czechs named them after their place of origin (štajryš → steirisch - Steiern in Austria; dajc/tajc → deutsch= German). These two dances mentioned are something similar to the Czech sousedská or folk waltz.} show their origin. The only particular dance of the Blata region occurs when dancers are already slightly tired. It is the so-called kolo or kolekó ("round and round" dance). Girls join hands around the waist,\footnote{As it is written, it could be understood that the girl puts her hands around the waist of her neighbors, but the assumption is that it is that most common position, that is – the girls are standing towards the center of the circle and cross their arms behind the back of their neighbor. Each girl, therefore is always holding the hand of a girl who is on the far side of each of her neighbors.} make a circle and move to the right or left after the music. Boys, standing behind them, are singing together. Also people used to dance the \textit{houpáč},\footnote{Houpáč → verb houpat = to rock, to swing → the dance is named after the character of movements.} the \textit{hulán} and often the \textit{sousedská}, depending on what kind of tune the musicians were playing. In the first half of the 19th century, favorite dances in Blata’s towns were \textit{Utíkej Káčo} (Run, Káča) or \textit{tramtara, křížalka} and the dance called, “seven steps.” In “Run, Káča,” dancers were standing in two lines
opposite each other. As the head couple on one of the ends turned, they went running, the boy chasing the girl, between the lines to the other end. If he succeeded, musicians played a flourish (fanfare) and the couple joined lines on the upper end.\[88\] When everybody took turns, everything was repeated once again but girl was catching a boy. In the křížalka dance, a boy and a girl were holding their hands crosswise.\[89\] According to the meter of the music, they stepped both on the heel of right foot and then on the toe, and repeated the same with their left foot and then turned together. In the “Seven steps” dance, a boy and a girl, holding each other, danced always five steps to one side, five steps to the other side, then made one turn together with same steps. The old-time dance “vrťák”\[90\] occurred as well – the boy’s left foot is next to the girl’s left foot, with the toes placed opposite each other. The dancers keep their feet in this position and turned according to quick rhythm of the music.\[91\]

It appears that there must have been plenty of opportunities for participation in various types of dances, which provided for a richer experience when compared to today’s situation where there are mostly polkas and waltzes. These dances would have undoubtedly taken place in the village pub. There was a substantial amount of dances in Bohemia.\[92\] As can be seen above, they carried at least as many names. One of these dances was called dudák or bagpiper. In this dance, the bagpiper would dance the steps of the sousedka,\[93\] turning about in the same place while the others dance in a circle around him.\[94\]

\[88\] When speaking about the upper end of the line, the lines would be like this || from an audiences view, or as they dance in the folklore group, Práchehský soubor písní a tanců, from Strakonice, / \.

\[89\] The description is very poor. The dancers were holding their hands crosswise, but it does not indicate if they were standing facing each other or next to each other (if this is the case, then it can not be determined if they were holding their hands in front of their bodies or behind the back). Also, there is no valuable information about the steps, so it cannot be ascertained from the description how this dance was danced.

\[90\] Vrták is a dance in quick tempo; a couple is turning usually on the spot. The people were reminded as if the dancers were drilling themselves into the ground and that is why they called it vrták (to drill = vrátat in Czech).

\[91\] Emilie Fryšová, Jihočeská Blata (Praha: FY. FR. Borový, 1913), 111-112.

\[92\] Many of these dances may be seen on the VHS tape “Jiříní Čechy” produced by the Ústav lidové kultury in Strážnice in 1996. There may be seen folklore groups, including Soběšlavská chasa mladá, Blaťák soubor Vlastiiboř, and Úsvit. An accompanying book describes the dances, gives musical examples, and lists the performers. A valuable bibliography is included as well.

\[93\] Sousedka = Neighbor lady.

At the heart of any Blata village (any village in Bohemia for that matter) was, and to some extent still is today, the village hospoda (tavern or pub). Here the locals gathered on a daily basis. The pubs were of the same construction and usually not much different in appearance from the dwellings in the village. They were, more often than not, not part of a courtyard complex, and they usually stood alone near the center of the village or near a main road. Of course the main hall was larger than any of the rooms of an ordinary home and the pub could easily be identified externally by the words hospoda or hostinec applied to the façade of the building. Inside the main hall was a room about 20’x 30’ with a 15’ high ceiling. The ceiling height provided adequate acoustics and a space for smoke to accumulate.

The importance of a pub to the musical culture in Bohemia is significant and will be referred to throughout this thesis. A famous 18th-century Bohemian musician, František (Franz) Benda, although not from Blata, was forced to play in taverns by his father. Although he utterly disliked it, a great model for his violin playing was a Jew who played in a tavern in his home town, and he wrote, “Moreover, I am convinced that playing for the dance had done no harm to my artistry, particularly in regard to time.”95

The musicians would play in one corner of the room on a small platform or a sort of loft in the corner made especially for that purpose. Sometimes the musicians played in the window sill of the pub or sat on a makeshift bench constructed of beer barrels and boards placed across the top:

During the era when bagpipes were used the musicians would sit on the windowsill with their feet on benches in front of them and tap their feet to the music. Bagpipe music may be considered as a “species” of brass music as it has

95 Nettl, 212.
high tuning, in accordance with the clarinets that were brought home by soldiers that were musicians in the military.

Before each tune someone always sang the melody and then the musicians all played. What followed then was a “bagpiper” variation consisting of their own ideas and a then a coda or finale. During this time there was no written music and these finales would have to be created immediately.96

In Blata today, it is not possible to find an original hospoda with a platform of this type. Many of the historic hospodas have either been torn down, are being used for other purposes such as workshops and storage facilities, or lie vacant and inaccessible. The old hospoda in Bzí between Týn nad Vltavou and Veselí nad Lužnicí is an example of a classic hospoda, located at the northeast corner of the village across from the chateau, where it is now being used, regrettably, as a combination workshop and storage area. In this hospoda, where it is possible that the famous bagpiper, František Kopšík, may have once played,97 the small stage was in the southwest corner of the room. It has proved impossible to find a photograph or painting of a “musical corner” in Blata. Fortunately, paintings in which this type of stage is being used for malá selská muzika (bagpipe, clarinet, and violin) in other parts of Bohemia, as well as what is probably an accurate recreation of the old Bohemian hospoda atmosphere, complete with a stage, bagpiper, and violinist, may be experienced in the 1955 film, Strakonický dudák (The Bagpiper of Strakonice).98 Looking at the issue from today’s perspective, each village pub now has a big screen television in the corner. Here once were bagpipers and fiddlers, so the scene from the film, while certainly theatrical, may not be far from the truth. This atmosphere

certainly once existed. Living in a time of relative silence, 19th-century people would have certainly danced and celebrated to the utmost.

Furthermore, the use of the bagpipe and singing cannot be separated. With the disappearance of the bagpipe and various combinations of instruments, the amount (or at least the type) of singing that takes place in villages also decreased. Again, one has to look to Chodsko and the ethnographer, Ludvík Kuba, who documented Slavic cultures throughout central Europe, to find any concrete evidence that a segment of the population did indeed regret the decline of bagpipe groups. “It is not only what I say, but mainly the older people and the good dancers and singers. The *plechmuzika* [brass bands] usually only play ‘town’ dances and the singing is not as gratifying as with *malá selská muzika* [bagpipe, clarinet, and violin].”

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Chapter Five

Bagpipe Use in Combination with other Instruments in Blata

The mouth-blown bagpipe used in Blata could have certainly stood alone as a solo instrument and provided dance music for many hours as attested to by various accounts. The music created by František Kopšík and his mouth-blown bagpipe would have certainly been adequate for any small pub. Along with his brother, who played the violin, they formed the classic duo, bagpipe and violin, that had existed for centuries in what Josef Režný of Strakonice has termed the “Central European Bagpipe Zone.”

For a purist, it would be very convenient to stop at this point and declare that this is the true tradition and anything different is a perversion. There are a number of accounts of bagpipes being used with other instruments, not thought of as being part of typical bagpipe groups from today’s perspective.

Čeněk Holas, among the most respected of folksong collectors in Bohemia, wrote about the various combinations of instruments in neighboring regions of Blata. In the Třeboň region (considered a part of Blata in this study) and in Vysočina, the violin and bagpipe were played. The clarinet was added later. In the Prácheňsko region, the short clarinet, string bass, and bagpipe were used and endured until about 1860. Even earlier, the dulcimer was used. In the declining years of the bagpipe, around the village of Putim, the string bass was dropped and brass instruments were introduced.101

From Holas there are strong hints, especially from Putim, a village located near Písek, that brass instruments were beginning to be introduced. The prevailing attitude

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100 It is the author’s opinion that the short clarinet, referred to here, certainly includes clarinets pitched above, and including, the soprano D clarinet.

101 Čeněk Holas, Zprávy o české národní písni a hudbě: O hudcích, dudácích a zpěvácích (Písek: František Podhajský a spol., 1937), 54.
amongst today’s folklorists is that bagpipes do not mix with brass instruments and often 
the dislike for brass bands from some individuals is clearly visible. When viewed from a 
contemporary Czech folklorist’s perspective, evidence coming from the Blata region 
specifically points to some seemingly unlikely combinations. However, there is 
additional evidence that before the demise of what could be called an authentic bagpipe 
tradition, there was the existence of what can be called “mixed groups.”

Information that provides some interesting testimony comes from an article by 
1950, he visited Josef Jineček, a weaver, clarinetist and band director in Soběslav, who in 
his youth played with a group that still had bagpipes (1888-1891). Zenkl notes that this 
group probably was not from Soběslav specifically, but from some village in the Blata 
region near Soběslav. At first the group consisted of a bagpipe, two clarinets, and a 
violin. Trumpets were added later so that eventually six musicians were playing together. 
Later a helicon was added to this group. After the “demise” of bagpipe music, in 1891, 
panská muzika or small groups of clarinets and brass started. In other words, the bagpipe 
ceased from being used in this “mixed group,” and what was left was a small group 
having similar instrumentation to what may still be heard in the Blata region today.

The reaction against the mixture of bagpipes and brass instruments is nothing new, 
and the article submitted by Luděk Zenkl came under attack later in the year in the form 
of a rebuttal article. This response carries the name, Karel Kaštánek, as the author, but 
in speaking with Kaštánek, he related that the article was really written by Arnošt

103 This reference is probably to the helicon bass.
105 The author visited Karel Kaštánek in Tábor, Czech Republic on August 11, 2006.
Kolář, a priest and well-known bagpipe enthusiast of the period, who preserved much of the tradition and, in addition, had a collection of bagpipes. The article had to be submitted through Kaštánek in order to avoid any problems with the authorities. This fear in all probability had more to do with Kolář being a Catholic priest during the Communist era, rather than the content of the article. Essentially, Kolář wrote that it was impossible to say that bagpipe music died out in one year (1891), as may be interpreted in Zenkl’s article. Perhaps Kolář misinterpreted the intent of the statement, which was not meant to apply to an entire region, but to a particular village or musical group.

Nevertheless, in his response Kolář gave an example of a dance in the village of Želeč near Tábor where there were seven bagpipers that came from the Blata region and played in a virtuoso fashion. He also avowed that there was no evidence that brass instruments were mixed in with bagpipe ensembles and even maintains that the composer and folklorist Karel Weis, who spent a considerable time in Blata, never mentions it.

Kolář seems to have been familiar with the 1954 Hospodář article that provides some detail about the bagpiper, Bartoloměj Brt, who immigrated to Nebraska, as he mentions Brt and some of the same details in his own article. If he was, indeed, familiar with the article, it was conveniently left out that the Brts, having come from Blata, immediately upon arrival in Nebraska played in a trio with a bagpipe, C clarinet, and at least one brass instrument.106

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Another view on the subject is that the addition of instruments to the established bagpipe trio, called *malá selská muzika* (bagpipe, clarinet, and violin),\(^{107}\) ended the true bagpipe tradition. Jaroslav Markl wrote that the late 19th century:

> . . . when bagpipe music tended to be ousted in favour of brass bands and string ensembles, bagpipe trios were expanded to form quintets and sextets of 1 or 2 bagpipes, 1 or 2 violins, E-flat or B-flat clarinet, and a doublebass. The previous quasi-polyphonic style was occasionally replaced by a homophonic style with a sharp accentuation of rhythm. This stage marked the end of the development of bagpipe music in Bohemia.\(^{108}\)

Moreover as bagpipe ensemble adds other instruments, the bagpipe’s importance typically diminishes. Certainly clarinets project more and are able to play more ostentatious interludes. The diminished role for the bagpipe within the large groups that typically consist of E-flat and B-flat clarinets, violins, string bass, and bagpipes may be summed up by this statement, “. . . the bagpipers play a sort of free accompaniments to ‘non-bagpipe’ songs. Fortunately, it is not a rule any longer that bagpipes are [only] included in larger ensembles where they only add a specific tonal color. In fact this is not bagpipe music, but rather music with bagpipes.”\(^{109}\) This is very obvious when the historical recordings from 1909 are compared to the performance practice of today. The music that contemporary groups play is clearly influenced by the brass band movement.

Furthermore, bagpipes in some contemporary Bohemian folklore groups add little or nothing other than visual interest. The constant “hum” of the drone, while providing a tonal foundation in a small group, adds little to a large ensemble, as the string bass provides both the tonal and rhythmic foundation. In addition, the sounds emanating from

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\(^{107}\) With the addition of a B-flat clarinet, this group is called *velká selská muzika* (large rustic music).


the bagpipes’ chanters are rarely heard unless the acoustics of the room are very good. When there is thoughtful scoring and arranging, one or two bagpipes can still be effective in these large groups. But, in groups where a continuous tutti, and, especially the continuous sound of a percussion instrument (vozembouch or Stumpf Fiddle) played at forte is used, bagpipes are not needed.

Nor is the best place to encounter Bohemian bagpipes on a large outdoor stage, as is most often the case for people not closely associated with the instrument. Often there are problems with amplification and balance. The best situation is perhaps to have a gathering in a room similar in size to those that were utilized for baroque or classical chamber music. Village pubs were comparable in size to the music room of a Bohemian chateau. Spaces of this type, for many reasons, are much more conducive to a positive, meaningful, and communal experience, than a performance on a large stage outdoors.
Chapter Six

The Bagpipes of Blata

Bagpipes in Bohemia can be classified using diverse methods. The most basic categorization is to place bagpipes that existed and/or exist in Bohemia in one of two groups: mouth-blown and bellows-blown. Both types could be found in nineteenth-century Bohemia. The conventional, bellows-blown bagpipes in E-flat that are used today in Bohemia are in most cases from the workshops of Lubomír Jungbauer (Vrabinská 648, 333 01 Stod), Miroslav Janovec (Malonice č. 12, 346 01 Horšovský Týn), Pavel Číp (Pod Javorníkem 1043, 756 54 Zubří), Vladimír Kovařík (V Pláni 7, 142 00 Prague), and Jakub Konrády (1905-1987) (Domažlice). The sons of Jakub Konrády, Ing. Jaromír (Plzeň) and Stanislav (Stod), continue the tradition of their father, but at a lower level of proficiency.

Based on research done by the author, it can safely be stated that in the present time there is not a single mouth-blown bagpipe, either of historic or recent construction, of the type and style native to the Blata region of Bohemia, being played on a regular basis. What should not be ignored is that for the Blata region there is no evidence supporting the historical use of bellows-blown bagpipes, other than one exception in the Jindřichův Hradec’s museum collection. This bagpipe (Inv. 29H), made by Wolfgang Šteffek from Újezd by Domažlice, may be dated ca. 1915, a time that can be considered a “late period” for bagpipes in Blata, a period that ended perhaps with the death of František Kopšík (1822-1915) and certainly with Matěj Veselý (1881-[1962]).

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110 Some of the instruments in the museum were collected by the well-known opera singer Emma Destinová, who lived in the chateau in Stráž nad Nežárkou. If the bagpipe was indeed part of her collection, it may be difficult to determine in what part of Bohemia it was originally used.
There is no iconographical or written documentation to support the historical use of bellows-blown bagpipes in Blata. The situation is practically the reverse in museums in West Bohemia, where the great majority of surviving bagpipes are bellows-blown. In some cases, if a mouth-blown bagpipe is found in West Bohemia, a possible connection to Blata may be hypothesized. All of these points indicate that the mouth-blown bagpipe was used nearly exclusively in Blata. Naturally, although the balance of information points to this conclusion, the possibility should not be ruled out that the use of bellows-blown bagpipes occasionally occurred, as not too far north of Blata, in the neighboring region of Kozácko near Tábor, the use of bellows-blown bagpipes is photo-documented.\footnote{This photo is a trio, bagpipe, clarinet, and violin. Based on their national costumes, the musicians could be from the Pilsen region of Western Bohemia. A copy of the photograph is in the collection of bagpipe related materials at the Muzeum středního Pootaví Strakonice, Czech Republic.}

Bagpipes of this specific type and make, or at least from a school of bagpipe making such as the bagpipe played by František Kopšík, may be found in museums and in private collections in the Czech Republic and as far away as Leipzig and North America.

The bagpipes that Kopšík learned to play and played till the end of his days came from a family of musical instrument makers. Of course, Kopšík’s belief that they were 300 years old is an exaggeration. But South Bohemian bagpipes of this type that have survived show considerable age. Perhaps they were made in the second half of the 18th-century from a still undiscovered South Bohemian bagpipe maker, from whose hands unquestionably a half-dozen survive.\footnote{Jaroslav Markl, \textit{Dudy a dudáci - O jihoceských písních a lidové hudbě}, 42.}

It is the author’s opinion that the bulk of these bagpipes are from the first half of the 19th century. This is based on one example, dated 1802 or 1832 (Soběslav 6695N), that
appears to be an earlier example than others. The National Music Museum’s NMM 2289 may be an 18th-century example.

These bagpipes were referred to as *bzíkalky* (blaring pipes), *moldánky* (syrinx bagpipes), *kvicalky* (squealing bagpipes), or *dudy* (small bagpipes). In a published article by Josef Režný about the bagpipes of the western Slavs, a section, titled *Malé dechové dudy* (Small mouth-blown bagpipes), includes bagpipes of the Blata region. Within, Režný theorizes that these bagpipes were called by various names in the Práčeňsko region: *krátké* (short), *kvíčalky* (squealing), *moldáňky*, and in South Bohemia, *bzíkalky*. These terms were likely used in the neighboring Blata region as well.

It is quite possible that bagpipes of that type and manufacture could have been used outside of Blata and neighboring regions, where there seems to have survived a “critical mass” of extant instruments and information. Keeping this possibility in mind, there is, however, little evidence to support the widespread use of them in other regions. Most of the examples found in these regions outside of Blata, were probably collected or otherwise transported to another area, based on their interest as historical musical instruments, not as a part of a local musical tradition. Perhaps the best illustration of this is housed in the Musikinstrumenten Museum der Universität Leipzig (bagpipe #1441 in the Heyer collection, described as “Böhmischer Dudelsack, im Aeußern einem ‘Hornbock’ ähnelnd.”) Obviously, this bagpipe is from the same workshop as are the

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most numerous mouth-blown bagpipes in South Bohemia and for some reason was brought to Germany. In many cases, when a bagpipe of this type is found outside of Blata, there is a plausible, non-musical explanation of how it got there.

In the permanent exhibit of bagpipes at the Muzeum středního Pootaví in Strakonice, nine mouth-blown bagpipes in various degrees of completeness from what is thought to be the same maker or workshop, (at the very least, the same school of bagpipe making) can be seen side by side. Although it may never be proven that the bagpipes are from the same workshop, their appearance does not support any other theory. This situation is somewhat analogous to the historical violins or old master paintings, where it is often hard to tell where the master’s work ends and the apprentices’ begins. It also has been determined that in some cases more than one hand was involved in making these bagpipes (as in the decoration of the resonator bell of Týn 26-808, where two different workers have been determined to have been involved with the engraving) and in some instances parts of the construction may have been divided among various tradesmen in the community. For example, a single bagpipe may exhibit the professional abilities of a turner, saddle-maker, tinsmith, and other metal workers. While it is possible that all of the work could and may have been performed by one person or group of people under one roof, it is perhaps more likely that perhaps a turner (or one of the other tradesmen) had other specialists make the different components. These were then assembled, thereby creating a work of high craftsmanship.

As of this writing, there is very little real evidence as to who made the bagpipes that appear to come from the same workshop. The fact that no single name has been associated with these bagpipes may indicate that they were assembled to some degree.
Arnošt Kolář, who in some ways can be considered a source closer to the tradition than any other, has offered some possibilities. Of the bagpipe makers that he mentions, the following may be best applied to Blata. About 1830, Josef Dvořák made bagpipes in Roseč near Jindřichův Hradec. Matěj Pyxa in Lutová near Stráž nad Nežárkou was making bagpipes in 1820. In the village of Slabčice, Josef Spineček is said to be a maker about 1835, and J. Skála was working in the Strakonice area.\textsuperscript{116}

Since there was a seemingly high concentration of bagpipers in the Soběslav area playing bagpipes where the basic tone of the chanter was somewhere in the b-flat\textsuperscript{2} to e-flat\textsuperscript{2} range (see Chapter Seven for a discussion of bagpipe tuning in 19th-century Blata), there is some possibility that these bagpipes were made in Soběslav. Soběslav was a large enough town to support various craftsmen and it would be reasonable that a maker would be located in an area where there was a reasonable demand for the product. Conversely, the availability of a skilled maker of bagpipes allowed for regional musicians to flourish. Perhaps in the future, a connection to the turner, František Světelský from Soběslav might be made. An advertisement for turned goods of all kinds states that he received awards in exhibitions in Soběslav, as well as in České Budějovice.

This ad (figure 14) appeared in 1905. Although it may be assumed that bagpipe construction of any volume concluded perhaps 20-30 years previous to this date, it is conceivable that the Světelský family members were turners for some generations previous to this, possibly involved in the making of bagpipes. Eventually, after further

\textsuperscript{116} Arnošt Kolář, Dudy: Stručné pojednání o dudách, dudácích a dudácké muzice (Mlýnek: Arnošt Kolář, 1958), 7.
research this hypothesis may be supported or disproved.\textsuperscript{117} This information is included as of this writing because there are no other real possibilities to offer. Access to the regional archive in Třeboň that contains personal data was closed for remodelling during the research period (summer 2006).

Figure 14  Advertisement from the magazine \textit{Staré i nové zvěstí ze Soběslavě a okolí} stating, Turned / production / for all classes is recommended / František Světelský / turner, Choustnická avenue #92 / Medals: Exhibitions in Soběslav / and the Chamber of Commerce in České Budějovice.\textsuperscript{118}

\textsuperscript{117} When this advertisement, found by the author, was shown to bagpipe maker, Pavel Číp at the International Bagpipe Festival in Strakonice on August 25, 2006, little interest was shown. Apparently, he believes the answer lies elsewhere.

\textsuperscript{118} \textit{Staré i nové zvěstí ze Soběslavě a okolí}, 1905, 39.
Chapter Seven

The Search for Bagpipe Tunings in 19th-Century Blata

The topic of tuning and pitch level in the general study of musical instruments is problematic. This has also been found to be the case with bagpipes in 19th-century Blata. The primary motivations for this chapter were twofold. The first resulted from the reconstruction of a Blata-style, mouth-blown bagpipe and the questions pondered concerning pitch before, during, and after its construction. Second, historical bagpipe recordings originally made on Edison cylinder records in 1909 and later mastered onto a CD were released in 2001. After some scrutiny, some of the material included in the accompanying booklet and the pitch chosen to realize the old cylinder recordings were questioned.

Originally, the author thought that perhaps there would be no way to determine the pitch of Blata bagpipes. After considerable study and consultation, this thinking was not necessarily flawed, except in one respect. The subject deserved to be investigated, and much was learned in the process, even though no firm conclusion was ultimately established.

Perhaps the primary motivations for investigating this topic were the conclusions presented in the substantial booklet that accompanied the CD of the Edison cylinder recording.

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119 “By 1888, a cylinder record standard had emerged; it had shrunk in size to a little over 2” in diameter and 4” long, was made of a usually brownish wax-like material – and it was brittle. Early wax cylinder recording speeds varied; slower speeds such as 90-RPM, used often for spoken material, would yield nearly a 4-minute recording, while faster speeds from 120 to 160-RPM (or more) for music would run for around 2 to 2½ minutes. In the late 1890’s, recording speeds were typically in the 120 to 125-RPM range, but by 1902 had settled into a standard 160-RPM,” [http://www.tinfoil.com/cylinder.htm](http://www.tinfoil.com/cylinder.htm), accessed March 21, 2007. Even though at standard of 160-RPM had been settled into by 1902, and Edison made an excellent product, it is possible that some variation in speed from the standard could have occurred during the field recordings. Furthermore, it would certainly be difficult to assure a second playback machine is playing the cylinder at exactly the same speed as it was recorded.

120 *Dudy a dudácká muzika 1909.* (Prague: Etnologický ústav Akademie věd České republiky 001, 2001), CD.
recordings. These recordings may be considered among the best primary source materials available concerning the topic of bagpipes in Blata. This significant publication was released by the Etnologický ústav Akademie věd České republiky (Ethnological Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic) in 2001. The recordings document the performance practice of the Blata bagpiper, František Kopšík (tracks 1-18), and an unidentified trio from the Chodsko region (tracks 19-47).

The value of this product is undeniable, as it has made available authentic recordings that were previously difficult to access. Since we know Kopšík was more than 85 years old at the time, it allows a look into the performance practice, perhaps to the middle of the 19th century, with a modern, easy-to-use format. With that being said, the accompanying material and perhaps the methodology used to realize the speed of the recordings falls short of meeting the standard expected from the premiere ethnographic institution in the Czech Republic.

The product is handicapped with numerous inaccuracies. For example, in addition to the inclusion of a photo of Němec (a.k.a. Švíc) from the village of Mrákov in Chodsko, who is described as a bagpiper and indeed was not, there are assumptions and conclusions made that raise significant questions concerning the bagpipe traditions and specifically the question of pitch used by 19th-century Bohemian bagpipers. It is precisely these assumptions and statements, giving the impression that there are no other possible results that are bothersome, presented as they are amid non-factual material.

121 The author, after purchasing a historic postcard with the image of the “bagpiper” Švíc and a wedding party, went to the village Mrákov to learn if anyone could provide details about the postcard. There he met Anna Kašová who also appears in the postcard. Of all the people in the postcard, she was the only one still living. She said that Švíc [Němec] was not a bagpiper, but only dressed as one for the photograph. This meeting is recreated in the film, Call of Dudy (23°50”-25°33”).
In the English summary, it is stated that the high bagpipes of the Blata region are “Tuned in E flat minor.” The text then continues to outline an E-flat major scale. This mistake does not appear in the Czech text and is likely a mistake in translation; specifically, the substitution of the word minor for major. However, there is an error that does appear in both the Czech and English texts regarding the tonal relationship between the chanter and the drone pipe. “The bagpiper used to play the instrument sitting down, both pipes hung down in front of him, the longer one called the drone was tuned an octave lower with relevance to the basic tone of the chanter pipe.”\textsuperscript{122} In some regions, such as the historically German-speaking area of Chebsko or Egerland in the northwestern part of Bohemia, it is true that the drone and the chanter were sometimes tuned an octave apart. But in Blata, and specifically bagpipes such as Kopšík’s, to which this statement refers, the drone pipe was in fact two octaves below the fundamental pitch of the chanter. Indeed, this was the standard in the region.

Simply measuring the sounding lengths of the chanter and drone of Kopšík’s bagpipes provided evidence that this was indeed the case. Kopšík’s bagpipe is currently on display in the Blata Museum in Soběslav (N4200).\textsuperscript{123} These were graciously made available to the author to examine. The chanter of Kopšík’s bagpipes were measured and the sounding length of the fundamental pitch was found to be approximately 127mm. Consequently, if the drone is to sound a pitch two octaves lower, then the theoretical sounding length of the drone should be approximately (127mm x 4) or 528mm. The

\textsuperscript{122} Tyllner, \textit{Dudy a dudácká muzika} 1909, 118.
\textsuperscript{123} This museum is in the Rožmberský dům (Rožmberk House) and is located on the square in Soběslav, Petra Voka 152. It is a department of the Hussitte Museum in Tábor. The bagpipe (4200N) is on permanent exhibit on the second level.
length was measured to be 515mm,\textsuperscript{124} thereby substantiating within reason that the drone of Kopšík’s bagpipe sounded two octaves lower than the chanter’s fundamental and not one octave as stated in the Academy of Science publication.

As stated previously, the recordings made in 1909 were of František Kopšík, who lived in Klenovice near Soběslav, and an unknown trio (bagpipe, clarinet, and violin) from the Chodsko region. All of the recordings were realized in what they term “Turkish E-flat.” The reasoning for this conclusion was outlined in their publication:

When transcribing phonographic rollers determining the pitch and hence the tempo of the rendering of Chodsko musicians constituted the biggest problem. Timewise the earliest attempts at transcriptions of recordings was realized in the key of F sharp (modern transcriptions on original phonographs at the beginning of the 20th century). The first Viennese transcription transposes the recordings to F, the notes taken down by the collector Ludvík Kuba in the nineties of the 19th century were transcribed in E (whereby Kuba had an absolute ear for music, and his records from the viewpoint of determining the keys were certainly precise). Various historic reports, however, refer to keys which served the most practical purpose for the musicians, notably the key of E flat. A combination of acoustic measurements of historic reports, comparisons of distorted human voices, the realization of the tempo of dance movements finally determined the number of rotations (and hence the key and the speed of the recordings) such as E Flat, but as E flat in the so-called high ‘Turkish’ tuning, which represents the key of E.\textsuperscript{125}

Again, all the recordings were realized in this “Turkish” tuning. One potential problem with this is that the conclusion reached for the Chodsko region was applied to Blata and Kopšík’s playing, apparently without considering alternatives. Kopšík’s bagpipe is indeed written about in a factual manner that it was in E-flat. No other alternatives were mentioned.

\textsuperscript{124} Also, an approximate measurement (measured from the tie on point of the drone to the drone’s end), as the true sounding length is difficult to determine, but it proves the relationship between the chanter and drone is 1:4 and not 1:2 as would be the situation with a drone that sounded only an octave below the fundamental pitch of the chanter.

\textsuperscript{125} Tyllner, Dudy a dudácká muzika 1909, 120.
One can find at least one reference to bagpipes being tuned in E-flat. “They played on mouth-blown bagpipes on high E-flat bagpipes tuned an octave higher than contemporary ones.” A question mark is included in the original text, indicating that perhaps there was some doubt as to the correctness of the statement.

One point in the above block quotation does not need to be refuted. The work of Ludvík Kuba (1863-1956), a well-known painter, musician, and ethnographer, is solid. He transcribed what he heard on the visit to Chodsko in 1893 in E major. But, using Kuba’s work to determine the pitch of the recorded group, while logical, is perhaps not prudent. In the CD booklet, it is written that “The Chodsko phonographic recordings made in 1909 essentially correspond to the characteristics of the music which in 1893 was set down in music notes by the folk-music collector Ludvík Kuba.” Yes, some characteristics perhaps correspond, but a basic attribute that does not correspond between what Kuba notated in 1893 and what was recorded in 1909 is the rhythmic motive of the dotted sixteenth – thirty-second notes. This can be clearly demonstrated by comparing the recording of “Až půjdu z hospody, dáám si hrát” (track #19) and Kuba’s manuscript of “Jestli sem ublížil komu z vás.” These are the same melodies and although the variations are indeed similar, the 1909 recording has an abundance of the dotted sixteenth – thirty-second note rhythm, while straight sixteenth notes are notated by Kuba in 1893. What does this mean? Taken in full context with all of the 1909 recordings and all of Kuba’s manuscripts, the group that Kuba listened to in 1893 and what was recorded in 1909 have enough differences to be considered distinctive from each other. Even more

127 Tyllner, Dudy a dudácká muzika 1909, 121.  
128 The manuscript, Rkp 64 - B 190, is kept in the Ethnological Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, Národní 3, 117 20 Praha 1 (Prague 1).
intriguing is that the 1909 group is likely playing in an older style, very similar to the Blata bagpiper, Kopšík, using the uneven rhythms, than the 1893 group. A possible explanation for this is that perhaps the researchers for the 1909 recording project were looking for the oldest and most “authentic” group they could find. These observations put into doubt the unquestioned use of Kuba’s research to explain the characteristics of a different group at a different time.

Another topic that was not fully explained is how the “E flat in the so-called high ‘Turkish’ tuning, which represents the key of E,” was decided upon. But, after making reasonable assumptions, the Academy of Science’s conclusions may be supported, and for the moment corroboration may be found for their suppositions in the following.

It is believed that Kuba had perfect pitch. It is reasonable that he had this ability, and consequently it was likely based on the keyboard standards of the time, $a^1 = 435$. Since Kuba notated the trio of musicians that he heard in E major, he may have based that on the bagpipe’s drone or the C of the clarinet. It is very probable that the wind instruments being used in Bohemia during the second half of the 19th century were at the same pitch level as other parts of Austria and based on the military standards of the time. He heard the music being played in E major, and it is perfectly reasonable that an E-flat clarinet meeting the standards of the Austrian military may have been used, as all of Bohemia, including Chodsko, was under the jurisdiction of Austria-Hungary.

Two sources were consulted in determining the pitch level of the Austrian Military. The lower is based on the 1880 Austrian Military High Pitch (a$^1 = 460$), and the

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129 Email from Miroslav Brejcha to the author, October 17, 2006. Brejcha is the director of the Plzeň Conservatory and is a pianist.
slightly higher standard \((a^1 = 461)\) is based on the Andreas Leonhardt’s regulations in effect from 1851 to 1929.\(^{131}\) If this is the case, then a C in the treble staff when played on an E-flat clarinet would sound an \(e^2 = 650\) Hz based on the diapason normal, \((a^1 = 435\) Hz), or an \(e^\text{-flat}^2 = 650\) Hz, based on the Leonhardt’s regulations \((a^1 = 461\) Hz), thereby supporting the belief that the groups of the period were playing in the high “Turkish” tuning.

A chart was created to show how this conclusion was reached and the relationship between two standards.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Assumed Piano Pitch of Late 19th-Century Bohemia. ((a^1 = 435))</th>
<th>Andreas Leonhardt’s Regulations in effect from 1851 to 1929 ((a^1 = 461))</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>435</td>
<td>461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A#</td>
<td>461</td>
<td>488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>488</td>
<td>517</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>517</td>
<td>548</td>
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<tr>
<td>C#</td>
<td>547</td>
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<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>D#</td>
<td>613</td>
<td><strong>650</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td><strong>650</strong></td>
<td>689</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 showing the relationship between the assumed piano pitch in late 19th century Bohemia and Andreas Leonhardt’s regulations in effect from 1851-1929. The factor 1.059 was used to determine the pitch of each theoretical semitone.

It appears that this establishes one thing. The groups that Kuba was documenting were indeed playing in the high E-flat of the era and, according to his manuscripts, the trio consisted of a clarinet, violin, and bagpipe. Also, according to his notation, the chanter of the bagpipe in Chodsko would have had the fundamental note e-flat\(^1\). This is critical, as from this point on the subject becomes more problematic.

\(^{131}\) Email from Václav Blahunek to the author, October 19, 2006. Major Blahunek is a Deputy Director of the Prague Castle Guard /Czech Police Band and obtained this information from the book *Vojenská hudba* by Robert Šálek, 1956.
Kuba’s manuscripts were one of the primary factors involved with determining the pitch of the cylinder recordings. Consequently, the original cylinder recordings of both Kopšík and the unknown Chodsko trio were remastered to play in the key of E based on $a^1 = 440$ Hz.\textsuperscript{132} It is the author’s opinion, in the case of Kopšík, that the recordings were mastered onto the CD at a slightly higher speed than they ought to have been. A drastic decrease is not proposed, but if the CD is played on a computer or other playback device where the speed may be varied, it is this researcher’s opinion that a reduction in speed that lowers the pitch between a semitone and a whole tone creates much more plausible renditions. This opinion has not found universal support, perhaps based on lack of interest or an unwillingness to challenge an authoritative institution. Or it may be that people simply agree with what has already been determined by the Academy of Sciences.

Others, however, agree with the premise that the speed of the recordings is realized at a too high rate of speed. Petr Nováček, one of the best clarinetists in Bohemian folklore and music director of the Blaťákův soubor Ševětín, says that at a slower tempo the recordings were “actually better.”\textsuperscript{133}

This opinion has also been reached by Alice Janotová, a recent graduate of HAMU (Academy of Music and Performing Arts) in Prague, whose specialty is South Bohemian folkdance. She says that it was more comfortable dancing to the recordings when they were played 10\% slower. It was possible to dance to the recording at the faster tempo, but it was the upper limit.\textsuperscript{134} Playing the recording 10\% slower also lowers the fundamental pitch modern by a corresponding amount. After a 10\% reduction in speed,

\textsuperscript{132} The author used a Peterson Strobe Tuner Model 450 to determine the pitch. The drone of Kopšík’s drone pipe was found to be within a few cents of $d = 146.83$ Hz.

\textsuperscript{133} Email from Petr Nováček to the author, October 13, 2006.

\textsuperscript{134} Janotová reached these opinions immediately after dancing to various tracks on the CD of Kopšík’s playing on Friday, September 15, 2006.
the resulting frequency, 593 Hz (659 Hz x .9), falls between c-sharp$^1$ (580 Hz) and d$^1$ (614 Hz) by the Leonhardt standard. Although the computer program used to slow the speed of the recording was not capable of being decreased by minute amounts, theoretically, if the recording is slowed down by 11% (x .89), the resulting frequency is 586 Hz (reasonably close to 580 Hz, c-sharp$^2$ or d-flat$^2$ on the Leonhardt standard). At this speed, the recording would make sense from both a musicians’ and a dancers’ perspective.

It is unlikely that country musicians played in the keys of C-sharp or D-flat on a regular basis; therefore, this rate of reduction had to be ruled out. One area that apparently was not considered as deeply as it might have been is the possibility that some clarinet other than an E-flat soprano was being played by rural musicians in 19th-century Bohemia. E-flat and B-flat clarinets were typically used together in the Austrian military bands, but there were other clarinets being played in 19th-century Bohemia. The use of the D clarinet is also possible, and this prospect is supported by information from the Egerland /Chebsko region of Bohemia.

Adolf Huska, a German-Bohemian who was exiled to Bavaria after World War II and founded a sort of hybrid brass band /bagpipe group, hailed from a family of teachers and musicians that lived in the village of Brod nad Tichou by the town of Planá. He recalled that his great-grandfather played on his own bagpipe, tuned in D, and with this bagpipe a D clarinet was used. The violinist had a Bockgeige or dudácké housle (bagpipe fiddle) that was a lot smaller than a normal violin. When a short-necked violin was not available, the strings of a normal violin were tied down in third position (c$^1$ – g$^1$ – d$^2$ –
a²), thereby creating the same piercing effect of a Bockgeige.¹³⁵ Indeed, support for D clarinets being used in Bohemia may be supported by the existence of two incomplete 19th-century D clarinets at the National Music Museum, Vermillion, South Dakota. NMM 10744 made by Höfer of Graslitz, ca. 1800-1825, and NMM 10745 by Tomáš Vokoun, Písek,¹³⁶ ca. 1876-1916, prove that clarinets in D were being manufactured in Bohemia at the same time “short” bagpipes were in use. The book, Hudební nástroje by Josef Hutter, lends further support the usage of clarinets in D in Bohemia, as a D clarinet is documented as being in the collection of the ethnographic museum in Plzeň in the 1940s.

Photo 9  *Dudácké housle* (Short-necked violin, Plzeň 7428) and D clarinet in the ethnographic museum in Plzeň¹³⁷

¹³⁶ Písek is a regional center in South Bohemia located approximately 30 km west of Blata.
If folk musicians in Bohemia played in D, d² based on the Leonhardt standard would sound a theoretical pitch of 614 Hz. If so, one can calculate how much slower the Kopšík recordings should be. If the Leonhardt pitch of d² = 614 Hz is divided by the fundamental pitch of the bagpipe’s chanter that the 1909 recordings were realized, modern e² = 659 Hz (614/659 = .932), then the result stipulates an approximately 6.8% reduction in playing speed. A 6.8% reduction in the playing speed already constitutes a more plausible rendition.

This conclusion is corroborated by a recording made of Matěj Veselý, who may be considered the last authentic Blata bagpiper, and is included in the Antologie jihočeské lidové hudby (Anthology of South Bohemian Folk Music). It is very likely he played on a bagpipe made by the same maker as Kopšík’s (See photos 11, 15, 18 and 19). The author determined that the drone pipe sounded 30 cents below e-flat, 152.89 Hz, based on a¹ = 440. Consequently, the fundamental pitch of the chanter, two octaves higher, is 611.56 Hz and is essentially the same as the 614 Hz frequency of d² at Leonhardt’s standard based on a¹ = 461 Hz.

To find the most convincing physical evidence that Kopšík’s bagpipe may not necessarily have been tuned to the “Turkish E-flat,” one can turn to František Kopšík’s extant bagpipe that is in the collection of the Soběslav Muzeum. This bagpipe was examined on September 18th, 2006, and it was concluded, based on a comparison with the newly constructed chanter by Pavel Číp in modern d² with a¹ = 440, that this historical bagpipe has a strong possibility of being in d² with a¹ = 461. The distance

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between the top edge of the thumbhole b^2 and the top edge of the lowest tone hole of the chanter a^1 (the hole that produces a fourth with an overtone of the drone) was found to be nearly the same, 126 mm (Kopšík) and 120mm (Číp). A difference between the two chanter is the size of the tone holes. The tone holes on Kopšík chanter are larger. Therefore, if all of the other specifications were the same, the chanter would sound higher in pitch than the new Číp chanter. It may not be a 100% confirmation that Kopšík’s bagpipe was in d^2 of the Leonhardt regulations but it does seem to suggest that his bagpipe was closer to modern D than to the historical “Turkish E-flat,” as has been commonly believed, based on the similarity in sounding lengths.

[Photo 10 Side by side comparison of the chanter played by František Kopšík (top) and a d^2 chanter made by Pavel Číp in 2006.]

This proposal has a weakness, however. It must not be forgotten that the pitch of a bagpipe also depends on the reed’s construction. Two identical chanters may be fitted with reeds made to produce entirely different pitch centers. Here lies one of the main variables regarding the pitch of bagpipes.
The author’s hypothesis that the cylinder recordings of 1909 were published at a higher than original speed has received little support from some Czech specialists. In the case of Kopšík’s bagpipe, Pavel Číp does not think that they were necessarily tuned in D.

He writes that it is fairly reasonable that the reed in the chanter may be positioned so that the entire chanter may be tuned a half step higher or lower. He says that Kopšík played on a very hard reed, so that there would be stable tuning, and that is why he could play on the same chanter (but with large holes) a whole tone higher. Číp also states that he does not think that the recording is sped up, and that the proof of that lies in the spoken introduction to the song, “Slovan jsem a Slovan budu” (track #1), which is fairly natural.\footnote{Email from Pavel Číp to the author, October 10, 2006.}

It may be inferred from a visit to the exhibit of Bohemian bagpipes at the Muzeum středního Pootaví in Strakonice that concrete conclusions about key and pitch to this date have not been reached. There, with one exception, the bagpipes are only described as having high, middle, and low tuning; i.e., short, medium, and long chanters and corresponding drone pipes. These categories, using the fundamental note of the chanter, are defined as low d\textsuperscript{1} and e-flat\textsuperscript{1}; middle f\textsuperscript{1}, g\textsuperscript{1}, and b-flat\textsuperscript{1}; and, high c\textsuperscript{2}, d\textsuperscript{2}, and e-flat\textsuperscript{2}.

Among the bagpipes directly related to this study, a mouth-blown bagpipe, short-necked violin, and a musical example in the key of D are on display. This implies that the curators believe that at least some of these bagpipes have a fundamental pitch and scale based on D. This theory may be supported by the use of a short-necked violin and one proposed tuning, of c\textsuperscript{1} g\textsuperscript{1} d\textsuperscript{2} a\textsuperscript{2}, that seems to have been used exclusively with bagpipes. When playing with a bagpipe, one of the roles of the violinist was to play open strings, when appropriate, to accent the rhythm or meter. In this case, a short-necked
violin with the proposed tuning above would be a good match for a bagpipe with a fundamental of d^2. One bagpipe, Prague 347E, on display in Strakonice with a short-necked violin, has a display label stating that the pitch of the mouth-blown bagpipe’s basic tone is d^2.

Conversely, during a conversation with Josef Režný of Strakonice, he reminisced about the same performance, in which he remembered that they played badly out of tune. He stated that the mouth-blown bagpipe, being played with a violin and a clarinet, was pitched in e^2. Agreeing with the Czech Academy of Science’s conclusions, he said that this was due to the tradition of making clarinets in Austria at a higher pitch. Stated in another fashion, the bagpipes are thought of as being in e-flat^2 but really sound as if they are in e^2. It is not clear if Režný implied that this trio was using an E-flat clarinet or not, but photo evidence suggests that something other than an E-flat clarinet was used in this trio.

This photo was shared with Václav Blahůnek, professional Czech clarinetist and leader of the Prague Castle and Czech Police Band, and he thought that it was a C clarinet.\textsuperscript{140} Clarinets in C were apparently not uncommon in Bohemia. A “Bohemian” clarinet in C was said to have been brought with the Brt family from Blata to Nebraska in 1874.\textsuperscript{141}

\textsuperscript{140} Deborah Check Reeves, Curator of Education, National Music Museum agreed that there is a possibility that clarinet in the photograph is in C. Email from Deborah Check Reeves to the author, March 25, 2007.

\textsuperscript{141} Piskač, 13.
Bagpipes and clarinets in C may have been used in the Chodsko region. In numerous conversations with Josef Kuneš, graduate of the Prague Conservatory and instructor of clarinet and bagpipe in the basic arts school in Domažlice, he has always indicated that the mouth-blown bagpipes in the Chodsko region were in C, which suggests, but does not prove, the use of a C clarinet. The idea of the C bagpipe must certainly be based on the work of Vladimír Baier, former Director of the Chodsko Museum in Domažlice and among the most respected musicians of the region, who

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142 Photo courtesy of Etnologický ústav AV ČR in Prague.
maintained that the mouth-blown bagpipes were pitched in C with the fundamental note based on c\(^2\). In his daughter’s thesis, it is written that of the seventeen bagpipes in the museum’s collection, five are mouth-blown bagpipes in C, having a chanter length of 18.5 cm.\(^{143}\)

Baier also offer evidence of when the use of mouth-blown bagpipes in C ended:

In the published recollections of Jan Dekr “Tůmák” (1819-1894) from Zahořany it is written that he attempted to alter a mouth-blown bagpipe in c\(^2\) into a bellows-blown bagpipe in e-flat\(^1\). The above-mentioned tuning was used in Chodsko until the 1860s. Since the time of the permanent addition of the E-flat clarinet in the 1870s in the bagpipe groups, required the bagpipes tuning be changed to E-flat major.\(^{144}\)

In addition, Josef Bauer of Domažlice played on his grandfather’s “golden” C clarinet\(^{145}\) as a youth. His grandfather, known as Soldek, played with the famous bagpiper, Jan Kobes.\(^{146}\) It is likely Soldek lived during the middle of the 19th century.

Realizing the 1909 Edison cylinder recordings in C of Leonhardt’s regulations (c\(^2 = 548\) Hz) would require close to a 17% (548 / 659 = .832) reduction in speed, but 17% is too much of a reduction and should not be applied to Kopšík’s recording. So the key of C can be ruled out in Kopšík’s case.

Perhaps the easiest way to look at the issue is that after the introduction of the clarinet to the bagpipe/violin duo, these instruments were made to conform to the clarinet. As has been demonstrated, the subject of pitch in Blata and Bohemia regarding bagpipes is problematic, so a hard and fast conclusion may not be agreed upon, but the most sensible theory may simply be that after the introduction of the clarinet, bagpipes


\(^{145}\) This probably refers to a boxwood clarinet.

\(^{146}\) Rudolf Svačina, Dudáci a dudácká muzika na Chodsku (Domažlice: Okresní národní výbor, 1990), 79.
and violins were constructed or modified to match them in pitch. As there was a range of clarinets available in Bohemia in the 19th century, there was likely an equal variety of bagpipes.
Chapter Eight

Historical Bagpipers of Blata

Who were the bagpipers in Blata during the time when a true bagpipe tradition could be said to exist? What were their occupations? Were they well known? Were they considered to be good musicians? Were they at all important to the fabric of Blata society?

At one end of the spectrum are František Kopšík and perhaps Antonín Bosák. From all accounts, they were very accomplished bagpipers and certainly well known figures. On the other end of the spectrum, there were at least a few bagpipers of a different sort, as attested to by this account:

As far as the people remember, the town of Milevsko used to be the bagpiper’s boundary city. Those who came to this border used to be either from Třebůň or Týn. I don’t really like those from Týn. Whatever I asked them, they just replied: “Oh, There used to be so many songs, I used to know all of them, but not any more!” I think that the bagpipes were only a cover for begging. Each of them didn’t know more than two songs that they repeated all the time. Bagpipers – All the real bagpipers are gone!147

Assuredly, the vast majority likely fell somewhere in between. They probably knew many more songs than the beggar bagpipers (or beggars that had bagpipes) that went to Milevsko to play, but didn’t play at the high level of Kopšík. There are a relatively few Blata bagpipers about whom we know little more than dates and places of their activity. Fortunately, however, there are also a few bagpipers about whom an adequate view of their lives and activities has been preserved. Accounts of their lives and activities follow.

147 Holas, Zprávy o české národní písni a hudbě: O hudcích, dudácích a zpěváčích, 54.
Antonín Bosák

Specific information about historical bagpipers in South Bohemia is difficult to uncover; and, although always valuable, it more often than not, does not improve our knowledge a great deal. This is not the case, fortunately, in regard to the bagpiper, Antonín Bosák. A valuable article written by Jaroslav Tejčka appeared in the 1947 magazine, Lidový Kalendář. Even though use of the article is made by Markl in his Dudy a dudáci, pertinent information that places the bagpipers role in society was not included.

Antonín Bosák lived in the village of Políkno, southwest of Jindřichův Hradec. He was born in the nearby village of Polště on May 9, 1800. In his youth, he worked as a mason and in the winter as a gamekeeper’s assistant feeding wildlife. But, he was known far and wide for his abilities as a bagpiper. He brought with him his laughter, good mood, and good-natured joking, from the village of Políkno to the south as far as Stráž nad Nežárkou and to the west as far as Blata and on beyond Veselí nad Lužnicí. At one Blata wedding, Bosák met up with another well-known bagpiper, František Kopšík, who was 24 years his junior. During this meeting, the younger bagpiper took it upon himself to challenge the older colleague. Without any doubt, Kopšík was a virtuoso bagpiper. The extant recordings prove this. Bosák in all probability must have also been a very accomplished bagpiper, as well. It is believed that Bosák knew more than a thousand songs, and he played for and arranged, as a sort of matchmaker, more than 700 weddings.

The telling article about Bosák’s activities, available for the first time in English, is included as Appendix 6 of this work. The importance of bagpipers in Bohemian village life may be inferred from the article.
František Kopšík

The pinnacle figure of bagpiping in Blata is František Kopšík, who was born in house #4 in the village of Čeraz near Soběslav on December 12, 1822. His musicianship was praised by a principal Czech folklorist, Jaroslav Markl, who wrote that the recordings by Kopšík that survive:

. . . . clearly show not only the technical skill of the musician, but also his remarkable gifts as a composer. Kopšík created formal and characteristic variations on a given melody that are perfect examples of composition. He also knew how to devise a logically motivated coda. Sometimes he played as many as five variations with a coda, based on an extended theme of twenty-eight to thirty-two beats, without deviating by one beat from the model – a feat of improvisation which a qualified composer could not better.\textsuperscript{148}

An article appeared in the magazine, \textit{Staré i nové zvěsti ze Soběslav a okolí} (Old and New News from Soběslav and Surroundings), dated January 15, 1908, that gives some useful insight into Kopšík’s life:

Recently I went to see an interesting collection at the museum. In front of the entrance into the main hall, there was a figure of a bagpiper and bagpipes in the “selský”\textsuperscript{149} room. An old man stood next to the display, watching it with an obvious joy in his face, but yet, there was a hint of dissatisfaction. All of this might have been caused by the comments of the visitors, of which he listened intently. A good number of people stopped to talk to him; a lot of people knew old Kopšík from Klenovice. The bagpiper being represented was Kopšík and the bagpipes were the ones he played for many years. I started to talk to him and asked what was it that he didn’t like about the bagpiper. He vented his feelings, “Everything was fine, it was just that the face was so pale, he has cheeks like roses.”\textsuperscript{150} He was completely on target as he was clean-shaven and had cheeks red as apples. I consoled him that this would be fixed, and that they would make his cheeks nice and red and with this, he settled down.

No one would think that this chipper old fellow, who had already reached 87, spent most of his life playing for dances in smoky surroundings. Today it is different as compared to those days, when messengers from distant villages came to ask him to come and play. That really meant something, as there were plenty of bagpipers around. František Vašta in Klenovice (2 years older), Janek in Dírná,

\textsuperscript{149} \textit{selský} is Czech meaning something similar to country or rustic.
\textsuperscript{150} Kopšík here is speaking about himself in third person.
Chalupa in Skalice, Kalaš in Mokrá, Řehák in Komárov, Macháček in Vesce and the so called, Jouza in Čeraz. Where are those times? It would be hard to find any youths of today who would want a bagpiper at their dance. Yet, when bagpipes are played at a dance you can dance very nicely to them and the farmers in Skalí would definitely agree with me as Kopšík played for them during carnival, “It was surprising, everyone was dancing.” It would be a big mistake to think that Kopšík ever got tired of playing. “I can play. I’m healthy in the chest, and when someone knows something, it goes by itself. It’s like that in every craft.”

Kopšík was not always in Klenovice. He was born in Čeraz (1821). His father, a village tailor, moved to Soběslav in his early 20s and this is where František attended school. After finishing his general education in Soběslav where his teachers included, Maršíček, Brunner and Winkler, he pastured livestock for a farmer. Later he went to the village of Nedvědice and learned the craft of tailoring from a Mr. Pícha. After 2 ½ years of instruction he worked as a journeyman in town. In 1844 the local master craftsman wanted to make him a master as well. This profession was in high demand. It cost him 90 gulden.

Photo 12 The “Selský” exhibit in Soběslav’s museum as it appeared in the same era as the article that appeared in 1908. Note that there appear to be two bagpipes on the table in addition Kopšík’s.

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151 Likely Soběslav.
152 Staré i nové zvěsti ze Soběslavé a okolí, [1912].
He married, and bought a house in Soběslav. There was a big advantage to this as he did not have to pay the *sobotáles* (school tuition). He became a well-known tailor in the region. He sewed in Zvěrotice, Klenovice, Skalice, Radimov, Nedvědice, Vlastiboř, and Vesce. The payment was modest. Farmers and workers paid 5 groš for linen pants. Linen coats cost 20 krejcar (a groš had 3 krejcar) and overcoats cost 1 tolar. He also tailored cloths for women. Tailors that specialized in women clothes only worked in the cities and worked for city people, those that worked in the village had to sew both kinds. The prices mentioned were just for the labor, the customer was responsible for the material and the tailor would move to the customer’s house until the project was complete. Kopšík did fairly well in this business. “Of course others sewed for less. “But, I had 2 journeymen and 2 apprentices and nothing happened to my livelihood. When I gave the journeymen 1 gilder and 25 groš a week, they grabbed it! We all got something to eat. We ate together. The meals were home made, but when the tailors sewed, they always made something better.”

Photo 13 A ceramic head (shown as well in photo 12), created by professor František Kopecký of the ceramic school in Bechyně (1907). Modeled after František Kopšík, the cheeks’ coloration was an issue of concern for the bagpiper.

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*Sobotáles* was a sort of payment in kind that was brought by the children of the village to their teacher on Saturday. *Sobotáles* was still customary in the 19th century, and, for example, could consist of a meal, firewood, or some other useful items.
A substantial source for Kopšík’s income came from his bagpiping. He learned the bagpipe like this: “My father only taught me to play the violin. But I knew that he always played with some farmer. I went to the farmer with a bottle of liquor. He would play the violin and I would play the bagpipe accordingly. A number of times I played for free when I was learning. Since I was 17 I have been playing music in the pubs. Afterwards my brother, Bartoloměj, learned to play and the two of us played alone.”

“I have played from that time until today. We would play sometime starting after noon, and then at around 3 P.M. the young people of the village came and danced until morning. Each person paid 2 groš. There was no entrance fee or cover, but whomever the musicians stopped by had to pay (that’s how it goes still today). Musicians had a good time and there was enough beer especially. But Kopšík was careful; “I was never drunk while I played. My brother did get drunk. Rum and booze destroyed him.”

As musicians the Kopšíks were known far and wide. “There were no musicians like my brother and myself.” The furthest away that they played was in Modrá Hůrka. They also played in Bzí, villages in Blata, and Neplachov. They played in Roseč, Ratiboř, and Nový Dvůr near Jindřichův Hradec, but mainly in Blata where he bagpiped a lot. In the Kozácko region, the bagpipes didn’t go. There they played “hermonie.” It was a tough business, sometimes dangerous, but you could make a lot of money.

When they were paid in ordinary paper guldens, he kept it in a book under his coat. Money makes a show-off. “One time I went to Horusice and lost plenty of money. I didn’t want to go home. I lost 15 gilders there.”

The village boys liked the Kopšík brothers, but sometimes they teased them. They would stand before the musicians and sing something and the musicians were then to play it. Since the songs were the same in the entire region, it was not very common for the musicians to come across an unknown song. Sometimes, they had to come up with a joke in order to avoid embarrassment. This happened in Bukovsko. “I was there with my brother. They were trying to get us with some song that we did not know, but I was listening. Then one of them said, ‘We will sing to them and they won’t be able to play’ and they said it like this:

V tom bukovským zámku – chytí cikánku –
Hot, lysá, hot.
Ty bukovský páni – chytí cikány –
Hot, lysá, hot.

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154 This likely refers to Bohatá Blata (Rich Blata), as referred to in Chapter One, page 8.
155 The Kozácko region is just to the north of Blata. It is defined on Map 1, page 9.
156 Likely referring to wind music. The term, hermonie, is likely derived from Harmonie. Harmonie is a term associated with chamber wind groups, such as wind octets, that were popular with the nobility in 18th-century Austria.
In the Bukovsko Chateau – caught a Gypsy woman
   Hot, lysá, hot
The Bukovsko farmers – caught some Gypsies
   Hot, lysá, hot

I told that to my brother and he said, We will just play and then we only will say the “lysá.” So what, you can’t play that anyway.
   And when we sang it that way everyone was laughing and the young guys left us alone.”

Although his solo virtuosity is captured on wax cylinders, a recording with his brother, a violinist, does not exist, unfortunately. This combination of bagpipe and violin can be very pleasing.

Kopšík and his wife, Anna, planned to raise both of their daughters in the city. They sent one to Vienna for some time and she returned all dolled up to the point of astonishment. When Kopšík became a widower and his daughters married, he left tailoring and bought the tavern in the village of Zvěrotice. He did not stay there long and moved to Klenovice and ran the pub there. The pub business was eventually left to his son-in-law, Ryba. Even though Kopšík had his own room, he continued to live with the “younger” folks.

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157 It is not unusual to find Gypsies as themes in Czech folk songs. Contemporary Czechs often use the word cikáni, a pejorative, for the Roma people that have lived in Bohemia from Medieval times. “In the Czech lands the Roma demonstrably appeared in 1417, when a Romany group headed by “voivode Panuel” quickly passed through our lands to Germany and Switzerland. It is the first indisputable record on the Roma in our territory (C. Nečas, 1997). Some authors state that the Roma appeared in Bohemia even earlier. They have come to this conclusion based on several written sources, especially a record in the Czech Chronicle of 1242 which speaks of „Tartar spies” who were saying ”kartas bokh” when begging for bread. A record in the Executioner’s book of feudal lords of Rožmberk (1399) is also quoted as a proof of the Romany presence in Czech lands before 1417. It says that in a band of robbers, there was also a ”black Gypsy, Ondřej’s farm hand”. Nevertheless, these records cannot be taken for ascertainable proofs of the Romany presence in our country at those times (C. Nečas, 1993).” http://www.vcvscr.cz/mensiny/doc/manual/manual_eng.rtf. Accessed December 12, 2006. A recommended introduction to the Roma people is A History of the Gypsies of Eastern Europe and Russia (1995) by David M. Crowe.

158 Staré i nové zvěstí ze Soběslavě a okolí, 1908, 104-109.
This situation did not change even when Ryba’s wife died. Ryba did not operate the tavern well. As a result, it was turned over to Kopšík’s other son-in-law, Bouška, who by that time was also a widower (Kopšík’s other daughter), but had remarried. The chipper bagpiper was welcomed early into this family and became “grandpa” to the children of Bouška’s second wife, too.\(^{160}\)

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\(^{159}\) According to Vojtěch Trubač of Klenovice and confirmed by the dwelling’s current resident, July 22, 2006.

\(^{160}\) Jaroslav Markl, \textit{Dudy a dudáci - O jihočeských písních a lidové hudbě}, 40.
Photo 15 František Kopšík, Klenovice\textsuperscript{161}

\textsuperscript{161} Staré i nové zvěsti ze Soběslavě a okolí, 1908, 104.
Jan Pešek

A photo exists of a bagpiper identified as Jan Pešek from the village of Libín. As of this writing nothing more could be verified about Pešek. The bagpipe in the photograph clearly indicates that it belongs to the type included in Chapter Ten of this work, but does not exactly match any of the known surviving bagpipes.

Photo 16 Jan Pešek from Libín

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162 Photo courtesy of the Muzeum středního Pootaví Strakonice. Irena Novotná, ethnographer at the museum writes, “This photo I originally received from the archive of Etnologický ústav AV ČR Praha. It comes from beginning of 20th century. The name of this person was identified on back of the photo, and on the identification card, which they have for every photo.” Email from Irena Novotná to the author, March 21, 2007.
Matěj Šamáček of Dynín

Matěj Šamáček of Dynín played at the Ethnographic Exhibition in Prague in 1895. Although very little information can be found about him, a story exists that illustrates how he was found by the folk song collector, Karel Weis. The story appears in the three-volume collection, *Blaťácké písně*, published in 1898 and 1899. These three volumes are labelled as opus 31-33 and were published by Josef R. Vilímek in Prague.¹⁶³ The first volume is dedicated to Weis’ father, who was in Prague working on a chain bridge, but loved folksongs. Weis, a graduate of the Prague conservatory and a composer and conductor, explains in the introduction to the first volume how he was introduced to Blata folksongs by the bagpiper, Pantlička (Matěj Šamáček of Dynín). It also shows a slice of village life in Blata during the late 19th century:

On one Saturday in village near Veselí nad Lužnicí, Weis met by chance a young man wearing a military cap. It was a reservist with a sparkle in his eye returning from training. Weis told him that he was looking for songs and the reservist said, “You want songs? But here in Y (Wies did not name the village, but only gave it a letter) there is nothing, you must go to village B,¹⁶⁴ there the young people sing and you will see...They have the best time when they come on Sunday afternoon, there is music, so just ask about me and I can help you.” So on Sunday Weis and a friend went to B to find the reservist. They then proceeded to the first pub; it was quiet. Weis asked, “Isn’t the young guy that returned from the army yesterday here?” The response was, “He’s not here but in the other pub.” So they continued to the village square where they found the pub where could be found “panská muzika a výškot.” (Panská muzika was a term used in Blata to denote music without bagpipe; i.e., brass music, while výškot is simply good times). They went in and asked, “Please, is the reservist that returned home yesterday here?” “You have to go across the courtyard and to the right to the garden. He is playing skittles there,” came the reply. Weis went there and at that exact time the soldier, whose eyes were perhaps sparkling even more than yesterday, was increasing the stakes and didn’t even recognize Weis. Weis tapped him on the shoulder and asked, “So friend, how are our songs doing?” The reservist replied, “Sir, you will have to wait until evening, I’ve got two gold pieces in this game and they have to

¹⁶⁴ Probably the village, Bošilec
make it home.” Weis returned to the packed dance hall hoppin’ mad. He decided to complain to the bartender about the soldier and everything. The bartender told Weis, “Why don’t you go to village D. There are not so many youth and they know how to sing. There is nothing here.” Weis asked, “And where is this village D?” “It’s about a half-hour from here, you can always see it,” replied the barkeeper. Weis and his friend made their way to village D and on the village green some boys were gathered. Weis explained what he wanted and the boys just stood there dumbfounded and squeezing their caps as if they all had bad consciences and as if Weis was a fruit grower. Then he explained what he wanted again and finally someone said, “Yup, there lives here old Pantlička – bagpiper – he knows how to sing – there he goes now.” A hunched down, old grandpa greeted them. He had a wrinkled face and a mouth hanging open without any teeth. Weis invited him to sing somewhere in private. The old man at first did not agree, but Weis told him that he must sing. The old bagpiper replied, “I sir, do not know anything. I only know the old songs and I suppose you don’t want those.” Weis replied, “Oldtimer, I don’t want anything else but those old songs.

Photo 17 The village pond and square of Dynín in 2006.
Matěj Veselý

Very little information was uncovered about Matěj Veselý (1881-[1962]), who can be considered the last authentic Blata bagpiper.¹⁶⁵ His father, Martin, was also a bagpiper. Matěj Veselý was from the village of Přehořov and played at the second South Bohemia Festival of Song and Dance in Strakonice in 1956. The last documented performance of Mr. Veselý was at the Karel Weis day in Veselí nad Lužnicí in 1959.¹⁶⁶

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¹⁶⁵ Josef Režný, Partitury dudácké muziky Prácheňského souboru 1949-1999 (Strakonice: [publisher unknown], 1999), 80-81.
¹⁶⁶ Kaštánek, 249.
¹⁶⁷ Photo courtesy of the Muzeum středního Pootaví Strakonice.
Photo 19  Bagpipe of Matěj Veselý.\textsuperscript{168}

\textsuperscript{168} Photo courtesy of Etnologický ústav AV ČR. Very similar to the bagpipes of František Kopšík and Bartoloměj Brt.
Arnošt Kolář

Arnošt Kolář is perhaps one of the most important figures involved with bagpipes in Bohemia during the middle part of the 20th century. He was born near Nová Včelnice (located north of Jindřichův Hradec) on October 7, 1879. He attended school in Nová Včelnice and then furthered his education in Jindřichův Hradec and České Budějovice. In 1912, he was a priest in the village of Trhanov in Chodsko. Demonstrating the strong influence Chodsko often has, it was there that he learned to play the bagpipes and started to collect songs, dances, and stories.

In 1936 he returned to his hometown and started to dedicate his work to the preservation of South Bohemian folklore.169 He was also a member of the Jihočeský dudácký soubor (South Bohemian bagpipe ensemble) that was active ca. 1940-1943 and played mainly in the Jindřichův Hradec region. He died on the May 1, 1962, having contributed much to the preservation of bagpipe lore. His publication, Dudy, a 26-page mimeographed work released in 1958, while perhaps not “academic” (it does not provide sources), presents material not found in any other source.

Karel Kaštánek, a bagpiper who lives in Tábor, is possibly the only man alive today that knew Kolář well personally. During a visit with Kaštánek at his residence, he spoke very highly of Kolář and all that he had done for the preservation and promotion of bagpipes in Bohemia. Kaštánek also alluded to all the problems that Kolář had during the communist era because he was a Catholic priest.

Arnošt Kolář’s influence is not only felt by what he left in his publication, Dudy. His handwriting can be seen on description tags of bagpipes that he collected and donated.

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to the Chod museum in Domažlice. Unfortunately, many of them were water damaged during a fire at the museum in May, 1995. The bagpipe remnants not having a direct association to the Chod region are to be transferred to the museum in Strakonice, where they have a better chance of being studied or perhaps will be restored.170

Photo 20  South Bohemian Bagpipe Ensemble; Arnošt Kolář, bagpiper and Vlach, violinist. The other two men are unidentified. This photo was possibly taken in Kolář’s home, “Na Mlýnku,” near Nová Včelnice.171

170 The proposed transfer was initiated by the author in the winter of 2006, as the Muzeum středního Pootaví Strakonice seemed at the time to be a more appropriate place for the bagpipes, as there was little interest to preserve them in Domažlice.

171 Karel Kaštánek collection, Tábor, Czech Republic.
Chapter Nine

Bagpipers from Blata in Nebraska and Minnesota

The study of bagpipes in Blata is not limited to the geographic area of Blata or even to Bohemia for that matter. During the age (mid-19th century), when bagpipes were still the norm in Blata, the out-migration of people from Blata to the United States was significant. What follows is not meant to be a history of the migration of Bohemians to America, but is included to point out two things. First, there were Blata bagpipers in Nebraska and Minnesota. They were simply part of a larger group of immigrants. Their reasons for leaving Bohemia would be similar to those of their compatriots – the search for better economic conditions and the avoidance of military service. Second, it is necessary to put into context the importance of these musicians in pioneer life.

A number of factors were responsible for this migration. Although Bohemian peasants and farmers finally became owners of their own land on September 7, 1848, there existed strong incentives to leave Blata, one of richest agricultural areas of Bohemia. The conscription of young men into the Austrian military is often mentioned as a reason in families’ oral histories for leaving Bohemia and cannot be underestimated. At the same time, there was a strong draw to places in the new world, such as the United States. The Homestead Act of 1862 provided a system that provided relatively large amounts of land (160 acres) in order to settle the western states and territories of the United States. Since a lot of people in Bohemia linked their self worth

173 Salzmann, 8.
174 The author’s family came from a region neighboring Blata in 1867 and evading military service is one of the main reasons cited for the emigration.
to land ownership, an offer like this had significant influence, as did the luring tactics of railroad and steam-ship passenger lines.  

Two other events that took place must have had a large impact, as well. The battle of Hradec Králové in eastern Bohemia was a large battle between Austria and Prussia that ended in a substantial defeat for Austria. Many Bohemians lost their lives there. The fear of going off to this battle or others like it by both mother and son alike can be heard in the folk song, “Na třeboňském panství,” that is known to have been sung in one of the most well-known Blata villages, Komárov. In this song, two sons receive a notice that they must leave and fight. They beg their mother to pay off their obligation. Unfortunately, the mother has only enough money to pay for one of the sons and the other must go to Hradec. The last three stanzas start with the same words, Žádný tak neplakal (Nobody cried so hard). Thus, it can be inferred that in Blata, as well as in other parts of Bohemia, there was little desire to serve the Habsburgs in a military setting. Consequently, the incentive was high to move elsewhere.

The importance of the conclusion of the Civil War of the United States to increased emigration by Bohemians cannot be underestimated. Although Bohemians were already coming to parts of Iowa and Wisconsin in the 1850s, to trade one’s home country, which at was war with its neighbors, with another, which was at war with itself, would be difficult to fathom. But, with the end of the American Civil War in 1865 and the bloody outcome for the Austrian Empire on the battlefield in eastern Bohemia in 1866,

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175 For a comprehensive study of the reasons for leaving Bohemia and South Bohemia in particular, consult Jerabek, “Czechs in Minnesota.”

176 Čenek Holas, České národní písně a tance, part III, song 221c (Praha: B. Kočí, 1908-1910), 119-120.

177 The assumption is that the young man is off to Jindřichův Hradec, but he could also be off to the Battle of Hradec Králové that took place in 1866.
possibilities for a life of prosperity in America must have been very tempting for farmers from Blata.

As previously explained, the most significant figure in Blata in relationship to the bagpipe may have been František Kopšík. He had a pub in the village of Klenovice and was known “far and wide” as both a tailor and bagpiper. Bartoloměj Brt, bagpiper, and his family lived in the neighboring village, Rybova Lhota. Although the evidence is only circumstantial, there is a possibility that these two bagpipers could have known each other. This is based on three factors. First, they differed in age by only about three-and-a-half years. Bartoloměj Brt was born on August 23, 1819, and František Kopšík on December 12, 1822. Second, they lived at least a part of their adult lives in neighboring villages. Third, they played on same the model of bagpipes made by the same maker during the same era.

All of these factors are significant. It can be assumed that Brt and Kopšík played in a similar manner. Therefore, the recording that exists of Kopšík’s playing helps one understand what was probably played in pioneer times in the United States.

Bartoloměj Brt arrived with his family in New York on the Norddeutscher Lloyd passenger ship, Neckar, on October 28, 1874.\(^\text{178}\) Apparently, they immediately made their way west and settled in Saline county near Crete, Nebraska, buying 160 acres (section 25, Township 8, Range 4 East) on land contract from the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad.\(^\text{179}\) Primarily due to the efforts of Brt’s grandson, Edward C. Brt, Bartoloměj’s story has probably the most documentation about a Blata bagpiper that moved to the


\(^{179}\) Copy of the original deed (record No. 7791) provided by John Brt of Crete, Nebraska.
United States. Edward Brt gathered the information and preserved the story, even though other members of the Brt family had no interest.180

Map 2 This map illustrates the close proximity of Klenovice and Rybova Lhota181

In rural, mid-19th century Nebraska, music and dance would not have been easily obtainable. Any social event or gathering was celebrated with much enthusiasm, and the importance of Bartoloměj Brt and his role in providing an “oasis” from the difficult pioneer life experienced by Bohemians in the Crete, Nebraska area should not be

180 Email from John Brt to the author, October 10, 2006.
181 Autoatlas České republiky a Slovenské republiky 1 : 100 000, (Prague: Kartografie Praha, a.s., 1998), 117.
Life in the strange new land must have been very challenging, if not outright unbearable at times. Although the Brts came nine years later than the first Bohemians, Frank and Joseph Jelinek (Jelínek) and Vaclav Sestak (Šesták), the living conditions for the Brts must still have been a considerable contrast to the long-established and relatively stable life in the village of Rybova Lhota.

The Jelineks had come from the village of Mezná, just six miles east of Soběslav, and it appears that the Jelinek homestead was not only the starting point, but also a meeting place for some time to come, for these Bohemian pioneers.

Those first Bohemians in Saline County, indeed, had a difficult start:

Most of the early Czech settlers in Saline County lived in dug-outs by the river or in ravines. Mrs. Frank Jelinek in relating facts about that first winter wrote: ‘We had to ford the Big Blue River to get to our claim. When we got on the other side, we were frightened by 14 Indians on horseback, but all they wanted was tobacco. Our shelter was a veritable hole in the ground, covered but without doors or windows. It measured 10x14 and 18 of us lived in it all winter. The winter was a hard one at best, but spring came early and brought fresh hope and energy.’

Many of the settlers, like the Jelineks, came from small Blata villages. Today it is not uncommon to find families in those villages who are living on the same property that their ancestors lived on hundreds of years ago. Often it has been productive to visit these villages to gain an understanding of from where the bagpipers came. In the case of Bartoloměj Brt, a fortunate series of events resulted in a meeting with Jiří Brt, a current resident of Rybova Lhota.

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Jiří Brt, currently the mayor of four small villages, including Rybova Lhota, has an interest in his family’s past activities. Even more propitious, was that he had a copy of an article that revealed some fascinating information. It was from the January 1954 issue of the Czech magazine, Hospodár, published in Omaha, Nebraska.

In this article it was learned that Bartoloměj Brt wrote to his son, František, who had just finished serving in the Austria-Hungarian army, that he, Bartoloměj, had decided that he was going to Nebraska. František returned home soon, and the entire Brt family left for Nebraska, including parents, Bartoloměj (bagpiper) and Anna Brt, and their four sons, František, Jan, Václav, and Josef, and two daughters Anna and Kateřina. John (Jan) was already married, as well, and had two children, Jan and Josef.
They made their way to Crete, Nebraska. “When they arrived at the train station in Nebraska, he (Brt) didn’t even have a penny (haléř).”¹⁸⁵ There they were met by Josef Jelínek and brought to his father’s place.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁴ Nebraska State Historical Society Photograph Collections, RG3357.PH.BR
¹⁸⁵ Kaštánek, 248.
¹⁸⁶ Piskač, 13.
The Brt Trio, as they would become known, had their premiere performance in Crete. In the trio, Bartoloměj Brt played the bagpipes, the oldest son, Frank, played the tuba and/or Bohemian “C” clarinet, and another son played a Bohemian trumpet (perhaps cornet or flugelhorn?). In addition to the trio, both daughters of the elder Brt, on this first day in their new home, danced happily in their brightly colored folk dresses.\footnote{Ibid.}

The arrival of a bagpiper in Crete had to be good news indeed. Perhaps the musical culture had advanced, but only eight years earlier, in 1866, some Saline County Czechs celebrated their first Fourth of July on the farm of Václav Petráček, where they danced, sang, drank and were happy. Petráček, however, had to provide the instrumental portion of the celebration, by banging on a plow wheel.\footnote{Růžena Rosická, \textit{Dějiny Čechů v Nebrasce}, (Omaha, Nebraska: Český historický klub v Nebrasce, 1928), 62.} When placed in a musical context on the empty Nebraska prairie, even the most ardent opponents of the bagpipe might reconsider its qualities, when compared to the musical properties of a plow wheel.

Certainly, the arrival of the Brt family and the bagpipe generated considerable interest on the first day, as could be expected. As word spread in the Crete region that a bagpiper had arrived, playing the uncommon instrument,\footnote{Some of the early Bohemian settlers of Saline County were from the region around Mělník, which is located to the north of Prague. In this region, where bagpipes, assumed to have existed there in the past, were probably already unknown in the 19th century and would have been a great curiosity.} everyone wanted to see and hear it. For the trio’s performance the patriarch, Bartolměj Brt, received a handsome reward – a live cow from the Jelínek family. During this time, a gift of this sort was certainly an aid in starting farm life.\footnote{Piskač, 13.}

The Brt Trio later played for neighbors’ parties in the entire region and was very popular. “Not long ago one of the oldest readers of the magazine, \textit{Hospodár}, 92-year-old
W. J. Kottas, a pioneer of Saline county now living in Denton, Montana, wrote that on his wedding day, February 7, 1883, they danced ‘all day and night and part of the next day,’ to the bagpipes played by Bartoloměj Brť.191

Not only was Mr. Brť known as a bagpiper in the region, but he was also the neighborhood dentist. He had a special tool that he called the “Pelican” which he used to pull the teeth of his neighbors. On one occasion his daughter, Anna Husa, even had three teeth pulled at the same time.192

Nebraska was not the only state that received the benefits of Blata musicians. Indeed, substantial migration to Minnesota from the Blata region took place. Among the most uniformly populated areas of Bohemian immigrants in Minnesota were found around the towns of Budejovice, New Prague, Montgomery, Lonsdale, New Trebon, and Veseli.

In an examination of church records, biographies, plus interviews with settlers and their descendants, Milan Jerabek, who wrote a M.A. thesis, *Czechs in Minnesota*, found that there are constant references made to such places as Budějovice, Veselí nad Lužnicí, Týn nad Vltavou, Lišov, Tábor, Třeboň, Lomnice nad Lužnicí, Vodňany, and Bechyně.193 Almost all of these towns are in or near Blata.

Another excellent source that clearly proves Montgomery’s association with Blata is the book, *Montgomery: From the “Big Woods” To the “Kolacky Capital.”* Particularly valuable is the portion, “Czech Villages of Birth,”194 where Montgomery

192 Piskač, 14.
area pioneers are listed according to their villages of origin. It demonstrates that almost all of the Bohemian immigrants were from South Bohemia and many of them were from Blata.\footnote{The 1870 census indicates that in Montgomery Township, there was also significant Irish population, as well as lesser amounts of Saxons and Prussians as well.} Even a part of contemporary Montgomery, known as “The East Side,” was once called Bukovkso after a significant community in Blata.\footnote{Blanche Havel Zellmer, Karen Simon, and Dennis Lambrecht, ed., 78.}

Consequently, the place name origins of these Minnesota communities is clear. The small town of Veseli is named after Veselí, which is located on the southern edge of Blata. “It was Grandpa Vaclav Smisek, who lived to the ripe old age of 99 years, who gave the name of Veseli to the new settlement. The majority of the first settlers had come from Veselí or its vicinity in the old country.”\footnote{Robert M. Bastyr, compiler, \textit{75th year, Most Holy Trinity Church, Veseli, Minnesota: March 1, 1874-September 5, 1949} ([Place of publication unknown]: [Publisher unknown], 1949), [8].} Trebon is named after Třeboň, the fish capital of Bohemia, and is only about 20km south of Veselí in Bohemia. Although village life around Třeboň would have been slightly different than that in other parts of Blata, due to an additional focus for many centuries on the tradition of carp cultivation, there was probably little or no change in musical habits of the people. Indeed, this is confirmed by the number of bagpipers known to have been living around Třeboň (see Appendices 1 and 3). Two Minnesota locations, Budejovice and New Prague, were named for the capital cities of two regions, South Bohemia and Bohemia, respectively.

These Bohemians had difficult beginnings and their lives are too seldom reflected upon:

A saying goes, that all beginnings are difficult. The beginnings of the New Prague colony can be said to be, not only difficult, but very difficult. Let us imagine living in a tall thick forest, poor, with a few or even no dishes, with little or even no supply of food, in a forest where just wild animals, especially bloodthirsty wolves, have their lairs, and where savage Indians, though not bloodthirsty, still
envious of the white man, turn up from time to time. Let us imagine that we should snatch nearly every inch of arable land with our blood-calloused hands from such a kind of jungle – and that was the situation for our first colonists.\textsuperscript{198}

The lives of many of the immigrants from Blata had been difficult, as well, in Bohemia and can be inferred from Joseph Wohnoutka’s predicament, as a child growing up in Blata. He was born in 1869 in Kardašova Řečice and married a woman from Přebořov, the village of the bagpiper, Matěj Veselý. When he was about 8 years old, he was a cattle herder and these were difficult times for him:

Walking after the cattle, always barefoot, in the morning dew, the skin of my feet became cracked, punctured by rocks, and the soles became so swollen that I couldn’t stand on one foot or the other. The cows went into the clover, I cried, the neighboring farmer came out and said I was harming his property and that he would wallop me, but when I showed him my feet he helped me chase the cattle out of his field. After harvest I walked through the stubble, again barefoot, and my feet were all scratched up again. In the fall when there was frost, I warmed my feet by sticking them into the fresh cow pies\textsuperscript{199}

Although lives in their newly adopted land were difficult, most pioneers also had memories of difficult times in their homeland.

In today’s Western society, it is hard, without making an effort, to escape some constant level of noise and recorded music. Everyday sights, sounds, and smells were different in pioneer times. A generous amount of relative silence likely would have been the norm for these rural settlers.

The conditions in the new land were very difficult and foreign to these Bohemians. Perhaps the most crucial change was the fact that instead of living in villages, where there was a fairly tight social structure, many Bohemians were living with their families on


\textsuperscript{199} Margie Sobotka, \textit{Pioneer stories as related by Minnesota Czech residents: Abstracted & Translated From Hospodář (Farmer) Periodical (1906-1930) (February issues only)} (St. Paul: Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International, 2003), 125.
farms out on the plains, at some distance from their neighbors. Therefore, the importance of an appearance by a musician in the early period of settlement on the plains would be very significant socially, as it represented a possibility for future social engagement.

Due to the fact that immigration to Minnesota was by emigrants from regions where a strong bagpipe tradition existed, it begs the question. Should there not be some evidence that bagpipers were active in these areas of settlement?

Fortuitously, there are still people living who can attest to the fact that, indeed, there were bagpipers in region of Minnesota where Bohemians settled. Sibila Turek of Veseli, Minnesota, wrote, “My grandfather Frank Kaisersatt (Kaiseršat) born in 1855 played the bagpipe….”200 He played for weddings and other occasions all his life and “Grandma would sometimes get angry, as she had to stay home with the kids and baby sit … Sometimes grandpa would walk to his engagements, if they were close.”201 She continues, “I’m sad to say that the Bagpipes [sic] burned in a house fire in my mother’s house which was in the country in 1988.”202

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201 Letter from Sibula Mary Kaisersatt to the author postmarked, August 1, 2003.
With further research, it was determined that František Kaiseršat was born in 1858 in the village, Vlkov, which is just south of Veselí nad Lužnicí in Bohemia. He lived until 1941. Sister Anita Smisek, OP, while doing research about band traditions among the Czechs in Minnesota, photographed the bagpipes (ca. 1975), and this image provides important clues about the tradition, as it existed in Minnesota. The bagpipe was of the

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203 Photo (ca. 1975) courtesy of Sister Anita Smisek, OP.
204 The biographical information was found on the site www://awt.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=karolkayd&id=115978, accessed August 1, 2003. It indicates that František Kaiseršat was born in Vlkov. Another source, Montgomery: From the “Big Woods” to the “Kolacky Captial,” indicates he was born in the village Mláka (p. 232). There are two villages with the name Vlkov in the Blata region. One is near Ševětín and one is near Veselí nad Lužnicí. The 2004-2005 Český telecom/Mediatel CD-Rom phone directory suggests that there is a higher probability that František Kaisersatt (Kaiseršat) came from the latter.
mouth-blown type and is an example of same precise variety that could be found in Blata until the early 1960s.

Perhaps another bagpiper was Frank Žižka (1852-1932), who is thought to have been from house #3 in the village of Mazelov, which is located just east of Ševětín. Blanch Zellmer, local historian in Montgomery, Minnesota wrote, “I just remember that Laddy [sic] Kaisersatt telling that he [Žižka] made a bagpipe and using the skin or stomach of a dog for the bellow.”

Photo 24  St. John’s Catholic Church (1914) at Budejovice west of Montgomery, Minnesota. Czechs first settled there, 1856–1860. The first church was built ca. 1868. Nearby there was a general store and Czechs congregated there to dance. The railroad came through two miles to the east (ca. 1878) and there the “depot” developed into the town of Montgomery. In the cemetery, near this church, the Blata bagpiper, František Kaiseršat (1858-1941), is buried.

Brass bands (later, the accordion) are assumed to be the causes of the bagpipe’s ebb, not only in Bohemia, but also among future generations of the pioneers in the United States. Nevertheless, as can be inferred from the following newspaper announcement from New Prague, Minnesota, in 1897, “old folks” were at least occasionally clinging to their old ways.

“Old style social dancing party” given by St. Anna’s society in Topka’s hall especially for old folks. The Bag-pipe [sic] Band of Mr. Tuma of Montgomery will render old fashioned music. Remember that young people are also kindly invited to attend. Admission for gents 25¢.207

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207 “Old style social dancing party,” *New Prague Times*, 4 February 1897, Volume VIII Number 24 p.5 c 2.
The announcement gives the impression that the bagpipe was something old-fashioned and out of date by 1897. It also suggests that by this time the bagpipe was not the norm amongst the Bohemians of New Prague and was mainly for the pioneer generation. Wind bands were already long established in America, but an article that describes the strength of band music also mentions bagpipe activity in the vicinity of New Prague:

For many years, the most important musical center among the Bohemian communities was New Prague. Here were found three generations of bands and at least two families whose members have achieved particular distinction. The first generation featured the Smíšek family of Wheatland Township. During the 1860s and 1870s they were able to muster seven to ten players, the instruments including the trumpet, baritone, bass and cornet, as well as “fiddles” and the Bohemian bag-pipes [sic]. It is said that young people traveled as far as thirty miles to dances in New Prague during the ‘70s and ‘80s because of the fame of its bands.208

Some members of the Smisek (Smíšek) family are known to have come from the village of Ševětín, a small town that lies about 20 km to the south/southeast of Soběslav. Ševětín is currently the base for the bagpipe folklore group, Blaťácký soubor Ševětín, and a number of early New Prague musicians came from this town. In Minnesota, there is at least one more possibility of a Bohemian bagpiper in Montgomery area. After viewing the film, Call of Dudy,209 in Montgomery, Carol Kotasek said that as a little girl she remembers playing with something that could very likely have been a mouth-blown Bohemian bagpipe. She later wrote:

As a young girl growing up on a farm around the Veseli Mn. area, my brother and I spent a lot of time exploring the old items in the attic. All I really remember is a brown/tan leather bag with some green trim and possibly a red stripe surrounding the outside of it which as I somewhat recall may have had a leather or heavy cloth strap and a wooden? mouthpiece? . We had no idea what it was, but we used to blow it up and let the air out of it. As kids we explored everything. Never thought to

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209 Call of Dudy, Prague: Peligroso Productions, 2005, DVD.
ask what it was used for, till I heard you mention the bagpipe. What ever happened to it I have no idea. About 25 – 30 years ago some of the items were moved into town, but the attic was left untouched, due to everything from many years was also stored there, it was I guess considered not important enough to move because they didn’t need any of it to start up housekeeping in New Prague, where they moved to. They would spend the days on the farm and slept in town. It was vandalized many times, and as an adult I never saw what we used to play with. I assume someone helped themselves to it, as what also happened to a lot of items. My great grandparents and grandma left in 1903 from the Sobeslav area, Prehorov was the name of the little village. If it came with them, or on my grandfather’s side, I have no idea. He was born here in the states and never traced his roots yet. He died when I was still young but hopefully some day I will get to know where he also originated from. Grandmas house still stands today although has not been keep up very well over the years, but as precious to me as if it was a castle.

It is most probable, if, indeed, there was a bagpipe in the attic, that it belonged to Carol’s great grandfather, John Vohnoutka (1866-1944). He, his wife, Mary (1867-1954), and their daughter, Mary Teply (1890-1981), all came from Přehořov.

210 Prehorov or Přehořov is the same village where some consider the last authentic Blata bagpiper, Matěj Veselý, lived.
211 Email from Carol Kotasek to the author, October 7, 2006.
212 Email from Carol Kotasek to the author, October 28, 2006.
Chapter Ten

Descriptions of Bagpipes of Blata

The greatest concentration of evidence for the nearly exclusive use of mouth-blown bagpipes in Bohemia is in Blata. This “older” type of bagpipe is described in Čeněk Žíbrt’s *Hrály dudy* (1917), a significant work about bagpipes in the Czech lands:

Bagpipes of this type are put together of parts that may be separated in to seven parts. Of course, bagpipers did not take them apart but carried them assembled even across the fields. On the drone we can see a hook or loop that the bagpiper attached to a button on his vest in order to secure the bagpipe. A small pipe is used to force air from the mouth to the bag and then flows to the two remaining pipes. So that the air does not return to the mouth, the pipe is fitted with a check valve. These bagpipes did not go out of tune, even with the warm or moist air, as is often the case with bellows-blown bagpipes. It often happened that if the leather bag was left to dry, it leaked, therefore making the bagpipe unplayable. To prevent and correct this, the bagpipers would take the bag to the pub and soak it in beer so that the leather’s pores would tighten. It would then stay in the proper playing condition with only the moist air introduced by the bagpiper. It is noteworthy to mention that heated and bent horns from Hungarian cattle, as on today’s types any more.

A significant number of mouth-blown bagpipes exist in Blata today in museum collections and in private hands. Next to these, there is only one bellows-blown bagpipe that could be considered “historical,” meaning that it was used during a true bagpipe tradition; this is an instrument by Wolfgang Šteffek from Újezd near Domažlice that is in the museum in Jindřichův Hradec.

Mouth-blown bagpipes can be grouped into two general categories, high and low, or, to follow the historical Czech terminology, *krátké* (short) and *dlouhé* (long). As of this writing, the “short” bagpipes were popular in the Soběslav area and the “long”

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213 This is likely the longhorned Hungarian Gray Steppe breed, as this was the foremost breed of Hungarian cattle until the beginning of the 20th century. Furthermore, the horns of the cattle appear to be suitable for the making of bagpipe resonators. [http://www.embryoplus.com/cattle_hungarian_grey.html](http://www.embryoplus.com/cattle_hungarian_grey.html), accessed March 19, 2007.

bagpipes seems to have been popular in the Třeboň - Jindřichův Hradec area. This hypothesis is based on historical photographs, written materials, and the location of surviving instruments. Many of these bagpipes, perhaps the vast majority, came from what is thought to be one workshop. Certainly, they came from the same school of bagpipe making. They exhibit great consistency in design, proportion, decoration, and overall appearance. They are mostly concentrated in Blata, but are found in other parts of Bohemia, Europe, and the United States, as well.

The following descriptions will include the “short” bagpipes followed by “long” bagpipes. The amount of time allowed examining particular bagpipes varied considerably. In some instances, bagpipes could only be observed in their display cases, while in others, particularly in Týn nad Vltavou, the bagpipes were made available as often as requested. Information about a few of the bagpipes is based on photographs and information published in collection catalogs and other publications.

The bagpipes in Chart 2 are organized by chanter length, shortest to longest. The chanter ranges in length from 203mm to 240mm. The bores, essentially cylindrical, ranged from 6mm to 7mm. Each hole, thumb (located on the back side of the chanter), 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and dominant, are measured from the top of the chanter to the top of the corresponding hole’s opening. Each hole has two additional measurements. The horizontal measurements represents the distance across the opening of the tone hole and the vertical measurement represent the distance from top to bottom of the tone hole when

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215 The chanter is a primary component of a bagpipe. All the bagpipes included in this work are not included in the charts since in some cases the chanters are missing. Only those bagpipes that had their chanters accessible were measured. The measurements for the Lughoffer bagpipe were furnished by Michael Vereno, Salzburg, Austria.
the chanter is held vertically. In one instance (Soběslav 3907N 339/87), there was a 7th hole in the chanter. This anomaly is addressed on pages 212-213.

This data was then put into graphic form. Again, the data is organized based on the overall length of the chanters (with the exception of České Budějovice 3822 and Bechyně 2698, which were not able to measured since they were either not whole, or since the resonator was not able to be removed, respectively). The dots represent the relative location of the tone hole. Dimensional lines represent the width and length of the each tone hole. Hole number “5” (considered the fundamental note of the chanter) is identified for each case. The exception is České Budějovice 3822, as this chanter is missing its lower half. The bore and length of the chanters are plotted as well. In Graph 1, the bore curve (plotted with triangles) is quite flat indicating that the diameters of the bores are similar and vary no more than a millimeter. The chanter curve (plotted with circles) shows that the gentlest part of the curve reflects chanters having an overall length of 208 mm to 220 mm. Seven of the twelve chanters measured, fall into this category.
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<th>Location</th>
<th>Dimensions (Horizontal)</th>
<th>Dimensions (Vertical)</th>
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</tbody>
</table>
Graph 1 “Short” bagpipe chanter dimensions
The drone lengths of a selected number of the previously mentioned bagpipes were measured. These measurements carry a tolerance of +/- 50mm, as it is difficult to measure these accurately.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bagpipe</th>
<th>Drone length</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Týn nad Vltavou 26-808</td>
<td>500mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soběslav 4900N (Kopšík)</td>
<td>515mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soběslav 3902N 334/87</td>
<td>530mm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Netolice 3661</td>
<td>500mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>České Budějovice</td>
<td>413mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>České Budějovice N3822</td>
<td>474mm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Owner and Location: Městské muzeum Týn nad Vltavou (The City Museum of Týn nad Vltavou).

Identification: 26-808

Photo 26 Týn nad Vltavou 26-808
Týn 26-808 is a bagpipe that was used by František Slepička (1851-1937), who lived on a *samota* (farm that stands by itself) near the village of Všemyslice, located about five km to the west of Týn nad Vltavou. Most often farms in Blata are clustered together to form villages, but a *samota* is a farm or dwelling that is separated from other farms, as is the practice in North America. Slepička’s dwelling was located near a forest below the hill called Zdoba. Slepička was trained as a weaver and produced linen goods. When Josef Režný was commissioned to repair the bagpipes for the Týn City Museum in 1976, he first learned of the bagpiper, Slepička, since his name was noted on the identification tag of the instrument. He then went forward and made contact with residents of the area to document their accounts of the bagpiper, Slepička.\(^{216}\) According to Karel Landík of Neznašov, “When I was a small boy, I went with my mother to the Slepička place. Slepička knew my mother well and said to her, ‘Mary, wait, I will play something for you.’ He reached into the wardrobe and pulled out something that looked like two pipes for smoking; one he put across his shoulder and played. It was the song, *U panskýho dvora můj Vitoušek orá* . . .”

Currently, the greatest enigma is exactly by who, when, and where the specific type of bagpipe that Týn 26-808 represents was made. Because there is a high level of regularity and quality in the construction, it is almost certain that it was not made in a factory (factory making of bagpipes occurred in the 20th century at the Czechoslovak government’s conglomerate, Amati, where bellows-blown bagpipes of questionable quality were mass-produced in the town of Sedlčany). The most likely situation is that the bagpipes were produced in a small workshop where more than just bagpipes were being made. What can be learned from the decoration of Týn 26-808 is that it appears

\(^{216}\) Režný, *Po stopách dudáků na Prácheňsku*, 223.
that at least two workmen in this shop had a part in building the instrument. This is based on the ornamental hearts and decorations on the resonator bells, both of which have hearts with stars hanging from the hearts’ points.

![Image of resonators]

**Photo 27 Týn 26-808, resonators**

There is no reason to believe that these resonators do not belong together; they are a matched pair. The heart of the drone resonator is seemingly done in more detail; the curves are gentler and have a different character. Hence, the heart design and “hanging” stars are surely done by two different artisans. But what is telling is that creator of the heart on the drone resonator appears to have had a hand in the decoration of the chanter resonator too. Near the attachment point of the sheet brass to the cow horn component of the chanter resonator, the decoration of “U” shape waves was very probably engraved by the same person who did the heart of the drone resonator.
Photo 28 Týn nad Vltavou 26-808, Detail of drone resonator

Photo 29 Týn nad Vltavou 26-808 Detail of chanter resonator
Another item of interest is the repair of the bag. The repair is in a similar location as that of NMM 2289. But the repair is of a somewhat different style. Instead of simply gathering up and tying together some of the bag material, a wood plug was used. This may signify that the hole was larger than what could be repaired by simply gathering up the surrounding leather.

![Photo 30  Týn nad Vltavou 26-808, wood plug](image)

The drone and chanter stocks appear to have been replaced. They are not of the same quality of workmanship as the other wooden pieces. In particular, the stock in which the blowstick would fit is of lesser craftsmanship.

A problem that occurs, while playing bagpipes of this type, is how to keep the weight of the instrument from being solely supported by the hands on the chanter stock and to some degree by the blowstick as well. On Týn 26-808 there is a nicely executed
loop of cloth closed with a button and button hole that would have been attached to a belt or other article of clothing. A portion of the loop is further sewn across its width and therefore is securely attached to the drone pipe. A small feature of this loop is that there are two green balls, apparently only for decoration. This simple solution would have helped significantly to suspend and stabilize the bagpipe and relieve unnecessary strain on the hands and fingers.

![Photo 31 Týn nad Vltavou 26-808, cloth loop](image)

There is a unique decoration on the ferrule on the elbow of the chanter resonator. That particular design has not been found to date on any other bagpipes in the Czech Republic, in Blata or elsewhere. At first glance, it appeared to be expert handwork. Upon further inspection, however, it was determined that the design, consisting of roses and
rose leaves, is merely a segment of a roller-milled\textsuperscript{217} ribbon of brass with this motif, although it creates a nice effect. The joint that the maker made to bind the ends of this segment is highlighted by the light’s reflection in the photograph below.

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{photo32.jpg}
\end{center}

\textbf{Photo 32 Týn nad Vltavou 26-808, elbow ferrule}

Since the chanter resonator is separated from the brass elbow, there is a good opportunity to examine the socket. It appears that the male portion of the socket, hewn from horn, was merely cut with some sharp knife or other sharp instrument.

\textsuperscript{217} Roller milling was already known in parts of Austria by the 17th century. See http://www.oenb.at/en/ueber_die_oenb/geldmuseum/oesterr_geldgeschich/neuzeit/on_the_threshold_to_the_modern_age_innovative_tyrol.jsp, accessed March 18, 2007.
The brass portions of the resonators are attached to the horn part with standard screws. These are later repairs. Originally, there were very likely rivets, as appears on other bagpipes of this type. After time, they loosened and then were replaced with screws.
According to Irena Hájková,\textsuperscript{218} curator of the museum in Týn nad Vltavou, who is trained in bobbin lace making, embroidery, and textile preservation, the origin of the leather for the bag cannot be determined. She did, however, put forth theories of how the bag might have been sewn together.

\textbf{Photo 35 Týn nad Vltavou 26-808, detail of stitched leather seam}

The theory is that holes were first punched through the leather and then later sewn together in the fashion illustrated below, using two separate threaded needles.

\textsuperscript{218} Conversation with Irena Hájková in Týn nad Vltavou, July 26, 2006.
Týn nad Vltavou 26-808 also provides an opportunity to describe the decoration of bagpipe drones. The materials used include wood, bone, brass, and another metal.

Photo 36 Týn nad Vltavou 26-808, drone decoration
Owner and Location:  Národopisné muzeum Plzeňska (Ethnography Museum of the Pilsen Region)

Identification:  31671
In the Ethonographic museum in Pilsen there is a mouth-blown bagpipe in a relatively good state of preservation. This bagpipe appears in Josef Hutter’s book, *Hudební nástroje* (Musical Instruments), a book that provides general descriptions of musical instruments.219

The blowstick of this bagpipe is not typical. While most bagpipes have a two-piece blowstick, consisting of wood and brass sections, this blowstick is of three piece construction, with a wooden section coupled by a brass connector to a section perhaps constructed of bone. It may be surmised that this blowstick is a replacement, as are all three of the stocks for the blowstick, chanter, and drone.

The chanter shows that it has suffered damage since its inclusion in the museum. The chanter is broken out between number 3 and number 4 tone holes. These are clearly shown to have been in a good state of preservation in an earlier photograph of the instrument in Josef Hutter’s *Hudební nástroje*.

While a number of these bagpipes may have travelled far outside of Blata during the time of their use or perhaps even as new instruments, it is more likely, if a bagpipe is found today some distance from Blata, that this emmigration happened after the tradition in Blata ebbed. Plzeň 31671 is an example of this. Without any documentation, one would expect that it was used in the Plzeň region in West Bohemia. The museum’s catalog card reveals that this bagpipe was sold to the museum by Josef Starhoň on April 24, 1941. He gave his address as Široká 10, České Budějovice. The most important piece of evidence that comes from this card is that the bagpipe came from the village of Malešice. Malešice is located approximately 10 km southwest of Týn nad Vltavou.

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Figure 15  Copy of Ethnography Museum of the Pilsen Region's catalog card for inventory 31671.

Here follows the text in Czech and immediately below it a translation.

**Heslo**
Hudební nástroje lidové

**Popis předmětu**
Dudy k nafukování s hnědým hrubým koženým měchem, krouženými trubkami, s kostěnými kroužky a mosaz. kováním. Menší velikost

**Původ:**
Z Malešic
300

**Číslo invent.** 31671
**Umístěno**

**Prodal, dne** 24/4 1941
Josef Starhoň
Čes. Budějovice
Široká 10

**Entry Heading**
Folk music instruments

**Description of object**
Mouth-blown bagpipe with brown, rough, leather bag, with turned pipes with rings of bone and forged brass. Smaller size.

**Origin**
From Malešice
300

**Sold, Date** April 24, 1941
Josef Starhoň
České Budějovice
Široká 10

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220 This is perhaps the price that the museum paid.
**Owner and Location:** Jihočeské muzeum v Českých Budějovicích (The South Bohemian Museum in České Budějovice). Currently on display in Strakonice.

**Identification:** N/A

![Unnumbered bagpipe on display in Strakonice](image)

**Photo 38 Unnumbered bagpipe on display in Strakonice**

This bagpipe is another example on display in Strakonice. It appears to be complete. It is unique in one respect. The distinctive decoration around the circumference of the lower portion of the drone resonator has not been noticed on any other bagpipe of this type. As with many bagpipes, the bag has been repaired. Here it is repaired, as is usually the case, near the stocks. This makes sense, because this is the area that would be flexed most often and wear most quickly. A reed assembly of bone, cane, and string is also on display. Again, it is similar to other examples. In the display case is a photograph of Jan Pešek from Libín (see Photo 16). While this photograph helps put
the bagpipe in some sort of context, this instrument is obviously not Pešek’s bagpipe, because the decorations are not consistent.

Photo 39  Detail photo showing the unique decoration of this bagpipe

Identification: 347E

Photo 40 Mouth-blown bagpipe and short-necked violin

This is another typical South Bohemian, mouth-blown bagpipe. It is missing its blowstick. Although not clearly visible in this photo, the same decorations may be observed here as are found on Týn 26-808.

The short-necked violin in the photo is on loan from the Krajské muzuem Cheb (Regional Museum of Cheb) in Cheb (Eger), western Bohemia. According to the display label, the violin is signed by Andreas Kongs., 1709.

Identification: 820E

Photo 41 Overall view of 820E

This is another fine example of a mouth-blown Boehmian bagpipe. It, too, is missing its blowstick. What is most interesting about this bagpipe are the small “leaf” decorations found on the resonators. Only one other bagpipe is known to have these decorations. It is a bagpipe, privately owned by Rudolf Lughofer, that is presented later in this chapter (see pages 148-150).
A photo is on display with the bagpipe. In the photo is Matěj Veselý, a bagpiper from the village of Přehořov. The bagpipe in the photo with Veselý is a different bagpipe than 820E.

Photo 42  820E detail showing the “leaf” pattern
Owner and Location: Krajské museum Cheb (Regional Museum of Cheb).

Identification: HN69

Photo 43 Cheb HN69 Drone and chanter resonators

Photo 44 Cheb HN69 Drone pipe

What appears to be parts of bagpipes that originated in South Bohemia are preserved in the regional museum in Cheb, in far northwestern Bohemia. In all three of
these images, it is clear that these bagpipe remnants are from the same workshop as many of the bagpipes included in this chapter. A high quality of workmanship and aesthetics is visible.

In examining all the bagpipe remnants in the Cheb collection, it was learned that there was not the same consistency of artifacts found in the museums in South Bohemia. There seem to have been many more “one-of-a-kind” artifacts in the Cheb museum than in the museums in South Bohemia, indicating that perhaps in the Cheb region there was not one particular, well-known maker of mouth-blown bagpipes in the early- to mid- 19th century.

Photo 45  Detail of the drone pipe of Cheb HN69
Owner and Location: Miroslav Stecher, České Budějovice, Czech Republic

Identification: Private collection

Photo 46 Bagpipe owned by Miroslav Stecher

This is another example of a mouth-blown South Bohemian bagpipe. It is owned by Miroslav Stecher, a well-known bagpiper in the region who has been for many years
the musical director of the group, Úsvit, based in České Budějovice. In addition, Stecher has held other responsibilities, such as leading the Czech bagpipers in the final parade of the International Bagpipe Festival in Strakonice.

Stecher bought this bagpipe and made repairs. Some non-original parts may easily be seen, such as the bag, drone pipe elbow, chanter and drone stocks, and the wooden part of the blowstick.

It is obvious that the drone pipe’s elbow that connects it to the resonator is not original. This elbow’s angle is too small. To be repaired correctly, a new elbow would have to be made, so that the top of the resonator just barely touches the drone pipe and, at this point, is secured with a narrow leather sinew.

Even though many of the original parts have been replaced, the balance of the components clearly stem from the same workshop as the other bagpipes, as proved by the heart design on the bells and the drone pipe’s decoration.
**Owner and Location:** Muzeum středního Pootaví Strakonice, Strakonice

**Identification:** Strakonice 11553

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Photo courtesy of Josef Režný.

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This bagpipe exhibits many features similar to the other bagpipes, with the exception of the chanter. The chanter seems to be from another maker, otherwise not included in this study. The chanter’s resonator bell does not exhibit the quality of

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221 Photo courtesy of Josef Režný.
workmanship that others do. Perhaps it is a replacement or was made by an apprentice. The blowstick is unique, as a match to it has not been found. It appears to be completely made of wood. Most blowsticks are made of some combination of wood, brass, and sometimes bone. Not having examined this bagpipe closely, it is difficult to discern if all of these components come from one workshop, since, as has been demonstrated many times, bagpipes were pieced together and crossed the benches of craftsmen having varying abilities. This seems to be especially true of the blowsticks, as it is not possible to find two that are an exact match.

Photo 48 The bagpipe as it may be seen today in an exhibition in Strakonice

At one time the bagpipe’s resonators and brass parts were polished. The residue that was left in the grooves of the engraved decorations has provided an opportunity to see the motifs very clearly.
Photo 49  Detail of the drone resonator with the typical decorative pattern.

The decoration at the point of attachment between the horn and brass components of the drone resonator is of particular interest. Here is demonstrated a sort of philosophy of artisan. They strove not for perfection, but for quality. Here it is obvious that the decoration is not perfect, but it is of good quality and is effective. The rivets securing the brass portion of the resonator to the cow horn portion are slightly different than those seen on other bagpipes. They are not quite as large, but are made up for by number.

All of the components – the support band, the engraving, the cow horn, and the brass resonator – when viewed together, make for a pleasing effect.
Another very special detail of this bagpipe is the two ferrules near the lower end of the drone pipe. Again, these are unique, as no other bagpipe is known to have these same decorations. It is fascinating how similar some of these bagpipes are, but never are two exactly the same. There is often a different order and number of bone rings installed on the drone pipe. It shows that the maker was not satisfied with repeatably making the same model without any variation. It is a small detail and barely noticeable, but these two ferrules and bone rings add much to the aesthetic of this instrument and set it apart from the others.
Photo 51  Non-typical minute engraving at the bottom end of the drone.
Owner and Location:  Rudolf Lughoffer, Kremsmunster, Austria

Identification:  Private ownership

Photo 52  Bagpipe of Rudolf Lughoffer

222 Photograph by Michael Vereno, Salzburg, Austria.
This bagpipe appears in Josef Režný’s book, *5000 let s dudami* (p. 81).

The “leaf” pattern that is stamped near the distinctive pearl pattern ties this bagpipe to one already described, Praha 820E. These are the only two bagpipes presently known to have this decoration.

Lughofer bought this bagpipe at a flea market in Austria. He had to buy it from two sellers, since part of the bagpipe was at one stand and the resonators were for sale as drinking vessels at a nearby table.

This appears to be a very fine example. While the photos provide many details and insights into bagpipe construction, of particular interest is that a small hole can be clearly seen on the backside of the ring that tunes the chanter, located near the bottom of the chanter. This feature is found on the minority of surviving bagpipes. Unfortunately, it is hard to determine how prevalent this feature was, as often this entire ring has been lost.

One can also see the lap-seam construction the of brass portion of the resonators. This is very typical for this class of bagpipes. The interior of the drone resonator is also shown. It clearly shows that punching indentations fairly deeply in brass at very close intervals creates the pearl design. Overall, this is a nicely preserved bagpipe.
Photo 53 Details of bagpipe owned by Rudolf Lughofler
Owner and Location: Jihočeské muzeum v Českých Budějovicích (The South Bohemian Museum in České Budějovice). Currently on display in Strakonice.

Identification: N/A

Photo 54 Overall view of a bagpipe belonging to the South Bohemian Museum in České Budějovice

Here is yet another example owned by the South Bohemian Museum in České Budějovice, Czech Republic. Like many of these bagpipes, it is missing its blowstick. It has many of the typical features of a South Bohemian bagpipe such as the pearl decoration on the drone and chanter resonators and bone rings and brass ferrules on the drone that enhance the appearance and at the same time help prevent the drone from cracking. The bag also appears to be of a typical size.

One particular feature is the turning device used to tune the dominant tone. As is clearly visible in the photo, it is merely a portion of a Y-shaped twig that was found to be appropriate for this task. This seems to have been the standard for these bagpipes. If
there was a manufactured turning device that was used with this type of bagpipe, none are known to survive.

Photo 55 Chanter detail of the České Budějovice bagpipe with the Y-shaped twig used as a tuning device.
**Owner and Location:** České muzeum hudby (The Czech Museum of Music), Karmelitská 2, 118 00 Prague 1. Národní muzeum Praha. Currently on display in Strakonice.

**Identification:** 821E

![Photo 56 Chanter pipe and drone pipe and respective resonators](Image)

These nicely fashioned drone and chanter assemblies include a decorative pearl design with hearts. The drone pipe is particularly nice. The bone rings have two grooves on each of their sides. These are not perfectly matched to each other; but, the quality is good, demonstrating that quality was more important than trying to make everything look exactly the same.
The drone pipe is missing one of its inlaid bone pieces. This affords a view of the depth of the inlay. A hole is drilled all the way through the wooden ring. Again, it can be seen that the bone inlay was not done perfectly. The inlay nearest the top is flush with the surface of the ring, while the inlay immediately below lies at least partially below the surface of the ring. These are only small details in the construction, and do not detract from the overall beauty of the instrument. It may even create a more natural effect than if the decoration was produced to more precise standards.

Photo 57  Detail of drone decoration, demonstrating high quality turning and a missing bone insert.
**Owner and Location:** Národní muzeum – Historické muzeum – Národopisné oddělení (National Museum Ethnographical Division).

**Identification:** 45191

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**Photo 58 45191**

Another division of the Czech Republic’s National Museum is the Národopisné muzeum (Ethnographic Museum) that is located at Kinského zahrada (Kinský park). In the fall of 2005, the entire restoration of the summer palace of the Kinský family and the installation of new ethnographic exhibits was completed.

The bagpipe remnants are remarkably similar to the previous example, 821E. Without any doubt, they are from the same workshop. Included are some particularly nice examples of orignal reed assemblies. The photograph below clearly shows the reed construction that seems to be typical for these bagpipes. On the tip of the reed bodies,
made of bone, there is one large groove, along with smaller grooves. These help the bagpiper to get a better grip on the reed, if the reed needs to be moved higher or lower in the drone or chanter pipe. Usually this is done in order to quickly adjust the overall pitch of the drone or chanter pipe or to remove the reed completely.

Photo 59 Original reeds of 45191 (chanter reed top; drone reed bottom)

A small amount of wax may be seen on the larger drone reed. This was also used to adjust the pitch of the drone. A small quantity of beeswax adds mass to the reed tongue. As a result the reed vibrates at a lower frequency. Beeswax can be added for other reasons, to change the fibre of the reed or to stabilize the reed. Beeswax was an important substance tuning individual pitches of the chanter. Although seldom noticed on the “short” bagpipes of Blata (but found on Soběslav 3907N), bagpipers certainly adjusted pitches of individuals pitches with the aid of beeswax on the bellows blown Bock bagpipes used in Bohemia. They either added wax to the edge of tone holes (preferably the upper edge), making the opening smaller and thereby lowered the pitch,
or removed the wax, making the opening larger and thereby raised the pitch. Bagpipers who played the *Bock* style of bagpipe stored the supplementary wax in an ear of the bagpipe’s stylized goat head.

Photo 60  45191  Detail of drone resonator

Photo 61  45191  Chanter and chanter resonator
Photo 62  45191 Detail of drone resonator

Photo 63 Blowstick included in inventory 45191 that shows a unique rubber cushion wrapped around it.
**Owner and Location:** Department of the Blatské museum in Soběslav, located in the Rožmberk house on the square in Soběslav. The museum is under the administration of the Hussite Museum in Tábor.

**Identification:** 3909N 341/87

Photo 64 Overall view of Soběslav 3909N 341/87

This bagpipe remnant in Soběslav lacks a common characteristic. The drone’s decoration is very similar to the bagpipes listed immediately previously, except that the bone inlay was never incorporated into its design.

Photo 65 Detail of heart motif 3909N 341/87
Owner and Location:  Národopisné muzeum Plzeňska (Ethnography Museum of the Pilsen Region). On display in Strakonice.

Identification:  14562

Photo 66 Plzeň  14562

An incomplete bagpipe, consisting only of the bag, stocks, and most of the drone pipe, was sold to the Plzeň museum in 1930 by Starhoň, the same individual that sold Plzeň 31671 to the museum in 1941. No address for Starhoň or place of origin is listed on the catalog sheet.

The drone decoration is most similar to that of the two previous bagpipes, National Museum Ethnographical Division 45191 and The Czech Museum of Music 821E.
Photo 67 Detail of Plzeň 14562 showing circular bone inserts, a decorative characteristic that may tie bagpipes having bone ring decorations with ones that do not.

In this case, the bone inlay has been installed at different levels. In the photograph above, the one furthest left is flush and the remaining two are below the surface of the wooden ring.

The bagpipe is missing many parts. The absence of some of these parts allows one to see how rings and ferrules where slid onto a bare drone pipe, not only to enhance its appearance, but to help keep the wood from cracking.
Owner and Location: Jihočeské muzeum v Českých Budějovicích (The South Bohemian Museum in České Budějovice).

Identification: N3822

Photo 68 České Budějovice N3822

This elegant example, more modestly decorated than others, appears to come from the same workshop as many of the other bagpipes. Certainly, the drone resonator appears that it could be from the same workshop.

The chanter has been broken and its resonator is missing as well. Otherwise, the bagpipe is a typical South Bohemian, mouth-blown model. The drone reed assembly was found to exist and its reed body, apparently made of bone, does not appear to be made as
elegantly as others. The cane reed is attached by what appears to be cotton cloth. This is somewhat unusual and may not be authentic.

Another matter of interest regarding this reed are the knife marks that can clearly be seen near the tip of the reed. The bagpiper was certainly making adjustments in terms of pitch and timbre.

Photo 69 Detail of drone reed. České Budějovice N3822
**Owner and Location:** Jihočeské muzeum v Českých Budějovicích (The South Bohemian Museum in České Budějovice).

**Identification:** N/A

Photo 70  Bagpipe remnant in České Budějovice

Another bagpipe remnant that is part of the rich collection at South Bohemia’s regional museum is missing many of its components, such as portions of its drone and both resonators.

Bagpipers devised various ways to help them hold a bagpipe. This example has a belt that probably went around the waist of the player. Another interesting feature is that
the seam of the bag is supported by black leather. Perhaps this is a later addition or a
replacement bag. In any case, it is visually striking.

Another example of the Y-shaped twig, a simple yet effective device, is with this
bagpipe. It can be assumed that this twig was with the bagpipe for many years, as it
appears to be broken in nicely. A simple v-wedge is cut into the shaft. This is the
functional part that permits the dominant note to be tuned with the drone.

Photo 71 Detail of an example of a typical tuning device that tunes the lowest
tone hole of the chanter to produce the interval of an octave and a fifth
between the drone and chanter.
**Owner and Location:** Nebraska State Historical Society, Museum of Nebraska History, Lincoln, Nebraska, U.S.A.

**Identification:** 7446-1

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**Photo 72 The bagpipe of Bartoloměj Brť**

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223 Nebraska State Historical Society Photograph Collections, 9090 QC176. The bagpipe was brought to Nebraska in 1874.
It is fortunate that we know something about the history of this instrument. It (Brt 7446-1) was played by Bartoloměj Brt of Rybova Lhota and brought to Crete, Nebraska, in 1874. It is a very close match to the bagpipe Kopšík 4200N. This is not surprising, as the owners of these two bagpipes were contemporaries and lived near Soběslav, only a few kilometers from each other.

It is hard to imagine the meaning that Brt 7446-1 instrument must have had to Brt and his countrymen on the barren prairie of Nebraska. It certainly must have been an important link to “the old country” and provided many hours of entertainment. It has many typical characteristics caused by frequent use. The resonators are dented. The elbow of the drone’s resonator has been reinforced at some point after its manufacture. The chanter has been reinforced with wire to close the cracks that have formed, a nearly universal problem. The most obvious replacement is the wooden portion of the blowstick, which is relatively plainer than those found on other surviving “Blata” bagpipes. It is understandable that this piece was replaced, as the original one probably rotted, since it was constantly exposed to saliva and the player’s breath.
Owner and Location: Department of the Blatské museum in Soběslav, located in the Rožmberk house on the square in Soběslav. The museum is under the administration of the Hussite Museum in Tábor. The bagpipe is on display as part of the permanent exhibition.

Identification: 4200N

Photo 73 Soběslav 4200N
František Kopšík from Klenovice, the most famous of the Blata bagpipers, is said to have played this bagpipe.

An interesting detail that connects bagpipes of the “short” Blata type with others is the decoration. Some bagpipes of this type have small, thin pieces of brass that are bent over and then hammered into the surface edgewise. This is another example of an artisan not doing something precisely, but effectively. In very few cases are these small, sometimes horseshoe-shaped brass pieces hammered into the surface of the drone evenly. However, they are an effective decoration and are very helpful in identifying bagpipes that come from the same workshop. The brass ferrule’s joints appear to have separated at one time, and on one of the resonators the pearls are not as close to each other as they are on the bagpipe owned by Rudolf Lughoffer.

![Photo 74 4200N Detail of drone pipe](image)

Bellow the pearls are two grooves in the surface. Not only are these decorative, but they serve at least two more functions. First, they allow the sheet brass to be rolled into a
cylinder or cone shape evenly. Second, they add to the strength of the resonator. Without two (sometimes three and sometimes four) grooves, the resonators would not be as pleasing to view or as durable.

As always, the sheet brass is rolled over a piece of wire, at the top edge of the resonator, just as it is on the bell of a brass instrument.

Photo 75 4200N Detail of resonator
**Owner and Location:** Museum für Musikinstrumente der Universität Leipzig, Leipzig, Saxony, Germany. (This instrument was part of the Paul de Wit collection and carried the number 404).

**Identification:** 1441.1

Photo 76. Museum für Musikinstrumente der Universität Leipzig 1441.1
This bagpipe, formerly a part of the Paul de Wit collection (404), has been dated by the Leipzig museum ca. 1701-1799. This is probably much too early an estimate. It probably dates from the middle of the 19th century, as it resembles very closely, among others, the bagpipes played by František Kopšík (Soběslav 4200N) and Bartoloměj Brt (Nebraska State Historical Society, Museum of Nebraska History, Lincoln, Nebraska, U.S.A. Lincoln 7446-1), who were active in the second half of the nineteenth century.

This bagpipe has a blowstick that is very similar to E-3517 in Domažlice. The resonators, in particular are similar, as the rivets used to attach the brass resonator to the cow horn are the same type.

Photo 77. Leipzig 1441.1 Detail of blowstick stock ferrule that is very similar to a ferrule on Týn 26-608
At least two main points need to be made. First, the resonator is made from two pieces of brass not one. Does this indicate that brass sheets were only available in a certain width? Or perhaps brass was expensive and the excess overlap at the other end of the cone was cut off and placed at the top.

Second, the small “horseshoe”-shaped brass pieces appear to have been hammered into the drone in a haphazard manner.

Photo 78 Leipzig 1441.1 - Showing detail of drone resonator construction and “horseshoe” inlay of the dronpipe
**Owner and Location:** Národní muzeum – Historické muzeum – Národopisné oddělení (National Museum Ethnographical Division), Letohrádek Kinských, Kinského zahrada 97, Praha 5.

**Identification:** 52129

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Photo 79 Praha Národopisné muzeum 52129 May have been bagpipes of Matěj Mazač, Soběslav.