

THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF
BIEDERMEIER BOHEMIA BASED ON THE
TRAVELOGUES OF CHARLES SEALSFIELD AND
PETER EVAN TURNBULL

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The Habsburg Monarchy of the 1820s and 1830s is the subject of the travelogues of Charles Sealsfield and Peter Evan Turnbull. Gustav Otruba has demonstrated the authors' differing social and political points of view by quoting extensively from their work. While Sealsfield, a Bohemian clergyman who had sought political asylum in the United States, depicted the oppression and the secret police system, the English aristocrat Turnbull, relying on statistics among other sources, presented the Monarchy as a stable factor vis-à-vis Russian expansionism. The judgment of historians on the relative quality of the two works as source documents remains divided. Since the Second World War, both authors have been virtually ignored in Austria, while in Anglo-Saxon countries, they are still considered to be the principal witnesses of their era.