

Doing the hustle



On the title song of its wonderful new album, [Trans-Continental Hustle](#), the gypsy-punk band Gogol Bordello suggests that international commerce has turned into one big hustle. It started out with nomads killing all the men and stealing all the women and horses. Then it moved to the pursuit of spices, and from there all the other vices. Now, the band [sings](#), there's no time or space left to claim. It's all been scooped up by the hustlers. Typical of the band, it sees the answer to be an escape into music, borderless travel and "cross-pollination" by those who don't fit in and are therefore "contaminated." It's of course the world that is really contaminated, according to punk logic, and those who don't fit into it now will inherit it later. Perhaps the best Czech translation for "hustling" is *šejdírství*, which translates back into English as "shysterism." The global crisis is teaching Czechs to what extent their pursuit of democracy and personal freedoms has been one big *šejdírna*. Still unclear is who will inherit all the pieces when the music stops playing.

TNP

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