

At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century a visible shift occurred in the Slovak historiography, both thematic and methodological, away from the political history and the nation-centred paradigm of history. The professional development of historiography is more and more influenced by the new generation of historians. In their research they are going beyond what they consider as established stereotypes in research, terminology and historical interpretations. The main goal of this collective monograph is to provide an example of profile texts of the historians who conduct their research at the Institute of History of Slovak Academy of Sciences. The thematic, chronological and territorial scope of this book is in no way exhaustive. Rather, it is just an example of the topics of historical research addressed currently in the key historical research institution in Slovakia. Twelve chapters of this book cover the period of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and are devoted to the area of Central Europe with emphasis on the territory of Slovakia.



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Adam Hudek et al.

OVERCOMING THE OLD BORDERS

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BEYOND THE PARADIGM OF SLOVAK  
NATIONAL HISTORY

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NATIONAL HISTORY**

**Bratislava 2013**

**Institute of History, Slovak Academy of Sciences in Prodam**

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## INTRODUCTION

The Slovak community of historians is presently experiencing a relatively rapid change of generations. The professional development of historiography is more and more influenced by the generation of 30 – 40-year-old historians. This is the result of a specific development related to the changes in the society after 1989. At the beginning of the 1990s a considerable portion of scientists left the academic environment. Many of them moved to the private sector or got employed in lucrative positions within the civil service (e.g. diplomatic corps). Researchers compromised by excessive ideological commitment in the previous regime had to leave scientific teams, while others became the victims of radical cuts in employee numbers particularly in the Slovak Academy of Sciences (SAS). However, the situation changed in the second half of the 1990s. New universities were established and required human resources. A better financial situation in the SAS led to the opening of new job positions. At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries (not only) historical research institutions took on an unusually great number of young scientists. This process was also well reflected in the largest research institution dealing with the history – the Institute of History of the Slovak Academy of Sciences.

It is natural that all members of the new-generation researchers seek to somehow define themselves in opposition to their predecessors, for example, by going beyond what they consider as established stereotypes in research, terminology and interpretation. In their work, many young historians bring new methodological approaches into the Slovak historiography, and re-analyse the traditional historical constructs, or focus on phenomena of historical development which have yet to be explored. When compared with their older colleagues, they have got the undeniable advantage of working in a free society with almost no limitations in choosing research topics and with international cooperation opportunities.

The main goal of creating and publishing this collective monograph is to provide an example of profile texts of the new generation of Slovak historians who work in the Institute of History. The twelve chapters of this work cover the period of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The chapters are devoted to the area of Central Europe with emphasis on the territory of Slovakia. The authors have based their work on different theories and apply a variety of methodological approaches. Their common goal is to overcome the negative conceptual models typical for Central European historiographies after 1989 such as the nation-centred paradigm of history and the neo-positivist emphasis on political history. Comprehension of Central and Eastern European history is barely possible without a thorough analysis of the concept of nation, its creation, its use, and its specific formation in different national communities. This is the main reason why the monograph starts with a methodological study (by László Vörös) which deals with the question of defining and using the concept of “nation” and the problem with reification and objectification of the nation.

The political development in Central Europe in the last two centuries was largely turbulent, marked by conflicts arising from cultural, ethnic and social heterogeneity of the area. Central Europe is a region generally characterised by a complex, delicate, and constantly changing intersection of political, ethnic, national, linguistic, religious, cultural borders,

and contexts, producing various competing collective identities. The process of nationisation had an impact on the society in the Kingdom of Hungary, and initially, it led to questioning the concept of multi-ethnic Hungary in the environment of aristocratic elites. Peter Šoltés points to another trend which was particularly strong in Hungarian intellectual discourse before March 1848, to present Hungary as “Europe in miniature”, where in addition to the four major nations (Hungarians, Germans, Slavs and Wallachians), there were more than a dozen other nations. The issues of the (often tragic) developments of the multi-ethnic and multi-religious regions have been analysed by Petra Rybářová using the example of emancipation and assimilation of Jews during the boom of political anti-Semitism in Hungary. Michal Schvarc has focused on the destiny of the German minority in Bratislava (in German, Pressburg) since the establishment of Czechoslovakia to the actual end of the German community in the city after 1948.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century the territory of Slovakia and its people were exposed to frequent changes that affected their lives fundamentally. State formations, boundaries and the ruling regimes changed in quick succession. The collapse of Austria-Hungary, the creation of Czechoslovakia in 1918, the Munich crisis of 1938, and, a year later, the creation of the Slovak State as a German “vassal”, the restoration of Czechoslovakia in 1945 and its incorporation into the Communist camp in 1948. The development continued with 40 years of the communist regime, its crises, failed efforts to reform, various forms of constitutional organisation of the state, all culminating in the 1989 “Velvet Revolution” and the division of Czechoslovakia in 1993. The Slovak Republic then went through a difficult process of consolidating liberal democracy. It also entails the complex process of “coming to terms with the past”.

Naturally, a significant part of this book will therefore, in a way, reflect on the major breaking points in the historical development. Juraj Benko discusses the political socialisation of the Slovak population after the creation of Czechoslovakia in 1918. Matej Hanula deals with the issues of shaping the political culture of people in the new state’s developing party system in his text on the so-called Peasant Cavalry set up by the Agrarian Party: the most influential political party of the Republic. Miroslav Sabol analyses the economic impact of the Vienna Award of 1938 which resulted in the loss of one quarter of Slovakia’s territory annexed to Hungary. The topic addressed by Dušan Segeš is Slovakia as the subject of political contacts between Poland and Hungary in the neutral European countries during World War II.

The political socialisation of the population was also important for representatives of the communist dictatorship, especially in the initial period. As Marína Zavacká notes in the chapter on local communist activists in the period 1949 – 1956, the regime was to a great extent participatory and required massive involvement of citizens’ participation in its activities. The analysis of this issue is also a part of the answer to the question of why communism in Slovakia has established itself relatively easily and why its implications are still noticeable today.

Three chapters are devoted to the formation of the picture of the past as well as development of dominant narratives or counter-narratives. The text by Karol Hollý introduces the research of ideological discourse and nationalist historical thinking in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The main focus of the study is to analyse the two main documents presenting political

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programmes which were an essential element of the ideology of Slovak nationalism in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Miroslav Michela writes about the cult of the king Saint Stephen, patron of Hungary, in Slovakia in the interwar period. He draws attention to the political implications of his remembrance and hence the importance of stories about the history in the public discourse. This hypothesis is confirmed in the chapter by Adam Hudek on the formation of the picture of the fall of communism in Slovakia as a part of the problem coming to terms with the “totalitarian past”.

Twenty years after the fall of communism, it appears also among the political and intellectual elites that there exists a number of parallel planes of discourse and several competing or overlapping “memories”. The question is how the historical science is able to reflect on this fact. The effort to maintain value neutrality is an important factor distinguishing the work of historians from interpretations coming for instance from the political environment. However, it is necessary to realise that a historian is neither completely independent nor completely objective. Historical judgments will always be inextricably linked to the specific social reality from which they take rise.<sup>1</sup> The picture of value-independent research and the opportunities to discover a “definitive truth” is only a part of simplified notions of de-ideologisation of science which have emerged after 1989. The authors of this work are aware of this fact too.

This book aspires to present an account of the generation of significant representatives coming from a diverse group of young Slovak historians. It deals with the specific problems of the historical development in Slovakia and Central Europe over the past two centuries. The thematic, chronological or territorial scope of this publication is in no way exhaustive. Rather, it is just an example, though largely representative, of the topics of historical research addressed currently in the key historical research institution in Slovakia. The authors will be happy if they start a discussion, exchange of ideas and further inquiry on the history of Central Europe.

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<sup>1</sup> MOMMSEN, Wolfgang. Social Conditioning and Social Relevance of Historical Judgments. In *History and Theory*, 1978, Vol. 17, Issue 4, p. 22.



## Chapter 1

HOW TO DEFINE A “NATION”? A THING, A GROUP,  
OR A CATEGORY?\*

László Vörös

Nationalism and nation have been studied for almost a century now. During this period, a great amount of theoretical and empirical literature was written, ranging from general summarising treatises to detailed case studies. Several authors have tried to systematise and categorise the vast knowledge created on nations and nationalisms. The best-known is the typology by Anthony D. Smith, who divided theories of nation and nationalism into four types – primordialist, perennialist, ethnosymbolist, modernist – depending on the nature of origination (natural/God-given social entity vs. an outcome of long-term social evolution vs. a modern social construct) and the time of origination (in the ancient times vs. medieval/early modern period vs. in the 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century) individual theorists attributed to the “nation”.

An alternative differentiation of theories is based on the distinctions in epistemological foundations used by various theorists to define nations and nationalisms: the so-called *objectivist* and *subjectivist* approaches. The essential difference between them lies in the fact that objectivist authors define nations primarily by naming their properties (a shared territory, language, culture, history etc.) and the conditions under which these properties are able to emerge and exist. By contrast, the subjectivist definitions put the main emphasis on the factor of identification of individuals with the “nation”, i.e. the basic defining criterion is the participation of individuals, mental and social acts of self-identification (and identification of others), while the so-called objective properties are considered to be of secondary importance. However, what both of these approaches have in common is that they are trying to define a “nation” as a group of people or a social group.

In the past decade, several authors, among them Rogers Brubaker<sup>2</sup> criticised both definitional approaches mentioned exactly because they sought to define the nation as an objective entity observable in the real world. According to these critics, the attempt to define the nation as a substantial entity possessing certain qualities was a mistake. It is not just an innocent epistemic error, but a serious fallacy of reification (objectification). This study will try to develop the criticism in more detail using the examples of three definitions of the nation by theorists – Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin, Miroslav Hroch and Anthony D. Smith – who can be characterised as objectivist authors. The second critical point I make in connection with the objectivist approach is the improper use of the social

\* The chapter is the outcome of the VEGA grant no. 2/0138/11 – Transformations of the Slovak Society in the First Half of the “long” 19<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>2</sup> BRUBAKER, Rogers. *Nationalism reframed. Nationhood and the national question in the New Europe*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1996; BRUBAKER, Rogers. Myths and misconceptions in the study of nationalism. In HALL, John A. (ed.). *The State of the Nation. Ernest Gellner and the Theory of Nationalism*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1998, pp. 272-306; BRUBAKER, Rogers. *Ethnicity without groups*. Cambridge; London : Harvard University Press, 2004.

scientific concept of the *social group*. Furthermore, I argue that theorising about nations as definite groups of people is both misleading and useless for social scientific and historical analyses. For the analysis, I have chosen definitions accepted by a broader community of social science academics. Only the definition of Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin can be considered an exception to the rule. Stalin's definition, however, although nowadays it is not admitted openly by many, had a great impact not only on the Eastern but also the Western academic discourse on nations and nationalism. At the same time, Stalin's progressive elaboration on the necessary characteristics of a nation pregnantly illustrates the logic of the objectivist reasoning.

In his study *Marxism and the National Question* from 1913<sup>3</sup>, J. V. Stalin defines the nation as a delimited historically formed stable community of people (different from "racial" and "tribal" communities which in Stalin's opinion were not subject to the condition of "historicity"). However, not every historically stable community of people is a nation. For instance, "Austria and Russia" are stable communities of people, but no one considers them as nations. Therefore, according to Stalin, nations cannot be automatically equated with states, or their population. An important feature distinguishing a "national community" from a "state community" is the language spoken. Several peoples speaking their national languages can live in one country (e.g. the Czech nation in Austria and the Polish nation in Russia) despite the fact that the country's official language may be a completely different language. A common spoken language is the key feature of a nation, but it does not mean that two different nations cannot speak the same language.<sup>4</sup> "Englishmen and Americans", "the Norwegians and the Danes, the English and the Irish" speak the same language, but do not constitute one nation and they do not share one common territory. A common territory is another important attribute of nations – as Stalin wrote – because "(a) nation is formed only as a result of lengthy and systematic intercourse, as a result of people living together generation after generation."<sup>5</sup> However, even a common territory is not in itself a sufficient nation-creating factor, unless it is accompanied by "an internal economic bond". The different parts of the nation must be economically linked with each other and bonded. Stalin used an example of the Georgians, who according to him, in spite of sharing a common language and living in one contiguous area, had not constituted one nation for centuries as they were split into a number of principalities which were not economically integrated with each other, and, actually, often fought among themselves. Georgians formed into a nation in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century after the abolition of serfdom, when the rise of capitalism, development of infrastructure and communication tools and the increasing division of labour resulted in a complete disappearance of isolationism and economic integration of the Georgian territories. According to Stalin, "Americans", for example can be spoken about as a nation only due to the extensive economic integration of the United States of America. But not even this condition is definitively characteristic of nations by Stalin as "nations differ not

3 STALIN, Josif Vissarionovič. Marxizmus a národnostná otázka [Marxism and the national question]. In STALIN, Josif Vissarionovič. *Marxizmus a národnostná a koloniálna otázka*. Bratislava : Nakladateľstvo Pravda, 1952, pp. 7-56. English translation is available online at: <http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1913/03a.htm#s1>.

4 At the same time, however, according to Stalin, there is an exclusivity of the language criterion: "There is no nation which at one and the same time speaks several languages, but this does not mean that there cannot be two nations speaking the same language." Ibid, p. 9.

5 Ibid, pp. 9-10.

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only in their conditions of life, but also in spiritual complexion, which manifests itself in peculiarities of national culture.”<sup>6</sup> This spiritual complexion, or “peculiar psychological make-up” of nation, or the “national character” is something not stable and varies with living conditions, but constantly “at every given moment, it leaves its impress on the physiognomy of the nation.”<sup>7</sup> Thus, Stalin’s definition of a “nation” is as follows: “A nation is a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture.”<sup>8</sup> For completeness, it is also necessary to mention that according to Stalin: “None of the above characteristics taken separately is sufficient to define a nation. More than that, it is sufficient for a single one of these characteristics to be lacking and the nation ceases to be a nation. (...). It is only when all these characteristics are present together that we have a nation.”<sup>9</sup> Stalin also sees differences between Western and Eastern (small) nations. The former ones were formed with the end of feudalism and the development of capitalism and established their own independent national states. The latter, however, were delayed and were under the domination of a few “powerful nations” (Germans and Magyars). The response of these “small Eastern European nations” (“nationalities”) was the establishment of the national movements fighting the ruling classes of the reigning nations. Thus, according to Stalin, the “West nations” established themselves and created their own national state and the eastern “nationalities” generated their “national movements” fighting their nationalist struggle with other nations, national states or national movements. Of course, this “nationalist struggle” was in fact the class struggle of bourgeoisies. What is important for us in connection with Stalin’s definition is that it argued that “nations” (objective and stable groups of people) had existed first and then constituted a nation state or a national movement.

Miroslav Hroch is another prominent author, in whose opinion nations should be considered as social groups and objects possessing certain objective characteristics: “We therefore consider the nation to be a large social group characterised by a combination of several kinds of relation (economic, territorial, political, religious, cultural, linguistic and so on) which arise on the one hand from the solution found to the fundamental antagonism between man and nature on a specific compact land-area, and on the other hand from the reflection of these relations in the consciousness of the people.”<sup>10</sup> In a later work, Hroch made the definition more precise: none of the bonds or relationships mentioned above “is necessary and irreplaceable, but three circumstances are an inevitable condition for a nation’s existence: firstly, it is a civic commonalty of individuals with equal rights, secondly, every or almost every one of these individuals is aware of being a member of the nation, thirdly, the national commonalty has gone through common history, it has got the ‘common destiny’, whatever its particular form was.”<sup>11</sup> In the work cited earlier, Hroch adds an

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6 Ibid, pp. 10-11.

7 Ibid, p. 11.

8 Ibid.

9 Ibid. At the same place he adds that “a nation, like every historical phenomenon, is subject to the law of change, has its history, its beginning and end.”

10 HROCH, Miroslav. *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe. A Comparative Analysis of the Social Composition of Patriotic Groups among the Smaller European Nations*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1985, pp. 4-5.

11 HROCH, Miroslav. *Na prahu národní existence. Touha a skutečnost* [On the Threshold of National Existence. Desire and Reality]. Praha : Mladá fronta, 1999, p. 8.

important note to his definition: “*The nation is made up of individuals whose patriotism is not an unalterable datum, but undergoes a long formative period, proceeding initially from an elemental awareness of belonging to a greater whole (...). The individual’s national consciousness, and patriotism, is determined on the one hand by general factors (objective relations) and on the other by conditions of his own existence.*”<sup>12</sup> In accordance with Stalin, Hroch regarded the existence of nationalism and patriotism (national movement) as a phenomenon that emerged from the already existing nations, which means that it appeared after the formation of nations.<sup>13</sup>

Anthony D. Smith is a pioneer of the so-called ethnosymbolistic theory of nations, nationalism, ethnicity and ethnic groups, stating that nations were preceded by ethnic groups and that there is an immediate link between these two types of “*social groups*” and continuity in the form of customs, traditions, language, territory of settlement etc. He defined nation as follows: “*a named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members.*”<sup>14</sup> In Smith’s definition, an important role was already played by the criterion of collective (i.e. national) identity. The presence of *national identity* presumably in the minds of every individual members of the nation is a *sine qua non* condition for the existence of the nation. He considers the following points to be the basic features of the national identity: 1) a historic territory, or homeland; 2) common myths and historical memories; 3) common mass public culture; 4) common legal rights and duties for all members; 5) common economy with territorial mobility for members.<sup>15</sup>

At a first sight, these definitions may seem correct, as they articulate clear causal links, but at a closer inspection it turns out they lack a clear and explicit ontological classification of the definiendum i.e. the “*nation*”. The primary source of problems arising from the objectivist definitions is generally the implicit *a priori* assumption that nations exist as substantial entities.<sup>16</sup> As I noted in the introduction, this approach to the definition is reifying. This means that in the very beginning we encounter a serious epistemic problem of attributing false ontological status to the referent (the “*nation*”). Most of the critics focused their criticism on the specific characteristics of “*nations*” and factors of their existence<sup>17</sup> while the fact that the concept expressed by the objectivist definitions con-

12 HROCH, Social Preconditions, p. 13.

13 “*We consider the origin of the modern nation as the fundamental reality and nationalism as a phenomenon derived from the existence of that nation.*” Ibid, p. 3.

14 SMITH, Anthony D. *National Identity*. London : Penguin Books, 1991, p. 14.

15 Ibid.

16 Hroch is quite explicit about this: “*In every attempt to define or delineate the nation (and nationalism) there must be implicitly present an aspect of causality: how did the object to be defined come into being, how was it formed?*” HROCH, Miroslav. *Národy nejsou dílem náhody. Příčiny a předpoklady utváření moderních evropských národů* [Nations are not a product of coincidence. Causes and Pre-conditions for the Making of Modern European Nations]. Praha : Slon, 2009, p. 40.

17 In fact, every single criterion or property of the “*nation*” mentioned in the objectivist definitions was subjected to criticism based on specific historical (or present-day) examples. For an overview of these criticisms, see SMITH, Anthony D. *Theories of Nationalism*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. New York : Holmes & Meier, 1983; SMITH, Anthony D. *Nationalism and Modernism. A Critical Survey of Recent Theories of Nations and Nationalism*. London, New York : Routledge, 1998; ÖZKIRIMLI, Umut. *Theories of Nationalism. A Critical Introduction*. New York : Palgrave, 2000; a relatively detailed, though slightly biased overview of critiques concerning the objectivist theories of nations from different positions is provided by HROCH, *Národy nejsou dílem náhody*.

stitutes the objective existence of the nation as if it were a substantial entity, was left unnoticed.

In the nationalism studies in the recent few decades, criticism of reification has appeared frequently. This criticism has not been always consistent though. Many authors consider reification as a specific deviation occurring only in academic writings. Social-psychological and cognitive anthropological research revealed that reification is not a phenomenon typical of academia only, but on the contrary, it is an important universal cognitive mode, functional in the formation of knowledge, including broad domains of social knowledge.<sup>18</sup> Put simply, in the case of reification we are dealing with a modality of cognition through which humans are able to think about abstract entities in the way they think about substantial objects (that is, things existing independently from an observer, in other words, entities that exist regardless of whether we perceive them and give them names). Thus, reification is an erroneous ascription of incorrect ontological status to abstract entities. Reifying thinking is also at work, when we refer to social phenomena and processes in the same way as we do to material objects or human beings.<sup>19</sup> For instance *nationalism* – that is, a social phenomenon – is often represented as an entity with anthropomorphic attributes. Nationalisms are commonly seen to be expansive, aggressive, defensive, hateful, tolerant, moral, immoral, etc. It is not the humans inspired by a nationalist vision of the world who are represented as the actors that act or behave aggressively, defensively, hatefully and so on, but the “nationalisms”.<sup>20</sup> Similarly, *identity*, or more specifically *national identity* – that is social and psychological processes of identification and representation – is very often represented as a stable entity that has its “features”, an entity that can be “constructed” and “reconstructed”.<sup>21</sup> Again, it is not the ideologies and ideas, social representations of groups and communities with which a person identifies with that are seen as having features and being constructed, created or conceived, but the “identity”.<sup>22</sup> Reification is an extremely intuitive way of thinking. As a result, a vast majority of attempts to deconstruct reifying thinking seems to be in contradiction with the common

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18 In other fields and intellectual traditions different terms are preferred to denominate the cognitive phenomenon we call reification: *hypostatization* or *objectification*. Both terms are synonymous with *reification*. BERGER, Peter L. – LUCKMANN, Thomas. *The social construction of reality. A treatise in the sociology of knowledge*. New York : Anchor Books, 1967; MOSCOVICI, Serge. Notes towards a description of social representations. In *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 1988, Vol. 3, Issue 18, pp. 211-250; MOSCOVICI, Serge. Social representations. Explorations in social psychology. Ed. By Gerard DUVEEN. New York : New York University Press, 2001; HONNETH, Axel. *Reification. A new look at an old idea*. Oxford, New York : Oxford University Press, 2008; PITKIN, Hanna Fenichel. Rethinking reification. In *Theory and Society*, 1987, Vol. 16, Issue 2, pp. 263-293.

19 VÖRÖS, László. *Analytická historiografia versus národné dejiny . „Národ“ ako sociálna reprezentácia* [Analytical Historiography versus National History. “Nation” as a Social Representation]. Pisa : Edizioni Plus, Pisa University Press, 2010, pp. 51-71 and 215-219.

20 This kind of reification of nationalism appears for instance in HROCH’s *Národy nejsou dílem náhody*, pp. 30-40.

21 Examples of the reifying concept of identity see in SMITH, National Identity, e.g. pp. 8-15. For instance see Smith’s five point list of “*features of national identity*” I quoted above. Smith further claims that: “*National identity and nation are complex constructs composed of a number of interrelated components – ethnic, cultural, territorial, economic and legal-political.*” (p. 15).

22 Various reifying concepts of identity commonly used in the discourses of social sciences were, among others, criticised by: GLEASON, Philip. Identifying Identity: A Semantic History. In *The Journal of American History*, 1983, Vol. 69, Issue 4, pp. 910-931; and BRUBAKER, Rogers – COOPER, Frederick. Beyond “Identity”. In *Theory and Society*, 2000, Vol. 29, Issue 1, pp. 1-47.

sense. Deconstruction of the reifying concepts of social groups or categories is even more difficult, since one seems to find evidence of their reality in the everyday social practice. It is not hard to believe in the reality of nations as substantial entities since they are in discourses routinely endowed with “essential qualities” such as size, spatial location and historicity. It is this common sense reifying understanding that is at the heart of every objectivist definition of the nation and nationalism. If we accept that nations do objectively exist, it follows that “they” can be observed and examined. Then it is not that difficult to find their “features” and “properties” for they have been socially constructed and reproduced intensively in the last hundred or two hundred years. Since the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century modern states worldwide conducted regular censuses of their inhabitants, through which they introduced and objectified the categories of nationality, ethnicity, race, mother tongue, thus gathering data that modern ethnography, geography and cartography could use to draw up precise maps of “nations” and “national territories”. Historians created elaborate histories of nations often reaching back into ancient times; histories that became compulsory teaching material in the schooling system. Thus it seems, that there are data through which “nations” can be measured, quantified and qualified by size (the number of members), by geographic location and even by location in time (i.e. historicity: the old/historical vs. young/modern “nations” – a distinction made by several theorists<sup>23</sup>).

Does this all make a substantial entity, or an *object* as Hroch put it, from the nation? Is it plausible to consider socially constructed and reproduced phenomena that themselves are contingent upon the very idea of objective “nation”, as features and properties of an alleged substantial entity: “the nation”? Reified ideal entities acquire their “reality” for social actors through a multitude of acts and processes of social construction occurring in the everyday social practice – i.e. that we believe, that we speak, that we act as if nations were real things and *nationality/ethnicity* a natural trait of a person, which makes the participants of social life cognise about them as if they were tangible entities.

The reification of the nation has got its consequences. Indeed, it allows considering an abstract social entity in the same manner as we can think and talk about a “thing”, a natural phenomenon, or a living creature. In other words, reifying thinking allows the asking of wrong and misleading questions, because when considering abstract (thought) entities, (social) processes and phenomena, it allows the assuming that their properties and possible actions and impact on their environment are like those of tangible (real) objects. One of the most obvious manifestations of this fallacy is the anthropomorphisation (personification) of nations (or ethnic groups). Not only in everyday lay conversations but also in the social scientific and historic discourses it is nothing unusual encounter representations of nations as collective beings that do have a character or spirit, that are able to act, feel, desire, want, pursue goals, assert strategies, suffer, harm, oppress, fight (for freedom or territory) etc.

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23 For instance: SETON-WATSON, Hugh. *Nations and states. An enquiry into the origins of nations and the politics of nationalism*. London : Methuen, 1977; KOHN, Hans. *The idea of nationalism. A study in its origins and background*. New York : Macmillan Co., 1945; GREENFELD, Liah. *Nationalism. Five roads to modernity*. Cambridge : Harvard University Press, 1992.

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Let us return to the issue of the objective features of the nations. One cannot doubt the objective existence of some characteristics of the “nation” referred to in the cited definitions of Stalin, Hroch and Smith. For example, “language”, “common historical memory” or “territory” can actually be observed in some forms.<sup>24</sup> The latter two quoted theoreticians list these features or properties of nations and put them on a par with the according to them ultimate criterion of the nation’s existence, the *national identity* or *national consciousness* in other words *a sense of belonging to a nation*. Such a mixing of supposedly objective features together with a psychological condition of self-identification was found mistaken by Ernest Gellner, to mention the most prominent subjectivist theoretician.

The feeling of belonging to a nation was made the central element of the definition of “nation” by Ernest Gellner in his famous definition: *1. Two men are of the same nation if and only if they share the same culture, where culture in turn means a system of ideas and signs and associations and ways of behaving and communicating. 2. Two men are of the same nation if and only if they recognise each other as belonging to the same nation. In other words, nations make the man; nations are the artefacts of men’s convictions and loyalties and solidarities. A mere category of persons (say, occupants of a given territory, or speakers of a given language, for example) becomes a nation if and when the members of the category firmly recognise certain mutual rights and duties to each other in virtue of their shared membership of it. It is their recognition of each other as fellows of this kind which turns them into a nation, and not the other shared attributes, whatever they might be, which separate that category from non-members.*<sup>25</sup> Gellner considered nations as products of nationalism, which he defined as a political principle (according to which national boundaries shall conform to the territorial boundaries of the nation), a political movement (promoting the aforementioned principle) and, thirdly, as an emotional attitude (positive or negative, depending on how successful it is to fulfil the mentioned principle).<sup>26</sup> In a sense, it remains an interesting paradox that until the end of his life, Gellner abode to the reifying concept of the nation. On the one hand, he argued that “*membership of such a community [of culture] and their acceptance in it, that is a nation.*”<sup>27</sup> On the other hand, in polemics with A. D. Smith he attempted to deconstruct the concept of the nation as a modern and more complex form of an *ethnic group*. So what is the main statement in the Gellner’s definition? *Nation = shared membership and mutual acceptance*. How much more powerful would the Gellner’s definition be if it did not invoke a reified nation! How much more convincing would the cited objectivist definitions be if we made only one change in them: instead of the criterion of self-identification of an individual with a nation, we would postulate a criterion of self-identification of an individual with an *idea of the nation*.

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24 Although there is a big difference between considering a language as a spoken language, i.e. a means of communication used in everyday social practice, or as a codified standard language, which ideally exists in the written form only. Language in its various forms as a communication tool actually exists, but the “national language” is just an ideal entity represented as real in discourses. Similarly, it is possible to deconstruct the concepts of collective memory and national territory. Both memory and territory exist but the “national memory” and “national territory” are thought entities, just like the “national language”.

25 GELLNER, Ernest. *Nations and Nationalism*. Oxford : Basil Blackwell, 1983, p. 7.

26 *Ibid*, p. 1.

27 GELLNER, Ernest. ‘Do nations have navels?’ In *Nations and Nationalism*, 1996, Vol. 2, Issue 3, p. 368.

If we omit the reifying concept of the nation in the Gellner's definition, the key concepts remain: *culture (a system of ideas and signs and associations and ways of behaving and communicating)*; *men's convictions, loyalties and solidarities*; (social) *category*; and *mutual recognition*. These concepts clearly direct us to the social-psychological dimensions of human behaviour. In this form, the Gellner's definition would begin to resemble Benedict Anderson's approach. Anderson's theorising about nationalism is most famous for his attempt for dereification of the concept of nation. He referred to nations as "*imagined communities*", a concept which can be best interpreted that he meant not real but literally only *thought entities*, although in this sense, Anderson is slightly ambiguous. In several places in his book he used a reifying concept of nation, for example in the very beginning where he explained why nations were represented as *limited* : "*The nation is imagined as limited because even the largest of them, encompassing perhaps a billion living human beings, has finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other nations. No nation imagines itself coterminous with mankind.*"<sup>28</sup> In the second half of the sentence quoted he does not refer to nations as imaginary but real delimited, quantifiable and anthropomorphic entities capable of imagining themselves. Such a reifying concept of nation would also allow a way to understand Anderson in which "nations" could be regarded as real entities. Only these entities would be so complex and extensive that an individual would be able "only" imagine them as limited, sovereign and egalitarian communities. Of course, as I have argued above, such a concept would be hardly defensible and contradictory to Anderson's overall thinking.

If we depart from the reifying concept of the nation as a substantial entity, would there still be a way to maintain the definition of a nation as *a group of people*? I suppose one of the few viable options in this regard would be to define the nation as the actual sum of all people who 1) consider humanity as divided into nations, 2) consider their particular nation as a community possessing certain properties and qualities, and 3) consider themselves as members (or parts) of their nation. The meaningfulness and usefulness of this kind of definition for historical and social analysis is more than questionable. Problems would emerge immediately when attempting to delineate (i.e. determine the number of members) a nation in a particular historical period (whether yesterday or 50 or 100 years ago). Such an attempt would be unworkable because the actual criteria of *imagining a nation* as a natural entity and having a sense of membership would be rather difficult to grasp, since in both cases we are dealing with contingent psychological processes rather than stable things. As I have pointed out earlier, the identity (especially the national identity) is often incorrectly regarded as a stable psychological entity that determines who one is. Social identifications and categorisations are neither constant nor invariable; they are processual and context dependent. It would be impossible to arrive at a satisfactory general definition for the "idea of a nation" and "sense of identification with a nation" to establish the number of people making up the "nation" at a given moment, since we would have to ask constantly about specific situations and contexts.

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<sup>28</sup> ANDERSON, Benedict. *Imagined communities. Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. Revised Ed. London, New York : Verso, 1991, p. 7.

Even if we would overcome the difficulties arising from the ambiguity of the concept of national identity, from an analytical point of view, the applicability of such a definition would be more than questionable. The definition states that a number of people exist who believe they are members of this and that "nation". However, what other meaningful statement can be made about them? Any statements attributing some properties or agency to them – e.g. sentences starting with the words: "*Slovaks are ...*", "*Slovaks wanted...*", or "*Slovaks did...*" and so on – would have to be trivially general, incorrectly generalising (and reifying) or meaningless.

Finally, such a definition would not consider adequately the social practice of national categorisation and identification in contemporary and past societies. Indeed, such a definition would not apply to infants, mentally handicapped and any others for whom the concept of a nation and nationality (ethnicity) was – for various reasons – ungraspable. Nonetheless, people usually think of newborns and mentally handicapped as national beings, members of this or that nation: in the common sense, little Slovaks, Germans, French are born and handicapped people are usually neither considered as Non-Slovak, Non-French, and so on, nor is this fact taken into account in the above-cited definitions by Hroch and Smith, who consider the consciousness of belonging to a nation the key defining criterion. Perhaps M. Hroch just wanted to address this contradiction when he added an exception to his definition: "[E]very or almost every one of these individuals is aware of being a member of the nation (...)"<sup>29</sup> However, this formulation only confirms the strongly reifying concept of the nation which he uses: some individuals could be members of a nation without even knowing it (a view that is not far from the traditional reifying nationalist and essentialist understanding of the nation).

Does it then make sense to think about nations as quantifiable communities or groups of people? I argued that we would encounter serious problems which would render the whole concept useless. Let's see if it is plausible now to consider nations as *social groups*? Stalin (1913) defines the nation merely as a "group of people", but Hroch and Smith (both in the 1980s and the early 1990s) already consider "nations" as *social groups*. Since none of the mentioned authors made any remarks about the concept of social group they are using I should assume they intended to refer to the "standard" scholarly concept used mostly by sociologists.

In current social science discourse, the term "social group" is handled more than benevolently.<sup>30</sup> Naturally, in social sciences, various analytical concepts of social groups are used, but all have in common certain basic definitional characteristics. A *social group* usually means a group of people who usually interact regularly, share certain standards and rules of behaviour and are aware of being members of the group. Social groups are able to act in an organised manner; in other words, they are capable of collective agency. Social groups used to be defined differently according to the way of their formation, their pur-

29 HROCH, Na prahu národní existence, p. 8.

30 Generally speaking, historiographical debates often handle the concept of a group carelessly and commonly use it in reference to almost any formation larger than a family, to multiple (in the order of millions or hundreds of millions) numbers of people, regardless of the degree of integration, internal cohesion and consciousness of membership. For criticism of this practice, see BRUBAKER, Ethnicity Without Groups.

pose, internal structure, and so on. They may be small groups based on confidential, intimate relationships (the so-called primary groups: family, group of peers or friends etc.) to larger groups based on formal, institutional or interest bonds (the so-called secondary groups: an interest organisation, an employee group, etc.).<sup>31</sup> In relation to social groups, the most commonly studied are the conditions for the formation and functioning of a group, the level of “groupness” (internal homogeneity), form and structure of the group (the social background of the members, the hierarchies within the group) and the like.<sup>32</sup> Regarding the size of social groups in the sociological research, the concept assumes a one- to two-digit number of members. In laboratory conditions experiments work most often with two- to twenty-member groups.<sup>33</sup>

From this brief overview, it should be clear that if we wanted define nations as groups of people we could not use the analytical concept of *social group* used in the social-scientific analyses. Obviously, several definitional criteria mentioned could not be met altogether: the size, capability of collective agency and regular interaction to mention just three points which seem to be problematic at the first glance. According to Hroch's or Smith's definition some time in 1991 the “Slovak nation” could have had around 4 519 328 members. It is hard to imagine, that such a number of people would be able to act collectively to fulfill a task or achieve a particular goal. In fact, it is rather inconceivable that such a multitude of people – even if we would count only the adults – could have and follow a single common goal, however elementary.

It would not even be possible to use two other standard sociological concepts without any reservations – *social category* and *aggregation* of people – to define the “nation” as a social grouping of people. *Aggregation* is usually used to refer to any free groupings of people who are gathered in a particular place for a certain purpose, but have no particular social links among themselves (e.g. people waiting for a bus, people at an airport, in a library etc.).

The analytical concept of *social category* is however particularly interesting and useful for the study of nationalism. Social categorisation<sup>34</sup> is a sorting and grouping of people based

31 See articles “Group Size” and “Small Groups” in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> volumes of the *Encyclopedia of Sociology*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. BORGATTA, Edgar F. – MONTGOMERY, Rhonda (eds.). *Encyclopedia of Sociology*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. New York : Macmillan Reference USA, 2000, pp. 1117-1125 and 2610-2622.

32 Earlier the sociologists used to think about groups as entities existing in the social sphere (i.e. they have been concerned with the conditions of a group's existence), without any special interest in individual group members. In contrast, social psychology has not been interested in a group as such, it has been concerned with a group in the minds of individuals, i.e. how group membership influenced the self-understanding, self-identification and self-representation of an individual. In the last few decades, the trend has been the convergence and integration of these two positions, which has been reflected for instance in the *social identity theory* by Henry Tajfel and others. See WORCHEL, Stephen – COUTANT, Dawna. It Takes Two to Tango: Relating Group Identity to Individual Identity within the Framework of Group Development. In HOGG, Michael A. – TINDALE, Scott R. (eds.). *Blackwell Handbook of Social Psychology: Group Processes*. Oxford : Blackwell, 2001, pp. 461-463.

33 *Encyclopedia of Sociology*, 2000, p. 1117-1124; HOGG, Michael – ABRAMS, Dominic. *Social Identifications. A Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations and Group Processes*. London, New York : Routledge, 1988, p. 1-27 and foll.; ABRAMS, Dominic – HOGG, Michael. *Collective Identity: Group Membership and Self-Conception*. In HOGG, TINDALE, *Blackwell Handbook of Social Psychology*, pp. 425-460.

34 *Social categories* are often characterised as “groups of people”, which can cause confusion. In fact, they are often confused by intuition with *social groups*. At this point I want to emphasise that a “group of people” is not the same as a “social group”. *Social category* is a separate concept, clearly different from the concept of *social group*. Therefore, it is a safer approach to define the concept with an emphasis on the process-related aspect, i.e. the *social categorisation*, which reduces the risk of confusing unconsciously the concept of category with the concept of social group.

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on certain criteria – whether socially constructed, psychological, biological or phenotypic (such as nationality/ethnicity, race, social status, occupation, gender, age, education, appearance, etc.) – into “types” or “kinds” (i.e. social categories). Using social categories people organise the world of people into clear-cut and homogeneous blocks – which is a very important cognitive strategy. Social categorisations may be differently stable and durable and they can be permanently present in public discourses or created ad hoc in specific situations. Accordingly, they are more or less subject to *entitativisation* and *essentialism*.<sup>35</sup> When a client at the hairdressers creates a category of long-haired and bearded people waiting for a haircut, it is very unlikely that he will see them as a homogenous entity with common essential characteristics that determine “who they are”. However, the exact opposite holds true in the case of socially mandatory categories which an individual learns from an early age – along with the stereotypical knowledge relating to them. These include ethnic or racial categories, i.e. the categorisation of people based on their perceived or assumed nationality/ethnicity or race. The more a social category is understood in an essentialist way as an entity, the more stereotypes and other established social representations it is usually subject to.<sup>36</sup>

In relation to the concept of social categories (social categorisation), it is very important to point out two major moments of definition which make it different from the concept of social group. In the case of a social group, the key defining criterion is a sense of membership. That is, an individual has to be by definition aware of the existence of the group and his/her membership in it. Another essential factor is the relatively low and relatively determinable number of group members. In the case of social categories neither of these criteria is significant. People can be assigned categorically without their consent, against their will, or even without their knowledge and categories of people can be both countable and non-countable or with a relatively small or great number of members (e.g. “unemployed graduates of universities” is a countable category thanks to the statistical offices, whereas “corrupt politicians” will apparently never be a category to be counted).

I hoped to prove with this brief overview that theoreticians defining the “nation” as a social group treat this analytical concept inadequately. The three standard analytical soci-

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35 LICKEL, Brian et al. Varieties of Groups and the Perception of Group Entitativity. In *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 2000, Vol. 78, Issue 2, pp. 223-246; YZERBYT, Vincent – CORNEILLE, Olivier – ESTRADA, Claudia. The interplay of subjective essentialism and entitativity in the formation of stereotypes. In *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 2001, Vol. 5, Issue 2, pp. 141-155; CRUMP, Sara A. et al. Group entitativity and similarity: Their differing patterns in perceptions of groups. In *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 2010, Vol. 40, pp. 1212-1230; SANI, Fabio et al. Perceived collective continuity: Seeing groups as entities that move through time. In *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 2007, Vol. 37, pp. 1118-1134; SHERMAN, Steven J. – PERCY, Elise J. The psychology of collective responsibility: When and why collective entities are likely to be held responsible for the misdeeds of individual members. In *Journal of Law and Policy*, 2010, Vol. 19, Issue 1, pp. 137-170.

36 SCHNEIDER, David J. Categories and Categorization. In SCHNEIDER, David J. *The Psychology of Stereotyping*. New York; London : The Guilford Press, p. 64-119; HAMILTON, David L. et al. The Role of Entitativity in Stereotyping. Processes and Parameters. In NELSON, Todd D. (ed.). *Handbook of Prejudice, Stereotyping, and Discrimination*. New York : Psychology Press, 2009, p. 179-198.

ological concepts presented<sup>37</sup> are not applicable to defining nations as social groupings of people. At the same time I want to emphasise that it is meaningful to use the concepts of *social group* and *social category* (social categorisation) in the analysis of the social practice of nationalism, in relation to the ideas which ordinary social actors hold about human beings as essentially national creatures. Indeed, assigning oneself to national/nationality-related/ethnic categories (self-categorisation, categorisation by others, or institutional categorisation) is a powerful source of social identification for the individual. Social categorisation may be a contributory factor in the development of social groups as well. For example, negative national/ethnic categorisation with detrimental consequences for the people categorised can lead to the organisation of groups (for example, groups promoting “national emancipation”, group of minority students at a university and so on.)<sup>38</sup> In the end, it was M. Hroch who made an extensive comparative analysis of the non-dominant national (nationalist) movements and organisations in the 19<sup>th</sup> century<sup>39</sup> to which the concept of a *social group* is applicable adequately. Similarly, the concept of *social categorisation* is very well applicable for the study of processes of nationalisation and establishment of the social practice of nationalism among the population in the modernised European countries of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The objectivist definitions of the nation are then, as I hoped to demonstrate, seriously problematic for several reasons. Their single greatest flaw which gives rise to most other problematic aspects is that they represent “nations” as substantial entities. The majority of the alleged properties of nations named by the objectivist definitions can be considered as partial conditions, causes and consequences of social, linguistic and cultural integration of people in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries – which also occurs on the basis of a widely shared idea that people are naturally “national beings” and that “nations” exist in same way as tangible things. The belief that nations are more or less communities of fate, naturally bounded and internally homogeneous groups of people that always have been there, is now firmly anchored in common knowledge practically all over the civilised world. National membership (nationality/ethnicity or national/ethnic identity) is intuitively perceived as a natural (innate) characteristic of human beings. On the basis of essentialist reasoning people categorise and identify themselves and others as members of nations. It is a mistake to accept this kind of lay ontology and epistemology for

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37 Of course, as I mentioned above, there are many approaches in the social sciences and the term “social group” is used very inconsistently. There are various analytical definitions of “groups” which may differ from the one presented above, but their meanings match. For instance social psychologist Brian Lickel and his colleagues in a study presenting their research on the perceived entitativity of social groups used a broad concept of *social group*. They identified four varieties depending on the degree of perceived entitativity, durability, strength and intensity of intra-group relations. Lickel et al. divided social groups into (i) intimate groups, (ii) groups focused on tasks, (iii) social categories, (iv) free associations. LICKEL, Varieties of Groups. Lickel’s first and second varieties are identical with the (narrower) concept of *social group* as presented above, the third variety is clear, Lickel used the name “social category” too. Lickel’s fourth variety is in turn identical with the concept of aggregation of people.

38 The relationship between a social group, social categorisation and social identity of an individual was elaborated theoretically and confirmed experimentally by Henri Tajfel. See his classic work: TAJFEL, Henri. *Human Groups and Social Categories. Studies in Social Psychology*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1981; see also: WORCHEL, COUTANT, It Takes Two to Tango; HOGG, ABRAMS, Social Identifications.

39 HROCH, Social Preconditions.

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social scientific analyses. By defining objective characteristics of the “nation” – when it is defined as something having its five to eight properties (or conditions of existence), as something that emerged once in the past and has existed since then – the objectivist definitions create an anachronistic concept which is particularly useless and misleading for historical research. Indeed, the greatest failure of the objectivist definitions is that they do not take into account adequately the social practice of nationalism and its epistemological influence. On the contrary, they contribute to the social construction of the idea of a substantial nation.

A consequential constructivist reading of Anderson’s concept of nations as *imagined communities* leads us to a concept of nation where the referent (i.e. “the nation”) would not be *a thing*, a *substantial entity*, but a product of the human mind, a comprehensive idea providing frameworks for categorisation of people and an inter-subjective ideological vision setting frames and significant conditions for social practice. The only consequence of such an approach should be, in Rogers Brubaker’s words, a resignation to any effort to define the “nation” anyother way than merely an *idea of a community* and a *category of social practice*.<sup>40</sup> Depending on whether we want to follow the psychological (cognitive) or social aspects (i.e. whether we want to follow the ideal frameworks in which “nations” can be imagined as substantial entities, or nationalistic categorisation practices of individuals and institutions in daily-life situations and the resulting events), in the real world it will always be either an *idea of the nation* or *events in the sphere of social life* that we will find and not some kind of mysterious entity or collectivly being: “the nation”.

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40 BRUBAKER, *Nationalism Reframed*, pp. 13-22.



## Chapter 2

## “EUROPE IN MINIATURE” REPRESENTATIONS OF ETHNIC DIVERSITY OF HUNGARY IN STATISTICS AND HOMELAND STUDIES UNTIL THE REVOLUTION OF 1848 – 1849\*

Peter Šoltés

This study aims to analyse the construction and dissemination of ideas about the ethnic composition of Hungary in scholarly discourse of the first half of the “long” 19<sup>th</sup> century. I have concentrated primarily on the texts that originated in the discipline of *statistics* (in German *Statistik, Staatskunde*). It was established in the last third of the 18<sup>th</sup> century in German universities, where it soon spread to the Austrian and Hungarian academic environments. Then I observed how different ethnic groups were represented in statistics and homeland studies, and which concepts were used in their categorisation. Specifically, I examined, in what context and with what significance were the concepts of *nation, nationality, folk*, used, or, more precisely, their German forms of *Nation, Volk, Völkerschaft*, and other words and phrases derived from them. In the period studied, the statistics of Hungary or the Austrian state, as well as most of the homeland studies analysed, were published mostly in German, which at that period took over the role of Latin as the language of science also in Hungary. The period’s ethnonyms were recorded by different variants. For example, in the texts subjected to analysis, Serbs were referred to using the ethnonyms *Serben, Ráczen, Illyrier*; Slovaks were referred to as *Slowaken, Schlawacken, Sclawaken* as well as using ethnonyms related to all Slavic tribes such as *Slawi, Slaven, Slawen*. Hungarians were denoted in statistics and homeland studies as *Ungarn, Ungern, wahre Ungarn, eigentliche Ungarn, Magyaren, eigentliche Magyaren, Madscharen, Madjaren* and so on. Therefore, the variant names as captured by the period’s sources are provided in the present study in parentheses, following the current ethnonyms.

In the first half of the “long” 19<sup>th</sup> century, a significant part of the Hungarian educated elites completed university studies in German centres of education. It was mainly Jena during the lives of J. W. Goethe and J. G. Herder<sup>41</sup>, and, gradually, more and more students were attracted to Halle, Berlin, and, especially, Göttingen. In the “birthplace” of political science studied Johan Christian von Engel (1770 – 1814), the author of the six-volume *History of Hungary*, Christian Genersich (1759 – 1825), Karl Georg Romy (1780 – 1847), Gregor Berzeviczy (1763 – 1822) and finally, Martin Schwartner (1759 – 1823), the author of the first Hungarian statistics and professor of diplomatics at the University of Budapest. During the three years of studies in Göttingen (1781 – 1783), Schwart-

\* The chapter is the outcome of the VEGA grant no. 2/0138/11 – Transformations of the Slovak Society in the First Half of the “long” 19<sup>th</sup> century.

41 Jakob Glatz (1776 – 1831) and Samuel Bredetzky (1772 – 1812) studied in Jena, where they also attended lectures in geography, statistics, history and other disciplines, in addition to studying theology and philosophy. See: GLOSÍKOVÁ, Viera. *Handbuch der deutschsprachigen Schriftsteller aus dem Gebiet der Slowakei (17. – 20. Jahrhundert)*. Wien : Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1995, p. 54, 55, 44-45, 122-123.

ner learned about the methods of the historical statistical school and the English political arithmetics, which he would apply in drafting his *Statistics of the Hungarian Kingdom* from 1798.<sup>42</sup>

Taught by Gottfried Achenwall, August Ludwig Schlözer and Johann Christoph Gatterer, the greatest authorities of science of that time, the first generation of statisticians studied not only the methods of scientific inquiry, but has also their moral axioms. August Schlözer perceived the importance of the scientific studies not only as a contribution to expanding human knowledge, but, at the same time, as a gain in enhancing good relations among nations and states. He encouraged his students to carry out an objective description and evaluation of facts being examined, and to avoid confrontation and biased statements. The statistical descriptions of different states had to provide an authentic summary of geographical, administrative, economic, historical, legal, and other ethnographic knowledge.<sup>43</sup>

The introduction of *statistics* as a modern science was associated with the effort of the Enlightenment states to improve the performance of the state administration. Johann Georg Meusel, the author of one of the most widely used textbooks of statistics published in 1792, provided the following definition in the introduction: “*a science or knowledge of the current political configuration of states*”.<sup>44</sup> Meusel defined the difference between history and statistics by stating that while history explores the configuration of states in the past and the historical circumstances of the current configuration, statistics focus on describing the current conditions in the states. His textbook referred conceptually to the Göttingen School, especially to A. Schlözer who had defined statistics in terms of the concept, scope and methods of research as a new science that systematically summarised the most recent findings about different states.<sup>45</sup> The Meusel’s textbook became the model for two generations of statisticians in the Habsburg Monarchy and for some time it was even prescribed as a mandatory source for lecturers at Austrian universities.<sup>46</sup>

In statistics, only the existing states were the subject of interest, whether it was the miniature principality of Waldeck, the Free Hanseatic City of Hamburg, or France.

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42 TÖRÖK, Borbála Zsuzsanna. The ethnicity of knowledge: statistics and *Landeskunde* in late eighteenth-century Hungary and Transylvania. In ABBATTISTA, Guido (Ed.) *Encountering Otherness. Diversities and Transcultural Experiences in Early Modern European Culture*. Trieste : Edizioni Università di Trieste, p. 148.

43 ZANDE, Johan. Statistics and History in the German Enlightenment. In *Journal of the History of Ideas*. 2010, Vol. 71, Issue 3, pp. 411-432.

44 MEUSEL, Johann, Georg. *Lehrbuch der Statistik*. Leipzig : bey Caspar Fritsch, 1792, p. 1. In the 1817 edition, Meusel expanded the definition of statistics to “*scientifically organised presentation of the nature of state and its organisation*”. MEUSEL, Johann, Georg. *Lehrbuch der Statistik*. Vierte, grössten Theils umgearbeitete Ausgabe. Leipzig : im Verlage des Hahn’schen Buchhandlung, 1817, p. 1.

45 J.G. Meusel was a disciple of A. Schlözer, whose theoretical and conceptual work he would elaborate on. For Schlözer’s concept of statistics, see chapter: *Versuch den Begriff, die wissenschaftlichen Theile (also Umfang und Gränzlinien) und die Methode der Statistik zu bestimmen* in: SCHLÖZER, August. *Theorie der Statistik. Nebst Ideen über das Studium der Politik überhaupt*. Erstes Heft. Göttingen : in Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht’schem Verlag, 1804, pp. 1-16.

46 Joseph Liechtenstern, who wrote his own textbook of statistics in 1821, stated directly in the title that the book was prepared according to J.G. Meusel. LIECHTENSTERN, Joseph. *Lehrbuch der Statistik aller gegenwärtig bestehenden europäischen Staaten; nach dem Plane des verstorbenen Hofrats Johann Georg Meusel*. Erste Abtheilung, Wien und Dresden : In der Beck’schen und Arnoldischen Buchhandlung, 1821, p. III-IV.

If a state ceased to exist (for example, Poland), or lost sovereignty, it was no longer studied as a separate entity.<sup>47</sup> In the case of Hungary, which consisted of only one crown-land and was indeed merely one of the provinces under the Habsburg Empire (from 1804, the Austrian Empire), publication of Hungarian statistics became a part of the struggle between Vienna's centralisation tendencies and the Hungarian state-law tradition.

In the statistics, the location, size, quality (especially that of soil), industrial production and population were considered as the basis for a country's power and position. In relation to a state's population, statistical descriptions were focused mainly on accurate determination of different age, religious, professional, occupational, economic groups, observing migration of population, health, crime rates, and so on. In the case of ethnically diverse states great emphasis was on a detailed description of the linguistic and cultural background, or, as Johann Springer defined in the 1840 *Statistics of the Austrian Empire*: "*National differences by origin, language, national character and physical abilities, distribution of population by state, religion and employment.*"<sup>48</sup>

From the beginning of the "long" 19<sup>th</sup> century, statistics enjoyed remarkable support from the Austrian state.<sup>49</sup> It was based on the belief that thorough familiarity with the structure and actual conditions was an important prerequisite for the state's bureaucratic machinery to provide quality of service, and, in the eyes of the citizens, it strengthened loyalty to the homeland. Johann Springer described statistics in the work cited as a science most involved in fostering "*sympathy and fondness for the country*" and "*noble-minded patriotism*".<sup>50</sup> In the introduction of a homeland study paper on Hungary from 1805, Samuel Bredetzky expressed that as follows: "*An educated soul must be interested in the entire world, but especially in its homeland. This interest creates sympathy and fondness, which are the mother of fine patriotism, virtue, which civilise our minds and hearts, and which hardly agree with selfishness that destroys the common good.*"<sup>51</sup>

In Hungary, statistics was developed more slowly than in the western part of the empire. *Statistica regni Hungariae* written by Michael Horváth was prescribed by a regulation of the Governor's Council as a textbook intended for academic lectures.<sup>52</sup>

47 Georg Hassel expressed it clearly in the 1822 *Textbook of European States' Statistics*: "*Where the state is missing, it is impossible not to think about statistics.*" HASSEL, Georg. *Lehrbuch der Statistik der Europäischen Staaten für höhere Lehranstalten zugleich als Handbuch zur Selbstbelehrung*. Weimar : im Verlage des Geographischen Instituts, 1822, Vorbericht, p. V.

48 "[D]ie Nationalverschiedenheiten nach Abstammung und Sprache, der Nationalcharakter und die körperlichen Anlagen, die Abtheilung der Bewohner nach Stand, Religion und Beschäftigung." SPRINGER, Johann. *Statistik des österreichischen Kaiserstaates*. Band I, Wien : Beck's Universitäts-Buchhandlung, 1840, p. 82.

49 In 1827, there were departments of statistics at seven universities (Vienna, Innsbruck, Lviv, Padova, Pavia, Prague and Pest). Statistics was also taught in two imperial and royal lyceums (Graz and Olomouc), the Archiepiscopal Lyceum in Eger, and, finally, in seven colleges (two in Vienna, of which one was a military academy, in Oradea, Košice, Bratislava, Zagreb and Rab). The lectures in statistics were given by professors in separate departments of statistics, or in some places, statistics was taught by professors of law, history and other related subjects. Classes in statistics were also taught in Protestant lyceums, included among subjects with no intervention from the state. *Ibid*, p. III.

50 SPRINGER, *Statistik des österreichischen Kaiserstaates*, p. III.

51 BREDETZKY, Samuel. *Beyträge zur Topographie des Königreichs Ungern*. I. Bändchen. Zweyte verbesserte und vermehrte Auflage, Wien : In der Comesinischen Buchhandlung, 1805, p. XI-XII.

52 HORVÁTH, Michaelis. *Statistica regni Hungariae*. Pars I. Posonii : typis Joannis Nep. Schauff, 1794.

The first edition was published in 1794, although the text had already been written in 1770. Horváth served as professor of theology and did not maintain strong links with the German university environment. Looking at authors cited by him reveals orientation to the domestic tradition and authors whose works were obsolete at that time: Samuel Timon *Imago antiquae Hungariae* (1733), Antonio Bonfini *Rerum Hungariae Decades quatuor cum dimidia* (1581), then works by Adam František Kollár and, naturally, Matthias Bel. Even the structure of the work suggests at a first glance that the Horváth's *Statistics* belongs to an older tradition of homeland papers inspired especially by M. Bel.<sup>53</sup> The textbook's structure and content was reworked substantially in the second edition.<sup>54</sup> From the then available models of statistics these were neither Schlözer's nor Meusel's textbooks, but a work of one generation older Gottfried Achenwall.<sup>55</sup> In several points, Horváth drew data from the Schwartner's *Statistics* published in 1798, from works by Hans Grellmann and Ignaz de Luca, *Geographisches Handbuch von dem Oesterreichischen Staate*.<sup>56</sup>

In Hungarian educated discourse at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, there was widespread idea of the Hungarian Kingdom as a country where people spoke many languages and professed many religions.<sup>57</sup> The provisions under the *Racio educationis* reform of the educational system of 1777 were based on the existence of three main types of the population's variety: variety of nations (*Nationum Varietas*), variety of religions (*Varietas Religionum*), and variety of citizens (*Varietas ipsorum Civium*), meaning affiliation with the Estates.<sup>58</sup> In terms of the variety of the nations living in the Hungarian Kingdom, there were seven nations represented in greater numbers (Hungarians, Germans, Slovaks, Croats, Ruthenians, Serbs, Romanians) and several others, and all nations spoke their own languages and differed from one another in many respects.<sup>59</sup>

The image of Hungary as a country which is a meeting place of heterogeneous nations with different languages, customs, religions and economic lives was also widened by travelogues works by local authors as well as foreigners.<sup>60</sup> Travelogues as a literary genre

53 Chapters I and III in the first edition of 1795 were titled *Description and Structure of Hungary, Of Nations Living Now in Hungary, Of Languages Occurring Here*, and differ from the schemes by Achenwall, Schlözer, and the Göttingen school of statistics.

54 HORVÁTH, Michaëlis. *Statistice regni Hungariae, et partium eidem adnexarum*. Editio altera: auctior, et emendatior. Posonii: Typis Michaelis Landerer, 1802.

55 ACHENWALL, Gottfried. *Staatsverfassung der heutigen vornehmsten Europäischen Reiche*. Vierte verbesserte Ausgabe. Göttingen: im Verlag der Witwe Vandenhoeck, 1762.

56 HORVÁTH, *Statistice regni Hungariae*, p. 46, 62, 71, 84, 106, 121, 131, 135-136, 140, 175.

57 The unique ethnic diversity of Hungary was a well-known fact among the scholars. It was documented in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century in the work of Krištof Paršič *Descriptio Hungariae* from 1697, in which Hungary is described as the kingdom of many nations. Many subsequent authors used the Paršič's work as their source, including M. Bel, S. Timon and others. See: HORVÁTH, Pavel. *Slovenská historiografia v období pred národným obrozením. (1. časť)* [Slovak Historiography in the Period before the National Revival. (Part 1)] In *Historický časopis*, 1982, Vol. 31, Issue 1, p. 108.

58 *Ratio educationis totiusque rei literariae per regnum Hungariae et provincias eidem adnexas*. Tomus I. Vindobonae, typis Joan. Thom. Trattner, 1777, pp. 6-8.

59 "a) Hungaros proprie dictos, b) Germanos, c) Slavos, d) Croatas, e) Ruthenos, f) Illyrios, g) Valachos, qui omnes linguis utuntur propriis, multumque inter se diffidentibus." Ibid, pp. 6-7. See also: MIKLEŠ, Ján – NOVACKÁ, Mária – MÁTEJ, Jozef (eds.) *Ratio Educationis 1777 a 1806*. Bratislava: SPN, 1988, p. 41.

60 TIBENSKÝ, Ján – URBANCOVÁ, Viera: *Slovensko očami Európy* [Slovakia in the Eyes of Europe] 900 – 1850. Bratislava: Academic Electronic Press, 2003.

were widespread and popular in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and they belonged to sources used by authors of statistics. Ján Čaplovič (1780 – 1847) was an author who contributed significantly to building the image of Hungary as a multinational state in the Austrian and Hungarian discourse. In his text, this well-respected and frequently cited ethnographer and writer introduced and often repeated the quip about Hungary being Europe in miniature: “*Das Königreich Ungern ist Europa in Kleinen*”. For nearly two generations, it became a favourite phrase of many authors of statistics and homeland and ethnographic works, travelogues and articles.<sup>61</sup> *Europe in miniature* did not refer only to the diversity of the population, but also the climatic conditions, landscape, crops grown and animals raised. According to Wenzel Blumenbach,<sup>62</sup> Hungary was the home of “*almost all European national tribes (Völkstämme), languages, religions, employments, cultural levels, lifestyles, manners and customs*”.<sup>63</sup>

The statistical description of Hungary’s population raised the problem of distinguishing between the two meanings of the Latin term *Hungarus/Hungari* and the German term *Ungar/Ungarn*, or *Ungern*. It was used to denote the inhabitants of the Hungarian Kingdom, but at the same time it also served as the name for a linguistically and ethnically defined group of people. Under the influence of the Göttingen school of statistics, since the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the attributes such as *real, indigenous, native Hungarians (eigentliche, ursprüngliche, wahre, gebohrene Ungern/Ungarn)* were used to distinguish between the statist and ethnic significance of *Ungarn*.<sup>64</sup> For example, this group included Ignaz De Luca,<sup>65</sup> Heinrich Grellmann,<sup>66</sup> or Martin Schwartzner, who tried to introduce another term of *Urunger* in addition to the terms *eigentliche Ungern, wahre Ungarn* and *Magyaren*.<sup>67</sup> In scientific discourse, however, his neoplasm was not established.<sup>68</sup> In later statistical and national history works written in the German language, the duality of concepts *Magyar/*

61 The quip about *Europe in miniature* first appeared in the Čaplovič’s with the same title published in *Vaterländische Blätter* in 1820, Issue 103-105. A year later the article *Das Königreich Ungarn is Europa im Kleinen* was published in *Der Wanderer*, Issue 22, Monday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1821 See also: CSAPLOVIC, Johann. *Gemälde von Ungern*. Erster Theil. Pesth : Verlag von C. A. Hartleben, 1829, p. 14; ČAPLOVIČ, Ján. *Etnografia Slovákov v Uhorsku* [The Ethnography of Slovaks in Hungary]. Bratislava : SPN, 1997, p. 285, where he mentions the wide-spread use of the phrase *Europa im Kleinen*. This quip became very popular and can be found in a number of works from that time.

62 Wenzel Carl Wolfgang Blumenbach (Wabruschek), (1791 – 1847) a geographer and a statistician, cooperated with Liechtenstern in his Cosmographic Office, where he served as a clerk from 1813 to 1815. In 1829, he became a censor of books and alongside that he was concerned scientifically with the geography and statistics of Austria.

63 BLUMENBACH, Wenzel Carl Wolfgang. *Neustes Gemälde der Oesterreichischen Monarchie*. Wien : in der Kommission bei Anton Doll, 1833, p. 187.

64 GRELLMANN, Heinrich. *Statistische Aufklärungen über wichtige Theile und Gegenstände der österreichischen Monarchie*. Band I. Göttingen : bey Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1795, p. 380; DE LUCA, Ignaz. *Geographisches Handbuch von dem österreichischen Staate. IV. Band Enthaltend Ungern, Illyrien, und Siebenbürgen*. Wien : bey J. V. Degen, 1791, p. 185.

65 Ignaz De Luca (1746 – 1799), the first professor of statistics in the Habsburg monarchy, worked at the University of Vienna.

66 Grellmann Heinrich (1756 – 1804), professor of statistics at the University of Göttingen and in Moscow.

67 SCHWARTNER, Martin. *Statistik des Königreichs Ungern*. Erster Theil. Zweyte vermehrte und verbesserte Ausgabe. Ofen : gedruckt mit königlichen Universitätsschriften, 1809, p. 118.

68 In the second edition of his statistics of Hungary in Latin from 1802, Michal Horváth differentiated the two meanings of the term *Hungarus* through the use of the attribute *native* (“*native Hungari seu Magyari*”), as an alternative to the ethnonym *Magyars*. HORVÁTH, Michaëlis. *Statistica regni Hungariae et partium eidem adnexarum*. Editio altera: auctior, et emenditior. Posenii : typis Michaelis Landerer, 1802, p. 49.

*Madjar* and *Ungar/Unger*, or *Maďar* and *Uhor/Uher* in Czech and Slovak texts, established itself generally in order to distinguish between the ethno-linguistic and statist meanings of the Latin term *Hungarus*.

At the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, a controversy evolved in the Danubian monarchy about the nomenclature for labelling different population groups. As German was the language of scientific disputes at that time not only in the countries of Austria, but also in Hungary, the terms with disputed content were *Nation*, *Volk*, *Völkerschaft* and their derived forms *Volkstamm*, *Volksgruppe*, etc. However, this was not a linguistic dispute, but one of the manifestations of growing nationalisation of the society and transformation of its structure of the Estates. In the discourse of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, these terms were used rather loosely, without a well-defined meaning. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century's most extensive German-language encyclopaedia, Zedler's *Universallexicon*, the Slavs are alternately referred to as a *nation* (*Nahme mächtigen einer Nation*), as various *Slavic folks* (*Slavischen Völker*, *böhmisches Volk*)<sup>69</sup>, while *Székelys* (*Zeckler, eine Nation in Siebenbürgen*) and *Russians* (*Russi oder Rhosi, eine mächtige scythische Nation*) are identified as nations,<sup>70</sup> but, according to the *Lexicon*, *Serbs* (*Serben, Sebrí*), for example, are labelled as *Volk*.<sup>71</sup> *Ratio educationis* distinguished seven nations in Hungary (in Latin, *septem nationes*), which corresponded to the seven provincial languages to be introduced in teaching at trivial schools. Similarly, the *Geographical Guide of the Austrian State* by Ignaz de Luca from 1791 used the term *Nation* exclusively to describe the population of Hungary in the meaning of an ethno-linguistic group. He categorises Germans, Hungarians, but also Croats, Czechs and Slovaks as nations.<sup>72</sup>

In the early years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century a shift can be observed in the Hungarian discourse in the understanding of the concepts *Nation* and *Volk*, or *Völkerschaft*. It can be illustrated by the example of the two editions of the *Statistics of Hungary* by M. Schwartner.

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69 *Grosses vollständiges Universal-lexicon aller Wissenschaften und Künste, welche bishero durch menschlichen Verstand und Witz erfunden und verbessert worden*. Band XXXVIII, Leipzig : Johann Heinrich Zedler, pp. 29-34 (the Zedlers Universal lexicon).

70 Zedlers Universal-lexicon, Band 60, 1746, p. 1048.

71 Zedlers Universal-lexicon, Band 37, 1746, p. 340.

72 DE LUCA, *Geographisches Handbuch von dem österreichischen Staate*, pp. 202-206.

Schwartner, Martin. Statistik des Königreichs Ungern.

1 <sup>st</sup> edition of 1798	2 <sup>nd</sup> extended and revised edition of 1809 <sup>74</sup>	English translation of the second edition <sup>75</sup>
<p><b>Verschiedenheit der Menschen in Ungern. I. Nach den Sprachen</b></p> <p><i>"In keinem Lande der Welt sind vielleicht mehrere Sprachen - und eben deswegen auch so viele <u>Nationen</u> - einheimisch, als in Ungern. Ungern, zum Theil so weit die Geschichte reicht, der Stamm-Siß des größten zahlreichsten Volks der Slaven, war seit dem IVten Jahrhundert der Gasthof der die römische Welt stürmenden Barbaren, der Zufluchtsort verdrängter Nomaden, die <u>Passage</u> schwärmerischen Kreuzzüge, <u>der bequeme Feuerherd des Zigeuner's</u>, als Grenzreich der europäischen Christenheit der Schauplatz Europäischer Tapferkeit und asiatisch-türkischer Wildheit, von je her aber das Dorado des Deutschen überhaupt, insonderheit des arbeitsamen Sachsen und des fruchtbaren Schwaben. Italiener und hungrige Savoyarden müssen ehedem häufiger als jetzt in Ungern gewesen seyn. Ein so großer und mannigfaltiger Zusammenfluß von Völkern und Nationen, von denen in alten Zeiten keine der andern an Cultur viel überlegen war, mußte eine große Verschiedenheit der Sprachen zur Folge haben. So groß daher die Verschiedenheit der Religionen heut in Holland ist, so groß ist die Mannigfaltigkeit der Sprachen in Ungern."</i></p>	<p><b>Verschiedenheit der Menschen in Ungern. I. Nach den Sprachen <u>Magyaren oder UrUnger</u></b></p> <p><i>"In keinem Lande der Welt sind vielleicht mehrere Sprachen - und eben deswegen auch so viele <u>Völkerschaften</u> - einheimisch, als in Ungern. Ungern, zum Theil so weit die Geschichte reicht, der Stamm-Siß des größten zahlreichsten Volks der Slaven, war seit dem IVten Jahrhundert der Gasthof der die römische Welt stürmenden Barbaren, der Zufluchtsort verdrängter Nomaden, die <u>Heersstrasse</u> schwärmerischen Kreuzzüge und als Grenzreich der europäischen Christenheit der Schauplatz Europäischer Tapferkeit und asiatisch-türkischer Wildheit, von je her aber das Eldorado des Deutschen überhaupt, insonderheit des arbeitsamen Sachsen und des fruchtbaren Schwaben. Italiener und hungrige Savoyarden müssen ehedem häufiger als jetzt in Ungern gewesen seyn. Ein so großer <u>Zusammenfluß der heterogensten Zungen und Völker, von welchen keine dem andern an Cultur viel überlegen war, die Unbekanntschaft ferner der herrschenden Nation mit den Vortheilen der Herrschaft ihrer Muttersprache, und das Bestreben der ungarischen Könige der Vorzeit, auf die Mannigfaltigkeit der Völkerschaften und Zungen in der Monarchie, ihr Ansehen, und die Stärke und Festigkeit ihres Reichs zu gründen, mussten Ungern sehr früh zum Lande der Polyglotten machen. Dies ist daselbe auch noch gegenwärtig, und überaus merkwürdig ist diese seltene Völker- und Sprachenunterschied."</u></i></p>	<p><b>Diversity of people in Hungary. I. By language</b></p> <p><i>"Perhaps there is no country in the world is a home of more languages and, thus, so many nationalities but Hungary. As far as the history dates back, Hungary was the home of the largest and most numerous folk of Slavs. Since the 4th century, it hosted barbarians attacking the Roman world, became often the refuge for nomad outcasts, was a military road walked upon by the crusaders, and as a boundary country of the European Christianity, it was the scene of European bravery and Asiatic and Turkish ferocity. Before that, however, it was the Eldorado for all Germans, especially for hardworking Saxons and prolific Swabians. Even Italians or hungry Savoyards must have lived here in much larger numbers than today. Such a great confluence of the most diverse nations and languages, none of which excelled above the others in terms of cultural awareness and maturity, the fact that there was no governing nation benefiting from the domination of its mother tongue, together with the efforts of the Hungarian kings, who in ancient times tried to establish their empire's power and strength on respecting the diversity of nationalities and languages, all of that must have made Hungary very soon a polyglot country. This rare variety of nations and languages, which are still present today, deserves special attention."</i></p>

When describing the linguistic and ethnic diversity in Hungary, Schwartner used the concepts of *Nationen* and *Völker/Völkerschaften* in the first edition freely, without linking them in any way to the historical rights, or the existing tradition of statehood. However, in the revised second edition, he used the concept of *Nation* to describe people (citizens)

73 Highlighted are the words and phrases which are different in the two editions.

74 See the Slovak translation: ŠKVARNA, Dušan - ŠOLTĚS, Peter (eds.) Na prahu modernej doby : súmrak stavskej, úsvit národno-občianskej spoločnosti. Pramene k dejinám Slovenska a Slovákov IX [Sources on the History of Slovakia and Slovaks IX. On the Threshold of the Modern Era: Dusk of the Estates, Dawn of the National-Civil Society]. Edited by Dvořák, Pavel. Bratislava : Literárne informačné centrum, 2008, pp. 63-64.

of Hungary, of the Hungarian Kingdom (*ungrische Nation*).<sup>75</sup> The concept of *Volk* occurred in Schwarter's works in three different contexts: to denote the population of Hungary *Gesammtmasse des ungrischen Volks (8. Mill.)*, "beste Methode das ungrische Volk zu registrieren"<sup>76</sup>, in the sense of the folk (people) "das Volk in den fruchtbaren Regionen", "das Landvolk"<sup>77</sup> and, finally, to denote the ethno-cultural group, "das Zigeunervolk: , "Ein fremdes Volk – die Tüken".<sup>78</sup>

The change in understanding and use of the concept of *nation* which occurred in the Hungarian intellectual discourse in the first two decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century can be documented also in a dispute concerning the title of the Palkovič's (Weekly). Due to an intervention of officials of the Governor's Council, in 1817 Juraj Palkovič was forced to change its subtitle *Císařsko-královské národní noviny* (Imperial-Royal National Newspaper) to *Týdenník aneb Prešpurské slovenské noviny* (The Weekly, or the Presburgian Slovak Newspapers). The tendency to use the category of *nation* only in the representation of ethnic Hungarian population of Hungary and in representation of the Hungarian political nation grew even stronger in the further development.<sup>79</sup>

Martin Schwartner belonged to the circle of Hungarian intellectuals who were proponents of the *Hungarus* concept. The concept advocated equality of all citizens of Hungary, regardless of affiliation with the Estates, language, religion or any other difference. The position of different nations in the country's political structure had to be based on their numbers by which they were divided into *Hauptnationen* (main nations) and *Nebenvölker* (minor nations). Owing to the Schwartner's authority, the *Hungarus* concept was firmly established for over a half of century in the Hungarian statistics and geography. Schwartner's *Statistics of Hungary* were published already in his lifetime three times in German and Hungarian translations, and once in French translation, and had a major impact on shaping the opinions of the generation of pro-reform Hungarian intellectuals and politicians.<sup>80</sup>

By the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries the *Hungarus* concept had experienced quite a long career. It was as early as since the first third of the 18<sup>th</sup> century when a new form of identification with the Hungarian state established itself among the non-aristocratic, Protestant intelligentsia coming from the Upper Hungary's environment, or the ethnically mixed Lower Hungary's districts. Unlike the concept of *Natio Hungarica*, the *Hungarus* concept was exclusive neither in terms of the Estates nor in terms of language and ethnicity, and included non-aristocratic and non-Hungarian population. The small but literary and scientifically active and influential group defined itself on the state-territorial basis as *Hungarus/Hungari*, and hence the citizens of the Hungarian homeland – *Hungarie*.<sup>81</sup>

75 SCHWARTNER, Statistik des Königreichs Ungern, 1809, p. 3, 32, 122, 157, 357, 434.

76 Ibid, p. 181, 109.

77 Ibid, p. 361, 164.

78 Ibid, p. 153, 441.

79 A similar process in relation to using or not using the category of *nationality* when representing the non-Magyar population of Hungary is analysed by L. Vörös. See: VÖRÖS, László. *Analytická historiografia versus národné dejiny. „Národ“ ako sociálna reprezentácia* [Analytical Historiography versus National History. "Nation" as a Social Representation]. Piza : Edizioni Plus – Piza University Press, 2010, p. 130.

80 TÖRÖK, The ethnicity of knowledge, p. 148.

81 SOÓS István. Értelmiségi minták és a Hungarus-tudat a 18. században és 19. században elején. In SIMON, Attila (ed.). *Acta Historica Danubiensia 2007*. Pelikán Nyomda : Selye János Egyetem, 2007, pp. 25-35.

Matej Bel (1684 – 1749), Ján Tomko-Sásky (1692 – 1762) Karl Gottlieb von *Windisch* (1725 – 1793), Adam František Kollár (1718 – 1783)<sup>82</sup> were among the prominent representatives of the Hungarian patriotic intelligentsia. The Upper Hungary's minor nobility but also a part of higher aristocracy sided for some time with this current of opinion. Of these, Gregor Berzeviczy was the most active participant in the public discourse.<sup>83</sup> The scientific and social activities of the intelligentsia aware of the *Hungarus* concept was characterised by tolerance in the issue of language, and acceptance of cultural pluralism and within that, different historical narratives.<sup>84</sup> In addition to the tradition of St. Stephen, there were references to the past made in the statistics about the Great Moravian history of Slovaks, the mission of Cyril and Methodius, as well as acknowledgement of the cultural contribution of the translation of liturgical books into Church Slavonic, and so on. Since the last third of the 18<sup>th</sup> century marked by the reform decade under the rule of Joseph II, increasingly stronger efforts began to emerge in Hungary to emancipate the Hungarian language to the status of the official and national language. There were growing trends fostering the dominant position of the Hungarian language in the Hungarian political practice, especially in the legal norms adopted by the Hungarian Diet, in district administration, but also in everyday communication among aristocrats. Hungarian political representatives attempted to transform the Hungarian patriotism into the concept of the Hungarian political nation. In addition to the (still dominant) aristocracy, the underprivileged members of population had to be integrated into the nation as well. The ultimate goal of these efforts was to turn Hungary into a single multi-ethnic Hungarian national state.<sup>85</sup> In time, the *Hungarus* concept turned out to be politically unviable. The circle of his followers narrowed to educated persons of non-aristocratic origin, professors at universities, lyceums and gymnasiums, diocesan administration etc. An attempt by Karl Georg Romy to establish a scientific journal publishing texts in all Hungary's provincial languages also ended in failure. His goal was to represent and strengthen the multilingual nature of Hungary. The distrust of censors against Romy, suspected of excessive liberalism and democratism, caused that only one issue of the *Musen-Almanach von und für Ungarn auf das Jahr 1808* was released, and so there was no more persistent common literary base on which the *Hungarus* concept would develop and strengthen institutionally.<sup>86</sup>

82 For the ideological components which formed Adam František Kollár's understanding of the *Hungarus* concept, see: SÓOS, István. Die Korrespondenz von Adam Franz Kollár. In KISS, Endre – KISS, Gy. Csaba – STAGL, Justin (eds.) *Nation und Nationalismus in wissenschaftlichen Standardwerken Österreich-Ungarns, ca. 1867 – 1918*. Wien, Köln, Weimar : Bohlau, 1997, pp. 15-32, especially pp. 27-29.

83 CSÁKY, Moritz. *Von der Aufklärung zum Liberalismus. Studien zum Frühliberalismus in Ungarn. Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für die Geschichte Österreichs, Band 10*. Wien : Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1981, pp. 156-169, *ibid* p. 164.

84 CSÁKY, Moritz. Die *Hungarus*-Konzeption. Eine ‚realpolitische‘ Variante zur magyarischen Nationalstaatsidee. In DRABEK, Anna – PLASCHKA, Richard – WANDRUSCHKA Adam (eds.) *Ungarn und Österreich unter Maria Theresia und Joseph II. Neue Aspekte im Verhältnis der beiden Länder*. Wien : Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1982, p. 79-81.

85 RAPANT, Daniel. *Ilegálna maďarizácia 1790 – 1840* [Illegal Magyarisation 1790 – 1840]. Turč. Sv. Martin : Matica slovenská, 1947.

86 For the Romy's plan to establish *Musen* almanach and the reasons why he did not succeed, see: FRIED, István. Der Plan einer mitteleuropäischen Zeitschrift aus dem Jahr 1806. In *Magyar Könyvszemle*, 1974, Vol. 90, Issue 3-4, pp. 262-268.

**The most important multipliers of the *Hungarus* concept** were the authors of statistics and homeland studies. In these works, they emphasised the exceptionality of Hungary in Europe where no nation surpassed another one more considerably in terms of legal status and cultural maturity. Such equality was reflected in language because unlike in other kingdoms there was no national language in a position of the “ruling” language.<sup>87</sup> In the first third of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, two different approaches were formed in the Hungarian discourse concerning the use of the terms of *Nation* and *Volk*, or *nemzet* and *nép* in Hungarian, or *nation* and *folk* (*people*) in *English*. The first one dominated in the Hungarian political discourse and according to that approach, the entire population of Hungary formed one political *Hungarian nation* (*ungarische Nation*), which was further subdivided into ethno-linguistic groups – *folks* (*Völker*). The second approach was based on the idea of a single Hungarian folk (*ungarisches/ungrisches Volk*), i.e. all inhabitants of Hungary made up of several nations (*Nationen*). Ján Čaplovič defined the difference between a nation and a folk by stating that a nation (*Nation*) is a part of mankind characterised by its own linguistic and cultural features and folk (*regnicolae, Volk*) is made of all the inhabitants of a country, which, like Hungary, could consist of different nations.<sup>88</sup> The same concept as upheld by Čaplovič for the conditions in Hungary was put through in the Austrian statistics as well. In a chapter devoted to the spiritual characteristics of the population, subchapter *National character*, of the 1840 Statistics of the Austrian Empire, Johann Springer justified the impossibility of defining a generally applicable Austrian character as the Austrian folk consisted of not only one but many nations.<sup>89</sup> In terms of origin and prevalence of the language, he divided the Austrian folk (*Österreichisches Volk*) into four main nations (*Hauptnationen*), and six by-nations (*Nebenvölker*). The division of the population of individual states into *main nations* and *by-nations*, or *nationalities*, was generally established in the statistics in the last third of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In addition to this basic division into *national classes* (*Völkerklassen*), the population was categorised on the basis of number, morals, customs, historical and political developments, and language criteria.<sup>90</sup> By the national classes (*nach den*

87 BLUMENBACH, *Neustes Gemälde der Oesterreichischen Monarchie*, p. 187, 444-445; SCHWARTNER, *Statistik des Königreichs Ungern*, 1809, p. 119.

88 “*The nation is in fact already by the very word (vi vocis) a part of mankind, divided from others through its language and number. (...) The folk-regnicolae, Volk, is the whole (the community) of all inhabitants of a country, which can consist of different nations, like in our Hungary.*” ČAPLOVIČ, Ján. *Rozjmaní o zmaďarizovaní země Uherské*. [Contemplation about magyarised Hungarian country]. Praha, 1842, p. 16.

89 “*Da das österreichische Volk nicht aus einer, sondern aus mehreren Nationen besteht, so kann auch von einem allgemeinen Nationalcharakter keine Rede sein.*” SPRINGER, *Statistik des österreichischen Kaiserstaates*, p. 186.

90 According to the Johann Georg Meusel’s statistics textbook cited, Europeans were divided into: 1) Nations which originated as a result of military campaigns of the *German nations* (*Teutscher Nationen*) at the beginning of the Middle Ages and mixing with the old inhabitants of Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, and England. 2) *Germans* (*Teuschen*) who spread from their original homeland to Switzerland, Prussia, Courland, Livonia and Estonia, Transylvania, Hungary and Poland. 3) *Nordic nations* (*nordische Völker*) in Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Iceland. 4) *Slavic nations* (*slavische Völker*) in Russia, Poland, Bohemia, and Moravia. 5) *Ottomans or Turks* (*Osmanen oder Türken*). Beside them, many other nationalities lived in Europe: Tatars, Walachs, Hungarians (*Ungern*), Greeks, Albanians, Arnauts, Samoyeds, Estonians, Finns, Lapps, Irishmen and Scots. Traditionally, at the end of the list there were Jews and Gypsies. MEUSEL, Johann Georg. *Lehrbuch der Statistik*. Leipzig : bey Caspar Fritsch, 1792, pp. 9-10. In 1827, the fourth revised edition was published in Leipzig.

*Völkerklassen*), the population of Austria was divided into: 1) Germans (*Teutsche*), 2) Slavs (*Wenden* or *Slaven*), divided further into several tribes, 3) Hungarians (*Madscharen* or *Ungern*), 4) Walachs (*Wlachen/Walachen*), 5) Illyrians (*Illyrier*), 6) Gypsies (*Zigeuner*), 7) Walloons (*Wallonen*), 8) Italians (*Italiener*), 9) Jews (*Juden*), 10) Clementins or Arnauts (*Klementiner oder Arnauten*), 11) Turks (*Türken*).<sup>91</sup>

Taken from the German and Austrian environment, the division into *main nations* (*Hauptnationen*) and *by-folks*, or *nationalities* (*Nebenvölker, Völkerschaften*) was implanted in the Hungarian statistics at the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Firstly, it was in Martin Schwartner's statistics, and, influenced by the above, in the two coming generations of authors of statistics of Hungary. Schwartner as the first, followed by the next two generations of statisticians, divided the population of Hungary into four main nations (*Hauptnationen*) and a different number of by-nations, and by-folks (*Nebenvölker*). They diverged by origin, language, mental and moral background, and ways of housekeeping, farming and living. However, we can encounter the idea of the four dominant nations in Hungary already in the 1860s. In the preface to the earlier historical work by Mikuláš Oláh, Adam František Kollár distinguished four nations in Hungary. "[T]he major cities and busier towns are mostly inhabited by Hungarians, Germans and Slavs; the Kingdom is divided into these nations, and the Walachians."<sup>92</sup>

The division into four main nations in Hungary generally also correlated with the division into the four main languages – Hungarian, Slavic, German, and Latin. In that period's professional discourse it was the order, and thus indirectly the importance of major provincial languages, as well as the terms Slavic and Slovak, in German *slawisch* and *slowakisch*.<sup>93</sup> Each of the languages was predominately used for communication in certain situations and social contexts. Since the rule of Joseph II, throughout the period before March, the German language maintained the status of the language of scholars, while Latin was traditionally considered as the language of aristocracy and authorities. From 1790s until 1830s, the Hungarian and Slavic languages retained the character of popular languages, which was also reflected upon by foreigners who visited St. Stephen's country in that period.<sup>94</sup>

In the previous period, the population of Hungary was categorised in a different way. Volume 49 of Zedler's *Universallexicon* from 1746 provides that there were two main nations (*Nationen*) in Hungary – Hungarians (*Ungarn*) and Slovaks (*Sclawacken*) which constituted a majority of the population. In addition to the above, there were four nationali-

91 Ibid, p. 92.

92 This is the preface to the edition *Hungaria et Atila, sive de originibus, gentis, regni Hungariae situ, habitu, opportunitatibus et rebus bello paceque ab Atila gestis Libri duo* by Mikuláš Oláh. Viennae, 1763, p. 62. Cited from: TIBENSKÝ, Ján. *Chvály a obrany slovenského národa* [Praise and Defence of the Slovak Nation]. Bratislava : Slovenské vydavateľstvo krásnej literatúry, 1965, p. 104.

93 For example, in the Topography of Hungary from 1803 (second edition of 1805), Samuel Bredetzky referred to the languages as follows: *Hauptlandessprachen – die Ungarische, Lateinische, Slowakische und Deutsche*. BREDETZKY, Samuel. *Beyträge zur Topographie des Königreichs Ungern*. Wien : In der Camesinainen Buchhandlung, 1805, p. VI.

94 "[D]ie ungarische, slavische, teutsche und lateinische. Die ungarische und slavische Sprache ist die des Volkes, die teutsche die Sprache der Gebildeten, die lateinische, - ich kann mich nicht sehr irren, wenn ich sie als Sprache der Edelleute bezeichne." NORMANN, Hans. (the real name of Anton Johann Gross-Hoffinger) *Ungarn, das Reich, Land, Volk und wie es ist. Band I*, Leipzig : bei A. Fest, 1833, p. 82.

ties (*Völkerschaften*) in Hungary, of which two were represented by significant numbers – Germans (*Deutschen*) and Serbs (*Raißen*), and two in smaller or tiny numbers – Ruthenians (*Rußnacken*) and Wallachians (*Wallachen*).<sup>95</sup> Seven years before the publication of Schwartner's *Statistics of the Kingdom of Hungary*, Ignaz de Luca divided the population of Hungary in the *Geographical Guide of the Austrian State of 1791* into 1) *genuine Hungarians*, 2) *Slavs*, 3) *Germans*, 4) *Illyrians*, 5) *Wallachians*, 6) *Jews and Gypsies*.<sup>96</sup> De Luca did not categorise the population of Hungary into the main nations and by-nationalities, but into classes (*Classen*). In another place, where he described the linguistic diversity, he provides explicitly the four main languages.<sup>97</sup>

In parallel with the division of the population of Hungary into four main nations and different numbers of by-nationalities, other divisions occurred in that period's discourse as well. In the *Geographical and Statistical Dictionary of the Empire* published in 1809, Karl Georg Romy divided the seven million inhabitants of Hungary into eleven ethnic groups without any further categorisation. Romy distinguished between major and minor languages, and included *deutsche, slawische, ungarische, walachische* in the major languages, and *raizische, neugriechische, rusniakische, armenische, zigeunerische* in minor languages. A separate category was created for Latin.<sup>98</sup> In 1804, Juraj Palkovič (1769 – 1850) issued a textbook of the Hungarian national history entitled *The Knowledge of the Homeland* for Lutheran schools. While Palkovič, a professor at the Protestant Lyceum in Bratislava (Pressburg, Poszony) and a supporter of the concept of *Hungarus*, quotes the Schwartner's statistics, he mentions Hungarians, Slavs and Germans as the dominant nations of Hungary.<sup>99</sup>

Slavs were represented in the statistics as a nation (*Nation* or *Volk*) or a tribe (*Stamm*) with many branches. In statistical sources, Slovaks were represented as the most populous Slavic branch (*slawischer Volkszweig*) in Hungary, also noted for the greatest "repro-

95 Zedlers Universal-lexicon, Band 49, 1746, pp. 1357-1359.

96 "Die sämtlichen Einwohner in ganz Ungern lassen sich in diese Classen bringen. I. Die eigentliche Ungern; sie stammen von den Hunnen ab. II. Die Slaven, dazu gehören die Böhmen, Rußen ec. III. Die Teutschen; diese bestehen aus Oesterreichern, Steyermärker, Schwaben, Franken, Lothringen etc. IV. Illyrier, V. Walachen, VI. Juden und Zigeuner. Unter allen diesen Nationen machen die Illyrier, Wallachen und Slawen die grössere Zahl aus; jene der eigentlichen Ungern ist die kleinste." DE LUCA, Geographisches Handbuch von dem österreichischen Staate, p. 185.

97 "So wie die Einwohner in Ungern von verschiedenen Nationen sind, so gibt es auch verschiedene Sprachen. Gewöhnlich zählet man in Ungern vier Hauptsprachen. Es sind diese; 1.) Die ungerische Sprache, sie ist eigentlich die Landessprache, 2.) Die teutsche Sprache, sie hat nach Verschiedenheit der teutschen Nation verschiedene Mundarten. 3.) Die slawische Sprache; Man theilet sie nach der Nationen in die böhemische, kroatische, wendische, illyrische, und rußische Mundart. 4.) Die walachische Sprache. Die lateinische Sprache kann man mit allem Rechte als herrschende Sprache in Ungern annehmen, da solche selbst von dem Gemeinen, jedoch mehr als schlecht gesprochen wird." Ibid, p. 203.

98 RUMY, Karl Georg. *Geographisch-Statistisches Wörterbuch des Österreichischen Kaiserstaates, oder, Alphabetische Darstellung der Provinzen, Städte, Merkwürdigen Flecken, Dörfer, Schlösser*. Wien : bey Anton Doll, 1809, p. 413.

99 PALKOVIČ, Giřj. *Známost vlasti. Neywcj pro sskoly Slowenské w Uhřjch. Oddělenj Prwnj, známost geografická* [Knowledge of the motherland. For the Slovak schools in Hungary. Part one, Geography]. W Prešpurku u Symona Petra Webera, 1804, p. 13.

ductive power".<sup>100</sup> Martin Schwartner, Joseph Rohrer, Johann Demian and others considered Slavs also as the autochthonous inhabitants of Hungary.<sup>101</sup> In this way, Schwartner explained the fact that the country of St. Stephen was not called *Magyaria*, but it also bears the "spoiled" Slavic name *Hungaria*.<sup>102</sup>

Like in other European countries, in the Austrian monarchy, the Napoleonic wars led to boosting the state-supported patriotism. Its aim was primarily to increase the loyalty of the ethnically, confessionally and culturally diverse population of the state weakened by the society's nationalisation and political turmoils on the map of Europe. After releasing censorship and stabilisation of the political situation a new Romantic generation of national intelligentsia was formed (Vuk Karadžić, Ján Kollár, Mihály Vörösmarty, Pavol Jozef Šafárik) and disputes between Hungarian aristocratic and intellectual circles and the emerging national movements of Serbs, Croats, Romanians and Slovaks started to intensify.

In the 1830s and 1840s the struggle of the status of the Hungarian monarchy between the Hungarian political representation and Vienna escalated.<sup>103</sup> The concerns about the cultural domination of the Germans and the fear of being dissolved in the "Slavic sea" were the departure points of a situation in which the dominant part of the Hungarian elite began to incline to the opinion that cultural and linguistic homogenisation was an optimal solution for ensuring the integrity of the St. Stephen's Crown. Of the number of alternatives for consolidating the internal situation in the Kingdom of Hungary, including the concept of *Hungarus*, the statist approach of a homogenous Hungarian political nation was enforced.<sup>104</sup>

The most sedulous supporters and promoters of the *Hungarus* concept in the Hungarian scientific and political discourse were the authors of homeland and statistical literature. They distinguished consistently between the ethnic and political contents of the terms *Magyars (Magyaren)* and *Hungarians (Ungarn)*, and emphasised the fact that the rights of an individual in Hungary had never been dependent on belonging to a particular nation.

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100 "Der ausgebreitetste Volkszweig im eigentlichen Ungarn sind unstreitig die Slowaken; die ehrenvollsten Ueberbleibsel des einst so mächtigen, mährischen Reiches, welche schon Ackerbauer auf ungarischem Boden waren, als noch der Madjar außer Ungarn ein nomadisches Leben führte. Man heißt die Slowaken auch böhmische Slawen, woran man nicht unrecht thut; denn sie sind unstreitig die nächsten Brüder zu den Einwohnern des mährischen Slowaken-Landes, und kamen wirklich theilweise selbst in neuren Zeiten aus Böhmen." ROHRER, Joseph. *Versuch über die slawischen Bewohner der österreichischen Monarchie. Erster Theil*. Wien : im Verlage des Kunst und Industrie Comptoirs, 1804, p. 19; See also: DEMIAN, Johann Andreas. *Statistische Darstellung des Königreichs Ungern und der dazu gehörigen Länder. Band I*. Wien : in der Camesinischen Buchhandlung, 1805, p. 77; SCHWARTNER, *Statistik des Königreichs Ungern*, 1809, pp. 126-127.

101 ROHRER, Joseph. *Versuch über die slawischen Bewohner der österreichischen Monarchie. Erster Theil*. Wien : im Verlage des Kunst und Industrie Comptoirs, 1804, p. 107.

102 "Es lässt sich nun um etwas leichter begreifen, warum das Land nicht *Magyaria*, sondern liener mit einem verdorbenen slawischen Namen *Hungaria (Hungarn)* heisst." SCHWARTNER, *Statistik des Königreichs Ungern*, 1809, p. 127. In the first edition of 1798, this explanation is missing. Compare: SCHWARTNER, *Statistik des Königreichs Ungern*, 1798, pp. 87-107.

103 GOGOLÁK, Ludwik. *Die Nationswerdung der Slowaken und die Anfänge der tschechoslowakischen Frage 1526 – 1790. Beiträge zur Geschichte des slowakischen Volkes I*. München : Oldenburg, 1963, p. 215.

104 For details on the ideological components involved in the creation of the Hungarian national politics, see: HASELSTEINER, Horst. *Ungarische Nationalkonzepte, die Slaven und der „Austroslavismus“*. In MORITSCH, Andreas (ed.). *Der Austroslavismus: ein verfrühtes Konzept zur politischen Neugestaltung*. Wien : Böhlau, 1996, pp. 86-101, especially pp. 86-87.

They created a significant opposition to the tendencies to make “*Europe in miniature*” Hungary “*in large*”. When defending Hungary as a multi-ethnic state, they relied on the authority of the first King Stephen. In the lessons to his son Imrich he stated a principle, which would later become a generally wide-spread quote in Hungarian discourse, “[T]he kingdom of one language and of one manner is weak and fragile”.<sup>105</sup>

The developments in other countries, particularly in France, Prussia and Russia, where steps taken towards linguistic homogenisation were apparently successful, made these tendencies stronger among the Hungarian elites too. Initially, especially the aristocratic intelligentsia, and from the 1830s an increasingly greater circle of scholars began to perceive the “*diversity of languages and manners*” as a threat, a complication, or at least did not see any positive value in it. Fényes’s *Statistics of Hungary* from 1843, although often taking whole passages verbatim from Schwartner’s work, is the first statistical work which clearly departed from the *Hungarus* concept. He calls Hungary “*Europe in miniature*”, whereas it is the motherland of the 18 larger and smaller nations, which differ from one another in language as well as the physical and moral characteristics that Hungary managed to keep despite the growing rate of blending and melting of individual nations.<sup>106</sup> Fényes builds on the dominant concept in the statistics of the four main nations (*Hauptvölker*) of Hungary and (in his case) eight by-nations (*Nebenvölker*). Nonetheless, he did not see the population’s diversity as a positive value, but on the contrary, as a threat to the unity, security, cultural and economic progress of the Hungarian Kingdom. Perhaps the most pregnant formulation of this fact was Fényes’s polemic with the winged statement about the weakness and fragility of the Kingdom of one language and single manners: “*However, since then [the times of St. Stephen] the circumstances have changed significantly and now he would probably acknowledge too that the country is, nevertheless, more powerful and stronger, when inhabited by one nation speaking one and the same language, and be convinced that politics does not require dividing, but a unifying force. Even the powerful Russian nation considers it appropriate nowadays to unite with itself the German-speaking Estonians and Livonians through language.*”<sup>107</sup>

At the end of the period before March, the idea of four major nations became marginal in the Hungarian political discourse. In statistical and homeland works, however, this idea retained a dominant influence which would persist even in the period of Bach’s Neo-Absolutism, until the Austro-Hungarian Compromise.<sup>108</sup> This was present not only in the environment of the “*domestic*”, Austrian or Hungarian statistics, but also in a broader context of the German academic discourse.<sup>109</sup> One of the last works on Hungary based on

105 PUSZTAY, Alexander. *Die Ungarn in ihrem Staats- und Nationalwesen von 889 bis 1841*. Leipzig : Verlag von Mayer und Wigand, 1843, p. 72.

106 FÉNYES, Elek. *Statistik des Königreichs Ungarn. Band I*. Pesth : Verlag von Trattner Károlyi, 1843, p. 76, p. 68.

107 Ibid.

108 UNGEWITTER, Franz Heinrich. *Die österreichische Monarchie, geographisch, statistisch, topographisch und historisch dargestellt*. Brünn : Verlag von Buschak & Irrgang, 1856, p. 200.

109 “*Die Einwohner sind von verschiedener Herkunft, theils eigentliche Ungarn, Magyaren, welche scythischen Ursprungs sind, theils slavischer Herkunft, die Croaten, Raißen oder Serbier, theils Deutsche, theils Walachen. Ebenso viele Hauptsprachen werden hier geredet.*” ZACHARIÁ, August, Wilhelm. *Lehrbuch der Erdbeschreibung in natürlicher Verbindung mit Weltgeschichte, Naturgeschichte, und Technologie für den Schul- und Privatunterricht. Siebente, durchgängig berichtigte, ergänzte und sehr vermehrte Auflage I. Theil*. Leipzig : Verlag von Ernst Fleischers Buchhandlung, 1854, p. 271.

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the 1864 concept of statistics characterised Hungary in Chapter *Nationen* as a mixture of peoples of differing national character, customs and culture. He mentions Hungarians (*Ungarn, Magyaren*), Slavs (*Slaven*), Germans (*Deutsche*) and Romanians (*Rumänen*) as the “foremost nations of Hungary”.<sup>110</sup>

### The Habsburg Monarchy

<p>Johann Georg Meusel. <i>Lehrbuch der Statistik</i>. Leipzig, 1792, p. 92.</p>	<p><u><i>Verschiedenheit nach den Völkerklassen</i></u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teutsche</li> <li>2. Wenden oder Slawen</li> <li>3. Madscharen oder Ungern</li> <li>4. Wlachen oder Walachen</li> <li>5. Illyrier</li> <li>6. Zigeuner</li> <li>7. Wallonen</li> <li>8. Italiener</li> <li>9. Juden</li> <li>10. Klementiner oder Arnauten</li> <li>11. Türken</li> </ol>	
<p>Johann Georg Meusel. <i>Lehrbuch der Statistik</i>. 4<sup>th</sup> edition, Leipzig, 1817, p. 94.</p>	<p><u><i>Verschiedenheit nach den Völkerklassen</i></u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teutsche</li> <li>2. Wenden oder Slawen, in mehrer Stämme zertheilt, die verschied. Dialekte sprechen</li> <li>3. Madscharen oder National-Ungern</li> <li>4. Wlachen oder Walachen</li> <li>5. Illyrier</li> <li>6. Italiener</li> <li>7. Juden</li> <li>8. Klementiner oder Arnauten</li> <li>9. Neu-Griechen, Zinsaren, Armenier</li> <li>10. Zigeuner</li> </ol>	

<sup>110</sup> HORN, Julius. *Das Königreich Ungarn, seine Geschichte, Verfassung und seine gegenwärtigen Zustände*. Pest Verlag von Hornyánsky & Hummel, 1864, p. 116.

Joseph Constantin Biesinger. <i>General-statistik des österreichischen Kaiserthumes</i> . Erster Theil, Wien und Triest 1807, p. 34-38.	<u>drei Hauptnationen</u> (20,94 mil.)  1. Deutschen (5,6 mil.) 2. Ungern (3,34 mil.) 3. Slaven (12 mil.) Völker slavischer Abkunft Czechen Hanaken Slowaken Russniaken Kroaten Wenden Illyrier (Rátzen, Servier) Polen	<u>Nebenvölker</u> (1,06 mil)  Walachen/Rumani (0,87 mil.) eigentliche Walachen, Czinzaren, Macedoniern/Neugriechen Juden (0,3 mil.) Italiener (0,065 mil.) Armenier Zigeuner (0,03 mil.) Clementiner/Albanier Griechen Wallonen Franzisen Bulgaren Osmanen Tataren
Joseph Liechtenstern. <i>Lehrbuch der Statistik aller gegenwärtig bestehenden europäischen Staaten</i> . Wien und Dresden 1821, p. 42-43.	Slaven (1 256 2837), unter den Stammesnahmen der Czechen, Slowacken, Slovenen, Chorvaten, Polen, Wenden Deutsche (5 342 000) Italiener (4 226 000) Ungarn (4 225 000) Walachen (1 246 000) Juden (487 000)	Albanesen (Clementiner) Neugriechen Armenier Filipowanerr Zigeuner
Wenzel Carl Blumenbach. <i>Neustes Gemälde der Oesterreichischen Monarchie</i> . Wien, 1833, p. 187-190.	<u>vier zahlenreichsten Völkerschaften</u>  Magyaren / eigentliche Ungern (Hauptnation) Slaven Deutschen Wallachen	<u>kleinere oder weniger zahlreiche Völkerschaften</u>  Neugriechen / Makedonier Juden Zigeuner Franzosen Italiener Türken
Johann Springer. <i>Statistik des österreichischen Kaiserstaates</i> , Band I, Wien, 1840, p. 133.	<u>vier Hauptnationen</u>  Deutschen Slawen Italiener Ungarn (Magyaren)	<u>sechs andere Völkerschaften / Nebenvölker</u>  Walachen Juden Armenier Griechen Albaneser Zigeuner

## Hungary

Zedlers <i>Universal-lexicon</i> . Band 49, Leipzig, 1746, p. 1357-1360.	<u>Nationen</u>  Ungarn Schlawacken	<u>Völkerschaften</u>  Deutschen a Raißen Rußnacken a Wallachen
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<p>Ignaz de Luca. <i>Geographisches Handbuch von dem österreichischen Staate. IV. Band Enthaltend Ungern, Illyrien, und Siebenbürgen.</i> Wien, 1791, p. 185.</p>	<p><u>Nationen</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. eigentliche Ungern; sie stammen von den Hunnen ab</li> <li>2. Slaven, dazu gehören die Böhmen, Rußen ec.</li> <li>3. Teutschen; diese bestehen aus Oesterreichern, Steyermärker, Schwaben, Franken, Lothringen ec.</li> <li>4. Illyrier</li> <li>5. Walachen</li> <li>6. Juden und Zigeuner</li> </ol>	
<p>Heinrich Grellmann. <i>Statistische Aufklärungen über wichtige Theile und Gegenstände der österreichischen Monarchie.</i> Band I. Göttingen, 1795, p. 380.</p>	<p><u>Nationen</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- die eigentlichen gebohrnen oder urspünglichen Ungern</li> <li>- Slaven, die Sprache dieser Nation wird hier im Lande in verschiedenen Mundarten, z. B. böhmisch, mährisch, croatisch, serbisch oder raizisch, wendisch, dalmatisch, russisch und quasii halb polnisch</li> <li>- Teutschen, Oesterreicher, Steyermärker, Baiern, Schwaben, Franken. Sachsen, Ellsasser, Lothringen u. a.</li> <li>- Griechen</li> <li>- Juden</li> <li>- Walachen</li> <li>- Zigeunern</li> <li>- Italiener</li> <li>- Franzosen</li> </ul>	
<p>Martin Schwartner. <i>Statistik des Königreichs Ungern.</i> Pest 1798, p. 87-107.</p>	<p><u>vier Hauptnationen</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. eigentliche Ungern/Ur-Unger</li> <li>2. Slaven</li> <li>3. Deutsche</li> <li>4. Walachen</li> </ol>	<p><u>Nebenvölker</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Zinsaren, Macedonier, Armenier, Clementiner</li> <li>b) Zigeuner und Juden</li> </ol>
<p>Martin Schwartner. <i>Statistik des Königreichs Ungern.</i> 2. Auflage, Pest, 1809, p. 118-156.</p>	<p><u>vier Hauptnationen</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Magyaren/Ur-Unger</li> <li>2. Slaven (Slovaken, Russniaken, Raaten, Croaten, Slavonier, Dalmatiner, Wandaln e.c.</li> <li>3. Deutsche</li> <li>4. Walachen</li> </ol>	<p><u>Nebenvölker</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Macedonier/Neugriechen, Armenier, Franzosen, Italiener, Clementiner</li> <li>b) Juden</li> <li>c) Zigeuner</li> </ol>

<p>Michaëlis Horváth. <i>Statistica regni Hungariae et partium eidem adnexarum.</i> Editio altera. Posenii, 1802, p. 48-49.</p>	<p><u><i>Nationes Hungariae</i></u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. nativi Hungari, seu Magyari</li> <li>2. Germani</li> <li>3. Slavi, Pannonum posteros, et ceteros generis Slavici populos: Dalmati nempe, Croati, Sclavoni, Rutheni, Rasci, Servi</li> <li>4. Valachi</li> <li>5. Armeni</li> <li>6. Graeci</li> <li>7. Czinczari</li> <li>8. Clementini</li> <li>9. Zingari</li> <li>10. Judaei</li> </ol>	
<p>Johann Andreas Demian. <i>Statistische Darstellung des Königreichs Ungern und der dazu gehörigen Länder.</i> Wien, 1805, p. 74-83.</p>	<p><u><i>Hauptnationen</i></u></p> <p>A. eigentliche Ungern B. Slaven a) Slowacken b) Ruthenier oder Rußniacken c) Kroaten d) Wenden e) Illyrier C. Deutsche D. Walachen</p>	<p><u><i>andere Völker</i></u></p> <p>E. Macedonier, oder Griechen F. Armenier G. Zigeuner H. Juden</p>
<p>Karl Georg Romy. <i>Geographisch-statistisches Wörterbuch des Kaiserstaates,</i> Wien, 1809, p. 413.</p>	<p><i>Magayren oder eigentliche Ungarn</i> Slaven Deutsche Walachen <i>Raißen oder sogennten Illyriern</i> <i>Rusniaken (Rutheni)</i> <i>Neugriechen (Macedoniern)</i> Zinsaren Juden Armeniern Zigeunern</p> <p><i>Hauptsprachen: ungarische, slavische, deutsche, walachische</i></p>	<p><i>Nebensprachen: raizische, neugriechische, rußniakische, armenische. zigeunerische</i></p>
<p>Johann Leopold Stocz. <i>Königreich Ungarn. Nach seiner Grösse, Bevölkerung und Landesbestand, dessen physischer Beschaffenheit, Kulturverhältnisse und Haltung.</i> Wien, 1823, p. 17-19.</p>	<p><u><i>vier Hauptnationen</i></u></p> <p><i>Ungarn / die eigentlichen Ungarn (Magayren)</i> Slaven Deutsche Walachen</p>	<p><u><i>andere Völker</i></u></p> <p><i>Macedonier/Neugriechen</i> Armenier Juden <i>Zigeuner/Neuunger</i></p>

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<p>Johann Csaplovics. <i>Gemälde von Ungern</i>. Pest, 1829, p. 201-208.</p>	<p><u>vier Hauptvölkerschaften</u></p> <p>1. Magyaren (Ungern, Hungari) Nach dem Dialekt teilen sich: a) Donau-Magyaren b) Theißer-Magyaren c) Palóczen 2. Slaven a) Slowaken, Slavi, Tótok b) Szotáki c) Ruthenen (Russen, Oroszok) d) Böhmen e) Pohlen f) Wenden g) Kroaten h) Slavonier i) Serben (Raazen) j) Bulgaren 3. Deutsche 4. Wlachen (Dako-Wlachen), Valachi, Oldhok, Rumunyi)</p>	<p><u>andere Völkerschaften</u></p> <p>5. Neugriechen oder Macedonier 6. Macedo-Wlachen (Zinzaren) 7. Armenier 8. Klementiner 9. Franzosen 10. Italiener 11. Juden 12. Portugiesische und spanische Juden 13. Zigeuner 14. Türken</p>
<p>Pál Magda. <i>Neuste statistisch-geographische Beschreibung des Königreichs Ungarn, Croatien, Slavonien und der ungarischen Militärgrenze</i>. Leipzig 1832, p. 46-53.</p>	<p><u>die vorzüglichsten Nationen</u></p> <p>1. ungarische Nation 2. Slaven, diese Nation hat mehr Zweige Böhmische Slaven (Slowaken), Vandalen (Wenden), Croaten, Slavonier, Raaten, Illyrier, Ruthenen 3. Deutsche 4. Walachen</p>	<p><u>andere Nationen von geringer Zahl</u></p> <p>a) Neu-Griechen, Macedo-Wlachen (Zinzaren) b) Armenier c) Clementiner d) Franzosen und Italiener e) Juden f) Zigeuner</p>
<p>Hans Normann. <i>Ungarn, das Reich, Land, und Volk wie es ist</i>. Band I., Leipzig, 1833, p. 81-82.</p>	<p><u>große Völkerstämme</u></p> <p>Magyaren, Slaven (Slowaken, Ruthenen, Böhmen, Polen, Wenden, Kroaten, Slavonier, Serben, Bulgaren) Teutsche, hier Schwaben genannt (Sachsen, Schwaben, Franken, Elsasser, Thüringer, Tiroler, Oesterreicher u.s.w.) Wlachen</p>	<p><u>Völkerschaften</u></p> <p>Neugriechen, Macedowlachen, Armenier, Klementiner, Franzosen, Italiener, Juden, Zigeuner, Türken</p>
<p>Fényes, Elek. <i>Statistik des Königreichs Ungarn</i>. Band I. Pesth, 1843, p. 68-69.</p>	<p><u>Hauptvölker</u></p> <p>1) Ungarn oder Magyaren 2) verschiedene Äste des großen slavischen Stammes (Slowaken, Croaten, Shokzen, Raizen, Winden, Bulgaren, Ruthenen, Montenegriner) 3) Deutsche 4) Walachen</p>	<p><u>Nebenvölker</u></p> <p>Franzosen, Griechen, Mazedonier oder Zinzaren, Armenier, Klementiner, Zigeuner und Juden</p>



## Chapter 3

THE HISTORICAL NARRATION AS A POLITICAL PROGRAMME.  
ANALYSIS OF IMAGES OF THE PAST IN THE TEXTS OF THE SLOVAK  
NATIONAL MOVEMENT'S PROGRAMMES FROM 1848 AND 1861\*

*Karol Hollý*

As it is known, in the revolutionary year of 1848 there were public agitations for civil equality in the Habsburg Monarchy. The revolutionary activists nominated themselves to be the leaders of national communities and on their behalf they presented their requirements. The requirement of national equality with a reference to the natural law of an individual results from a concept of the nation as a collective individuality. Some of the revolutionary leaders worked with this concept. It is evident that national communities were more fictive than real and their names in primary sources (in case of this text, it concerns the names: Slovaks and Magyars<sup>111</sup>) are in fact references to the concepts of national ideologies and not the broad masses of that time's population.<sup>112</sup> This general statement also applies to the analysis of concepts of the nationalists speaking on behalf of the Slovak nation in the period after the constitutional experiments and after the dissolution of absolutism of the 1850s. The official documents presenting political programmes are the central source of knowledge about the concepts present in national ideologies. The main object of this study is the analysis of selected parts of two documents with political programmes - the first one from 1848 (*The Demands of the Slovak Nation*; hereinafter referred to as *the Demands*)<sup>113</sup> and the second one from 1861 (*The Memorandum of the Slovak Nation*, hereinafter referred to as *the Memorandum*).<sup>114</sup> These documents are necessary and essential elements of the Slovak nation's ideology in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In order to take into account the wider context I have chosen a few fragments of other historical texts of that time to complement the two central texts declaring political programmes. In addition to the above, a separate part of the study deals with the issue of historical reasoning about natural law and historical rights in the context of concepts

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\* The chapter is the outcome of the VEGA grant no. 2/0044/11 – Slovakia in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

111 I'm using the term Magyar (as Hungarians call themselves in their language) as a synonym for ethnic Hungarian nation. The term "Hungarian" was referring to all inhabitants of Kingdom of Hungary irrespective of their ethnic origin.

112 In addition to this meaning I will hereafter use these names in the sense of members of a particular nationalist society. Compare: HOLLÝ, Karol. The negation of event history and historical optimism: the historical ideology of Svetozar Hurban Vajanský (1881-1897). In *Historický časopis*, 2010, Vol. 57, supplementum, p. 26.

113 Žiadosti slovenského národa [The Demands of the Slovak Nation]. In BEŇKO, Ján – HRONSKÝ, Marián – MARSINA, Richard - PEKNÍK, Miroslav (eds.). *Dokumenty slovenskej národnej identity a štátnosti I* [Documents of Slovak National Identity and Statehood I]. Bratislava : Národné literárne centrum – Dom slovenskej kultúry, 1998, pp. 307-310.

114 Memorandum národa slovenského [The Memorandum of the Slovak Nation]. In ELIÁŠ, Michal (ed.). *Z prameňov národa. Na pamiatku stodvadsiateho piateho výročia vzniku Memoranda slovenského národa z roku 1861* [From the Nation's Sources. Commemoration of the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Memorandum of the Slovak Nation 1861]. Martin : Matica slovenská, 1988, pp. 257-262.

existing throughout the Monarchy, and especially in the Slovak national movement in the 1860s.

The following analysis can be defined more specifically using Jerzy Maternicki's conception of "historical ideology", that is to say, thematically as: the historic narration in the function of a political programme document.<sup>115</sup> The selected programme texts also include the historical reasoning, or narrative images of the past, which of course strictly follow political goals. The central objective of this study is to interpret exactly these parts of the texts. In the context of the interpretation, I emphasise the diversity of arguments in the historical reasoning in the concepts of natural law from 1848 (*the Demands*) and 1861 (*the Memorandum*). The reason is that such distinction is crucial and its naming is an essential starting point for the analysis of historical ideology in Slovak nationality-related thinking not only in the time the documents were written, but also at a later stage of the dualism period of Hungary.

## 1. Historical arguments of 1848

### *The Demands of the Slovak Nation*

The document *The Demands* dated the 10<sup>th</sup> May 1848 was the most compact form of expressing the requests of the Revolution's active participants who spoke on behalf of Slovaks. Their back-bone idea was the equality of nations in the political sense, expressed, for instance, by demanding for national councils. Therefore it was primarily a political document with a function of national agitation. At this point it should be said that *the Demands* were based on the principles of the natural law of nations to self-determination, and Ľudovít Štúr gave this general idea also a specific, i.e. political, content.<sup>116</sup> It is typical that the specific demands expressed in 14 clauses were preceded by an introduction to the history legitimising them through the concept of the history of Hungary and Slovaks.

### **Semantic Paradoxes in Images of the Past in *the Demands***

The concept of the Slovak history in *The Demands* is based on the following tenets:

- a) The Slovak nation has slept during the whole history of Hungary. (The nation slept for 900 years.)
- b) Slovaks are the primeval nation and former owners of their territory, meaning in the "Holy Land of the Hungary". (This formulation means nothing but an expression of the historical superiority over the Magyars.)
- (c) The relationship the Slovaks hold with Hungary is characterised by the metaphor of a mother. She behaves unfairly and as a result the positive metaphor shifts to the negative – Hungary is now step-mother.

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115 J. Maternicki understands the historical ideology as a part of the history of historiography. He detailed the subject of research into the historical ideology also by analysing the contents of parts history in official documents presenting political programmes, or through an analysis of the historical parts in speeches and ideologists of the movement. See more details: MATERNICKI, Jerzy. *Wielokształtność historii. Rozważania o kulturze historycznej i badaniach historiograficznych*. Warszawa : Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1990, pp. 207-214.

116 Compare: POTEŤRA, Michal. Právnehistorická argumentácia v slovenskom národnom programe v polovici 19. storočia [Legal and Historical Reasoning in the Slovak National Programme of the Mid-19th Century]. In *Právnehistorické studie*, 1978, Vol. 21, pp. 145-181.

d) The Slovak nation forgives itself and its oppressors and wants to forget the times of injustice.

e) The new age of equality must replace the old. The Slovaks declare they will not oppress other nations and neither will they allow other nations to “harness them by the old yoke”. Therefore the whole period of the history of Hungary was unfair for Slovaks. Unlike their oppressors – meaning Magyars – Slovaks in their position as the original owner of their homeland declare they will not oppress other nations, and also are capable of a huge gesture - to forget the 900 years full of wrongs and injustice. This remission is taking place simultaneously with an awakening from a dream which represents an apparent semantic paradox. Slovaks have been oppressed throughout the history of Hungary, while not being present in it at all – the entire history was a dream for them.<sup>117</sup> This paradox was noticed by Meakulpinský more than half a century later. In his political brochure *Co hatí Slováky?* (What Hampers Slovaks?) *The Demands* would be ironised heavily exactly because of their concept of the history.<sup>118</sup>

### **Ludovít Štúr clearly defines the Slovaks’ enemy as “Magyar, tyrannical oppressor of Slovaks”**

In this context, it is interesting to focus on the autumn of that very year and remember the Štúr’s speech to volunteers, participants in the September expedition, in Myjava on 18<sup>th</sup> September 1848. Since this occasion we encounter the enemy named openly, who were Magyars – “oppressors of Slovaks”. Štúr demanded that the sword should decide “whether the Magyar tyrant will reign over us!” Unlike in *The Demands*, Štúr spoke about a thousand-year-long oppression.<sup>119</sup> The symbolism of the rounded milenium was more effective than the nine hundred years in *The Demands*, regardless of the fact that Magyars were actually given the status of oppressors as early as in the time after 848, when (also by that time’s concepts) they were not present in the Carpathian Basin, and at the same time, in the period of promising development of the Slavic liturgy. Moreover, there is a noticeable shift from a forgiving nation to an attacking nation. *The Demands* is one of the last documents speaking of millennial (or nine-hundred-year) oppression in the history of the Slovak historical thinking before 1918. As I will point out further on, this theme cannot be found in *the Memorandum*. The theme of oppression began to appear in modified versions in the concepts by Czech Slovakophiles and their ideological supporters.<sup>120</sup> Within the ideologies that stood up against the ideology of the national unity of Czechs

117 Compare: “The Slovak nation in the Hungarian homeland wakes up from a nine-hundred-year dream, as the primeval nation of this country (...)” see: *Žiadosti slovenského národa*, pp. 307-308 and 310.

118 See for more details on the personality and national ideology of the author with regard to his historical reasoning: HOLLÝ, Karol. *Práca Co hatí Slováky?* od Meakulpinského ako výraz ideológie národnej jednoty Čechov a Slovákov na začiatku 20. storočia [The Work *What Hampers Slovaks?* by Meakulpinský as an expression of the ideology of national unity of Czechs and Slovaks at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century]. In *Česko-slovenská historická ročenka*, 2009, pp. 217-232.

119 Compare: “Fighters! Look at this open valley that leads us to our goal. Beyond those hills, there lies Slovakia, our family, desolate nation, oppressed, for a thousand years deprived of all independence (...)” See: Štúrova reč pred slovenskými dobrovoľníkmi. [Štúr’s Speech in front of the Slovak Volunteers] In BENKO – HRONSKÝ – MARSINA – PEKŇÍK, *Dokumenty*, p. 313.

120 For example, see: KÁLAL, Kar[el]. Pred tisíc rokami. Na pamiatku veľkého kňaza Svatopluka. [A thousand years ago. In Memory of Svätopluk, the Great Priest.] In *Dom a škola*, 1894, Vol. 10, Issue 2, pp. 34-35; ŠROBÁR Vavro. Maďarisácia. [Magyarisation.] In *Hlas*, 1898, Vol. 1, Issue 3, pp. 65-73.

and Slovaks, the history of Slovaks in Hungary would be rarely described through the concept of an oppressed nation.<sup>121</sup>

## 2. Historical rights and natural law as ideological sources of historical interpretations

Before moving on to *the Memorandum* it is necessary to briefly recall the historical context of its creation. Restoration of the constitutional situation through the October Diploma and the February Patent was closely linked with the concept of the so-called historical and non-historical nations. It should be noted that in this case it was not some kind of an intellectual joke of nationalists; quite the contrary, the official interpretation of history had real political consequences. The attempt to federalise the monarchy in the sixties was based on a concept of the so called historical and political individualities. Only the so called historical nations (historical-political individualities) which could have relied on their medieval statehood were to become the members of the federation.<sup>122</sup> It had a wider moral dimension in addition to the political implications. The “non-historical” peoples were considered by the “historical” nations as less valuable from the fundamental human – cultural, civilisational, and moral perspective.<sup>123</sup> This problem was aptly characterised by József Eötvös in his work entitled *The Nationality Question* (1859).<sup>124</sup> Referring to the historical rights, or combatting it, was regarded as the essential feature of a new historical phenomenon - the nationality question: “*Certainly, we can contend that the national struggle, which is currently moving Europe, results primarily from the past and does not emerge from differences and racial contradictions existing as result of this struggle reflected in the habits and way of life of individual nations. We can say without exaggeration that nearly every national movement is nothing more than a struggle for or against the historical rights. And so it is in our country’s movement. Magyars call for sovereignty and Croats demand independence, relying purely on history. Other nations, in turn, are struggling against the historical rights that hinder them in the free development.*”<sup>125</sup>

As it is going to show in the following text Eötvös’s observations were correct. The history of Slovak historical thinking confirms the struggle against the historical rights and drafting out of alternative arguments. However, part of the Slovak intelligentsia employed

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121 Compare with note 159.

122 For an analysis of the constitutional aspects of the October Diploma and the February Patent, as well as the basic concepts of reforming the monarchy in this period, see: WIERER, Rudolf. *Der Föderalismus im Donauraum*, Graz, Köln : Verlag Hermann Böhlau Nachf., 1960, pp. 63-78.

123 KIZWALTER, Tomasz. *Historia powszechna. Wiek XIX*. Warszawa : Trio, 2003, p. 98. The criterion of historicity and non-historicity enables to introduce two types of formation of the national movement; for details see: KIZWALTER, Historia, pp. 98-99.

124 For details on the concepts of the nation and the nationality question in the Habsburg monarchy in the period 1859-1867 of J. Eötvös see: BÖDY, Paul. *Joseph Eötvös and the Modernization of Hungary, 1840-1870. A Study of Ideas of Individuality and Social Pluralism in Modern Politics*. Philadelphia : The American Philosophical Society, 1972, pp. 63-97. A. Göllnerová wrote an interesting analysis of the concept of a state’s nation in the context of its literary activity. See: GÖLLNEROVÁ, Alžbeta. *József Eötvös. Štúdia literárne historická* [József Eötvös. A Literary Historical Study]. Bratislava : Filozofická fakulta University Komenského v Bratislave za podpory Ministerstva školství a národní osvěty v Praze, 1937.

125 Quoted from: PAŠIAKOVÁ, Jaroslava – GARAJ, Ludovít. *Úvod do dejín maďarskej kultúry a literatúry* [Introduction to the history of Magyar culture and literature]. Bratislava : Univerzita Komenského v Bratislave, pp. 71-72.

historical and legal arguments, trying to prove that the Slovaks are a historical and political individuality. Jozef Hložný (Hložanský)<sup>126</sup>, Jonáš Záborský<sup>127</sup>, Peter Kellner (Záboj Hostinský)<sup>128</sup>, and Ján Mallý used the historic rights platform<sup>129</sup> to conceive their own versions of the national history.<sup>130</sup> This direction of thinking was also adopted by Franko Víťazoslav Sasinek who at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries represented a sort of “relic” of that period’s historical and legal arguments. Truly it was a relic in increasingly bizarre forms.<sup>131</sup> After the establishment of the Dual Monarchy in 1867 this way of thinking became more and more marginal. As well as in the case of the theme of oppression, the historical and legal arguments would play, in a modified form, an important element of the historical arguments engaged by the supporters of the ideology of the national unity of Czechs and Slovaks. However, their search for periods of “Slovakia’s” political independence in the history would be based on their part on different motivations than the historical-legal thinking in the 1860s.<sup>132</sup>

However, the historical legal arguments of the Slovak nationalist society’s representatives were not approved of by the competent politicians in the Habsburg Monarchy, which resulted not only from their poor authority, but mainly from their failure to write a generally acceptable history of the Slovak medieval statehood. The leaders of the nationalist Slovak society fully realised the relevance of this fact as early as in 1849. Their request for the constitution of an independent crown-land - the Principality of Slovakia - was rejected by Vienna, arguing that the Slovaks had no historical right to become independent of Hungary. After 1867, the Slovak representatives could have not expected a fundamentally different response from Pest. Therefore, we can identify with Peter Macho, who

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126 However, the arguments about historical rights were mostly complemented with those about natural law. Similarly, arguments from history were an integral part of the primary concepts of natural law thinkers (see below).

127 See: MARSINA, Richard. Historické názory Jozefa Hložníka-Hložanského [The Historical Views of Jozef Hložník-Hložanský]. In *Historický časopis*, 1981, Vol. 29, Issue 1, pp. 91-102; MACHO, Peter. Od Bieleho Uhorska k samostatnému Slovensku. Zabudnutý historik Jozef Hložanský [From White Hungary to Autonomous Slovakia. Forgotten historian Jozef Hložanský]. In *Historická revue*, 1997, Vol. 8, Issue 7, pp. 18-19.

128 See: POTEĽMRA, Michal. Štátoprávne myslenie Jonáša Záborského [Constitutional Thoughts of Jonáš Záborský]. In *Právnický obzor*, 1976, Vol. 59, Issue 6, pp. 525-542.

129 See: MAGDOLENOVÁ, Anna. Peter Kellner-Hostinský ako historik. [Peter Kellner-Hostinský as a Historian.] In *Historický časopis*, 1981, Vol. 29, Issue 1, pp. 103-115.

130 The direction of Slovak historical thinking in the 1860s was analysed by M. Potemra and P. Macho. See: POTEĽMRA, Paper 5, pp. 145-181; MACHO, Peter. Koncepcia historicko-politickej individuality Slovenska v kontexte štátoprávnych hnutí národov habsburskej monarchie v 60. rokoch 19. storočia [The Concept of Historical and Political Individuality of Slovakia in the Context of Constitutional Movements of the Habsburg Monarchy’s Nations in the 1860s]. In *Historické štúdie* 1994, Vol. 35, pp. 23-48.

131 While such an assessment does not correspond with the literature on Sasinek, based on the historical sources such a formulation is defensible. Compare: HOLLÝ, Karol. Franko Víťazoslav Sasinek as the “historiographer of Slovaks”. In *Leidschrift : historisch Tijdschrift*, 2010, Vol. 25, Issue 1, pp. 145-165.

132 The supporters of the ideology of national unity of Czechs and Slovaks at the break of the centuries “deliberately sought any sign of political independence of Upper Hungary (which they consequently called *Slovakia*). Obviously, it was a part of programmed deconstruction of the perception of Hungary by Slovaks as an indivisible whole. By emphasising the classical motifs related to Štúr, such as Matúš Čák in the role of an independent ruler of *Slovakia* (ideally, combined with political connections with the Czech Kingdom) the possibility was created – albeit theoretical – to bring Slovakia and Bohemia together.” See: HOLLÝ, Karol. *Historická ideológia a slovenské národné hnutie na prelome 19. a 20. storočia* [The Historic Ideology and the Slovak National Movement at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century]. PhD.Dissertation. Supervisor: Dušan Kováč. Bratislava : Historický ústav SAV, 2008, p. 464.

noted that insisting on the platform of historic rights in Hungarian conditions was seen by the Slovaks as counterproductive.<sup>133</sup> It is resulting from the fact that the establishment of the Dual Monarchy was an expression of the Magyar historical jurisprudence. From other nations of Hungary only Croats were considered a historic nation which was expressed by the 1868 settlement between Hungary and Croatia.<sup>134</sup> So if the 1860s, as a period of “constitutional experiments”, represented a boom in the line pursuing the historical and legal rights in the Slovak political and historical thinking, it would be the concept of natural law to dominate in the later periods.

### Natural Law and History

This direction of political thought was conveyed in the principal programme document of Slovaks in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century: the aforementioned *Memorandum*. It was typical for this way of thinking that the natural law of an individual was extended to the nation as a natural grouping of individuals, which had been an idea spread in a broader social discourse by the French Revolution.<sup>135</sup> Stefan Marko Daxner, a leading personality in the history of the Slovak natural-law thought, wrote in that context: “*The idea of the nationality of our times could be born in nations only when the Great French Revolution had crushed down the privileges of the section coming from the first right of the Middle Ages, and established on the ruins – by declaring equality and liberty (...) – the rights of man as a recognised personality in the state.*”<sup>136</sup> Thus, Daxner did not doubt that the nation is inherently an individual (with a significant attribute of “moral”) and, as such, was entitled to the same privileges as granted to “individuals and families”. Daxner asked: Since “*in Austria justice ensures the principle of equality in preference to law*”, and, at the same time, “*nations are not anything other than persons in humanity*”<sup>137</sup>, how could legislation

133 Compare: MACHO, Koncepcia, pp. 23-24.

134 For more details see: KRESTIĆ, Vasilije. Über einige politisch-historische Bedingungen der Entstehung des kroatisch-ungarischen Ausgleichs 1868. In VANTUCH, Anton - HOLOTÍK, Ludovít (eds.). *Der Österreichisch-ungarische Ausgleich 1867. Materialien (Referate und Diskussion) der internationalen Konferenz in Bratislava 28.8. - 1.9.1967*. Bratislava : Vydavateľstvo Slovenskej akadémie vied, 1971, pp. 783-829.

135 Similar concepts can also be found, for example, in the political thinking of Transylvanian Romanians. The national programme of Blaj (1848) was departing gradually from the historical arguments at the expense of the natural law of peoples. They were also derived from the natural law of an individual. Compare: HITCHINS, Keith. *A Nation Affirmed: The Romanian National Movement in Transylvania. 1860 – 1914*. Bucharest : The Encyclopaedic publishing house, 1999, p. 44.

136 From the article *On Nationality*. Quoted from: MESÁROŠ, Július. K otázke hodnotenia historického zástoja Š. M. Daxnera a historických a prirodzenoprávnych základov jeho národného programu [On the Question of Assessment of the Historical Protagonism of Š. M. Daxner and the Historical-Rights and Natural-Law Bases of His National Programme]. In MESÁROŠ, Július. *ladanie pravdy o slovenských dejinách [The Complex Search for the Truth about the Slovak History]*. Bratislava : Veda 2004 [formerly *Obzor Genera-Malohontu* XXIII, 1992, Issue 4, pp. 152-155], pp. 323-324.

137 Interestingly, an analogical idea was uttered by T. G. Masaryk: “*Still more will it be clear that the nation is a natural member of the humanity (...)*”. See: GARRIGUE MASARYK, Tomáš. Problém malého národa [The Problem of a Small Nation]. In GARRIGUE MASARYK, Tomáš. *Ideály humanitní. Problém malého národa. Demokraticismus v politice*. Praha : Melantrich, 1968 [4th edition; 1st edition: 1905], p. 74. Here it can be added that this quote evidences the link poorly emphasised by historiography that Masaryk's thoughts were primarily nationalist and that his alleged cosmopolitanism was just one of the historiographical stereotypes recycled in the extensive literatures about this personality. Compare: HOLLÝ, Karol. Ponímanie histórie a inštrumentalizácia obrazov minulosti v národnej ideologii Tomáša G. Masaryka na prelome 19. a 20. storočia [Understanding the History and Instrumentalisation of the Past in the National Ideology of Tomáš G. Masaryk at the Turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century]. In *Dějiny – teorie – kritika*, 2011, Vol. 8, Issue 1, pp. 35-59.

not pursue this principle also in the “mutual relations among the nations living with one another”.<sup>138</sup>

Consequently with the attitudes quoted, Daxner defined the nation through its rights as “communities of free beingness”: “[A] nation as an including of many free beings embodied in one by residence, language, nature, cannot have fewer rights than the individuals included in it.”<sup>139</sup> This leads to an extremely significant thought: “Slovaks need nothing else but simply to appeal to their national being (existence), which is a sufficient proof of their right to national equality.”<sup>140</sup> This idea, placing natural law above historical rights, was the starting point for the works on the Slovak history at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries on the basis of the historical rights.<sup>141</sup>

It is significant that the “national being” or “beingness” also included their own history in addition to attributes such as language, territory, manners, awareness and culture.<sup>142</sup> Therefore, no arguments referring to the glorious past of the Slovaks were precluded by emphasising the nation’s natural law. On the contrary, as Milan Podrimavský pointed out, the history formed an integral part of the thoughts of Š. Marko Daxner, which involved not only the famous, but particularly the oldest history expressed by the statehood of Slovak ancestors in the period before the arrival of the Magyars.<sup>143</sup> The relationship between thinking in terms of natural law and historical rights cannot be seen as mutually exclusive. There can be defined two major differences. The first one is seen in the preference of one to another: Daxner did not set the history as the condition for the rights of Slovaks, thus he clearly preferred the natural law. On the other hand, Sasinek, preferring the historical rights to the natural law, wrote: “The natural law is greater, but the historical rights are more valid”.<sup>144</sup>

The second one recognizes the difference in the type of the historical arguments. I have already pointed out that the historical and legal historiography sought evidence of the medieval statehood. Legal continuity of a territory with a current nation in the given area meant such statehood. Slovaks found it generally in the continuity of the Principality of Nitra. Although this stream had several variations, it was primarily a demonstration of

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138 DAXNER, Štefan, Marko. *Slovenská otázka od konca 18. stoletia* [The Slovak Question from the Late 18th Century]. Turčiansky Sv. Martin : Kníhtlačiarsky účastinársky spolok, 1912 [2nd edition; 1st edition: *Hlas zo Slovenska*, 1861], p. 37.

139 From the article *O národnosti* [On Nationality]. Quoted from: MESÁROŠ, K otázke, p. 324.

140 DAXNER, Slovenská.

141 Of course, it was not an original Slovak idea. For example, we can find an identical idea in the 1892 Memorandum of Romanians. See: Memorandum Rumunov [Memorandum of Romanians]. In *Národné noviny*, 21<sup>st</sup> July 1892, Vol. 23, Issue 84, p. 2.

142 MESÁROŠ, K otázke, p. 324.

143 PODRIMAVSKÝ, Milan. Slovenské dejiny v diele Š. M. Daxnera [The Slovak History in the Works by Š. M. Daxner]. In *Historický časopis*, 1981, Vol. 29, Issue 4, pp. 516-517, more details: pp. 506-519. In addition to the work cited, see more on the Slovak history in the thoughts of Š. M. Daxner: MESÁROŠ, Július. Štefan Marko Daxner a Memorandum slovenského národa [Štefan Marko Daxner and the Memorandum of the Slovak Nation]. In ELIÁŠ, Michal (ed.). *Z prameňov národa. Na pamiatku stodvadsiateho piateho výročia vzniku Memoranda slovenského národa z roku 1861*. Martin : Matica slovenská 1988, pp. 42-46; MESÁROŠ, K otázke, pp. 320-326. For an analysis of the natural law as a basis for Daxner’s thinking, see: HAJKO, Dalimír. *Filozofické návraty a vízie [Philosophical Comebacks and Visions]*, Bratislava : PhDr. Milan Štefanko — IRIS, 2001, pp. 12-36.

144 SASINEK, Franko Vítázoslav. Myšlienky dejepisca [Thoughts of a Historian]. In *Národné noviny*, 28<sup>th</sup> January 1909, Vol. 45, Issue 12, p. 1.

political independence of the territory inhabited by Slovaks. On the other hand, the history based on the natural law was characterised by laying emphasis on the oldest possible presence of a nation in a given territory (this concerns mainly *the Memorandum*). It did not necessarily have to be a legally provable territorial unit, but rather *a priori* an ancientry, usually with an emphasis on the nation's moral qualities. It was a kind of pendant of the Rousseau's natural state. Of course, there is a difference: while Rousseau's construct had not been set in a historical time and was more a kind of a model of an ideal status,<sup>145</sup> the history based on the natural law construed the historical "golden age".<sup>146</sup>

### 3. Historical Reasoning of 1861 (and 1862)

#### *Memorandum of the Slovak Nation*

In *the Memorandum*; the second basic programme document in the modern history of Slovaks, much like in *the Demands*, the superiority of the Slovak history over Magyars is emphasised too: "*History and our national presentment tell us that we are the oldest inhabitants of this land surrounded by the Carpathian Mountains. A long time before the arrival of Magyars, our fathers had called this land their homeland (...)*" In the next part of the document, however, the national story of Slovaks is fundamentally different to the one in *The Demands*. The arrival of Magyars and the subsequent formation of Hungary is seen as a positive factor: "*By the arrival of Magyars in the first stage of development, the confederation of Slavic tribes present in this land disappeared and made way for a new confederation, which within a century [became] a Hungarian country under the Crown of Saint Stephen (...)* The common material and spiritual interests united different tribes of this country

145 KRŠKOVÁ, Alexandra. *Kapitoly z dejín európskeho politického a právneho myslenia* [Chapters in the History of European Political and Legal Thinking]. Bratislava : Vydavateľské oddelenie Právnickej fakulty UK, 1997, p. 187.

146 One of the manifestations of such a construction was an idealisation of life in the early Slavic history. The fact that such perceptions of Slavs were influenced especially by Rousseau, in addition to Herder, was pointed out by T. G. Masaryk. See: GARRIGUE MASARYK, Tomáš. *Č* [The Czech Question. The Efforts and Aspirations of the National Revival]. Praha : Melantrich, 1969 [7th edition; 1st edition: 1895], p. 70. Indeed, the Rousseau's influence on later concepts of the "golden age" was significant. The idealisation of simple egalitarian forms of the society was related to the concept of the "noble savage" - for Rousseau, this "man of nature" was healthy, happy, and free. The political aspect of the Rousseau's concept was expressed by Alan Barnard when he stated that it contributed significantly to the development of American and French republics. See: BARNARD, Alan. *Antropologia. Zarys teorii i historii*. Warszawa : Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 2006, trans. Sebastian Szymański, pp. 53-54. Compare also: LIBISZOWSKA, Zofia. Voltaire and the United States of America. In *American Studies II* [Warszawa : Warsaw University Press], 1981, pp. 5-17. The antithesis to the Rousseau's construct was the Hobbesian theory of a state of nature, in which a "man is a wolf to man", and so: "[D]uring the time men live without a common power to keep them all in awe, they are in that conditions called war; and such a war, as if of every man, against every man." See: HOBBS, Thomas. *Leviathan*. Trans. et ed. HOHOŠ, Ladislav. In BURA, Ivan et al. *Sociálna filozofia. Vybrané kapitoly a texty*. Bratislava : Univerzita Komenského; Vydavateľstvo UK, p. 99. Thus, Hobbes' political philosophy provided legitimacy to a strong ruling power; especially to the absolutist monarchy. For more details see: KRŠKOVÁ, Kapitoly, pp. 150-158; HOHOŠ, p. 97. Although I am not dealing with the concepts of the New Slovak School's representatives in this text, it is worth noting that the political thoughts of Ján Palárik were inspired by the natural philosophy of Hobbes. See: MARTINKOVIČ, Marcel. *Ideový prínos Novej školy do národovtorného myslenia* [The Conceptual Contribution of the New School to the Nation-Forming Thoughts]. In *Filozofia*, 2004, Vol. 59, Issue 10, p. 781. I only point out these associations at this moment, as formulation of a potential meaning of similar analogies would require specially targeted research.

together as children of one common mother in one family.”<sup>147</sup> These ideas should be seen in the context of the October Diploma and the February Patent, which tried to restore the constitutional situation in Hungary based on the federation of “historical nations”. Slovaks, as a fully-fledged part of the “Hungarian confederation” and also owning an older tradition of the “confederative whole of Slavic tribes”, should have had the same rights as the nations officially recognised as “historical”. These arguments expressed in *the Memorandum* were taken from the history for the political requirement to detach the Slovak administrative whole of the so-called Slovak Region.

Although in this case natural law was used in particular as arguments the signatories of *the Memorandum* argued that the Region was not in contradiction with the historical rights. Again, the concept of ethnically tolerant Hungary was used as an argument. Stephen’s lessons given to his son Emmeric were used as the “evidence”: “*St. Stephen declared in his last will to his son Emmeric: Regnum unius linguae imbecille et fragile est, thus giving him the advice to respect the habits, manners and customs of different tribes living in the country. The unity and integrity of the country had already been established under his reign on the basis of the complete equality of the various tribes.*”

This tradition should therefore be the basis for simultaneous solutions for the nationality question, i.e. solutions in terms of equality. From a terminological point of view it is interesting that a distinction was made between “tribes” (Great Moravia, medieval Hungary) and contemporary “nations” with their own consciousness, which had evolved from “tribes”. This evolutionary process, construed as progress, is inevitable, and independent of human action. When searching for the causes, the argument of the divine law is used: “*If the tribes have changed into nations conscious of their personal characteristics and if, as a result, the unity and integrity of our homeland must seek their roots no longer in the equality of the tribes, but in that of the nations, it is something for which we deserve neither praise nor blame. This event is a logical outcome of the progress which has its origin in divine law and which does not allow itself either to stop or be side-tracked by obstacles thrown together by human laws. Not to recognise this progress implies a denial of Providence which clearly manifests itself both in the life of peoples and in the development of States.*”<sup>148</sup> Here the emphasis is put on natural (divine) law. A qualitatively new historical phenomenon is explained through it – the national-emancipatory movement.

Nations having their consciousness have got a right to take a stand as individuals with natural rights, for example, to define their own administrative territory, namely (in the context of *the Memorandum*) the “Upper Hungarian Slovak Region”. Making references to the history of Hungary in the sense of a “common mother of different tribes” performs a dual function. On the one hand, it provides guidance on a coequal solution to the nationality question in the present time, and, on the other hand, it points at the inadequacy of the interpretation of the history of Hungary and the historical rights of Magyars. Therefore, the existence of a fully-fledged history of Slovaks, expressed for example by their own statehood in the period of Great Moravia and equality with other tribes in feudal Hungary, forms a part of the concepts based on natural law.

<sup>147</sup> Memorandum národa slovenského, p. 257.

<sup>148</sup> Memorandum národa slovenského, p. 259.

This means that there is a fundamental difference between *The Demands* and *The Memorandum*. In 1848, Hungary had been a stepmother, and Magyars oppressors. In 1861, all at once Hungary was a common mother of equal nations, both Slovaks and Magyars. In *the Demands*, for the Slovaks the history of Hungary had been expressed as the oppression and sleep at the same time, and vice versa, in *the Memorandum*, there was a platform for a good-quality life. These divergent opinions were also noticed by the merciless critic: anonymous Meakulpínský.<sup>149</sup>

### ***Inscription to the Petition of Slovaks (to the Vienna Memorandum)***

*The Memorandum* had been addressed to the Hungarian Diet where, as it is known, it was not accepted with comprehension. Subsequently, the second version of *the Memorandum, the Petition of Slovaks* was drafted, and intended directly for the Emperor.<sup>150</sup> These facts are quite well known. However, in the context of this study, it is interesting to examine the shifts in the historical reasoning to legitimise the Slovak requirements (including those of the Upper Hungarian Region.) By means of Štefan Moyses' personal *Inscription to the Petition of Slovaks*, a concept of the history of the Hungarian Kingdom was introduced to Franz Joseph. The author of this document had no doubts that "the Hungarian Kingdom of Saint Stephen was not established on the basis of *some special nationality* [italics in the original], but of the Christian religion and the laws adopted from the pre-Christian peoples. The incunabula of the Kingdom know nothing about a priority of the Magyar people." Subsequently, he negated the state-building role of Magyars in the establishment of the Hungarian Kingdom, because there was a prevailing, and even, as "the history says", "exclusive influence of Italians, Germans, Slavs". After the adoption of Christianity "all tribes lived in unison, without the slightest prejudice against Magyars". However, subsequently, the proposition of harmonious symbiosis of nations (tribes) in Hungary is made relative. In alliance with Slavs, Germans dominated the political life at the expense of Magyars: "*Germans and Slavs sometimes prevailed so much that the Magyars sought protection in the Diet.*" Nevertheless, the Magyars were given no offerings, and the Diet confirmed the equality of rights. Antagonisms among nations (tribes) were effectively eliminated through the use of Latin: "*The Latin language used for eight hundred years was opportune to avoid jealousy of the tribes.*" The situation would change only through measures taken by Joseph II. to "awaken the national movements in Hungary". In the context of the described circumstances there is a rather unexpected turnover. In political terms, Slovaks (Slavs) either had dominated over Magyars in the history of Hungary or at least they had been equal to each other, and suddenly became able to respond to the emerging national

149 See for more details: HOLLÝ, Co hatí.

150 For more details see: BARANOVÍČ, Štefan. *Štefan Moyses. (Na sté výročie úmrtia)* [Štefan Moyses (On the 100th Anniversary of his Death)]. Bratislava : Osvetový ústav, 1969, pp. 15-16; ELIÁŠ, Michal. Štefan Moyses a Viedenské memorandum slovenské [Štefan Moyses and the Vienna Memorandum of Slovaks]. In ELIÁŠ, Z prameňov, pp. 53-57; SEDLÁK, Imrich. Štefan Moyses a Memorandá národa slovenského. [Štefan Moyses and the Memoranda of the Slovak Nation.] In SEDLÁK, Imrich (ed.). *Karol Kuzmány a Štefan Moyses v slovenských národných a cirkevných dejinách*. Martin : Matica slovenská, 2007, pp. 207-211.

idea in the literary sense only. In fact, Joseph II stirred up the national movements among “Slovaks only in literary terms, and among Magyars in respect of the state too.”<sup>151</sup>

### ***Inscription from Bishop Moyses to Earl Móric Pálffy***

In this context it is worth mentioning Moyses' arguments used in the text from the following year (1862) which was not addressed to the Emperor but to Earl M. Pálffy. In this document, Moyses protested against hampering the Slovak nation in its development by Magyars. The document leads to a petition to Earl Pálffy to recognise the rights of the Slovak nation in order to keep Matica Slovenská and secondary schools (particularly, the Catholic ones in this specific point) and, simultaneously, to mediate the issuance of official permissions to keep these institutions.<sup>152</sup> In addition to the natural law, Moyses found key arguments on this subject taken mainly from the history, in which he put an emphasis on the legal documents guaranteeing the equal rights of tribes. Not only did *The Demands* work with nine hundred years of coexistence with Magyars, but also the speech of Štúr delivered a version of thousand years of the coexistence, and Moyses referred to “eight-hundred-year-old positive laws of our country” or the “eight hundred year history”.<sup>153</sup> Not only is it unfair to deny the rights of Slovaks, but “highly indecent: too.”<sup>154</sup> He also supported this point of departure with historical reasons. The most important reasons include the well-known propositions referring to Slovaks as “the oldest inhabitants of the country”, and their civilizational primacy over Magyars: “[W]hen the Magyars immigrated in the community with Russians and Cumans, they [Slovaks] were also the most educated group in its [the country's] population.” Moyses elaborates on this theme of superiority of Slovaks over Magyars, and states more specifically: “They [the Slovaks] had their cities and castles, which have had their Slovak names until now, they had a political constitution whose essence and names have been preserved in Hungary for eight centuries.” Subsequently, he mentions the acts of “tribesmen of Slovaks”<sup>155</sup> - Saint Adalbert (“who christened the founder of the Kingdom of Hungary”) and his pupil St. Astrik<sup>156</sup> (“who brought the royal crown from Rome.”) It is credit to them, that Hungary was definitively incorporated into the “European family of nations”. Indirectly and quite clearly he alludes to the merits of Slovaks. However, in order to avoid doubts, Moyses describes the Slovak

151 [MOYSES, Štefan]. Memorandum to the Petition of Slovaks. Quoted from: HURBAN VAJANSKÝ, *Svetozár. Život Štefana Moysesu* [The Life of Štefan Moyses]. In *Storočná pamiatka narodenia Štefana Moysesu, biskupa baňsko-bystrického, Jeho veličenstva skutočného tajného radcu, doktora filosofie, predsedu Matice Slovenskej atď. atď.* Turčiansky Sv. Martin : Vydanie Kníhkupecko-nakladateľského spolku, 1897, pp. 71-72. The same location provides also detailed information about the document.

152 [MOYSES, Štefan]. Prípís biskupa Moysesu od 10. mája 1862 grófovi Moricovi Pálffymu. [Memorandum from Bishop Moyses dated 10<sup>th</sup> May 1862 to Earl Móric Pálffy.] In *Storočná*, pp. 175-182. For more details about the circumstances of the document's genesis see: HURBAN VAJANSKÝ, *Život*, pp. 78-89; SEDLÁK, Imrich. *Štefan Moyses a Memorandá národa slovenského*. [Štefan Moyses and the Memoranda of the Slovak Nation.] In SEDLÁK, Karol, p. 212.

153 Moreover, he demonstrates the injustice of the current status by quoting the Hungarian laws. See: [MOYSES, Štefan], pp. 178-179.

154 [MOYSES, Štefan], p. 180.

155 Based strictly on the structure of Moyses's sentence, only Saint Adalbert was mentioned as the “tribesman of Slovaks”. However, the context suggests that name also refers to Saint Astrik.

156 Neither Adalbert nor Astrik are named directly. For an identification of these personalities, see: BARANOVIC, Štefan, p. 30; Note no. 114.

influence on Magyars in the central domains of life: “*History as well as the Hungarian language clearly prove that Slovaks had been the teachers of Magyars, in the subject of Christian religion as well as in farming and industry.*” What’s more, owing to this Slovak civilizational mission, Magyars have endured to exist as a nation at all: “*So, if Magyars, a virtuous shepherd nation, had found it helpful and had been pleased to become devoted to the arts of peace, while still being able to avoid the destiny of the much stronger Hunnes and Avarians, Slovaks cannot be withheld from the great degree of worthiness that they had given a hand to their countrymen so willingly and effectively, in achieving the noble objective.*” The basic conclusion is that Slovaks have been willing to help Magyars since the beginning of the Hungarian history and, therefore, the current behaviour of the Magyars towards the Slovaks is “highly indecent”.<sup>157</sup>

#### **4. Summary and conclusion**

##### ***The Memorandum versus the Demands***

*The Memorandum* raises fundamentally different discourse in comparison with *The Demands*. The fact that Magyars do not emerge as oppressors in *the Memorandum* is the most important point of the document.

In *the Memorandum* the superiority of the Slovak history to the Magyar one is expressed merely in their chronological order. The Slovaks had lived in the territory of Hungary long before Magyars. However, the arrival of Magyars is not a tragedy, but, on the contrary, the beginning of their harmonious coexistence with Slovaks. By contrast, *the Demands* assume a 900-year coexistence of Slovaks and Magyars full of injustices and iniquities of Magyars against Slovaks (and also of the sleep of Slovaks.)

##### ***The reasoning in favour of the Slovak Region in the Memorandum***

In *the Memorandum* the requirement to locate the Slovak territory is expressed primarily by reasoning in support of the natural law and, more specifically, also by a positive interpretation of Stephen’s *Guidances*. There is no argument in favour of the ancient statehood’s legal continuity. Compliance with this requirement is primarily a matter of moral nature.

##### ***Inscription to the Petition of Slovaks (to the Vienna Memorandum)***

The certain semantic inconsequence can be seen in this narration. On the one hand, it is declared that nations (tribes) of Hungary lived together in harmony, while, on the other hand, the underestimation of the political rights of Magyars is emphasised. Moreover, the Slovaks (Slavs) are presented here as a nation fully involved in the political power within the Kingdom of Hungary. This characterisation fades away along with the description of the 18<sup>th</sup> century when the Slovaks were capable of expressing themselves through literature only.

In the past the Kingdom of Hungary was primarily presented as a whole: consisting of various nations which lived in mutual concord. This principle of equality has arisen from Christianity and the ancient (“pre-Magyar”) legal order of Slavs, in which Germans, Italians and Slavs dominated. The political dominance of Germans and Slavs over Magyars is accentuated within the second variant. This needs to be appre-

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157 Compare: [MOYSES, Štefan], p. 180.

hended in context of the document setting – particularly it's addressing to the Emperor in the period of strained relationship between Hungary and Austria and, at the same time, in the time of seeking adequate arrangement of the Empire.

Inscription from Bishop Moyses to Earl Móric Pálffy

This text contains a clear formulation of the important concept of civilisational primacy of Slovaks over the Magyars. From a terminological point of view, the term of “a Slovak” prevails over “a Slav”. In the context of the fundamental civilisational impact – Christianisation of Magyars – the name of “tribesman of Slovaks” is used. The fact that the Magyars were shaped up by the Slovaks affected actually all domains of public life. It also means that the system of ruling, administrative structure, quality of agriculture, industry, as well as education and culture of the population in Hungary were derived from the civilisational impact of the Slovaks.

In the context of the contemporary studies of historical thinking I consider the mention of the eight-hundred-year history in *the Inscription from Bishop Moyses* as very important. This mention functions as a political argument. Together with the concepts of harmonious coexistence of Slovaks and Magyars, and Slovaks as teachers of Magyars, this chronological data refutes interpretations of the concept of a millennial subjugation as an *a priori* scheme (it is to be documented especially by the “round thousand”) existing continuously since the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to interwar Czechoslovakia (until the present day.)<sup>158</sup> *The Demands*, in which the history was presented through oppression and serfdom, mentioned 900 years.<sup>159</sup>

## Conclusion

The textual analysis of selected documents with political programmes of the Slovak national movements is, inter alia, useful and necessary for the research of ideological discourse and nation-oriented historical thinking on the turn of the centuries. In the men-

158 Compare e. g.: FINDOR, Andrej. Tisícročná poroba? [A Millennial Serfdom?]. In KREKOVIČ, Eduard – MANNOVÁ, Elena – KREKOVIČOVÁ, Eva (eds.) *Mýty naše slovenské*. Bratislava : Academic Electronic Press, 2005, pp. 73-74.

159 Naturally, the theme of (millennial) oppression did not disappear completely. As an example of a concept of unjust history (for Slovaks), we can remember e.g. [KUZMÁNY, Karol]. Pozdravný list Karola Kuzmányho Štefanovi Moysesovi [Greeting Letter from Karol Kuzmány to Štefan Moyses]. In BARANOVIČ, Štefan, pp. 39-40. A similar example can be found in relation to media protesting against the millenium celebrations of 1896. *Národné noviny* brought an agitation article addressed to Slovak women, in which a letter written by an unnamed lady who had organised a women's protest against the magyarisation with the slogan: !We are Slovaks! We do not want the Magyar language!". The author of the article supports such activities, while underlining the persistence of national identity of Slovaks, in spite of the “thousand years injustices”. See: K národným úlohám slovenských žien [On the National Tasks of Slovak Women]. In *Národné noviny*, 14<sup>th</sup> February 1896, Vol. 27, Issue 32, p. 1. In spite of the fact that one could certainly find similar examples, the concept of the thousand-year oppression became marginal in the official discourse of the Slovak national movement. Here it may be noted that the concept of the millennial oppression is not found in the official arguments presented by the Slovak National Party or later. *The 1896 Protests of Romanians, Serbs and Slovaks regarding the Millennium Celebrations* can be given as an example. The authors of this official document, Issued on the occasion of millennium celebrations of the Executive Committee of the Congress of Nationalities do not mention a millennial oppression, but rather the well-known concept of civilisational superiority. For more details see: KOMORA, Pavol. Milénárne oslavy v Uhorsku roku 1896 a ich vnímanie v slovenskom prostredí [The Millenium Celebrations in Hungary in 1896 and their Perception in the Slovak Environment]. In PODRIMAVSKÝ, Milan – KOVÁČ, Dušan (eds.) *Slovensko na začiatku 20. storočia (Spoločnosť, štát a národ v úradniciach doby). Zborník štúdií*. Bratislava : Historický ústav SAV; Polygrafia SAV, 1999, pp. 100-102.

tioned concepts of Moyses, we can see for example the common features shared with the subsequent concepts of Svetozár Hurban Vajanský; this concerns primarily the theme of backwardness of the Magyars throughout the history, which precluded the idea that Slovaks had been oppressed by Magyars. According to Moyses, and also as stated by Vajanský later on, Slovaks, by contrast, were among the ruling elite of Hungary.

Finally, it is necessary to draw attention to one relevant fact. It is known that at the turn of the century Slovak nationalists often referred to *the Memorandum* in the texts of their programme documents or articles. The work by Július Botto *Slováci. Vývin ich národného povedomia* (Slovaks. The Development of their National Awareness) (first volume: 1906) which is explicitly dedicated to the memory of Štefan Marko Daxner and *the Memorandum*, points to the fact that the actual content of *the Memorandum* has often not been elaborated on. We know that in his perception of the history of the national consciousness, Botto somehow 'bracketed out' the history of Hungary, as he found it irrelevant from the viewpoint of the Slovak national awareness. At this point it is sufficient to simply compare that with the concept of the Slovak-Magyar harmonious coexistence, present in *the Memorandum*, which shows a paradoxical semantic contrast with the declarations emphasising the importance of the document's ideological message, or the concept drafted by Š. M. Daxner. This short final reflection was meant to point out, particularly, the rarely formulated fact that similar paradoxes make up one of the basic features of national ideologies. Awareness of these facts is a necessary pre-condition for all serious analyses of the ideological reasons presented by nationalists. In this respect, researchers have got a vast and unexplored space for analysis and interpretation.<sup>160</sup>

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160 Parts of the Memorandum's English translation taken from the public resource: [http://explorehumanrights.coe.int/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/Slovakia\\_ehr.pdf](http://explorehumanrights.coe.int/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/Slovakia_ehr.pdf), Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic

## Chapter 4

## EMANCIPATION AND ASSIMILATION OF JEWS AT THE TIME OF EXPANSION OF POLITICAL ANTI-SEMITISM IN HUNGARY\*

Petra Rybářová

Jews were given a guarantee of equality by the Emancipation Act no. XVII/1867, which meant the same role for them like for all other citizens of Europe: to fulfil civil obligations and be loyal to the Hungarian statehood and the crown. They had to stop operating as a separate unit, that is, they had to suppress through reforms the cultural and ethnic particularities that distinguished them from the rest of the population and, consequently, to blend in with the majority, keeping their own religion at the most. Assimilation was intended as the consequence of emancipation and, in fact, its fulfilment.<sup>161</sup> Such a liberal model, based on the Enlightenment ideals of the French Revolution, was in place everywhere in Western Europe. In the Hungarian intentions the assimilation had to take place toward the dominant ethnic Hungarian (Magyar) culture in order to strengthen its tenuous position within the boundaries of the historic Kingdom of Hungary, or, in other words, to increase at least statistically the number of ethnic Hungarians compared to other “nationalities”.<sup>162</sup> In the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Jews in Hungary amounted to about 6 % of the total population, which was a really high number compared with 1 % in Germany. The assimilation process in Hungary took place much faster than in Western Europe, or in less time, generally between the Compromise and World War I, and was most evident in the area of language. The difference was also in the fact that while the assimilation took place in the West in strong national cultures and modern economies,

\* The article is a re-edited version of the chapter *Emancipation, Assimilation* from the monograph: RYBÁŘOVÁ, Petra. *Antisemitizmus v Uhorsku v 80. rokoch 19. storočia* [Anti-Semitism in Hungary in the 1880s]. Bratislava : PRO HISTORIA, 2010.

161 H.A. Strauss believes that “acculturation” is a more appropriate term than the originally constitutional legal term of “emancipation”, and the one-sided or political concept of “assimilation”. See: STRAUSS, A. Herbert. Introduction: Possibilities and Limits of Comparison. In STRAUSS, A. Herbert (ed.). *Current Research on Anti-Semitism, Vol. 3(1). Hostages of Modernization. Studies on Modern Antisemitism. Germany – Great Britain – France*. Berlin, New York : Walter de Gruyter, 1992, p. 3. The concept of acculturation can be understood as the transformation of collective values and norms, modification of socio-cultural structures of a minority, and, finally, changes in its identity. It is a mutual but not balanced influence and convergence of the minority and the majority which also takes some elements of the minority culture. Both groups affect and change each other, but remain ethnically distinct. If acculturation exceeds these limits, assimilation occurs which means total accommodation. An ethnic minority adopts the culture and the value system of the ‘host’ society (the majority), and ethnic categories will no longer be relevant in the social contact. See: HECKMANN, Friedrich. *Ethnische Minderheiten, Volk und Nation. Soziologie inter-ethnischer Beziehungen*. Stuttgart : Ferdinand Enke, 1992, pp. 168-170. Various historians see assimilation as different phenomena. Those who take into account the economic and social modernisation, talk about assimilation as an essential part of the integration process. Another group of historians regard assimilation primarily as a political ideology and practice. See: GYÁNI, Gábor. Pojem asimilácie v moderných maďarských sociálnych dejinách [The Concept of Assimilation in the Modern Social History of Hungary]. In KOVÁČ, Dušan (ed.). *História a politika III*. Bratislava : Česko-slovenský výbor Európskej kultúrnej nadácie, 1993, pp. 81-86.

162 Still in 1890, the percentage of ethnic Hungarians (Magyars) did not exceed one half of the total population in the Kingdom of Hungary.

in Hungary it unrolled in generally less developed economic, cultural and political conditions.<sup>163</sup>

Although Jews as a group ostracized for a long time got the civil rights, it did not mean automatically that the prejudices of non-Jewish population disappeared. A lot depended on what Mitchell Cohen calls “readjustment”, i.e. a kind of re-adaptation - social, cultural and political - not only of an emancipated person, but everyone around that person.<sup>164</sup> In the Kingdom of Hungary, the mutual effort to achieve successful integration was labelled “the social agreement on assimilation” introduced by the leaders of liberal aristocracy as early as in the time of the first reform generation.<sup>165</sup> The alleged breach of agreement by Jews later served the anti-Semite as an excuse for their demands to repeal the Emancipation Act. Integration into the society through mixed marriages and baptisms before 1895<sup>166</sup> was typical almost exclusively for the higher strata of the Jewish society, especially the neologist Budapest male Jews, with the objective to obtain a certain social status. The social discrimination persisted, despite the civil equality, and Jews could not be employed in public administration or the academic sphere a long time after 1867. In addition to the efforts to achieve social acceptance, it could have also been an attempt to get rid of the origin marked by discrimination, and so even after 1895 this concerned mostly Jewish partners who voluntarily left their religious community.<sup>167</sup> However, the unwritten social convention was relentless because in the eyes of the majority, a converted Jew still remained just a “baptised Jew”. Hidden behind the mentioned individual motives were also some internal conflicts within the Jewish community which had to cope with an increasing degree of secularisation that affected Jews much more than Christians. “Crisis of the Jewish identity” is the common name, rather vague than accurate, describing the individual and collective transformation of the Jewish tradition and mentality on the basis of external cultural and social incentives and contradictions. This was reflected, inter alia, in the boom of various religious streams, and later in the development of the Zionist movement, which was also a reaction to the stifling atmosphere induced by anti-Semitism. The nationalist dissimilation movement encountered from various reasons the resistance of neologists and Orthodox Jews, because from the position of the earlier it threatened the assimilation process, and from the perspective the latter it would not be compatible with the idea of messianism. Paradoxically, anti-Semitic rhetoric of the “father” of anti-Semitism, Győző Istóczy (“Jews to Palestine!”), who wrote

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163 KARÁDY, Viktor: *Zsidóság, polgárosodás, asszimiláció*. Budapest: Cserépfalvi Kiadása, 1997, p. 117. See also: RANKI, Vera. *The Politics of Inclusion and Exclusion. Jews and Nationalism in Hungary*. New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1999, pp. 18-23, 55-58.

164 COHEN, Mitchell. Auto-Emancipation and Antisemitism (Homage to Bernard-Lazare). In *Jewish Social Studies*, 2003, Vol. 10, Issue 1, p. 69.

165 Ibid, p. 120.

166 In that year, Judaism was up-graded to a religion recognised by the state, and Christians were free to convert to the Jewish faith. The year before, mixed marriages between Jews and Christians were officially recognised, and Jewish partners did not have to be converted to Christianity.

167 KATZ, Jacob. The identity of post-emancipatory Hungarian Jewry. In DON, Yehuda – KARÁDY, Victor (eds.). *A social and economic history of Central European Jewry*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1990, pp. 26-27.

in 1906 that anti-Semites are simply “non-Jewish Zionists” was strikingly reminiscent of the Zionists’ goals.<sup>168</sup>

As a result of systematic, state-organised “magyarisation” policy, and also the spontaneous reaction to the modernisation process, Jews registered themselves as ethnic Hungarians in official censuses in the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The statistics after 1867 did not indicate a “Jewish nation”, “nationality” or the Yiddish language, so the Jews were registered only as a religious group under the ecclesiastical and religious affiliation of individual “nationalities”.<sup>169</sup> Between 1880 and 1900, the number of Hungarian-speaking Jews almost doubled, while the number of non-Magyars showed a significant decline.<sup>170</sup> This phenomenon cannot be viewed in isolation, but only in a broader context which hides some important moments.<sup>171</sup> First of all, it was the notorious lack of credibility of statistics with regard to data collection methodology and implementation. Basically, the statistics reflected the knowledge of a mother tongue, or since 1910, the most publicly used language, and so hidden behind the Hungarian language declared there were different shades of bilingualism and multilingualism, which were typical for the Jews. On the one hand, the statistics can reveal the loyalty to the Hungarian “nation”, targeted voluntarist auto-assimilation and conformism, and, on the other hand, also a pure formalism without any expression of patriotic sentiments.

A specific type of assimilation was the magyarisation of names and surnames whose protagonists were again predominately Jews. Besides these, Catholic Germans and Slovaks from Western Slovakia often magyarised their names too while Slovak Lutherans did this much less.<sup>172</sup> According to Péter Hanák, one reason for the rapid assimilation was the alluring “*socio-psychological momentum*” of the Jewish middle class to be identified with the lifestyle and worldview of the traditional Hungarian gentry, and also the faith in “*rational liberalism*”, combined with the “*romantic ideal of freedom*”.<sup>173</sup>

In newspapers, regardless of the political or ideological orientation, and whether intended for Slovak, Hungarian or German readers, Jews were presented in a similar way, most commonly as a “nation” or “nationality”, although Jews do not fall into any of these categories according to that time’s stereotypes. Other names included “race”, “breed”, “a nation within a nation” and “a state within a state”. The “nation”, as understood essentially in that time, was a positive value - an entity firmly anchored with the knowledge

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168 ISTÓCZY, Győző. *A magyar antiszemita párt megsemmisítése with ennek következményei*. Budapest, 1906, p. 18.

169 In 1850 Jews were still recorded by ethnic criteria, but in the 1869 census demographer K. Keleti included them, based on the Yiddish language used, among Germans.

170 KARÁDY, Zsidóság, p. 164.

171 The Issue of Jewish assimilation is also dealt with by: KAMENEC, Ivan. Historická retrospektíva formovania židovskej národnosti v moderných slovenských dejinách. [The Historical Retrospective of the Jewish Nationality in the Formation of the Modern Slovak History.] In *Sociológia*, Vol. 24, Issue 1-2, 1992, p. 25-30; KAMENEC, Ivan. Problémy asimilácie židovského obyvateľstva na Slovensku. [Problems of Assimilation of Jews in Slovakia.] In KAMENEC, Ivan. *Hľadanie a blúdenie v dejinách. Úvahy, štúdie, polemiky*. Bratislava : Kalligram, 2000, pp. 312-324.

172 KARÁDY, Victor: Aspects of Unequal Assimilation in Liberal Hungary. Social Geography of the Movement to Magyarise Alien Surnames before 1918. In *CEU History Department Yearbook*, Budapest: CEU Press, 1997 – 1998, p. 56.

173 HANÁK, Péter. A közép-európai háromszög. In HANÁK, Péter. *A kert és a műhely*. Budapest : Balassi Kiadó, 1999, p. 221.

of a cultural ethos, fellowship, and shared history. So if the goal was to pick up certain positive, collective characteristics of the Jews, the phrase “the Jewish people” was used, but if negative traits were pointed out, in turn, the Jews were written about as the Jewish “race”, “breed”, “nation within nation” or “state in state”. However, this was not true in absolute terms; for example, the designation of race or breed in other contexts had largely a neutral connotation. However, through the use of the word Jew, the anti-Semitic phraseology created a number of expressions. With regard to the definition of a Jew (identification), Jews were (in Hungarian) “zsidófaj”, “zsidófajzat”, “zsidótermészet”; in the economic-social field “zsidósajtó”, “zsidóuzsora”, “zsidóuralom” and, finally, “zsidókérdés” or “zsidóemancipáció” (Jewish: species, race, nature, press, usury, domination; question, emancipation). The Liberals were execrated as “zsidópajtás” and “zsidóbérenc” (pal, hireling). Judit Kubinszky reports that according to the model of the German anti-Semites new forms for naming various accusations penetrated the Hungarian anti-Jewish vocabulary such as “corrupt”, “destruktív elem”, “idegen betolakodó”, “hazafiatlan”, “erkölcstelen”, “elzárt kaszt” and many others (corrupt, destructive elements, alien invaders, unpatriotic, immoral, closed class).<sup>174</sup>

In the Christian anti-Jewish tradition the name “Jew” acquired a pejorative meaning, but in the century of the Jewish emancipation, the Jews once again claimed themselves to be called the old new name “Israelites”, or the citizens of the “faith of Moses” which was even used in official documents.<sup>175</sup> The move, however, was not viewed merely as regaining self-confidence, but also as purposefully remaining away from using the name Jew just for its pejorative nature. Thus, it led to suspicion why the Jews tried so suddenly to get rid of the name used for centuries that filled them with pride.<sup>176</sup> In the semantics of the anti-Semitic ideology, the diversity of terms denoting the collectivity of Jews can be characterised with the dichotomous pair of identity and non-identity. An analysis of the press shows that the “group of us”, “we”, (Hungarians, Slovaks, etc.) was considered to be a community with clearly defined national identity, while the Jews were attributed ambivalent, paradoxical identity,<sup>177</sup> characterised in that Jews were in one and the same time perceived by the surroundings as “germaniser”, “matadors of magyarisation”, or as a group with ambivalent identity (e.g. without patriotism).

Every print medium represented a group that defined itself in relation to other groups. The *Národné noviny* newspaper, the press body of the Slovak National Party, assumed the position of a representative and spokesman of discriminated Slovaks in an opposi-

174 KUBINSZKY, Judit. *Politikai antiszemizmus Magyarországon 1875 – 1890*. Budapest : Kossuth, 1976, p. 82.  
175 Ibid, p. 39.

176 BEIN, Alex. *The Jewish Question: Biography of a World Problem*. Rutherford : Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1990, p. 122.

177 HOLZ, Klaus. *Nationaler Antisemitismus. Wissenssoziologie einer Weltanschauung*. Hamburg : Hamburger Edition, 2001, p. 161.

Jews as a whole were subject to a variety of classifications and stereotypes. Their identity was attributed on the basis of different collective characteristics. Non-Jews identify particular Jews as carriers of characteristics, typical of the Jews as a collective. There was a “complete identification of an individual with typifications attributed to that individual by the society”. The identification of a “Jew” can have both positive and negative connotations. See: BERGER, I. Peter – LUCKMANN, Thomas. *Sociální konstrukce reality. Pojednání o sociologii vědění* [The Social Constructions of Reality. A Discussion on the Sociology of Knowledge]. Brno : Centrum pro studium demokracie a kultury, 1999, p. 92.

tion to Hungarians. In turn, the dominant position of the Hungarians was represented by the pro-government press as well as press bodies of the opposition Anti-Semitic Party founded in 1883. In the century of nationalism, the representation of one's own internal group and its definition against an external group was symptomatic. Once Jews were granted civil rights, as a group with no clearly defined boundaries between religious and ethnic identity, they became the subject of nationalisation by both Hungarian and Slovak elites who attempted to integrate Jews among themselves, and thus strengthen (numerically, culturally, economically) the ethnic groups they represented. Jews had to do so because they lived "in the middle" of these groups, or on their "work, sweat and blood", which was a favourite catchphrase of the contemporary journalism.

The offer for Jews to assimilate with Slovaks was related to the socio-political changes after 1867 and in particular the so-called. Nationality Act of 1868, which promoted the concept of a single Hungarian political nation. The Emancipation Act was perceived by the Slovak elites with mild dissatisfaction, as the success of Jews greatly contrasted with their disappointment concerning the Nationality Act. Also the fact that the Emancipation Act was enacted a year before the Nationality Act was considered as evidence that the Hungarian government cared more about Jews than non-Hungarian inhabitants of the state: *"Although we know how to appreciate the impatience of the Jews yearning over an earlier emancipation; and we know it better than anyone else. After all, our desire and efforts for 'national equality' is therefore a desire for emancipation. But with all that we do not accept that emancipation of the Jews could and should take precedence over the nationality question. And if this is still achieved, it will be an evidence to us that the Hungarian Diet cares more about the equal rights and satisfaction of several hundred thousands of Jews than the equal rights, satisfaction, and fulfillment of life desires and requirements of many millions of non-Hungarian citizens of Hungary."*<sup>178</sup>

Politician and journalist Viliam Paulíny-Tóth published a series of articles under the title *Letters to the Jews* in the *Národné noviny* newspapers. In line with the state's official policy, he did not consider Jews to be a specific "nation" or "nationality", but only a group of people with their own religion. That is why, and even more so, in his opinion, they were obliged to be fused with the Slovak nation in the middle of which they lived. In return for confessing to be Slovaks, he promised them the fulfilment of the "true emancipation" and "respect and love from their fellow Christian citizens". The difference between the Slovak and Hungarian visions was that while the Slovak representatives demanded assimilation of Jews only in their own ethnic territory, Hungarians demanded absolute assimilation of all Jews (as well as other non-Hungarian population).<sup>179</sup> However, there would be no offer of the "true assimilation" made by the Slovak nationalists in the 1880s. Slovak journalism, unlike the Hungarians, gave up entirely on the idea to strike the spark of "Slovak consciousness" in Jews. As Ivan Kamenec argues *"the Slovak society itself had to resist*

178 Editorial (untitled). *Pešťbudínske vedomosti*, Vol. 7, Issue 82 from 11<sup>th</sup> October 1867.

179 Listy k Židom. [Letters to the Jews.] *Národné noviny*, Vol. 2, Issues 128, 131, 134, 137, 140, 143, 149 from 1871.

*systematic assimilation pressures from Hungary*” and that “*there was a lack of objective preconditions*” for integration of the Jews.<sup>180</sup>

The issue of anti-Semitism in ethnically mixed areas is a difficult problem. The Slovak nationalist historiography has often emphasised the role of Jews as “exponents of magyarism”, which supposedly had to incite the population to even greater repulsion.<sup>181</sup> This view represents mainly the visions of the Slovak movement’s representatives. They responded critically to the various manifestations of Hungarian nationalism by the Jews, which was shown notably in the parliamentary election. However, as far as the 1880s are concerned, the Slovak political elite was in an electoral passivity. We can read in Slovak newspapers about Jews as the “magyarises” who could jeopardise Slovaks but more attention was devoted to economic and social problems in the country. We encounter criticism that the Jews “get magyarised” or “magyarise”, however as Eleonóra Babejová notes, also the Slovak and German assimilants were criticized for their “magyarism”.<sup>182</sup> Later, when Slovak politicians got involved actively in the the electoral fights, they focused their anger on the Jewish agitators and defenders of magyarisation. Such manifestations must be analysed to see if and how the perceived image of certain “magyarising” Jews was transferred to the image of all Jews.

The results of an ethnological research focused on Slovak folklore suggest that there is a “*lower degree of reflecting one’s own ethnicity*”, which means that nationalism “*did not penetrate too much into the lower classes of the population*”.<sup>183</sup> One must distinguish between ideas and visions of Slovak representatives and their reflection among ordinary people. In 1884 the *Národné noviny* newspaper wrote that “*Jews help magyarisation*”, and on each occasion, they are against “*any attempts, or help suppressing the acts, of those who fight for the rights of the Slovak people*”.<sup>184</sup> The statement suggests that it is not the “Slovak people” against the Jews, but the Slovak elites. If we go through district records, we encounter in them a frequently repeated phrase that “the people” behaved soberly, wisely, and thus did not let themselves go by the “pan-Slavic firebrands”. All local press bodies

180 KAMENEC, Ivan. Bieda antisemitizmu a asimilácie u malých národov a štátov strednej Európy. [The Poverty of Anti-Semitism and Assimilation in Small Nations and States in Central Europe.] In KAMENEC, Ivan. *Hľadanie a blúdenie v dejinách*. Bratislava : Kalligram, 2000, p. 288.

181 Foreign authors have adopted this view too. See: WISTRICH, Robert. *Socialism and the Jews. The Dilemmas of Assimilation in Germany and Austria-Hungary*. East Brunswick, London, Toronto : Associated University Presses, 1982, pp. 187-188. FISCHER, Rolf. *Entwicklungsstufen des Antisemitismus in Ungarn 1867 – 1939*. München : R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1988, pp. 85-86; FEJTŐ, Ferenc. *Magyarország, zsidóság*. Budapest : História. MTA Történettudományi Intézeti, 2000, p. 141 - there are mainly quotes of Anton Štefánek who commented on the “Jewish question” in a poll of the *Huszadik Század* magazine published in 1917. In it he stated that the further magyarisation got in schools, the more “aggressive” the Jews became in the politics. Subsequently, this would cause conflicts between them and the “people”. See: HANÁK, Péter. *Zsidókérdés asszimiláció antiszemitizmus*. Budapest : Gondolat, 1984, p. 92. A positive role of Jews in the Slovak movement is recalled by JELINEK, A. Yeshayahu. *Židia na Slovensku v 19. storočí: poznámky k dejinám* [Jews in Slovakia in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century: Notes on the History]. In *Slovenský národopis*, 1993, Vol. 41, Issue 3, pp. 285-286; ROTHKIRCHEN, Livia. Slovakia: I., 1848 – 1918. In *Historical Studies and Surveys*, vol. I. Philadelphia : Jewish Publication Society of America, 1968, Vol. I, p. 73.

182 BABEJOVÁ, Eleonóra. *Fin-de-Siècle Pressburg*. New York : Columbia University Press, 2003, p. 357.

183 KREKOVIČOVÁ, Eva. [Between Tolerance and Barriers: the Image of Jews and Romanies in the Slovak Folklore]. Bratislava : Academic Electronic Press, 1999, pp. 1-17.

184 Nová zásterá. [The New Apron.] In *Národné noviny*, Vol. 15, Issue 80 from 10<sup>th</sup> July 1884.

bringing news from the regions of Upper Hungary talked about the submissive “people” who passively bear the “Jewish yoke”. The animosity and occasional flare-up of the people against the “master of the village” had origins in the economic and social conflict, and not in the fact that Jews hungarised their names, or were directly “magyarisers”. When analysing the anti-Jewish riots that took place in Slovak communities in the districts of Nitra and Bratislava between 1882 and 1883 I have not encountered any mention that the leaders incited plebs against the Jews as being the “exponents of magyarisation”. The anti-Jewish actions were probably initiated by the “Pan-Slavs”, but because of “soaking” people, not because they ranged themselves with the Hungarians.

The pre-election talks of anti-Semitic candidates were primarily intended for people with the right to vote. When the pre-election promises were addressed mainly to Slovak lower aristocracy and intelligentsia, the anti-Semitic candidate tried to speak to them in Slovak and vaguely mention some support for the Slovak demands, but certainly did not criticise the Jewish “magyarisers”. The motive for such an empty gesture was undoubtedly mere political calculation as the Anti-Semitic Party, in relation to the nationality issues, was clearly in support of the state’s official doctrine of a single political nation, to at least partly legitimise its presence on the political scene. One of the first “defences” of the Anti-Semites in the parliament was the question “*so how can anti-Semitism be called dangerous when it calls for magyarising Jews?*”<sup>185</sup> The most important anti-Semitic newspaper *Függetlenség* countered by noting that the general progress, magyarisation and assimilation is first of all a national motto, not only a slogan of the anti-Semites, and Semites (sic!).<sup>186</sup> The statement alluded to the Jewish willingness to blend in with the Hungarians on the one hand, but on the other hand it was mostly intended to demonstrate that the goal of the anti-Semites was primarily the welfare of the “nation”. This is evidenced by the fact that Lajos Mocsáry, member of the Diet, was blamed for moderate attitudes towards the “nationalities”.<sup>187</sup>

Ferencz Komlóssy, an anti-Semitic member of the Diet, responded to the criticism of his “Pan-Slavic” parliamentary speech with an explanation that he was interested in improving the economic situation of the Slovak “people” without “*interfering with the nationality question*”, as it was not a part of his party’s political agenda. It is natural that he also met with representatives of the Slovak intelligentsia in the district, who, as he said, did not ask for any obligations from him. Apparently, this was a cooperation based purely on the common “struggle” against the Jewish capital because it did not require the same attitude in regard to the nationality question.<sup>188</sup> Moreover, Komlóssy was elected in the district of Vrbové where a majority of the Slovak people were Lutherans, despite the fact that he was a Catholic priest and Hungarian. A major advantage of the election was the fact that this region was known for an aversion to Jews, so the voters were certainly impressed by his anti-Semitic programme. A significant role was also played by his personal charisma, as in this period it mostly held true that voters decided primarily by sympathies for individual candidates. The assumption that the representatives of the Slovak movement were able

185 Domáce správy [Domestic news] In *Národné noviny*, Vol. 14, Issue 118 from 9<sup>th</sup> October 1883.

186 Zsidóellenes zavargások Pozsonyban In *Függetlenség*, Vol. 2, Issue 270 from 30<sup>th</sup> September 1882.

187 KUBINSZKY, Politikai, pp. 190-191.

188 A közönség köréből In *Nyitra megyei Közlöny*, Vol. 5, Issue 34 from 23<sup>rd</sup> August 1885.

to cooperate on a local scale with the Hungarian anti-Semitic politicians (also with Ignác Zimándy) is based on the rules of the ideology of nationalist anti-Semitism. The rules read that *“in relation to the Jews, to all nations appear to be essentially the same”*.<sup>189</sup> Svetozár Hurban Vajanský pointed out in his paper entitled *The Jewish Question in Slovakia* that the Jewish menace is a danger to both Hungarians and Slovaks, and therefore he advised Hungarians to forget the hatred for Slovaks.

In response to the accusation of spreading anti-Semitism as presented by the Hungarian press, the *Národné noviny* stated that the originators of this accusation, who *“perhaps hate only a debtor or a wiser man than they are more than they hate a Jew”* were those who contributed to the fact that anti-Semites conquered three Slovak districts, but immediately became enthusiastic defenders of Jewry. Thus they achieved their goal - to win the merits from the *“Hungarian patriotic circles and even the creditors – Jews”*. Finally, the *Národné noviny* tried to formulate their attitude to anti-Semitism: *“Neither we beat nor we defend those [Jews], nor we hide their errors and sins that is our anti-Semitism. And, truly, we would have more causes for more radical anti-Semitism, like our Hungarian fellow citizens. Our poor, uneducated Slovak people are nowadays almost subservient to Judaism; Judaism sucks their labour, bothers them with distilled infection, it interferes with each of their mental uplift, kills their manners, defames and destroys their speech, helps magyarisation and on any occasion it is against any attempts, or help suppressing the acts, of those who fight for the rights of the Slovak people. Against the sins the Jews committed on the Slovak issue, our passive position is almost incomprehensible. (...) Authorities of the Slovak National Party never reached neither for untrue news, nor whistle-blowing, nor falsehood, whenever Jews have been concerned, as Pester Lloyd is doing along with other Hungarian and German magazines in Jewish hands, whenever it comes to speaking of the Slovak National Party. (...) To become exemplary Semite-philes, we really do not miss anything else but celebrating Judaism, when it kills us and helps our oppression, or concealing and hiding all sins and nuisances that Jews commit, while insulting the responsibilities we have as journalists.”*<sup>190</sup>

The government's assimilation policy and especially the reception of it in the target groups was continuously reviewed by Hungarian journalists who analysed critically the assimilation's speed and quality. On the one hand, we see reactions praising how quickly some of the Jews were assimilated, but also criticism of those who were not willing to do so. The Hungarian press was pleased to deliver lists of Jews who had substituted their German corporate signs and surnames for Hungarian ones. In many cases, the magyarising efforts of Jews were described, and often ridiculed, as being exaggerated. On the other hand, the Hungarian journalism (both liberal and anti-Semitic) used a number of examples to accuse Jews of germanisation. The general “evidenced germanisation activities” included mostly the traditional cultural links with the German environment, communication in the Judeo-German Yiddish language, and also the fact that all major Hungarian dailies written in German, were owned by Jews. There were many daily-life specific cases, such as the election to the city councils. If Jews supported a German candidate, it was interpreted as

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189 HOLZ, *Nationaler*, p. 160.

190 Nová zástera. [The New Apron.] In *Národné noviny*, Vol. 15, Issue 80 from 10<sup>th</sup> July 1884.

an anti-Hungarian stance and again a proof that Jews are “*németek utolsó csep véretekig*” (Germans to the last drop of their blood).<sup>191</sup> Therefore, the Hungarian policy was not to demand just a flat rise in the number of Hungarians, as seen in the results of the official censuses, but a situation when Jews would be convinced to claim allegiance to Hungarians and support these trends actively at the same time. For this reason, they were constantly foisted upon the obligation to perform the “patriotic duties” and take part in the “building of the general welfare”, if they wished to enjoy the “gift” of equality. This means that besides the parallel use of two opposite extremes - Jews as “germanisers”, and Jews as “matadors of magyarisation” - there was a third alternative in the middle - Jews with no patriotism. This image reflected the largest group of Jews living in isolation from the rest of the population, forming a “state within a state”.<sup>192</sup> In 1884, the *Pozsonyvidéki Lapok* newspaper blamed Jews for poor or no involvement in the activities of the Upper-Hungarian Educational Association.<sup>193</sup>

The upsurge of anti-Semitism served the Hungarian nationalists as an argument that Jews would avoid anti-Semitic provocations through assimilation. It seems that such warning did not fall short of effects because it was exactly in the first half of the 1880s when the number of Jews with magyarised names reached a temporary peak.<sup>194</sup> Viktor Karada believes that this could have been a natural reaction of the Jews to conceal their stigmatised origin, but at the same time he points out the difference between them and Germans or Slovaks regarding the successfulness of that move. A German-named Jew, even after changing the surname remained in the eyes of people around still “only” a Jew, while Germans and Slovaks were shortly deliberated from the originally negative attributes. The Jew changed to “*magyar nevű zsidó*” (a Jew with a Hungarian name), or, at best “*jó magyar zsidó*” (a good Hungarian Jew).<sup>195</sup>

A typical phenomenon of this period was the effort by the Hungarian elites to achieve linguistic and cultural dominance in the towns. The objective of Ferenc Rath as an editor of the *Pozsony* anti-Semitic newspaper<sup>196</sup> was to assist in promoting the idea of Hungarian national state. The *Pozsony* set out the difficult challenge to contribute to the use of Hungarian in sessions of the Municipal Council as truly an official language of the state, and not from a position where it could not even achieve the same position as German. An interesting paradox which perfectly illustrates the struggle for the Hungarian character of

191 Megbuktunk! In *Pozsonyvidéki Lapok*, Vol. 12, Issue 43 from 6<sup>th</sup> March 1884.

192 The genesis of this phrase was analysed by: KATZ, Jacob. A state within a state. The History of an Anti-Semitic Slogan. In KATZ, Jacob. *Zur Assimilation und Emanzipation der Juden. Ausgewählte Schriften*. Darmstadt : Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1982.

193 Zsidók! In *Pozsonyvidéki Lapok*, Vol. 12, Issue 25 from 10<sup>th</sup> February 1884.

194 Compare this with the opinion of Gusztáv Bekšics who noted in 1883 that the assimilation process was forcibly interrupted by the boom of anti-Semitism. “*Exactly this process was hampered by anti-Semitism. It is possible that magyarisation of Jews, industry and commerce will be stopped for some time. (...) But I firmly believe that while Jews can be justifiably outraged for the sedition against them, they will not cease to be Hungarian patriots. However, when the choking haze of anti-Semitism evaporates and social peace is restored in Hungary - and it is in a position to be restored soon - magyarisation of Jews will carry on smoothly*”. In: BEKŠICS, Gusztáv. *Maďarizácia a pomaďarčovanie s osobitným zreteľom na naše mestá* [Magyarisation and Hungarianisation with a Particular Focus on Our Towns]. Bratislava : Knižná redakcia R-COOK, 2000, p. 58. (original: Budapest, 1883).

195 KARÁDY, Zsidóság, pp. 125-129.

196 Pozsony is the Hungarian name for the current Bratislava (capital city of Slovakia)

the city is described in the reaction of *Pozsonyvidéki Lapok* to the notice of planned termination of the *Pozsony* daily. Liberal newspapers criticised thoroughly every anti-Semitic move but regretted the loss of the anti-Semitic newspapers written in Hungarian.

The situation in Trnava was in many ways similar to that in Bratislava. Meetings of the Municipal Council were held in both German and Hungarian, while the earlier still maintained a dominant position. The participants often objected to speakers using Hungarian and demanded switching to German. If, however, the speaker was not good in German, he could get into “an embarrassing situation not only for the Hungarian-speaking members, but also those on whose behalf the translation was made”. The bilingual local weekly *Nagyszombat Hetilap* therefore proposed that the council members would have their speeches translated in advance. However, the weekly essentially supported all magyarising activities and combated everything that would prevent them from developing. It principally criticised the Jews of Trnava for leaving a Hungarian association (*Magyar kör*) under the influence of anti-Semitic movement, as the association succumbed to anti-Semitic sentiments, and the Jews established their own association (*Leseverein*). The editorial office did not see a problem in that the Jews were separated but that they gave the new association a German name. The whole issue was spiced with the fact that the Trnava newspapers published the criticism of the problem in its German edition. The newspaper refused to accept the assurance by the Jews to remain true patriots. According to them, it cast a bad light on all Jews and further confirmed the assumption of their opponents that they are “*a germanisatio apostolai*” (apostles of germanisation).<sup>197</sup>

Among the anti-Semites, it was especially the founder of the Anti-Semitic Party, Győző Istóczy, who talked openly about the relation between anti-Semitism and the “nationality question”. He considered the 1867 Emancipation Act a failure, because the expectations that Jews would “blend in with the society” had not been met. Istóczy was reluctant to call Jews a nation, because he thought they lacked the basic attribute of “nationhood”, which meant a common language.<sup>198</sup> It therefore follows that even if in Hungary “*valamennyi Zsida kizárólag magyarul beszélne is, Azeri OK nem lennének Magyarok, Han csak magyarul beszélő zsidók*” (...all Jews spoke only Hungarian, they would not be Hungarians, but only Hungarian-speaking Jews.)<sup>199</sup> He questioned the results of linguistic assimilation achieved until then because Jews were apparently not steered by sincere incentives. Another anti-Semite, Iván Simonyi, editor of the Bratislava newspaper *Westungarischer Grenzboten* reflected on the topic of Jewish assimilation and magyarisation of Jewish names very cautiously, unlike other anti-Semites. Michael Potemra mentions that Simonyi generally rejected the government’s repressive policy in dealing with the “nationality question” which was also targeted against Slovaks and their alleged Pan-Slavism. On the other hand, he criticised the representatives of the Slovak national movement too.<sup>200</sup> We can reasonably assume that these attitudes were affected by the fact that he lived in predominantly

197 *Nagyszombat*. In *Nagyszombati Hetilap*, Vol. 14, Issue 25 from 17<sup>th</sup> July 1883.

198 KATZ, Jacob. *From Prejudice to Destruction. Anti-Semitism 1700-1933*. Cambridge : Harvard University Press, 1980, p. 238.

199 Istóczy Győző *országgyűlési beszédei, indítványai és törvényjavaslatai. 1872 – 1896*. Budapest, 1904, p. 144.

200 POTE MRA, Michal. *Bibliografia inorečových novín a časopisov na Slovensku do roku 1918* [Bibliography of Newspapers and Magazines in Slovakia in Other Languages until 1918]. Martin : SNK, 1963, pp. 86-87.

German Bratislava, and, as a German, he was a representative of an ethnic minority himself.<sup>201</sup> He emphasised individual identities mostly depending on the situation: at home in Hungary he presented himself as a Hungarian patriot, in Vienna as a “*good Austrian*”<sup>202</sup>, and in Germany, as a German.<sup>203</sup>

Not even the *Národné noviny* newspaper considered the “nationality question” as the cause of anti-Semitism. According to the newspaper, it was only the Hungarian government who tried to move the issue of anti-Semitism in this plane as they wanted to divert attention from the burning social and economic problems of the country. The most effective means of suppressing anti-Semitism had to be education in patriotic spirit and consistent magyarisation, and thus another reason was found to prove its necessity and a proof of its rightfulness. This opinion was spread by the press bodies in services of the Hungarian state doctrine, to which the representatives of the Slovak movement reacted indignantly.

The state-organised nationalisation of Jews through the assimilation policy, or, in other words the effort to include them in the “single Hungarian nation” seems to me as a “positive inclusion” when compared to the ideology of nationalist anti-Semitism. As I have mentioned, the anti-Semites questioned the sincerity of the Jews in becoming magyarised, and also their ability to achieve cultural assimilation with Hungarians, and so ultimately condemned them as being “non-assimilable”. The opinions that a Jew will always be a Jew get closer to the nationalist anti-Semitism of the German anti-Semites. As it is known, in Germany, the concept of linguistic assimilation was irrelevant, and so at the forefront of “the Jewish question” there were constructs of the existence of “a state within a state”, “a race with its own religion”, and the like.

The anti-Semites saw the problem in the Emancipation Act, the radical ones called for complete abolition of the Act, and exclusion of Jews. It follows from the said that the views of the anti-Semites diverged as far as the issue of emancipation was concerned, and so the demand for abolition was not included in the Party’s agenda. The Emancipation Act, however, was not only questioned by the anti-Semites, but also journalists, showing neutral or more positive attitudes to Jews, delivering controversial opinions that the law had come in too soon and so neither Jews nor the majority society were prepared for it. Therefore, there were also opinions that emancipation should have been gradual, until Jews became mature (which meant that they first had to get rid of their cultural traditions, customs and overall differences).

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201 Compare with the statement of Klaus Schickert that Simonyi was “*not German but Hungarian*” which was evidenced by his membership in the Party of Independence, before joining the Anti-Semitic Party. SCHICKERT, Klaus. *Die Judenfrage in Ungarn*. Essen, 1943, p. 153.

202 At a meeting in of the patriotic organisation Reformverein in Vienna he stressed that the “*Hungarian anti-Semites are good Austrians*”. Reformverein. In *Národné noviny*, Vol. 16, Issue 127 from 29<sup>th</sup> October 1885.

203 At the Deutscher Reformverein’s meeting in Chemnitz it was emphasised by the host. He responded to the rumours allegedly spread by Jews that Simonyi hates Germans (*Deutschenhasser*). In: *Vorträge des Herrn Ivan v. Simonyi aus Pressburg. Abgeordneter des ungarischen Reichstages und des Herrn M. Liebermann v. Sonnenberg aus Berlin über die Judenfrage gehalten am 5. Februar 1883 im deutschen Reformverein zu Chemnitz*. Chemnitz, 1883, p. 1.



## Chapter 5

## THE STATE AND ITS PEOPLE. THE POLITICAL SOCIALISATION OF THE SLOVAK POPULATION AFTER THE CREATION OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK REPUBLIC\*

*Juraj Benko*

It is in the interest of the stability of any political system to form the political culture of the population in accordance with its fundamental principles and values. Through the available options, the political system makes efforts to define essentially a framework for the formation of political values, norms, expectations and behavioural patterns of the system's individual and group participants. In a controlled process of continuous political socialisation, it ensures their loyalty also through active support in moments of crisis, while stimulating political and social cohesion and integration in a society defined by its citizens or nations, in turn, it seeks to prevent conflicts and tensions among social groups and social anomy.<sup>204</sup>

The same tasks were also faced by the new Czechoslovak state which emerged on the map of Europe during the "national revolution" at the end of October 1918. The formation of a new, republican, democratically and nationally oriented political culture of the population, which would retrospectively constitute a fundamental pillar of the existence of the state and its state form, was in the interest of the elites in the Republic full of internal social and nationalist tensions. In order to consolidate itself and achieve long-term stability the established regime was forced to ensure transfer of adequate informations into the daily life of the population. Not only was the information meant to communicate political symbols, norms, institutions and procedures of the new regime, but, consequently, on both individual and community level it had to ensure the internalisation of the value system and ideology in support of the established *status quo*. In the new state, the process of the political socialisation initiated was also intended to contribute to the adoption of social patterns corresponding to the social position and to the legitimacy of inequality in the redistribution of power and wealth in the society.

Immediately after the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic (ČSR) it turned out that it was exactly the issue of the level of political culture, loyalty and support of the population in which the situation in Slovakia presented a serious problem. In general, we can identify three main groups of the population based on their approaches to the new political situation:

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<sup>204</sup> The introductory section briefly defines the concept of "political socialisation", which is discussed in such context in the following text. For more details on the concept, see e.g.: MARSHALL, Gordon. "Political socialization" *A Dictionary of Sociology*. 1998. Encyclopedia.com. Available at: <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1088-politicalsocialization.html>.

1) The thin Slovak national intelligentsia and its audience perceived the formation of the Czechoslovak Republic with sympathy as a major step towards the implementation of the political project of national emancipation. Even this relatively narrow political and cultural class which formed the support for consolidating the new state power in Slovakia was differentiated internally in the relationships to the new state and its ideology. From that, the degree of direct cooperation with the regime unfolded too. On the part of the state's regime, there were two approaches (in principle, pragmatic ones) to this group, manifold in opinions and ideology. Those who enjoyed the confidence of the state's elites were saturated with power and involved in state and public structures of the new regime in Slovakia. On the contrary, it was particularly the Slovak Catholic clergy who were left in suspicion on the part of the new power, despite their considerable role in the coup and the initial enthusiasm of the priesthood from the inception of the state. Whether in the coup, or later, both these two subgroups of the Slovak intelligentsia, in hand with the more socially varied but politically united Czech element, in the political struggle they represented a major group of the bearers of a new political culture and agents of political socialisation of broader strata of the population.

2) Various forms of the initial antipathy marked the starting position of a rather large and diverse group tied with the old regime and the state - socially, economically, politically, ideologically, social value, psychologically or by status. The group included not only the existing political and public elites, but from various reasons (e.g. national), also Hungarian or German middle urban classes and intelligentsia, and from the socio-economic reasons, a considerably sized group of state and public employees. In the East of Slovakia, particularly, it was the Catholic clergy who openly supported and agitated for the integrity of the Kingdom of Hungary.<sup>205</sup> The integration efforts aimed against Czechoslovakia also found support among the partly nationally assimilated Slovak or directly Hungarian work-people organised by the Hungarian social democracy based in Budapest. The work-people's attitude to the new state was defined on the one hand by the organisational discipline, and, on the other hand, by the existing interpretation of internationalism from the part of the uninational discourse of the socialist movement's elites in Hungary.<sup>206</sup> The attitude of this whole group of the population was not fixed in terms of ideology, but partly ambivalent, pragmatic, marked by an effort to preserve the social position and status also in the new political regime and state. For this reason, the behaviour of this group varied between rapid reorientation to the new State to active resistance against it. Anyway, the attitude of the new elites and the state's security machinery to these classes was suspicious, and in crises the machinery did not hesitate to intern their representatives as the

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205 NURMI, Ismo. *Slovakia – a Playground for Nationalism and National Identity: Manifestations of the National Identity of the Slovaks, 1918 - 1920*. Helsinki : Suomen Hist. Seura, 1999, p. 109.

206 Until that time, the leaders of the Hungarian social democracy downplayed the Issue as an anachronism, and swept it aside, or even confronted it in extreme cases. The little so-called Pan-Slavic organisation of Slovak Social Democrats were grouped around the *Robotnícke noviny* (Workers' Newspaper) published since 1905. After the 1918 coup, these representatives joined the new, pro-regime political elites, and, almost without any exceptions, remained in the right "state-forming" wing.

regime's hostages.<sup>207</sup> The internment practice was a normal method of preventing the crises such as the 1914 and 1938 mobilisations.

3) The third and the most numerous group of people was a mystery for the new political elites: the so-called Slovak people. Even in the creation of the Czechoslovak Republic, this vague and stereotyped social category remained to be the determinative concept for the elites and the public in their perception of the lowest and largest strata of the Slovak ethnic group. It had a reason too – compared to the Czech or Hungarian ethnic groups, this one had so little differentiated social structure, that to a large extent it was still seen by the public, consisting mainly of middle classes and the elites, as a homogeneous undifferentiated social group. Although the fact was that people included in this category were various in their particular totality of confessions, culture and economy, with some generalisation they shared a number of common specifications. First of all, it was a horizontal definition by ethnicity or language (Slovak in its dialects), then vertical social definition (the lowest social classes), and, finally, determination by the relationship between the centre (city) and the periphery (rural), i.e. by domicile. In addition to the relatively ethnically homogeneous - Slovak countryside, we can include here the working-class neighbourhoods and colonies on the outskirts of cities where people migrated for livelihood, also from rural areas. The three definitions are supplemented with another significant characteristic - the economic one, which, inter alia, had a considerable share in the long-term shaping of mentality: a high proportion of manual work in the lives of a vast majority of the Slovak population. The economic element persisted from the agrarian era, while remaining a significant factor in the shaping of patterns of behaviour and, ultimately, the social thinking of the lowest classes.<sup>208</sup>

The image of the "Slovak people" fulfilled mainly the homogenisation function. It homogenised and also reduced the diversity of the definitions of the population of Slovakia represented and, more precisely within that picture, the definition of Slovaks to an easy mental representation with a finite number of stereotypical features.<sup>209</sup> The analysis, reducing and simplifying the form this image was presenting in the public discourse created and reproduced by higher social classes, as well as other ethnic groups, became the basis for the practice of political propaganda or educational activities for the politicising coming from outside of this environment.

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207 "Instruction for the Czechoslovak corps during the occupation of Western Slovakia: The garrisons were ordered to intern the leading representatives in every occupied town (typically, the "Jewish leaders") and make public announcements with drums that in return for each Czechoslovak soldier killed, one hostage will be shot. If the hostages refused and resisted, it was allowed to tie them up, but they could only be shot upon express command from the headquarters in Hradište." Report from the journey to Slovakia between 23<sup>rd</sup> November and 1<sup>st</sup> December 1918, by the National Assembly's members, Emil Špatný, Cyril Dušek and Jan Pociško. National Archives of the Czech Republic (hereinafter NA CR), fond (hereinafter f.) PMV-AMV 225, carton (hereinafter c.) 43, Call Number 43, Sheets 10 – 11. After all, it was the same as in the mobilization in 1914 and 1938

208 More on the topic: MATĚJČEK, Jiří. Pět idejí lidových vrstev. K zapomenutému projektu profesora Grosse. In *Věstník grantu KSC a radikální socialismus v Československu 1918 – 1989, 12/2005*. Praha : Ústav soudobých dějin, 2005, p. 61.

209 On this Issue, see also: VÖRÖS, László. Premeny obrazu Slovákov v maďarskej hornouhorskej regionálnej tlači v období rokov 1914 – 1918 [Transformations of the Image of Slovaks in Upper-Hungarian Regional Press in the Period 1914 - 1918]. In *Historický časopis*, 2006, Vol. 54, Issue 3, pp. 419-421.

There were no great illusions concerning the political maturity of the “Slovak people” among the Czechoslovak political elites as well as the Slovak and Czech pondering public. The image of Slovaks prevailing among the Czech national elites with their limited knowledge of Slovakia was that of linguistically related but culturally isolated and stagnant people, which in the context of the Enlightenment thought approximated to the perception of a typical Slovak as an archaic Slavic “civilised savage”.<sup>210</sup> Given also the poor dynamics of the Slovak political life before the war, the Czech political elites saw Slovakia in the early years of the Republic as something exotic.<sup>211</sup>

Naturally, there were also huge deficits in the knowledge of Slovaks about the Czech Republic, as noted by Emo Bohúň in his description of the condition of knowledge of the Czech nation on the part of Slovaks at the end of the World War I: “[B]eforehand, very little was known in Slovakia about the Czech nation. Several Slovak writers, enthusiastic patriots, a small group of Slovak politicians maintaining contacts with similar Czech people - they had their ideas of the Czechs, but masses of Slovak people knew just where Prague was located, but nothing else (...) In Hungary, the world ended somewhere near Holíč or Skalica, but what was there further in the West, in the Czech lands was something we had only hazy ideas about. The thousand years split us perfectly.”<sup>212</sup>

The image of the “Slovak people” in the minds of both Czech and Slovak elites used to be marked by romanticism and emerging optimism. On the one hand, the traditional romantic image of the Slovak people as “civilised savages” added a positive mark of political purity and incorruptness by the past to the real political underdevelopment of a large part of the Slovak ethnic group, which on the other hand, was a healthy and spotless ground in which one could plant the new state’s democratic, republican and national ideals.

However, as far as the issue was concerned of the actual maturity to make serious decisions, or, in other words, the plane of political realism and pragmatism, the warning features emerged in the foreground of the unspoiled people’s image regarding their “infantility”, “inferiority”, “immaturity”, “unawareness”, “underdevelopment” and “swooning state”, in relation to the most serious issues of that time – the political matters. Emblematic was the attitude of the new Czechoslovak elites to the question of the plebiscite on

210 HASLINGER, Peter. Maďarské motívy pri vzniku a rozpade československého národného príbehu [The Hungarian Themes in the Creation and Decline of the Czechoslovak National History.] In *Forum Historiae. Odborný internetový časopis pre históriu a príbuzné spoločenské vedy*, 2007, Vol. 1, Issue 1, Available at: [http://www.forumhistoriae.sk/FH1\\_2007/texty\\_1\\_2007/haslinger.pdf](http://www.forumhistoriae.sk/FH1_2007/texty_1_2007/haslinger.pdf)

211 Emo Bohúň, an astute observer, described these identifying stereotypes in a commemoration study entitled *Český paprikáš* [The Czech Paprikash], as he was commenting on the first official visit of the delegation of the Slovak intelligentsia in Prague in 1920: “[A]t that time, we only got to know each other with the Czechs, sniffed one another (...) I felt like an exotic animal that amazed the people of Prague (...) I think we disappointed the genial Praguers a little bit. They had expected stout tinkers with hatchets and smeary hats, and then there came people wearing black suits sewn by good tailors, with hard collars and ties (...) Martin and Mikuláš they loaded us, those few Slovak highbrows, into a beautiful extraordinary train to take us to the platform in Prague, to show those Praguers - just look at that, please, behold this fine company, this is how your brothers under the Tatry look like, of whom the Czech poets romanced with so much love before the coup, and about whom honourable Miss Fastrová wrote so many absurdities after the coup.” BOHÚŇ, Emo. *Český paprikáš* [The Czech Paprikash]. In *Zaprášené historoky*. Bratislava : Tatran 1971, pp. 171-172.

212 BOHÚŇ, Český paprikáš, p. 108-109. In this particular literary memory, “we” refers to the person of Emo Bohúň and three Slovak soldiers, a later factory owner, a notary and a teacher, moved by command to Kutná Hora in 1917.

annexation of Slovak regions to the Czechoslovak Republic, summarised in Masaryk's statement (from the end of 1919): "*I consider the referendum as a double-edged weapon. The winner is the one who canvasses. And as far as Slovakia is concerned, in particular, no voting can be allowed at all, because Slovaks have been oppressed so much that have never had the opportunity to think politically and they would not even know how to make decision about their destiny. In such circumstances, the opinion of the people's leaders must be accepted.*"<sup>213</sup>

The political Catholicism and its main political representative – the Slovak People's Party (Slovenská ľudová strana, SĽS) stood out most intensely against this image of "political unripeness and immaturity" of Slovaks after the formation of the Republic. The ambition of the Party, on the contrary, was to present an authentic, conservative political tradition in Slovakia prior to the foundation of the Czechoslovak Republic, mainly for one reason: to declare that the Party would follow and represent the tradition in the period of an upcoming cultural struggle and importation of political culture from the Czech environment.<sup>214</sup> Ultimately, the discourse of the political Catholicism presented its own stereotyped image of the Slovak population, which in certain respects overlapped with the Czech one: particularly regarding the idea of purity and incorruptness. Anyway, whether the image of the new state elites was getting closer, overlapped with, or receded from reality, it was the basis for the practice: for the political socialisation of the population and the formation of its political culture.

In the first months of the Czechoslovak state, in the time of consolidating the post-war situation and overall instability of the new state's political regime in Slovakia, the possibilities for political socialisation of the population perceived in such a way were limited. As the power and institutions of the state settled in Slovakia, all of the loyal cadres available in the state's services were entrusted with its political agenda. In the first months after the establishment of the Republic this task was carried out by the incoming Czechoslovak Army, recruited students,<sup>215</sup> scattered national councils, as well as a part of the clergy in various regions and communities of Slovakia.<sup>216</sup> The programme of massive propaganda in Slovakia from February 1919 defined other agents for political socialisation of the population and their agenda: minister, officers, district administrators, politicians from

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213 Quoted from: PEROUTKA, Ferdinand. *Budování státu II* [Building of the state]. Praha : Lidové noviny 1991, pp. 780-781.

214 "*There had been neither rumours nor hearing in Slovakia of the light progressives by 1896, and the Catholic Slovaks have shown as much political maturity as you can never do. Who of you stood in the election site in November, in coldness, in mud, freezing, thirsty and hungry as our men from Kysuce, Varín, Bystrica or Čadca?*" In *Slovák*, Issue 10 from 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1919. Related article: "*The Slovak people have often shown their political maturity and bravery.*" (from article Let's get organised!)

215 *A report from the journey to Slovakia by the National Assembly's members Emil Špatný, Cyril Dušek and Jan Pociško between 23<sup>rd</sup> November and 1<sup>st</sup> December 1918.* NA CR, f. PMV-AMV 225, c. 43, Call Number 43, Sheet 11.

216 MEDVECKÝ, Karol Anton. *Slovenský prevrat I* [The Slovak Coup I]. Bratislava : Komenský, 1930, pp. 365-366. For the clergy's share in the agitation work in the plebiscite's territory, see also: MATULA, Pavol. *Úloha cirkvi v zápase o národnú identitu obyvateľstva severného Spiša a Oravy v rokoch 1918 – 1938* [The Role of the Church in the Struggle for National Identity of the Population of Northern Spiš and Orava in the years 1918 – 1938.] In *Človek a spoločnosť. Internetový časopis pre pôvodné, teoretické a výskumné štúdie z oblasti spoločenských vied*, 2007, Volume 10, Issue 2. Available at: <http://www.saske.sk/cas/archiv/4-2007/index.html>.

Bohemia, clergymen, soldiers, as well as civilians chosen by military commanders to act as teachers in permanent agitation - in Sunday camps for the people, through lectures, meetings and sermons in churches and with the support of the mass media in the form of magazines, brochures, posters, and written or illustrated leaflets.<sup>217</sup>

In March 1919 new elements emerged to support the regime - agitation brigades of the Slovak legionaries whose task was to “attach the people in Slovakia to the new regime, as well as to watch over the behaviour of those who would be reconciled with the new regime (...) The legionary propagandistic teams summoned people with drums, told them about the freedom gained, distributed lots of promotional flyers, posters and brochures, and in doing so, they looked for people unreliable for the new state”.<sup>218</sup> In other words, they explained to the crowds gathered the differences between the old and the new regime, told about the Republic, the universal suffrage, the blood-redeemed freedom, but also about cheaper foods, plans to stop alcohol drinking, as well as the reasons “why the Slovak people had to avoid Magyarone, Hungarian and Jewish banks”.<sup>219</sup> But mere singing of Slovak songs by the legionaries represented an effective stimulus for evoking sympathy for the new state.<sup>220</sup> In towns and villages, assemblies of confidants were organised - the so-called Freedom Leagues, whose members were marked with badges and carried membership cards and were entrusted with the propagandistic agenda. Each of these groups of “patriots” had to remain in contact with the central Propagandistic office in Bratislava, where they were also provided with promotional materials.<sup>221</sup> The legionaries, even those of peasant origin, attended a quite intense political education in the legions already before the end of the war. After returning to Czechoslovakia they were among the most reliable supporters of the regime and during the early improvisational period in Slovakia they were entrusted with all sorts of tasks, not only military but also those related with intelligence and propaganda, as well as those ensuring the smooth operation of strategic communications networks - post offices and railways.

Of course, the help in creating not only the public opinion, but generally in evoking the interest of the public in the existence and destiny of the new republic, was required from

217 ŠROBÁR, Vavro. *Oslobodené Slovensko. Pamäti z rokov 1918 – 1920* [Liberated Slovakia. Memories from the years 1918 – 1920]. Bratislava : AEP, 2004, p. 31.

218 DUBNICKÝ, Jozef Honza: *Fragments of the Czechoslovak French Legion from Abroad and from Home.* [Fragments of the Czechoslovak French Legion from Abroad and from Home.] Slovak national Archives (hereinafter SNA), f. Československé légie (1890) 1914 – 1920 (1948), c. 2, Call Number 1b – Rukopisy legionárov. [Manuscripts of Legionaries.]

219 Ibid. Úpravy pre legionárov. [Regulations for Legionaries.]

220 DULOVIČ, Erik. *Osudy a postavenie legionárov na východnom Slovensku v rokoch 1919 – 1929* [The History and Status of Legionaries in Eastern Slovakia in the years 1919 – 1929]. In *Historický časopis*, 2000, Vol. 48, Issue 1, p. 55.

221 The regulations for the legionaries who were sent to the Slovak villages read as follows: “Act in respectable and manly way in towns and cities. Every separate group for each district should appoint one speaker; if there are more speakers in the group, each shall speak at all times on one or more subjects. Before the group starts agitation or talks, it must be well-informed from the relevant Slovak circles and individuals loyal to the Slovak nation about the situation and the need for what people should learn, about and all the details, which they must be aware of... Do not leave one community without having found a number of reliable Slovaks and without having sent their names to the central office in Bratislava.” Ibid, see also: MANNOVÁ, Elena. *Zmeny vo vedomí slovenskej spoločnosti za prvej svetovej vojny* [Changes in the Slovak Society’s Consciousness during the World War II]. In KOVÁČ, Dušan – PODRIMAVSKÝ, Milan (eds.). *Slovensko na začiatku 20. storočia. Spoločnosť, štát a národ v súradniciach doby*. Bratislava : Historický ústav SAV, 1999, p. 355.

all “nationally conscious” individuals located in Slovakia - who were mostly the Czech officials, teachers, police officers, railway workers, soldiers and businessmen exposed in Slovakia.

Quite naturally, like in any modern society, the intelligentsia as a specific social and cultural group was predestined for the agenda of political socialisation - the intelligentsia in the broadest sense in reference to people working with symbolic languages, able to convey the idea of the new republic, not just those who worked with words such as writers, poets, journalists, scholars, teachers, or speakers at the service of political parties, but also artists working with images such as painters, sculptors and filmmakers. In this sense, Arnošt Bláha, a classic of Czech sociology, wrote described intelligentsia’s function as a “*management of the society’s ideal assets (...) In this place, the ideal assets mean not only what is produced in the area of scientific research, arts, moral thoughts and perception of life, but also values such as love, order, justice, social balance, tolerance, peace, etc.. The intelligentsia’s function is precisely to maintain the spiritual bond of the society, to fill its social atmosphere constantly with spiritual elements.*”<sup>222</sup> When focusing on the Slovak conditions the fact emerged that the Slovak intelligentsia capable of carrying out political and ideological tasks convening with the new regime was as scarce as saffron. Most members of the small group of “lone flashing lights”<sup>223</sup> above the poorly socially differentiated ethnic group were priests.

Before the establishment of Czechoslovakia the Slovak society was influenced greatly by the Catholic Church. The incomplete social structure of the Slovak ethnic group, lack of education in the mother tongue on the one hand, and, on the other hand, specific education and status of priests caused that the priests traditionally formed an important part of the national political elites - owing to education, relative economic independence, close connection with the people in the environment of local communities and the moral authority they enjoyed. They were the organisers of associations’ activities, and some of them were not only the cultural elites (publishers, editors, writers), but also substituted other groups of a modern society, not to mention that they also headed banks and joint-stock companies.<sup>224</sup> Catholic priests were the basis for the formation of a significant part of conservative political elites as one of the consequences of the Church’s reaction to the secularisation movements. This group became fully involved in the modern socio-political structures and “*its impact on the formation of the civil society across individual classes grew undoubtedly stronger, although that society was not its priority.*”<sup>225</sup> Of less importance for the group was the society which was about to be formed in the Czechoslovak state, with its elites oriented against the clergy, secularisation tendencies, republican and democratising political culture, and almost unlimited space of political pluralism.

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222 BLÁHA, Arnošt. *Sociologie inteligence*. [Sociology of Intelligentsia] Praha, 1937. Quoted from: ŠTEFÁNEK, Anton. *Základy sociografie Slovenska* [Fundamentals of Sociography of Slovakia.] Bratislava : Slovenská akadémia vied a umení, 1944, p. 101.

223 PEROUTKA, Ferdinand. *Budování státu I* [Building of the State I] Praha : Lidové noviny, 1991, p. 134.

224 HOLEC, Roman. Úloha katolíckej cirkvi pri formovaní občianskej spoločnosti na Slovensku [The Role of the Catholic Church in the Formation of Civil Society in Slovakia]. In *Československá historická ročenka*, 2006, p. 158.

225 *Ibid*, p. 161.

Dragging lower classes into the political forcefield and radical politicisation of their life accelerated the erosion of the traditional worldview and its centuries-old spiritual instance - the Church. The loss of its monopoly in explaining the world beyond the horizon of every day with its non-problematic certainty meant an invasion of the most diverging concepts of political good that questioned one another into the "people's" everyday life. It was, among other things, a factor which weakened rather than strengthened the social cohesion, besides some more general modernisation trends (secularisation, urbanisation and industrialisation). In the democratised and pluralised political environment of Czechoslovakia, the Church lost its existing influence on shaping the civic structures, while this role was taken over by the secular state and the influence of Czech society. *"The Catholic Church views negatively the notion of people as a source of law and power, because, people are not independent from God to be the source of law with no regard to God."*<sup>226</sup> In spite of that, the Catholic clergy, as an important component of intelligentsia, remained very close to the "hearts and souls" of Slovaks as their parishioners - since confessions supplied priests with knowledge from all spheres of family and community life. It was exactly the lowest classes of people such as peasants, workers and craftsmen from which the clergy received major support and trust.<sup>227</sup>

In any case, regardless of the situation and attitudes of the (Catholic or non-Catholic) intelligentsia, concerning the highly important issue for the new regime - the political education of the population - the state's elites could not rely only on the initiatives and volunteering of individuals, communities, or different associations, not to mention political parties, which quickly approached to clearly-defined particularism of interests. It was the state which had to be the main body supervising the "civic education" to set a democratic orientation of the people's knowledge, as well as their feelings and volition,<sup>228</sup> not only through financial incentives for the aforesaid individual and institutional political socialisation agents. The state's effort to develop a new political culture was to be supported immediately after the inception of the Republic by legislative measures adopted by the Revolutionary National Assembly, especially the Act on the Organisation of Civics Courses for the People from February 1919,<sup>229</sup> as well as the Act on the Public Community Libraries from July 1919 (unique in Europe due to its popular character).<sup>230</sup>

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226 Ibid, p. 168.

227 NURMI, Slovakia, p. 118.

228 *"The state itself is obliged to take care of the political education of the state's citizenry as the foremost and most majestic of all its tasks. The task of political education is firstly to bridge the gap between the state and the citizens created as a result of the bureaucratic action of Austria in the minds of our people, to convince them that, essentially, we have now become the state, that the state institutions are our national institutions, what we give now to the state we only give to ourselves, and what we take from the state we take from ourselves."* From the report of the Cultural Committee of the Revolutionary National Assembly of the Czechoslovak Republic on the Act on the Organisation of Civics Courses for the People dated 22<sup>nd</sup> January 1919. 15<sup>th</sup> August 2012 <[http://www.psp.cz/eknih/1918ns/ps/tisky/t0428\\_00.htm](http://www.psp.cz/eknih/1918ns/ps/tisky/t0428_00.htm)>

229 Under the Act, educational teams were in charge of the people's education at district level, as subordinate bodies of the People's Education Department at the Ministry of Culture and National Education.

230 PAŠKA, Pavol. Otázky kultúrneho vývoja východného Slovenska v revolučnom robotníckom hnutí v rokoch 1918 - 1938 [Issues of Cultural Development of Eastern Slovakia in the Revolutionary Labour Movement in the years 1918 - 1938]. In *Príspevky k dejinám východného Slovenska*. Bratislava : Vydavateľstvo Slovenskej akadémie vied, 1964, p. 322.

The initial efforts of the state to get the people of Slovakia on its side and immunise them against the pro-Hungarian propaganda's influence were crowned in the beginning of 1920 with the establishment of the Slovak Press Agency. In the first few months of its existence, the Agency held more than a thousand lectures working in the spirit of the Czechoslovakism and national science's apologetics, morals and propaganda. The lectures were held on the following topics: "American and our democracy", "conditions for national happiness", "money and the central bank", "liberation of the Czechoslovak nation", "Masaryk's activities abroad" etc.<sup>231</sup>

In the years after the consolidation of the new regime the political socialising agenda was stabilised institutionally and, also, it was passed under the auspices and certain control of the state to other state, public and private actors. It became the agenda of the education system, media, public organisations, societies and associations, social and art-related events.

In critical moments, however, the elites of the State were open to the possibility of modelling the public discourse by direct interventions in the interest of the regime's stability, and switched from long-term awareness-raising strategies to the means of propaganda, or counter-propaganda. Whether in the early or later years of the Republic, they did not avoid providing direct subsidies for the pro-regime press<sup>232</sup> and its spreading among the lowest-class people, or directly for politicians,<sup>233</sup> by the rapid building of generously subsidised propaganda-oriented and cultural institutions.<sup>234</sup>

The agenda of political parties related to the process of people's identification with parties was definitely the one which penetrated their daily lives most deeply. It drew people's attention by its hypnotising rhetoric and an attractive blend of promises and phobias. At the same time the struggle among the parties for power had set the way for a super-party and, idealistic efforts to shape an adequate political culture that would become a fixed basis for performing any activities as part of the democratic political competition.

No causal link existed between one's identification with a party and adoption of general norms and values concerning the political behaviour. The motives for inclination to a par-

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231 NA CR, f. PMV, 1919 – 1924, IV/Slov/1, 3153/20.

232 The newspaper titles *Slovenský východ* (The Slovak East) or *Slovenský ľud* (The Slovak People) were published with a strong support of the state, for example in 1922 it was the amount of fifty thousand korunas a month. See: Archives of the TGM Institute, Prague (hereinafter A TGM I), f. TGM, R – Tisk, c. 444, script Tisk 1922, unit 4). Other periodicals could count with the state's support too, in contrast to the newspaper published by radical parties. However, they made their requests for aid elsewhere. H. Taussig, a Communist official, wrote in October to Comintern representative Matyás Rákosi that "*Kassai Munkás and Slovak Communist dailies in Slovakia have difficulty to live from day to day with the financial strength of the proletariat living in Slovakia. 8 of 12 bourgeois and social-democratic newspapers are subsidised by the state Government and are distributed among the workers at particularly effective (...) occasions for free*" Rossijskij gosudarstvennyj archiv social'noj i političeskoj istorii, Moscow, f. 495, transcription 71, delo 35, sheet 11.

233 In 1938, Edvard Beneš, and also Prime Minister Milan Hodža, provided secretly their own personal funds as financial aid to political parties and individual elected party members, dailies and their editors, not to rely on funds chiefly raised abroad. BYSTRICKÝ, Valerián. Eduard Beneš a Slovensko [Eduard Beneš and Slovakia]. In *Od autonómie k vzniku Slovenského štátu*. Bratislava : Historický ústav Slovenskej akadémie vied, 2008, p. 146; Ibid. Politické rozvrstvenie spoločnosti na Slovensku vo svetle obecných volieb roku 1938. [Political Stratification of the Society in Slovakia in the Light of the 1938 General Election.] In *Od autonómie*, p. 123.

234 For example, see Ivan Dérer's observations on the proposal to regulate the relationships between the Czech lands and Slovakia from the summer of 1938. Documents on the attitude of Edvard Beneš to the Czech-Slovak relations in the late 1930s and the beginning of the 1940s. Document no. 2. Ibid, p. 263.

ticular political party and ways of manifesting one's party affiliation could at most only reflect the current state of the people's political culture. The unusually rapid succumbence of the people to party canvasses in the early post-war years was preceded by neither long-term nor too thorough political socialisation that would ensure internalisation of republican and democratic values.<sup>235</sup> The "Slovak people" mostly did not fight for their political rights in political and economic struggles and if so, just in a minority. Therefore, their attitude to the new political regime's values was largely indifferent.

The lowest classes of the Slovak population coming from rural environments, were brought up traditionally in their families, local communities and churches rather to metaphysical understanding of their own destinies – to fatalism, most often expressed by repeating the "mantra" of the faith in God's will, God's hands, etc. One of the mobilisation formulas of both anti-clergy and political catholic awareness-raising was also based on the knowledge of "the people's" essential attitude of to the possibility of changing their lives actively, both before and after the war: "*Help yourself and God will help you, man.*" It reflected the effort to draw people into the political competition, to convert them to the seeing of their own destiny rather not as being determinate and docked in a universe interpreted through religion, but as a political destiny in a society radically open to change.

From the viewpoint of classical typology of political culture, a majority of Slovakia's population was somewhere on the boundary between parochial and subject political culture.<sup>236</sup> Their awareness of the presence of a political system largely ended with perceiving and respecting the state and its institutions passively as they intervened sporadically in their daily lives. At the beginning of World War I, the existing system was still linked with the indisputable authority of the Emperor and the belief in the age-long validity and consistency of the social order, whether considered in an evaluation as positive or negative.<sup>237</sup> On the contrary, the awareness of the opportunities to address their discontent with social circumstances using existing political and organisational means (so heavily restricted in Hungary) remained poor. This is what made the group different from others who were united, despite diametrical dissimilarities in their relationship to the newly established state and its political regime, by the fact that that they related to it in some way - and were able to respond to its establishment individually or collectively - which ranged from various political forms of resistance or agreeing with it (from strike or manifestation to reading selected politically and ideologically oriented press) to chameleon-like and defensive reactions to the new political circumstances - joining the regime-favoured parties.

In agitation, the laws of political competition made the political parties creep under the bar of the people's political culture that had been set so low, and subsequently, exploit politically the huge sphere of their social frustrations, traumas, stereotypes and phobias.

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235 A collective exception among the lowest classes were perhaps those in support of Social Democracy, shaped by awareness-raising and pro-democratic agenda.

236 The three prototypes of political culture are discussed in classic study by American sociologists Almond and Verba – parochial (local), subject and participant. ALMOND, Gabriel – VERBA, Sydney. *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*. New Jersey : Princeton University Press, 1963.

237 HRONSKÝ, Marián. Slováci na frontoch prvej svetovej vojny [Slovaks on the Fronts of World War I]. In KOVÁČ, Dušan – PODRIMAVSKÝ, Milan (eds.). *Slovensko na začiatku 20. storočia. Spoločnosť, štát a národ v súradniciach doby*. Bratislava : Historický ústav SAV, 1999, p. 278.

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Despite the ideals declared, the particular party pragmatism did not leave much space in agitation for the cultivation of political attitudes, values and behaviour of the audience. Mainly the radical socialist and nationalist movements did not contribute too much to spreading the principles and values of the Czechoslovak state and the formation of the civil society. In particular, the previously heavy participation of political Catholicism in politicisation of the lowest classes, mostly from countryside, and formation of the civil structures, declined rapidly after the war. The main representative of the political Catholicism in Slovakia – the nationalist, autonomy-oriented Slovak People's Party – “*made a full use of the knowledge about the deficits of the Slovak voters who had voted in the interwar period by confession and not by affiliation to the estates*”.<sup>238</sup> A similar route was taken by a part of the Socialist movement. Before 1918 its anti-system stance against the Hungarian regime was marked with a sign of a struggle for the democratic principles and through organisation and agitation work, it got the working class involved in the fight for extension of political democracy, religious freedom, minority rights and international peace. After World War I, the anti-system radicalism was taken over by the Communist movement, but in fundamentally changed, democratic conditions. It contributed to the spread of *a priori* negative attitudes toward the regime, and along with talking about continuing class struggle in the midst of the society; it called for elimination of the established system. Since the early years of the Republic the elites of both populist and communist movements promoted and hammered in their demagogic agitation among the population the archaic intolerance, xenophobia, and various forms of hatred on the basis of religion, class, ethnicity or race intolerance.

If there were appeals made by the state-political elites before the first general elections in 1920 to “*tolerance to political beliefs of fellow citizens, and freedom of speech granted to a political opponent*”<sup>239</sup> they had a good reason. Intolerance against another view was natural for the traditional mentality of ordinary people. The level of political debate among the people, whether in a pub or during amusement events, had more of the character of a quarrel, and the last argument which usually did not take long to come was the physical strength of an individual or a gathered crowd. Public or social events ending with massive fights and violence were no exception to the rule. On the contrary, it was an exception if a social event ended without a fight which started as a result of different political affiliation. A retired teacher from Hloža, correspondent of the *Trenčanské noviny* (The Trenčín Newspaper), described a dance party: “*What a very nice impression on me was the fact that we even though there were Czechs, Slovaks, peasants, nationalists, socialists, Catholics, Protestants, Jews, among us, and, may God be praised and our peace-loving and self-renouncing nature too, yet we did not fight but respected one another, and did not push forward our political, or religious beliefs (...) It is a pain to read the reports that there or there some Slovaks insulted other Slovaks, their brothers, just for belonging to another political party.*”<sup>240</sup>

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238 HOLEC, Úloha katolíckej cirkvi, p. 168.

239 *Trenčanské noviny*, 1920, Vol. II, Issue 5, p. 1, 1<sup>st</sup> February 1920, Minister Šrobár v Trenčíne [Minister Šrobár in Trenčín]: After arriving by train to Trenčianská Teplá the then Minister Plenipotentiary for Administration of Slovakia delivered a speech in which he talked about civic responsibilities before the election, how the government watches over the freedom of political and religious beliefs, tolerance to political beliefs of fellow citizens, and freedom of speech granted to a political opponent.

240 *Trenčanské noviny*, 1920, Vol. II, Issue 18, p. 2, 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1920.

The sudden democratisation of the society and the subsequent involvement of previously culturally and politically marginalised people into the political competition marked the expressions of the politics in everyday life. Especially the pre-election struggles were accompanied by bloody encounters and violence “*resulting in uncontrolled personal emotions vented by demolition of neighbours’ fences.*”<sup>241</sup>

Politics divided not only communities, but also families. Women gained the right to vote, which somewhat undermined the old model of one authoritative opinion in the family. In January 1920, prior to the first parliamentary general elections, and in fact the very first elections in Slovakia, Minister Plenipotentiary for Administration of Slovakia Vavro Šrobár instructed common women in his speech in Trenčianská Teplá how their initiation into politics in the election should take place in practice, on the basis of the traditional model of family relations. He recommended that “*in the election, women should go with their husbands and fathers, and not be influenced by those who exploit religion and faith in God for political agitation.*”<sup>242</sup> Quite a patriarchal appeal for the unity of family in the election sought to neutralise the strong influence of the clergy on women’s political decision-making. But generally it signalled a gradual penetration of politics into the private family space, which often resulted in the different identification of its individual members with political parties. In particular the anti-religious socialist ideology and, conversely, religiosity used for political purposes by populists (in Slovak ľudáci) using the clergymen did not get along well with one another at a kitchen table, and could cause real disruption in the family. Especially if an excessively heavy involvement of a breadwinner could cause a family to lose the only earner. The communist women’s magazine *Proletárka* (Proletarian Woman) often pointed out such cases in an effort to neutralise the traditionally strong religious affiliation of Slovak women and to indoctrinate their own ideology. Already in the period following the second parliamentary elections, the magazine could release: “*We saw this especially in the elections when a woman influenced by a priest’s agitation stood out openly against her husband and voted for the populists who exploit her own husband. In fact, there were many women who did not let their men get organised, go to meetings, camps and pushed them into the church, because: so said the priest, and what he says is holy. As a result, conflicts emerged in families conflicts, discord, the man was angry and the woman resentful. Sometimes, there were fights, brawls too, because a man was right that a worker belongs to the workers, and his wife claimed what she had learned from the priest, that when woman goes to church, her man has to go too.*”<sup>243</sup>

The naive trust in unworkable election promises, faith in the salvific power of a political organisation necessarily lead to disillusionment with politics as such and indifference to

241 BYSTRICKÝ, Valerián. *Politické strany na Slovensku a vývoj vo svete v 30. rokoch 20. storočia* [Political Parties in Slovakia and World Developments in the 1930s]. (unpublished manuscript).

242 *Trenčianske noviny*, 1920, Vol. II, Issue 5, p. 1, 1<sup>st</sup> February 1920, “Minister Šrobár v Trenčíne [Minister Šrobár in Trenčin]”.

243 *Proletárka*, 1926, Vol. V, Issue 22, p. 6, 15<sup>th</sup> November 1926 „Čo je veľmi potrebné pre pracujúce ženy [What is Very Necessary for Working Women]”. Or, in another article: “*We bring home the few pennies that capitalists throw us like alms. Then there are often cries quarrels at home because no one knows what to pay first with the pennies ... The woman does not call rude names those who cause primarily that we have to slog for a few grumbled-about pennies, but scolds her husband and the organisation, saying it is because we do not want to listen to the respectable men*” *Proletárka*, Issue 22-23, p. 3, 15<sup>th</sup> December 1926, “Muž k ženám [Man to Women]”.

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the political system itself. The faith in a political party as something saving “immediately”, or rejecting it archaically as being a kind of some elite’s forgery were the two poles of the same attitude of the lowest classes to the political system; the attitude staggering between chiliastic fatalism and resigned fatalism. The disillusionments were the motive to inclination to a radical political rhetoric and agenda fully corresponding with social chiliasm anchored in the mentality of the “Slovak people”, as suggested by the collective hero of Jozef Cíger Hronský’s novel *Chlieb* (The Bread): “*Something has come into the world (...) this cannot not last. But none of them could not think what that “something” would be. They only felt that they anticipate something mysterious, something miraculous, phenomenal in the air, which could save them here in Bacúch, in Sedlice, and anywhere else in the world. Something, which the people of Bacúch have expected for ages ago, always, but now it would be very close to the hand, it just needs to be given a name, to be called in. Well, at least a name, perhaps it would satisfy them a little.*”<sup>244</sup>

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244 CÍGER-HRONSKÝ, Jozef. *Chlieb* [The Bread]. Bratislava : Tatran, 1967, p. 329.



## Chapter 6

## PEASANT CAVALRY IN SLOVAKIA - THE GREEN ARMY OF THE AGRARIAN PARTY OR ITS PRESTIGIOUS CLUB?\*

*Matej Hanula*

The Peasant Cavalry (hereinafter referred to as the PC) occupied a prominent place among a number of defence organisations operating in Slovakia in the period of inter-war Czechoslovak Republic. As far as election results are concerned, it belonged to the most successful and thus the most influential political party of the Republic - the Republican Party of Peasant and Agricultural People, known in both Czech and Slovak's terminology and contemporary historiography under its unofficial name - the Agrarian Party. Due to this fact, the PC differed significantly from other similarly oriented organisations.<sup>245</sup> PC was focused mainly on defence training for rural people whose riding and also shooting skills they planned to improve.

Regarding Slovakia, the development of organisational structure, official cadres and forms of defence training in the PC were described in detail in a paper by historian Miroslav Čaplovič<sup>246</sup>. Therefore, in this paper I will focus on other issues related to the activities of the PC in interwar Slovakia. The first will be the PC's position in society, the ideological sources for its activities, and the difficulties it had to face. In the second part, I will discuss the position of the Peasant Cavalries in Slovakia in the structure of the republic-wide organisation, and their development lagging behind that in the Czech lands. At the same time, I will try to answer the question of whether the Agrarian Party, managed to make the PC a mass organisation similar to the Peasant Army as it liked to claim in the party materials, or whether it was rather a prestigious club in Slovakia for wealthy residents of the Slovak countryside to spend their free time.

The Peasant Cavalry was established as a part of the Agrarian Party in the mid-1920s. The official date of establishment was 21<sup>st</sup> March 1924, when the establishing congress was held in Prague.<sup>247</sup> However, the PC started to operate in practice two years later after the election of the leaders. It evolved from the original equestrian organisations that existed along with the Party in the in the previous period. They included mainly peas-

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\* The chapter is the outcome of the VEGA no. 2/0070/11- Published Essays of Milan Hodža Related to his Peak Political Activities During the 1930s.

245 For a detailed overview of military organisations operating in Slovakia during the first Czechoslovak Republic, see: ČAPLOVIČ, Miloslav. *Branné organizácie v Československu 1918 - 1939 (so zreteľom na Slovensko)* [Military Organisations in Czechoslovakia in 1918 - 1939 (with regard to Slovakia)]. Bratislava : Ministerstvo obrany Slovenskej republiky, 2001.

246 ČAPLOVIČ, Miloslav. Hlavné črty činnosti Sedliackej jazdy na Slovensku v rokoch 1926 - 1938. [The Main Features of the Peasant Cavalry's Activities in Slovakia in 1926 - 1938]. In ČAPLOVIČ, Miloslav. *Branné organizácie v Československu 1918 - 1939 (so zreteľom na Slovensko)*. Bratislava : Ministerstvo obrany Slovenskej republiky, 2001, pp. 99-111.

247 ROKOSKÝ, Jaroslav. Selské jízdy v éře první republiky. [Peasant Cavalries in the Era of the First Republic.] In HARNA, Josef - RAŠTICOVÁ, Blanka (eds.). *Agrární strana a její zájmové, družstevní a peněžní organizace. Uherské Hradiště : Studie Slováckého muzea*, 2010, p. 197.

ant horse-riding groups and equestrian clubs as part of the Reich Union of Republican Youth organised prevailingly in the Czech lands. The Party decided to create a unified character of these groups in a fixed organised structure. The aim was to establish a mass organisation in the country focused on equestrian sports and horse breeding, striving to develop defence training among its members. The goal of such activities was to achieve the formation of a huge cadre of rural or country-sentient individuals who *“should be imbued with a healthy, peasant national awareness, and always be prepared and steeled for every situation”*.<sup>248</sup> Last but not least, the PC’s mission was to maintain the members under the ideological influence of the Agrarian Party and protect them through appropriately focused sports and military activities against possible indoctrination by thoughts of other political movements and entities, in particular populists and communists. It is evidenced by an extract from the speech made in 1934 by Pavol Teplanský, the highest official and country manager of PC in Slovakia, and the Agrarian Party’s member of parliament, who said among other things: *“With our programme [the PC’s programme] we must go to all the villages to keep away the intrusion of peripheral urban cultures, to keep away the youth from football which affects them adversely. We need to keep the youth with the national peasant culture, the only healthy culture for the village.”*<sup>249</sup>

The main activity of PC was equestrian sport and, especially, horse-riding trainings for the rural candidates. The efforts were directed to the above-mentioned attempt to create a robust mass organisation, which was also expressed by the popular and constantly repeated catchphrase *“a peasant rider in every village”*. However, this effort was hampered majorly from the very beginning. Even the documents of PC Central Office admitted openly that joining the organisation was associated with considerable financial costs. In addition to owning a horse, people interested in the equestrian sport in PC had to use their own harness, saddle, pay for sewing their own uniforms, and also pay significantly higher membership fees in comparison to other organisations.<sup>250</sup>

The PC officials were aware of this contradictory fact. It is also indicated by the letters distributed in 1927 to important party officials asking them for financial contributions to the organisation. Their requests were justified by stating that PC, besides performing professional tasks, *“serves the general order and is on guard to prevent every shock”*.<sup>251</sup> At one of the meetings of the PC’s Central Office criticism was raised against former Minister Juraj Slavik, who donated 15,000 Czech korunas to university sports, although according to officials SJ, this *“has got no breeding importance and relatively few members”*.<sup>252</sup>

The basic organisational units of PC were the local Peasant Cavalries, who, until 1934 were called precincts (okrsky). However, as the territorial scope of their activities was practically confined solely to the territory of one community, use of the term was aban-

248 *Chovatel’ jazdec* (hereinafter Ch J), Vol. 3, Issue 3 (March), 1934, p. 5.

249 Ch J, Vol. 2, Issue 12 (December), 1933, p. 3.

250 National Archives of the Czech Republic (hereinafter NA CR), fond (hereinafter f.) Selské jízdy [Peasant Cavalries] 1924 – 1942, carton (hereinafter c.) 1, inventory (hereinafter inv.) no. 412 – 11 – 1. The Report on the Activities of the Central Office of the Peasant Cavalry from November 1925 to 1<sup>st</sup> December 1926.

251 Slovak National Library - Archives of Literature and Arts (hereinafter SNL – ALA), Private Collection of Anton Štefánek, Call Number 42 M 73. Letter for the Peasant Cavalries in Prague to A. Štefánek dated 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1927.

252 NA CR, f. Selské jízdy 1924 – 1942, c. 1, inv. no. 412 – 11 – 1. The Report on the Activities of the Central Office of the Peasant Cavalries from November 1925 to 1<sup>st</sup> December 1926.

done.<sup>253</sup> Subsequently, local organisations founded district organisations which amalgamated into regional corps. In each country of the Republic, the corps were united in the so-called Land Central Office headed by a permanent state-wide organisation under the umbrella of the Peasant Cavalries' Central Office in Prague. The organisation had a dual management at all levels in the form of a mayor and a chief, and so, in that period's terminology, the highest representatives of the PC in Slovakia were the country mayor and the country chief. While the mayor was primarily a political and ideological official, the chief was in charge of the technical aspects of training in the relevant organisation. The management bodies at district and regional level were a committee headed by the mayor and the chief, the presidency and the general assembly. The administrative matters of individual organisations were under the responsibility of their secretaries. Every member of the party or the youth organisation older than eighteen could become a member of PC. When founding the organisation in 1926 the PC's Central Office also decided that members would need to be at the same time members of the Sokol (Falcon), so that this oldest and most popular physical-education organisation would not become weaker.<sup>254</sup> In practice, however, this principle was not applied too much, especially in the 1930s.

The PC's ideological sources came entirely from the domestic background, particularly from the Czech environment. In the Czech lands, the tradition of horse-riding association existed as early as in the period before the coup. They were substantially more plebeian in nature than similar associations in Hungary. In any of the documents I have not encountered any references made by their authors to foreign sources. It was also reflected in the PC uniforms inspired mainly by motives of folk costumes, Sokol uniforms, or, later in the 1930s Czechoslovak Army uniforms. In the early years, there were great inconsistencies in the use of the uniforms. Especially, a number of Czech districts have a hard time keeping their traditional costumes from the period before the establishment of PC. The documents from the PC's Central Office often point out the inconsistencies in wearing uniforms in Slovakia as well.<sup>255</sup> Also due to lack of finances, many PCs used traditional folk costumes of their regions, and for long time the only unifying element throughout the Republic were black riding boots. The final design of the PC uniform was set in 1934 – 1935. The uniform for ceremonial occasions included a "vydrovka" hat inspired by the traditions of the Czech Chodsko region's folk costume, dark blue shirts with green embroidery, red riding pants with a pattern of the Slovácko region's folk costume, and black boots with spurs. The uniform used in training comprised "*red pants like in the ceremonial costume, light brown linen shirt cut like an officer's shirt, "jiskračky" caps with shirt's linen brim and red bottom.*"<sup>256</sup>

The greater emphasis put on military instruction in times the Republic was in danger was translated to the introduction of shoulder marks as well as stabilisation of the military terminology for different units. Similar to the army, PC had their teams, troops, squad-

253 Ch J, Vol. 3, Issue 12 (December), 1934, pp. 2-3.

254 NA CR, f. Selské jízdy 1924 – 1942, c. 1, inv. no. 412 – 11 – 1. The Report on the Activities of the Central Office of the Peasant Cavalries from November 1925 to 1<sup>st</sup> December 1926.

255 NA CR, f. Selské jízdy 1924 – 1942, c. 1, inv. no. 412 – 11 – 8. Minutes of the meeting of the Headquarters of the Peasant Cavalries' Central Office in Prague held on 27<sup>th</sup> June 1933.

256 ChJ, Vol. 3, Issue 6 (June), 1934, p. 8.

rons, and flags.<sup>257</sup> Instead of borrowing foreign models the Agrarian Party was more like an inspiration for similarly oriented organisations in other countries, particularly Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Poland, and PCs were no exception in this respect. The Italian fascist organisations definitely were not the ideological model for the creation and activities of PC. Documents of the PC's Central Office admitted that the cavalries are an appropriate institution to tear more radical peasants away from becoming members of fascist groups, and in no case did they consider them as their ideological or organisational origin.<sup>258</sup> Especially the documents from 1930s are full of words like discipline, responsibility, sense of obligation or being a part of the whole, referring to PC, which smells of authoritarianism,<sup>259</sup> however, the officials of the local organisations were elected by members until the end of the first Republic. In this context, it is peculiar how the contemporary communist propaganda enjoyed reporting on the PCs as being fascists. For example, the *Rudý Večerník* (The Red Evening Paper) reported on the PCs' parade at the Agrarian Party's anniversary meeting in the capital city in 1928, that Prague had an opportunity to see "countryside fascists, fat landowners, and their sonnies."<sup>260</sup>

The technical work of PC was focused mainly on improving the members' horse-riding skills. This happened every year as a part of mandatory week-long training courses held in liaison with the military. The minimum requirement was that a "farming horse", meaning a horse normally used for agricultural work in harness was able to jump over five 60cm tall hurdles. All regional units were also required to participate in nationwide equestrian competitions of the Agricultural Council for Slovakia, called the Challenge Cup, where the regional units sent 12-member teams. The participants competed in several equestrian disciplines: horse striding, show jumping, 18km cross-country riding, flat and steeplechase races, and horse sled races. Active military members were not allowed to take part in the competitions, and it had to be confirmed before races that the competing horses are indeed peasant - by demonstrating the ability to pull a carriage in harness.<sup>261</sup> Teams of PC members from Slovakia also represented Czechoslovakia in international equestrian events.

Defence training was another component of the PC's technical activities. Selected members of PC attended equestrian courses led by the army's officers under military regulations. In doing so, two objectives were to be achieved. Firstly, the goal was to prepare young recruits for service in the cavalry and artillery units of the Czechoslovak Army. The second proclaimed goal of the defence training was to keep older soldiers (reservists) in good shape and prepared to fight.<sup>262</sup>

The Švehla's Horse-Riding School in Bratislava became an institution intended to improve horse-riding skills of selected PC members as well as develop their defence capacities. In

257 ChJ, Vol. 3, Issue 12 (December), 1934, p. 4.

258 NA CR, f. Selské jízdy 1924 - 1942, c. 1, inv. no. 412 - 11 - 1, The Report on the Activities of the Central Office of the Peasant Cavalries from November 1925 to 1<sup>st</sup> December 1926.

259 For example: Niečo pre náčelníkov. [Something for the Chiefs.] Ch J, Vol. 1, Issue 2 (October), 1932, p. 3; NA CR, f. Selské jízdy 1924 - 1942, c. 1, inv. no. 412 - 11 - 7, PC's internal material entitled *The Responsibility of the Chiefs* written by Reich Chief J. Fulík.

260 NA CR, f. Selské jízdy 1924 - 1942, c. 1, inv. no. 412 - 11 - 2.

261 A detailed report on one annual races of the Challenge Cup of the Agriculture Council for Slovakia: Ch J, Vol. 5, Issue 3 (March), 1936, p. 6.

262 Ch J, Vol. 5, Issue 1 (January), 1936, pp. 2-3.

early 1936, 25 PC members from all Slovak units completed a demanding 6-week course finished with final tests in theory and practice. In addition to practical training and theoretical issues related to horse breeding, their courses also included subjects such as defence instruction, horse-riding rules, horse-breeding, and organisational issues. The Horse-Riding School was organised under the auspices of the Ministries of Agriculture and Defence, which was at that time firmly in the hands of the Agrarian Party. Except three of its graduates, all of the other ones had already completed their elementary military service. It was expected of them to take the positions of PC Chiefs after the completion of the course.<sup>263</sup> Although party press reported on the Švehla's Horse-Riding School as a successful event, surprisingly, it was not opened in the years that followed.

In 1933, the Prague Central Office accommodated the Slovak demand to create cycling sections of PC in addition to the horse-riding sections. This decision directly negated the original intent of creating an organisation from PC to develop equestrian skills of party members. The management, however, saw an opportunity to take on new members from economically weaker Slovak peasants, and possibly from urban population. And so cycling became the third component of the PC's technical activities. However, unlike the equestrian sport, the cycling training was strictly abided by the principles of military defence. The members practiced riding in army-like squadrons, and strictly avoided participation in cycling competitions, which at that time were already popular in Czechoslovakia. Since 1932, National Shooting Associations came into existence in Slovakia, whose task was to develop their members' shooting skills. Until 1935 they worked under ten PC district organisations in Slovakia.<sup>264</sup>

In addition to the technical activities, horse breeding was another important component of the PC's work, under the responsibility of the PC's breeding division. In contrast to the Czech lands, the role of PC in Slovakia was to fill the gap of absent breeding associations. In 1932 to 1937, the *Chovatel' jazdec* monthly, published by the Slovak Land Corps, was the primary means of disseminating the latest knowledge about horse breeding.

From the beginning, the development of PC organisations in Slovakia lagged greatly behind the growth of the network in the Czech lands. In addition to economic factors, the poor cavalry tradition in Slovakia in comparison to the situation in Bohemia and Moravia also played a role here. Slovak PC officials never forgot to emphasise certain prejudices against equestrian sport among the Slovak population. They reminded that particularly the older generations of Slovaks considered horseback riding as a noblemen's privilege and an activity unnatural for peasants and looked upon it as "*self-importance of wealthy individuals*". However, at the same time, they admitted that in the mid-1930s the situation started to change.<sup>265</sup> In Slovakia, the membership began to expand more significantly in the last three years, before the forced dissolution of the organisation in the changed political conditions in December 1938.<sup>266</sup> But this was still not enough to take deeper roots

263 Ch J, Vol. 5, Issue 2 (February), 1936, pp. 4-7, Ch J, Vol. 5, Issue 3 (March), 1936, p. 6.

264 Ch J, Vol. 4, Issue 12 (December), 1935, p. 8.

265 Ch J, Vol. 5, Issue 3 (March), 1936, p. 3.

266 In the Czech lands, the Peasant Cavalries outlived the end of the democratic political system during the second Czechoslovak Republic, and were active in the early years of the Protectorate. They were dissolved in 1942.

in the country. PC officials of the Prague Central Office sought the causes for the smaller success of PCs in Slovakia compared to the Czech lands. Besides general statements about worse economic and political conditions, they came up with more specific analyses as well. They stated that in Bohemia and Moravia, the cavalries were mostly successful in areas with manors of 50 to 100 hectares in size, exactly of which there was a minimum number in Slovakia. High price of warm-blooded horses best suited for training was often given as the second cause.<sup>267</sup> In short, there were only few members of the Party who could afford to join the PC.

The widely diverse influences the Peasant Cavalries had in Bohemia and Moravia in contrast to their impact on the Slovak countryside are also reflected in a numerical comparison of the number of PC members and organisations in Slovakia and the Czech lands. Already in the PC's first annual report it was stated that as of the end of 1926 there were 86 district organisations in Bohemia and 18 in Moravia, while in Slovakia their activities still only began to develop.<sup>268</sup> The Party's official publication used for propagandistic purposes in addition to providing information brought unrealistically high number of PC members in Ruthenia and Slovakia 1928 in comparison with internal Party documents, while the numbers from the Czech lands probably reflected the reality. According to this source, at that time there were 89 clubs in Bohemia associating 6,650 members, 42 organisations with 2,250 members in Moravia, 5 organisations with 570 members in Silesia, and a total of 26 organisations with 1,530 members in Slovakia and Ruthenia.<sup>269</sup> These figures were questioned as being exaggerated by M. Čaplovič mentioned above.<sup>270</sup> At that time, such a number of local PCs in Slovakia could exist only on paper in the plans of the party leaders. This is supported with data from documents of the PC's Central Office covering the organisations which were really active. According to the documents, in the same year there were 97 organisations in Bohemia associated in 14 regional corps, and 42 organisations in Moravia and Silesia in 8 corps. As stated by Ján Janík, the then executive officer of the Bratislava branch office, organisations were founded in 10 districts in Slovakia, but the actual activities were performed by only three of them. In that period of time, the PC had around 400 members, of which 45 were in the most numerous organisation in Bratislava.<sup>271</sup> It is also necessary to rule out the possibility that the data taken from the official Party's publication applied not to Slovakia but Ruthenia. That is to say, still in 1936 the PCs in the easternmost country of the Republic associated only 77 people.<sup>272</sup> The critical meeting of the headquarters of the PCs' Central Office was when a proposal was accepted to establish at least two corps in Slovakia - Western Slovak and Eastern Slovak. It was only stated about Central Slovakia that conditions are not yet in place there

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267 NA CR, f. Selské jízdy 1924 - 1942, c. 2, inv. no. 412 - 12 - 10. Minutes of the meeting of the Headquarters of the Peasant Cavalries' Central Office in Prague held on 15<sup>th</sup> March 1938.

268 NA CR, f. Selské jízdy 1924 - 1942, c. 1, inv. no. 412 - 11 - 1. The Report on the Activities of the Central Office of the Peasant Cavalries from November 1925 to 1<sup>st</sup> December 1926.

269 *Ten Years' Work of the Republican Party of Agricultural and Peasant People in the Republic of Czechoslovakia*. Prague, 1928 - 1929, p. 303.

270 ČAPLOVIČ, Hlavné črty, p. 104.

271 NA CR, f. Selské jízdy 1924 - 1942, c. 1, inv. no. 412 - 11 - 2. J. Janík's response to the questionnaire of the Peasant Cavalries' Central Office in Prague from 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1928.

272 NA CR, f. Selské jízdy 1924 - 1942, c. 1, inv. no. 412 - 12 - 8. Minutes of the meeting of the Peasant Cavalries' Central Office held on 30<sup>th</sup> January 1936 in Prague.

to establish the corps.<sup>273</sup> In mid-1932 the Central Slovak corps started activities too and thus there were three corps associating a total of 17 district organisations. The situation changed significantly only when the Slovak corps enforced in the Prague Central Office the extension of activities by cycling. The number of members grew more rapidly. In 1935, the PC Land Corps reported a total of 10 regional corps – the Western Slovak Corps of Dr. Pavol Blaho based in Bratislava, the Eastern Slovak Corps of General Milan Rastislav Štefánik in Košice, the Novohrad Corps of General Janko Kozina Vlk in Lučenec, the Nitra Corps in Nitra, the Southern Slovak Corps in Nové Zámky, the Zemplín Corps in Michalovce, the Tatry Region's Corps in Poprad, the Považie Corps in Trenčín, the Turiec Corps of Dr. Milan Hodža in Martin, and the Central Slovak Corps of Ján Jiskra of Brandýs in Zvolen.<sup>274</sup> According to the report of the the Slovak Land Corps' Secretary Miroslav Javůrek, there were 42 district organisations operating in Slovakia and particularly in Western and Central Slovakia they already covered almost the whole territory which was administratively divided into 77 districts.<sup>275</sup> Nevertheless, the number of PC members in Slovakia in 1936 for which I have retrieved the latest particular data, lagged fairly behind the Czech lands. According to one source from the organisation's internal materials, in this year the PCs had 7444 members in Bohemia, 3937 in Moravia, 1368 in Slovakia, and the mentioned 77 members in Ruthenia.<sup>276</sup> According to data from the *Chovatel' jazdec* magazine intended for the general public, which apparently included the number of members in the cycling sections, the PC had 6,000 members in Slovakia and a total of about 30,000 members all over the Republic.<sup>277</sup> Taking into account that in the mid-1920s the Agrarian Party had almost 80,000 members in Slovakia,<sup>278</sup> not even every tenth party member was a member of PC. These figures suggest that in contrast to the slogans about the green army in the ranks of the Agrarian Party, until the end of the Republic the PC in Slovakia remained to be rather a selective organisation.

The joylessness of the situation in PC in Slovakia is evidenced by the fact it was often discussed at the Prague Central Office's meetings. For example, in June 1930 it was noted in this forum that especially the party machinery, already developed at that time, should give help in organising the cavalries in Slovakia.<sup>279</sup> The aforementioned critical meeting of the PC headquarters held in December 1930 in Nitra where the decision was made to establish the first two Slovak corps, criticism was raised in turn by Slovak treasurer Plica. He accused Prague of proceeding in Slovakia without coordination with the Slovak Land Presidency, and stressed that Slovakia needs a different organisation than the Czech

273 NA CR, f. Selské jízdy 1924 – 1942, c. 1, inv. no. 412 – 11 – 6. Minutes of the Meeting of the Peasant Cavalries' Central Office held on 14<sup>th</sup> December 1930.

274 ČAPLOVIC, Hlavné črty, p. 107.

275 Ch J, Vol. 4, Issue 12 (December), 1935, pp. 8-9.

276 NA CR, f. Selské jízdy 1924 – 1942, c. 1, inv. no. 412 – 12 – 8. Minutes of the meeting of the Peasant Cavalries' Central Office held on 30<sup>th</sup> January 1936 in Prague.

277 ČAPLOVIČ, Hlavné črty, p. 105.

278 According to the 1925 statistics the Party had 76,345 members in Slovakia: UHLÍŘ, Dušan. *Republikánska strana venkovského a maloroľníckého ľudu 1918 – 1938. Charakteristika agrárneho hnutia v Československu* [The Republican Party of the Rural and Peasant People 1918 – 1938. Characteristics of the Agrarian Movement in Czechoslovakia]. Prague : Ústav československých a světových dějin ČSAV, 1988, p. 68.

279 NA CR, f. Selské jízdy 1924 – 1942, c. 1, inv. no. 412 – 11 – 5. Minutes of the Meeting of the Peasant Cavalries' Central Office held on 13<sup>th</sup> June 1930.

lands. He criticises the Czech colleagues that they had even convened the meeting without informing the Slovak Presidency.<sup>280</sup> This criticism eventually yielded success. Since the beginning of 1931 two separate provincial secretariats of PC were created, one in Brno and one in Bratislava. Thus, the separate Land Corps came into existence although it remained until the end just as some kind of a temporary solution, without legal personality pertaining to district organisations only. According to the articles of association, the district organisations were directly members of PC's Central Office. However, in documents and in practice the Land Corps were still an institution that acted as the supreme body of PC in Slovakia. Although the officials had to be formally approved by the PC Central Office in Prague, the headquarters never rejected the Slovak proposals. In practice, the Slovak PCs acquired a certain autonomous position to the centre. In this way a paradoxical dual-track situation occurred within the Agrarian Party. Their PCs in Slovakia managed to achieve organisational independence and so achieved the goal which the Party's Slovak wing would never do until the end of the First Republic despite great efforts. Even in the years to come, however, some voices of dissatisfaction concerning the Slovak organisations were heard from the PC Central Office. The headquarters in Prague objected that the Bratislava's Land Corps began to publish the aforementioned *Chovateľ jazdec* magazine without their knowledge, although they were in support of the idea as such. Similarly, they had reservations about the arbitrary adjustments of the uniforms in Slovakia.<sup>281</sup> The Central Office rarely provided material support to Slovak districts. In 1933, the Central Office donated 5 saddles as subsidy to the district organisation in Zvolen, but this was an exception rather than a rule. Complaints about the lack of saddles from individual organisations to the Prague headquarters were a phenomenon permanently accompanying the PC's operation in Slovakia.<sup>282</sup>

Over the entire period of PC's existence, the Central Office often reminded the Slovak districts that they had not sent their membership fees until the deadline. The Slovak districts, in turn, often demanded the headquarters to forgive them different fees for the sake of the development of their organisations, for example, besides the arrears on membership fees, also an amount of 100 Czech korunas for borrowing a training film.<sup>283</sup> In 1932, the district organisation of Bratislava, otherwise a fairly active one, did not make a secret of the fact that its two or three members jointly owned one horse, while the PC's programme assumed that every member would use his or her own horse for training. Moreover, the Bratislava organisation openly admitted that a number of members rode on horses borrowed from the Sokol association.<sup>284</sup> Also, in many districts, members only exception-

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280 NA CR, f. Selské jízdy 1924 – 1942, c. 1, inv. no. 412 – 11 – 6. Minutes of the Meeting of the Peasant Cavalries' Central Office held on 14<sup>th</sup> December 1930.

281 NA CR, f. Selské jízdy 1924 – 1942, c. 1, inv. no. 412 – 11 – 7. Minutes of the headquarters' meeting of the Peasant Cavalries' Central Office held in Prague on 27<sup>th</sup> September 1932.

282 NA CR, f. Selské jízdy 1924 – 1942, c. 1, inv. no. 412 – 11 – 7. Minutes of the headquarters' meeting of the Peasant Cavalries' Central Office held in Prague on 31<sup>st</sup> January 1933. In this meeting the information was presented that the PC's management asked the Baťa company to manufacture cheap saddles, but the company responded negatively.

283 NA CR, f. Selské jízdy 1924 – 1942, c. 3, inv. no. 412 – 3 – 4. Letter to the regional union of the Slovak Peasant Youth for the District of Nitra to the Peasant Cavalries' Central Office in Prague dated 10<sup>th</sup> March 1931.

284 Ch J, Vol. 2, Issue 5 (May), 1933, p. 4.

ally wore their own uniforms; each priced about 300 Czech korunas.<sup>285</sup> An interesting exchange of opinion took place between the Slovak organisation and the headquarters in connection with taking the organisation's magazines which illustrated well that the efforts to achieve as much Slovak organisational autonomy at the end of the 1930s existed also in PCs. The district of Parkán (nowadays called Štúrovo) wrote to Prague in 1932 that the Central Office's magazine *Selská jízda* (The Peasant Cavalry) should concentrate more on Slovakia than the Czech countries. While the level of the organisations in the historical countries was high according to the Czech chief, Slovakia was still "limping".<sup>286</sup> However, just four years later, the very same secretary refused to subscribe to the Prague magazine, saying that his organisation is fully satisfied with the *Chovatel' jazdec* magazine published in Bratislava.<sup>287</sup>

The PC's activities in Slovakia were also hampered by a strict nationalist viewpoint applied to admission to its ranks. Only Slovaks or Czechs could become members. This position contrasted sharply with the fact that already from the mid-1920s the Agrarian Party lured Hungarian peasants from Southern Slovakia to join, who had the opportunity to become members of the Party's affiliated organisations – the Union of Hungarian Republican Peasants and Farmers. However, due to the alleged concerns about the safety of the Republic the PCs were not open for citizens of Hungarian ethnicity. In 1933, Secretary Javůrek interpreted the Slovak corps' attitude to the problem as follows: *"As regards the question raised whether we have to or not organise in the P. C. the republican Hungarians, it has been mostly stated that our task and direction is too patriotic for us to overlook those quite frequent excesses of the Hungarians, which could disrepute our organisation. The future will show whether it is possible to take into account the request of Hungarians to be organised in P.C."*<sup>288</sup> A similar rejective position to Hungarians being members in PC also prevailed in the meeting of the Land Corps in the succeeding year and remained unchanged until the organisation's dissolution in October 1938. The Hungarian citizens were good for the Agrarian Party for their votes in the elections, but in the turbulent 1930s the officials were not able to regard them as true trustworthy patriots for joint defence of the Republic.

In addition to the equestrian and defence training or equestrian competitions, the PCs in Slovakia also participated regularly in significant social events of state-wide importance. Their first public appearance in Slovakia took place in the 1933 Pribina's<sup>289</sup> Festival in Nitra, where they made an allegorical procession of 800 peasant riders from Slovakia and the Czech lands.<sup>290</sup> A year later an honorary section of PC took part in the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first Czechoslovak Government's arrival in Bratislava.<sup>291</sup> In 1935, the Slovak PC organised a relay horseback ride from Trebišov to Bratislava on the occasion of the 60<sup>th</sup>

285 Ch J, Vol. 3, Issue 3 (March), 1934, p. 4.

286 NA CR, f. Selské jízdy 1924 – 1942, c. 3, inv. no. 412 – 3 – 6. Correspondence of the Central Office with the Peasant Cavalry of the district of Parkan.

287 Ibid.

288 Ch J, Vol. 2, Issue 12 (December), 1933, p. 3.

289 Pribina was the first known prince of Slavic Nitra Principality in the first half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century.

290 Ch J, Vol. 5, Issue 1 (January), 1936, p. 1.

291 ČAPLOVIČ, Hlavné črty, p. 106.

birthday of General Josef Šnejdárek.<sup>292</sup> The background to that was that the general was an honorary mayor of the Eastern Slovak Corps for many years while he served in Košice. Otherwise strictly apolitical soldiers got involved very often in PC which was certainly related to the fact that the Ministry of Defense was under stable control of the Agrarian Party. A number of active officers served as the chiefs responsible for technical operation in the districts, while others served as trainers in the PC's equestrian courses. Augustín Malár, who would later become the Slovak general and the commander of the Fast Division in World War II, was also an active member of PC. As the captain in the Czechoslovak Army he was in charge of horse-riding and cycling training since the beginning of the 1930s, and later an executive member responsible for defence training and a member of the defence division of the Slovak PC's Land Corps.

The PCs played the role of the symbolic equestrian staffage, similar to that of the aforementioned state-wide celebrations, in other party events too, such as the traditional harvest-home celebrations or pre-election public gatherings, particularly those held before the 1935 parliamentary election. However, their participation in the election campaign was an exception rather than a rule. Unlike the Home Defense (Rodobrana) organised under the Slovak People's Party or other defense organisations under other political parties, the PCs never served as forces to keep order in such events, but were meant to complement the festive atmosphere.

As it can be seen, the Slovak PC's organisations struggled with the most diverse problems throughout their existence. The answer to the question of this was the Party's green army, or a prestigious interest circle is also offered by the overview of the organisation's activities in the district of Sabinov in 1934, which in the first year of its existence associated a total of 52 members, of whom only 11 rode on horses. The most significant event for them was for the 6-membered team participation in the equestrian race in Prešov, where they won interesting prizes. Two members won liquor cutlery, two watches and one smoking instruments. In addition to the courses completed and the procession through the streets of Sabinov, they also included among the important milestones in their activities the hunting ride to celebrate the feast of St. Hubert. The organisation's chief and mayor were a professor and a director of the local state school of agriculture, the treasurer was an employee of the local Peasant Common Treasury, which was a financial institution controlled by the Agrarian Party. This means that there was not one farmer in the management.<sup>293</sup> However, there were also districts where PC at least approached the declared position of the green army. In 1935, the PC's district organisation in Galanta associated already 142 members, who were praised by the Land Corps for their proactive approach to equestrian training and other obligations.<sup>294</sup> However, it was the PC's district organisation in Parkán, seated in the community of Kőbölkút (present day's Gbelce) which was most often set as an example for other districts. Until 1933, it was able to build its own horse-riding school as the only one among all district organisations in Slovakia, so did not have to use the army's hippodromes, or pay high fees to private associations like other

292 *Slovenský denník* [The Slovak Daily], Vol. 18, Issue 74, 28<sup>th</sup> March 1935, p. 2

293 NA CR, f. Selské jízdy 1924 – 1942, c. 2, inv. no. 412 – 12 – 5. Questionnaire of the Central Office for the Peasant Cavalry of the district of Sabinov on activities in 1934.

294 Ch J, Vol. 4, Issue 12 (December), 1935, p. 8.

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organisations. It also had its own run for colts, a music band, and according to the *Chovatel' jazdec* magazine, its permanent technical work was excellent too. According to the PC's leading officials, it was evidence that "one can work in village as well".<sup>295</sup> Nonetheless, the overall picture of the PC's activities in Slovakia was not by far so positive. In one of the last meetings of the PC's Central Office before Munich, held on 15<sup>th</sup> March 1938 criticism was raised against Slovakia concerning the need to get more members. On that occasion, Jan Voženílek, the central organisation's vice-mayor, stated that achieving the PC's goal expressed by the motto about a peasant rider in every village was still very far away.<sup>296</sup>

The most important gain arising from the PC's activities in interwar Slovakia was definitely the contribution to the development and popularisation of the equestrian sport. In times the Republic was in danger it was undoubtedly of benefit to improving the military preparedness and awareness of a part of the Slovak population. The PC helped to build a positive relationship to the Republic and its democratic establishment and diverted members from joining more radical organisations threatening democracy. Nothing is changed about the facts by stating that the development of PC in Slovakia was not as dynamic as in the Czech lands, and, also, due to the financial demandingness, not so many members of the Agrarian Party were able to join the Cavalry to make the slogans about the green rural army or a peasant rider in every village a reality. PC became an organisation whose membership base in Slovakia consisted mainly of wealthier Slovak Agrarians. At the same time, the dismissive attitude of the organisation to people of Hungarian ethnicity becoming members was typical of the civil society of interwar Czechoslovakia which did not change until the dissolution in December 1938.

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<sup>295</sup> Ch J, Vol. 2, Issue 12 (December), 1933, pp. 2-3.

<sup>296</sup> NA CR, f. Selské jízdy 1924 - 1942, c. 2, inv. no. 412 - 12 - 10. Minutes of the meeting of the Headquarters of the Peasant Cavalries' Central Office in Prague held on 15<sup>th</sup> March 1938.



## Chapter 7

# “A HOME SHOULD BE A HOME TO ALL ITS SONS”: CULTURAL REPRESENTATIONS OF THE SAINT STEPHEN IN SLOVAKIA DURING THE INTERWAR PERIOD

*Miroslav Michela*

In August 2009 the waters of European politics and especially the Slovak-Hungarian diplomatic relations, were stirred up by an event linked with the unveiling of the equestrian statue of Saint Stephen in the Slovak border town, Komárno. The President of the Republic of Hungary, László Sólyom, who had been invited as a keynote speaker for this event, was not admitted to enter the Slovak Republic (SR). Although the resulting conflict originated mainly from already tense political relations, as has happened in other cases, events did not go without a historicist interpretation. The Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic, Robert Fico, reproduced the standard representation of Saint Stephen as the symbol of national oppression, when he commented that: *“Under the flag of the first Hungarian King Stephen the harshest magyarization occurred. Therefore let no one pretend that he was some sort of Slovak king. We have our own Svätopluk, not Stephen.”*<sup>297</sup> By contrast, the organisers of the statue’s unveiling were interpreting Saint Stephen as a symbol of cooperation and ethnical intertolerance. As the Mayor of Komárno, Tibor Bas-trnák, pointed out *“Saint Stephen founded and built a strong state of many nations where people lived with each other in peace.”*<sup>298</sup> However, they were criticised by the representatives of Slovakia that they had not shown enough interest and activities towards ensuring the parity participation of politicians, as it is usually the case in official state visits.<sup>299</sup> In a pro-government periodical, the present day’s President of Matica slovenská, Marián Tkáč, called this act a demonstration of *“Hungarian arrogance and superiority. And pride.”*<sup>300</sup> In the subsequent, often emotionally charged, discussions that followed, several conflicting narratives appeared concerning the importance of the first Hungarian monarch and saint of the Árpád family. At the same time, Stephen became a symbol of both “ethnic tolerance” and “national oppression”. The diplomatic incident in mentioned and, in particular, mentions of Saint Stephen also draw attention to the importance of historical narratives in public discourse.

Establishment of different interpretations of the cult outlined above dates back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and is associated with the boom of nationalist politics in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The “building blocks” of the nationalist ideas include the founding stories of the past, initially created and disseminated by various social agents and institutions, with a

297 For example: <http://dnes.atlas.sk/slovensko/vlada-a-parlament/587849/fico-pod-zastavou-krala-stefana-sa-robila-najtvrdsia-madarizacia> (viewed 12<sup>th</sup> September 2012).

298 For example: <http://www.bumm.sk/32289/solyom-laszlo-szonoklataval-leplezik-le-a-komaromi-szent-istvan-szobrot.html> (viewed 12<sup>th</sup> September 2012).

299 <http://dnes.atlas.sk/slovensko/vlada-a-parlament/587849/fico-pod-zastavou-krala-stefana-sa-robila-najtvrdsia-madarizacia> (viewed 12<sup>th</sup> September 2012).

300 <http://www.extraplus.sk/content/view/550> (viewed 12<sup>th</sup> September 2012).

subsequent canonisation of these narratives. Through them the national history is constructed, and the idea of a national community whose members identify with it despite the fact that they do not know each other.<sup>301</sup> In his thesis on the banality of nationalism, Michael Billig highlighted the ubiquitous “natural” sense of identification with the “nation” and its perpetuation in public discourse.<sup>302</sup>

Historian Móric Csáky has noted that in the culturally diverse region of Central Europe attempts to construct and enforce the concept of a historical homogeneous national community, in order to legitimise the subsequent political efforts and an existence of a “national state” represent more than just a complicated plan.<sup>303</sup> Many nationalist movements have competed in the region beginning in the nineteenth century to the present. In this rivalry, the medieval state/dynastic traditions and religious cults were transformed and gradually gained a national hallmark. The narratives were supplemented with emerging ideological pendants – the representatives of the non-dominant nationalist movements constructed the “national history” in the form of a “counter-narrative” to create their own stories of uniqueness, tragedies and glory. The “tradition” of Great Moravia and Cyril and Methodius was accentuated.<sup>304</sup> It was also suitable because Great Moravia had existed before the Hungarian state, which should have had to prove the historical and cultural maturity and superiority of Slavs/Slovaks in this territory.<sup>305</sup> This rivalry has long been present in the public spaces of Komárno. It was also underlined by Prime Minister Fico also underscored this point: “*On the one hand, the self-government of Komárno prohibits the statue of Cyril and Methodius, which is disrespectfully placed on the bal-*

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301 ANDERSON, Benedict. *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*. London : Verso, 1991.

302 BILLIG, Michael. *Banal Nationalism*. London-Thousand Oaks-New Delhi : SAGE, 1995.

303 On the subject: CSÁKY, Móric. Introduction. In CSÁKY, Móric – MANNOVÁ, Elena (eds.) *Collective Identities in Central Europe in Modern Times*. Bratislava : Institute of History of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, 1999, pp. 7-20.

304 HUDEK, Adam. Cyrilo-metodská tradícia na Slovensku v 20. storočí [The Tradition of Cyril and Methodius in Slovakia in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.] In PANIS, Branislav – RUTTKAY, Matej – TURČAN, Vladimír (eds.) *Bratia, ktorí menili svet - Konštantín a Metod : príspevky z konferencie*. Bratislava : Slovenské národné múzeum; Nitra : Archeologický ústav SAV, 2012, pp. 229-244.

305 See, for example: HROCH, Miroslav. *Národy nejsou dílem náhody. Příčiny a předpoklady utváření moderních evropských národů* [Nations Are Not a Result of Coincidence. Causes and Requirements for the Making of Modern European Nations]. Prague : SLON, 2009, pp. 168-199; MAXWELL, Alexander. *Choosing Slovakia. Slavic Hungary, the Czechoslovak Language, and Accidental Nationalism*. London : Tauris Academic Studies, 2009; ŠKVARNA, Dušan. *Začiatky slovenských národných symbolov. K vytváraníu národnej identity od konca 18. do polovice 19. storočia* [The beginnings of Slovak national symbols. On the formation of national identity from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century to the 19<sup>th</sup> century]. Banská Bystrica : UMB, 2004.

cony of Matica slovenská, while, on the other hand, they erect the statue of Saint Stephen in a beautiful place and now offer it to us as our king".<sup>306</sup>

### The Cult of Saint Stephen

The rituals and commemoration of selected historical events nestled into the master narratives have been a part of the running of the human society for a long time. Taking a part in the stories has been one of the important indicators of the making, consolidating and reproducing the identification relations within the society. As Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger have pointed out, many stories have acquired new meanings owing to the influence of modernisation and penetration of nationalist policies, or, in other words, entirely new traditions referring to the ancient past have emerged.<sup>307</sup>

The nationalisation of public life also occurred in the Habsburg Monarchy and was reflected in the symbolic politics of Hungary.<sup>308</sup> It was found in interpretations of the meaning of Stephen, the first Hungarian king, who was canonised in 1083, 45 years after his death.<sup>309</sup> The making of the St. Stephen cult dates to the eleventh century when it served to legitimise the royal power. A century later it began to be feminised through the creation of the parallel Marian cult (Regnum Marianum), which inculcated it with a clear religious element. Another milestone in development of the cult was the Counter-Reformation. The celebration's religious nature had lasted until the early nineteenth century, when the cult of Saint Stephen gradually gained a more secular meaning. This change was also helped by an 1819 regulation of the Archduke Joseph, Palatine of Hungary to make participation in the solemn commemorative rituals mandatory for cities and towns, guilds, military, and the like.<sup>310</sup>

Based on years of tradition, Saint Stephen celebration was a festive procession with the "Holy Right" held annually on 20<sup>th</sup> August in Budapest. This event, dating from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, involved figures prominent in the religious and political life of the country and

306 <http://aktualne.atlas.sk/fico-pod-zastavou-krala-stefana-sa-robila-najtvrdsia-madarizacia/archiv/> (viewed 12<sup>th</sup> September 2012); See also: MANNOVÁ, Elena. Nemzeti hősoktól az Európa térig – A kollektív emlékezet jelenetei Komáromban, a szlovák-magyar határon. In *Regio*, 2002, Vol. 13, Issue 3, pp. 26-45; STRÁŽAY, Tomáš. Myths in Action: Two Cases from southern Slovakia. In HLAVIČKOVÁ, Zora – MASLOWSKI, Nikolas (eds.) *The Weight of History in Central European Societies of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*. Prague : CES, 2005, pp. 101-113; KUSÁ, Dagmar. Úloha kolektívnej pamäti v procese etnickej mobilizácie [Function of collective memory in the process of collective mobilization]. In DRÁL, Peter – FINDOR, Andrej (eds.) *Ako skúmať národ : Deväť štúdií o etnicite a nacionalizme*. Brno : Tribun EU, 2009, pp. 79-105; SCHWEGLER, Brian Alexander. Entrepreneurial governance and the urban restructuring of a Slovakian town. In TSENKOVA, Sasha – NEDOVIČ-BUDIČ, Zorica (eds.) *The Urban Mosaic of Post-Socialist Europe*. Space, Institutions and Policy. Heidelberg : Physica Verlag, 2006, pp. 295-318.

307 HOBBSAWM, Eric – RANGER, Terence (eds.) *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1992.

308 See, for example: FREIFELD, Alice. *Nationalism and the Crowd in Liberal Hungary, 1848 – 1914*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000; GERŐ, András: *Képzelt történelem. Fejezetek a magyar szimbolikus politika XIX–XX. századi történetéből*. Budapest : PolgART 2004.

309 More on this subject in a comparative perspective: KLANICZAY, Gábor. *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses Dynastic Cults in Medieval Central Europe*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2002, pp. 114-154.

310 On this question: KLIMÓ, Árpád von. A nemzet Szent Jobbja. In *Replika*, September 1999, Issue 27, p. 49; GYARMATI, György. A nemzetudathasadás ünnepi koreográfiája. Augusztus 20. fél évszázada, In *Mozgó Világ*, 1995, Issue 8, pp. 87-100; KLIMÓ, Árpád von. *Nation, Konfesion, Geschichte: zur nationalen Geschichtskultur Ungarns im europäischen Kontext (1860-1948)*. München : Oldenbourg Verlag, 2003; GYÁNI, Gábor. *Relatív történelem*. Budapest : Typotex, 2007, pp. 89-110.

a large crowd. As historian Gábor Gyáni has noted, modern Magyar/Hungarian nationalism sacralised the population in this way while introducing nationalism into religion at the same time.<sup>311</sup> Attenuation of the official ordination of Saint Stephen as a national hero was a result of the defeating of the Kossuth Revolution of 1849. Paradoxically, the Austro-Hungarian settlement did not significantly strengthen the cult, since a regulation was issued to cancel the mandatory celebrations.<sup>312</sup> In the context of the dominant discourses regarding Saint Stephen, two main, confessionally determined, representations coexisted. In the Catholic representation, he was viewed as “the first king” and the “Hungarian/Magyar apostle”. In contrast, by means of secular and pragmatic attitude, in the Protestant discourse was Stephen represented mainly as “the first king”. However, even in this case, the moment of Christianisation was present.<sup>313</sup>

We can talk about mass celebration of the Saint Stephen’s cult began after 1891, when, despite still persistent ritual-religious presentations (processions with the “Holy Right”) commemorations were clearly profiled as a part of the cultural policy of a “unified Hungarian/Magyar national state” which was also underlined by the fact that national flags appeared on state buildings and citizens got time off. Decorations as well as by festive dark clothes or costumes worn by participants confirmed the significance of the memorial procession as a “national holiday”. The following issues were the most highlighted in public discourse: “foundation of the Hungarian State”, “Stephen’s role in Christianisation”, his “contribution to stability and peace in the region” and his “cultural contribution” such as “connectedness with the Western culture”. This course was then persisting until the end of the Monarchy. In the last period of dualism, the Saint Stephen’s cult was represented also as a legitimising element of “Hungarian” supremacy in the Carpathian Basin. The interpretation and reception of the cult also introduced a super-confessional and super-national dimension. The holiday was celebrated on 20<sup>th</sup> August by the all official Christian confessions and also by Jewry.<sup>314</sup> The core idea of tolerance and cooperation was particularly stressed to non-Hungarians. At the end of World War I, the pro-government newspaper *Slovenské noviny*, published in Budapest, wrote: “*Strong will, fraternal accord and patriotic soulfulness of the country’s sons has maintained and enhanced the power of the Hungarian State.*”<sup>315</sup> In this sense, the Slovaks were represented in the public discourse primarily as loyal, hardworking, simple, uneducated people (*Tót nép*) who had co-existed for centuries in fraternal accord with the Hungarians. In addition to this picture a second category emerged in the public discourse of Slovaks – supporters and activists of the Slovak national movement openly criticising the status quo – named with significantly negative connotation – “Pan-Slav” (who was the country’s enemy).<sup>316</sup>

The political instrumentalisation of the Saint Stephen cult as one of the most important Christian and national traditions in Hungary also contained significant ethno-political elements based on emphasising “the importance of Hungarian creative genius in the Car-

311 GYÁNI, Gábor. *Relatív történelem*. Budapest : Typotex, 2007, p. 92.

312 KLIMÓ, A *nemzet*, p. 49-50.

313 LAJTAI, László. *Nemzeti vagy felekezeti történelem?* In *Korall*, 2004, Issue15-16, pp. 205-225.

314 *Komáromi lapok*, 19<sup>th</sup> August 1916, p. 5; *Komáromi lapok*, 17<sup>th</sup> August 1918, p. 4.

315 *Slovenské noviny*, 20<sup>th</sup> August 1918, p. 1.

316 See: VÖRÖS, László. *Analytická historiografia versus národné dejiny. “Národ” ako sociálna reprezentácia*. Pisa : Pisa University Press, 2010, pp. 128-136.

pathian region". Such reasoning was linked with an attempt to homogenise the country's national landscape and became a part of the discussions about the Hungarian minority policy. At that time, not very influential and relatively small number of Slovak nationalist activists regularly pointed out the kings' "spirit of tolerance" contained in Stephen's warnings to Emmerich.<sup>317</sup> The most frequently repeated was the statement *Regum unis linguae ac imbecille est* (kingdom of one language is weak), which identifies the ethnic differentiation as a positive phenomenon. The Slovak national movement, however, stressed a strong accent on the "Great Moravian tradition" as a certain historical and ideological counter-image of the official state history. This period was portrayed as a "Golden age" and Slavs (Slovaks) were identified as the "original" and "creative" cultural element in the region.<sup>318</sup>

### The End of the "Old World" and Building the "New World"

In times of crises before the downfall of the Monarchy, the tradition of Saint Stephen was contextualised as transcendental protector of the country "against enemies from inside and outside".<sup>319</sup> On the other hand, the Slovak nationalist activists pointed out in their argumentation the continued violation of ethnic tolerance principles established by King Stephen. A significant part of the Slovak national discourse has become the common representation of the Slovak and Hungarian history as "the period of serfdom" which is often symbolically defined as the narrative of "millennial serfdom".<sup>320</sup> This picture was not always reproduced by the Czechoslovak official circles. The period of "serfdom" was more often correlated with the beginnings of Austro-Hungarian dualism.<sup>321</sup>

The downfall of the Habsburg Monarchy brought with it a change in the political situation of the region. The fact that the cult of St. Stephen had been represented by the Slovak elites as an ideological attribute of the homogenisation process was subsequently reflected in a negative reaction regarding the issue of whether it would be preserved. With the foundation of the First Czechoslovak Republic came a systematic change in the presentation of history. State officials, defining the country as a national state of Czechs and Slovaks, rejected the ruling Hungarian narrative as something "outmoded" and "hostile". The Czechoslovakian one was constructed as a "natural" and "overcome stage" of development. The end of the monarchy was explained as "national liberation". The basic arguments were built on highlighting the "Slavic reciprocity" on the concept of the "Czechoslovak nation" as one of the major legitimising formulas of new state formation.

317 For example: *Slovenský denník*, 20<sup>th</sup> August 1910, p. 1.

318 For more details on the subject, see for example: HASLINGER, Peter. The Nation, the Enemy, and Imagined Territories: Slovak and Hungarian Elements in the Emergence of a Czechoslovak National Narrative during and after World War I. In WINGFIELD, M. Nancy (ed.) *Creating the Other. The Causes and Dynamics of Nationalism, Ethnic Enmity, and Racism in Eastern Europe*. Providence : Berghahn Books, 2001, pp. 169-182.

319 *Komáromi lapok*, 17<sup>th</sup> August 1918, s. 4; *Ibid*, 26<sup>th</sup> October 1918, p. 1.

320 See for example: *Slovenský denník*, 20<sup>th</sup> August 1910, p. 1; FINDOR, Andrej. Tisícročná poroba? [A Millennial Serfdom?]. In KREKOVIČ, Eduard – MANNOVÁ, Elena – KREKOVIČOVÁ, Eva. *Mýty naše slovenské [Our Slovak Myths]*. Bratislava : AEP, 2005, pp. 71-76.

321 On the subject: MICHELA, Miroslav. Functions of the Myth of "National Oppression" in Slovak master narrative 1918 – 1945. In SZARKA, László (ed.) *A Multiethnic Region and Nation-State in East-Central Europe : studies in the History of Upper Hungary and Slovakia from the 1600s to the Present*. Boulder : Social Science Monographs, 2011, pp. 253-268.



of Hungary, for which, in Czechoslovakia, they were labelled enemies and publicly called pejorative names such as Magyarones, traitors and renegades.<sup>327</sup>

Despite the above-mentioned examples, particularly those narratives were reproduced in the environment of the Hungarian minority in the interwar period which was based on the dualistic Hungarian traditions, or those enforced at the time in Horthy's Hungary. The relationship to the "mother land" (Hungary) was too strong a determinant of the community's cultural life.<sup>328</sup> These links were created, maintained, and strengthened through regular commemorative rituals devoted to different cultural and historical moments of the "national history".

The most commonly used historical themes included the conquest of the country (in Hungarian – honfoglalás), Saint Stephen, the fight against the Turks and Tatars, and the revolutionary tradition of Rákóczi and Kossuth.<sup>329</sup> The selection and methodology of presenting history was also subject to the vision of restoring the integrity of Hungary. In the context of setting the revisionist orientation of politics which was based ideologically on the continuity with the recent Hungarian history and used terms such as "national" and "Christian" for its self-definition, there was a strong support for the cult of Saint Stephen, who was represented as a transcendental assurance of the country's historical integrity. The revision has become the alpha and omega of Hungary's politics during the interwar period. For example, it is demonstrated by the content of education in schools, as classes in primary schools started regularly with reciting the prayer: "I believe in one God, I believe in one country, I believe in one eternal truth, I believe in the rebirth of Hungary, Amen!" The belief that the status quo would not last forever was an important attribute of the Hungarian culture of remembrance. The personality of the first Hungarian king stood on the highest point of the imaginary national pantheon.

Such a social environment, multiplied with more or less demonstrative ways in which the representatives of the Hungarian community inhabiting the homogeneous strip along the border between Hungary and Czechoslovakia acted, evoked concerns of "the majority population". Representatives of the Czechoslovak Republic strongly opposed the dissemination of ideas and symbols that undermined the idea of Czechoslovak statehood. They also stood out against the Hungarian irredentism and revisionism and suppressed various manifestations of the above by repressive measures. The resistance to the revisionist efforts in Slovakia was characterised by the idea "revisionism strengthens our nationalism".<sup>330</sup> Such a view of the problem became an important part of the Czechoslovak social discourse and politics in building its own institutionalised image of the past and a "pantheon of heroes" and myths.

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327 More in: MICHELA, Miroslav. *Pod heslom integrity. [Under the Slogan of Integrity]*. Bratislava : Kalligram, 2009.

328 See more for example in: MANNOVÁ "Ale teraz je dobrý Slovák": Vplyv novej štátnej hranice štátu na etnické vzťahy v Lučenci a Komárne (1918-1938). [But Now He is a Good Slovak: The Impact of the New State Border on Ethnic Relations in Lučenec and Komárno (1918-1938)]. In KAMENEC, Ivan – MANNOVÁ, Elena – KOWALSKÁ, Eva (eds.) *Historik v čase a priestore : Laudatio Lubomírovi Liptákovi*. Bratislava : Veda; Historický ústav SAV, 2000, pp. 53-62.

329 See more: ZEIDLER, Miklós. *Ideas on territorial revision in Hungary, 1920 – 1945*. Boulder : Social Science Monographs, 2007.

330 *Slovenský Juh*, 24<sup>th</sup> June 1933, p. 1.

Despite increased pressure against remembrance and celebration of the Hungarian past many Hungarians continued celebrating existing holidays and personalities. The unexpected end of the monarchy increased the importance of remembrance based on the feeling of insufficiency in the present. A classic example was in invoking memories of the “heroic past” and emphasising the differences between what had been “once” and what was “now” (what was missing at the present time, what was lost, or marginalised.)<sup>331</sup> It is also related to the tragic stories from the “national history” whose task was also to remind of the historically proven “power of community” while in the contemporary context they acquired additional, up-to-date meanings. The contrasting group which they stood out against most often were not “Slovaks” presented more as “deceived and misled brothers” but “Czechs”, described as a foreign element: as “invaders” and “exploiters” of Slovakia. Such an understanding of “our” against “foreign” is typical of the so-called theory of indigenous population which was not very successfully promoted in the interwar period by the Hungarian Christian Socialist Party.<sup>332</sup>

The commemorative rituals created a sense of cultural and political togetherness and represented an important framework for identification in the lives of Hungarians in Slovakia. Coercion by the ruling power and repression of recently introduced holidays only strengthened the critical attitudes to the Czechoslovak Republic and was articulated as a permanent injustice. In contrast, from the viewpoint of the state power such manifestations were seen as hostile irredentist activity supported by the “mother land”. As a result, public places became the battlefield of two different mutually excluding versions of the national history.<sup>333</sup>

This conflict was also reflected in the closeness of the “majority” part of the Hungarian community in Slovakia to the influence of dominant power, which was also shown in the critical and reluctant stance to the “new” symbols and holidays, as if they embodied the “minority trauma”. This concerned especially the celebrations of the establishment of the Czechoslovak state organised every year on 28<sup>th</sup> October and the birthday of President T. G. Masaryk held on 7<sup>th</sup> March.<sup>334</sup> These celebrations had also undertones of the current politics and become a part of the policy of building the new “national state”. The period immediately after 1918 was characterised by open opposition from the Hungarian population. This was especially absent of demonstration in the sense of “not to celebrate” and “not to participate in events organised under the auspices of the ‘foreign’ (Czechoslovak) state”. There are also records of cases when an employer did not allow employees to participate in a celebration, or sent them to work in Hungary, where there was an ordinary working day in that time.<sup>335</sup> In addition to absence from similar events the antagonism

331 ASSMANN, Jan. *Kultura a paměť* [Culture and Memory]. Praha : Prostor, 2001, p. 72.

332 It was the concept of political cooperation among the “indigenous peoples” in Slovakia (Slovaks, Hungarians and Germans). The main idea was autonomism and Christianity, and one of the goals of this concept was to achieve restoration of Hungary’s integrity.

333 MANNOVÁ, Elena. Konštrukcia menšínovej identity, p. 121.

334 More details in: HÁJKOVÁ, Dagmar – Nancy WINGFIELD. Czech(-oslovak) National Commemorations during the Interwar Period: Tomáš G. Masaryk and the Battle of White Mountain Avenged. In *Acta Histriae*, 2010, Vol. 18, Issue1-2, pp. 425–452.

335 State Archives in Nitra - branch office in Ivánka pri Nitre (hereinafter SANR), fond (hereinafter f.) PK KN, carton (hereinafter c.) 18, 1500 prez. Chief Police Commissioner for KÚ in BA, 30<sup>th</sup> October 1928, Ibid, c. 13, Report by Sprušanský from 7<sup>th</sup> November 1928.

was often exhibited by demonstrative behaviour of those involved. If participants felt their presence at some events as forced, they did not show enough respect, whether it was inappropriate clothing, or behaviour during the ceremony, or when the national anthem was played. The police reports say that these acts were neither arbitrary nor coincidental, but coordinated demonstrative expressions, which if not observed by someone, could mean being exposed to ridicule, or even expulsion from the community.<sup>336</sup> Another form of resistance was when people did not respect the obligation to decorate official building, their houses or shops with the state symbols, or when they intentionally used damaged flags for decoration.

### **A tradition doomed to be forgotten?**

After the end of the monarchy, some traditional symbols gained new and up-to-date meanings. This was also reflected in the context of the commemoration of the Saint Stephen tradition which had once been fairly widespread in the territory of present-day Slovakia. Commemoration of this tradition reinforced the sense of unity among "all Hungarians". It was often emphasised, that "*wherever Hungarians have lived to date, on 20<sup>th</sup> August churches become overcrowded*".<sup>337</sup> The first Hungarian king was presented as a transcendental guarantee of a bright future. In Hungary, his name was associated with hopes and expectations that everything would be good once, in the spirit of the contemporary slogans: "*Feltámodunk!*" (We will resurrect!) "*Nem, nem, soha!*" (No, no, never!), "*Így volt, így lesz!*" (So it was, so it will be!) "*Csonka Magyarország nem ország, egész Magyarország mennyország!*" (Truncated Hungary is not a country; the whole Hungary is the kingdom of heaven!) with the leitmotif being the belief that the integrity of Hungary had to be restored. Many sermons and political speeches in Hungary were based on this belief. The ceremonial sermons and editorials dedicated to the first king of Hungary, published in Slovakia in Hungarian opposition newspapers, contained a similar argument.

In Czechoslovakia, however, the Saint Stephen tradition was associated mainly with the issue of Hungarian/Magyar assimilation pressures, national superiority, and the demand for border revision. Nonetheless, the Czechoslovak authorities were unable to eliminate the tradition completely. Initially, the celebration was transformed by an official intervention from a religious state (national) holiday to a purely religious celebration (commemoration of Saint Stephen as the founder of the ecclesiastical province, or patron of the church.) In this context, authorities employed an important argument that the Feast of Saint Stephen was on a different day than in the church calendar (2<sup>nd</sup> September.) This also limited the scope of the traditional celebrations. Of significance is in particular the Circular of the Apostolic Administration in Trnava dated 4<sup>th</sup> August 1919, which stated that 20<sup>th</sup> August had never been established ecclesiastically as a feast and at that time not even the secular laws obliged to stay away from work. Sung Masses and sermons

336 For example, in 1923 there was a case when students of the Benedictine Grammar School in Komárno refused to take their hats off during a ceremony. Their teachers, in turn, showed their attitude by wearing everyday clothes which they would not dare on another Sunday, and instead of compulsory lectures on the importance of 28<sup>th</sup> October, their speeches were more like anti-propaganda. SANR, f. Policajný komisariát v Komárne (Police Commissariat in Komárno, hereinafter PK KN), c. 1, Situation Report from November 1923. See also: Ibid, c. 18, Prez. ŽÚ – PR, 7<sup>th</sup> October 1925.

337 *Prágai Magyar Hírlap*, 19<sup>th</sup> August 1923, p. 1.

were banned on 20<sup>th</sup> August. The Circular strongly forbade Hungarian-language sermons in those districts where people spoke Slovak. An exemption applied only to patronage churches, in which it was allowed to serve Mass dedicated to the patron of the church, without a sermon, and the public celebration was postponed to the next Sunday. This regulation provided the opportunity for disciplinary action on clerics who celebrated the feast (from demonstrative or anti-state reasons.) It meant a fundamental change in the celebrations of 20<sup>th</sup> August as a day of Saint Stephen in the Czechoslovak Republic.<sup>338</sup> Although the new church authorities tried to accommodate to the Czechoslovak Government, they could not afford to make any radical interventions with regard to the churchgoers, who often demanded respect for the old religious traditions. The problem also partly drew attention to the complex jurisdictional relationship between the ecclesiastical and secular powers.

Following the intervention of the ecclesiastical authority measures were taken by the state authorities too. Despite the clear messages from the state, certain inertia is noticeable in the 1920s in the traditional observation of the feast in areas with a strong presence of the Hungarians, which was seen in the conditions of the new state as demonstrative sedition. Saint Stephen's day was most frequently celebrated by abstaining from work and participating in Masses, especially by older generations and women. On 20<sup>th</sup> August, people were dressed in dark/mourning clothes. The national dimension of the feast was promoted by red, white and green colours of the Hungarian tricolour "smuggled" into the ceremonies, whether in festive decoration of flowers, or as part of clothes and spontaneous singing of old Hungarian/Magyar songs during the Mass. The most famous one was: *"Where are you King Stephen, Hungary wishes for you, dressed in mourning clothes, crying for you."* It happened often that in the end the Hungarian national anthem was sung, which was considered by the authorities as a provocation followed by police investigation. Such cases were regularly reported on by the contemporary press.

Participants expressed their attitude by active participation on commemorations. It was usual on this day that those people attended the solemn Mass and showed national solidarity and respect for the rich history and culture who usually would not go to church.<sup>339</sup> Both the Masses and newspaper editorials were marked by a festive spirit, while celebrations did not take place in Catholic churches only. Representatives of other religions also expressed their reverence in their own churches, which suggests the superconfessional understanding of the feast's "national" status. In some locations, where the population had initially been suspected of sedition (as the people had refrained from working and spent the whole day in a festive mood) the police authorities, after examining the situation, came to the conclusion that it was more or less the inertia of longstanding traditions with no intention to provoke.<sup>340</sup>

338 Slovak National Archives (hereinafter SNA), f. Krajinský úrad (Regional Office, hereinafter KÚ), c. 268, 15104/30 prez., Prez. KÚ – ON, 7<sup>th</sup> August 1930.

339 See for example: SANR, f. Policajný komisariát v Komárne (Police Commissariat in Komárno) (hereinafter PK KN), Box 7, Prez. PR in BA for PK KN, 19<sup>th</sup> April 1927.

340 SNA, f. KÚ, c. 268, 827 prez. OÚ Šala – Prez. KÚ, 8<sup>th</sup> October 1931; OÚ Šala – Prez. KÚ, 23<sup>th</sup> August 1931; 48. prez. 1930 OÚ v DS – Prez. KÚ, 22<sup>nd</sup> January 1930; 1034/1930 prez. OÚ NR – Prez. KÚ, 22 August 1930.

The excursions into history in the days around 20<sup>th</sup> August published regularly in Hungarian community's newspapers in Czechoslovakia pointed out the great moral and historical significance of the Saint Stephen tradition as well as Hungarians in the region. The festive editorials brought historical-philosophical discourses on the importance and contribution of Saint Stephen for the region, for Hungarians and the whole of Europe, sometimes even with the current political undertone highlighting the belief in a better future for all Hungarians. The characteristic features of all editorials on Saint Stephen were idealisation, generalisation and an update of history. Using arguments from the past and depicting the current situation from a martyr-like position was compatible with the contemporary discourse in Hungary: *"Not one nation has been tested as much as the Hungarian one – by Tatars, Mohács, Trianon... How much longer? When will the West give a helping hand, where will there be peace among the "sons", when will those nations indulge rest to Hungarians, which they defended against Turks and Tatars, which would not be so strong today, if we did not bleed for them and for our faith."*<sup>341</sup>

On 20<sup>th</sup> August 1931, the church authorities made another vigorous intervention against the celebrations of Saint Stephen again, which actually supplemented the above-mentioned circular letter of 1919. Since 1931 there was a general ban on commemorating Saint Stephen on this day in patronal churches declaring that Slovakia had already become a part of the new state and therefore there was no reason to celebrate the feast which the Catholic Church celebrates on 2<sup>nd</sup> September celebrated on a different day: *"Only in Hungary it is exceptionally celebrated on 20<sup>th</sup> August and because it is seen as a national holiday of Hungarians."*<sup>342</sup> The issue of the regulation gave rise to discussions on the topic of Saint Stephen, but by that time people had largely abandoned going to the celebrations. It was more about the fact that many Hungarians in Slovakia gradually dropped acts to provoke the state authorities. They wanted to avoid being accused of irredentism and subsequent discrimination and retaliation. In contrast to the past, when there were demonstrative acts in public places, there was a gradual strengthening of the importance of private spaces, for example connected with listening of the radio broadcasting from Hungary.

There are two characteristic lines for historical interpretation, in this period already linked, of Saint Stephen's significance: the "secular" one and the "religious" one. The particularly important lines of the "secular" arguments are represented by the information emphasising Stephen's "cultural and integrating mission" which involves mentions of "reconciliation of nations", "civilising Hungarians", "integration into a multinational community", "advertising and promoting Western European culture" or "building the state". Hungarians were situated in the centre of events and thematised as those who preserve the message of Saint Stephen. The regular mentions of the need and importance of the annual commemoration of the feast were intended to conserve and maintain the transcendent bond between the ruler – the protector and "his nation". The necessity to preserve "the unity of the divided nation" was emphasised as well.<sup>343</sup>

The religiously oriented reasoning points to the historical contribution of Saint Stephen in the area of "Christianity" or "the creation of church administration in Hungary" which

341 *Hiradó*, 21<sup>st</sup> August 1931, p. 3.

342 SNA, f. KÚ, c. 30, Circular of the Diocese of Spiš No. 3, 1931.

343 *Prágai Magyar Hírlap*, 19<sup>th</sup> August 1928, p. 1; *Hiradó*, 20 August 1932, p. 1.

brings heavy-weight arguments supporting the celebrations in Catholic churches also after 1918. The arguments of the Hungarian opposition press in Czechoslovakia against the attempts to prohibit the celebrations were based for the most part on the interpretation of the canonical law, supplemented with enumeration of Stefan's principal acts to the benefit of the church in the territory of present-day Slovakia.<sup>344</sup> The reasoning supported by confession-related arguments was often associated with an image of Czechoslovakia (and in particular the "Czechs") as an "anti-Catholic element".

Following Georg Schöpflin's taxonomy of modern mythology focussed on the area of Central Eastern Europe,<sup>345</sup> mentions of the "civilisational mission" of Saint Stephen indicate affinity with the myth of being chosen and the civilisational mission. The articles analysed reproduced the image of Hungarians as being the followers blessed by God. On the contrary, the Czechoslovak discourse was dominated by accenting the "Czech democratising mission in the region", often politically instrumentalised in the arguments against the "backwardness" and "lack of democracy" in the former political system. There is also an important moment arising from the arguments related to the "myth of the civilisational mission" of self-presentation as preservers of the mission's achievements. The area where this "mission" took place (the Hungarian Kingdom) was contextualised in the Hungarian discourse as the "ideal unity of the state" canonised through the "territorial myth" that met all the historical, geographical and economic conditions, and its residents, entrusted by God and would defend it to the last man. In this regard, Saint Stephen was represented as the "second founder of the homeland".<sup>346</sup> In contrast, the Slovak territorial myth defined Slovakia – the "territory between the Danube and the High Tatras – as a national territory of Slovaks.

In connection with the Saint Stephen cult a representation of Hungarians appeared often in the contemporary Hungarian discourse as "defenders of the Carpathian Basin and Western culture" (i.e. Western Europe) against dangers coming from the east ("barbarians"). Typically, there were stories about Hungarians (Ugrians) depicted as soldiers bleeding in the battle for their homeland and for the preservation of Christian Western Europe.<sup>347</sup> The stories of "defenders" were related to the moment of "betrayal" in which the "ungrateful minorities" and "greedy neighbours" were blamed, which occurred in a "life-threatening" extreme situation, such as the military setbacks and the monarchy's failure in World War I. The moment was used with a relatively strong emotional potential by the irredentist propaganda in Hungary. For example, the "motives of betrayal" are known, depicted in propaganda as a "shoved knife" or "arrow in the back". It is important to add that Slovaks were presented in these stories as participants in the St. Stephen's tradition and were not specially excluded from the story of coexistence. The representation of a Slovak as a "younger brother" continued to persist in the Hungarian discourse. The rapid changes in the field of culture, but also poor support for the cult after 1918, were interpreted as a result of the Czech influence. Together with some of the representatives of the Treaty (especially France), Czechs were deemed responsible for the "greatest injustice", i.e. the violent disintegration of the country and the nation, which greatly resembles the "myth of injustice" ("unfair peace"). The following statements were made in the same sense: "*no national*

344 For example: *Hiradó*, 18<sup>th</sup> August 1931, p. 2.

345 According to: SCHÖPFLIN, Nations, pp. 79-98.

346 *Komáromi lapok*, 21<sup>st</sup> August 1923, p. 3

347 *Prágai Magyar Hírlap*, 20<sup>th</sup> August 1927, p. 1.

*calendar contains so much pain.*<sup>348</sup> The bans on remembering the “national history” and “traditions” were also explained from the traumatic, martyr sense: *“Is this the image of our destiny with no more feasts? Our mission in this country is the only daily work and rush, taxes, military service, transfer of assets, observing tanks turned against Budapest, Prague getting richer at the cost of our assets, plenty of civic burdens and responsibilities – but is there no place for our peace, joy, rights? (...) Why don’t they allow just one lucky day for those who have had bad luck for so long?”*<sup>349</sup> The call stressing the necessity of remembering the “glorious past” and preserving the “mental and cultural unity of all Hungarians” also helped to keep the faith in the “historic role of the Hungarian nation” in the Carpathian Basin.<sup>350</sup> Commemoration of the “national history” was closely linked with the current requirements of the community: *“Therefore, it is our duty to protect the language of the Hungarian nation, the land of the Hungarian farmer, workshops of the Hungarian industrialist, job opportunities for the Hungarian worker, and it is our duty to fight a government trying to take away the language and rights from the Hungarian nation, inconsistently with the constitution and other laws.”*<sup>351</sup> Saint Stephen was represented as a transcendental guarantor of the right for an “inevitable” change. The factor of an expected change (“rectification”) openly proclaimed by the Hungarian state-controlled propaganda, was also emphasised by the instrumentalisation of Saint Stephen as a universal “symbol of peace and stability” in the Carpathian Region.<sup>352</sup> The timelessness of his work is also pointed out in articles such as “Saint Stephen – a Modern Politician Forever”.<sup>353</sup>

From the perspective of the contemporary politics of the Hungarian Christian Socialist Party in the Czechoslovak Republic, the representation of the Saint Stephen tradition mentioned above was also associated with the theory of autochthonous population of Slovakia. Main principle of that theory was based on the premise of inevitable political cooperation among the “autochthonous nations”, forming a political bloc of Hungarians, Slovaks and Germans, in Slovakia. Some Hungarian politicians had an ambition to compete with the centralist parties under the slogan of Slovak autonomy.<sup>354</sup> From a long-term perspective, however, the Budapest government had to coordinate cooperation in order to re-establish the integrity of Hungary and used Saint Stephen as the main symbol that represented their ideology. In this context, some mentions even appeared in the press of a special status of the territory of “Slovakia” in the early Hungarian state.<sup>355</sup> In the inter-war period and especially the late 1930s years, arguments emerged about the “necessary unity” in the Carpathian Basin, in addition to the thesis of natural partnership. For example, the well-known Hungarian writer Pál Szvatkó emphasised the timeliness of the idea of cooperation in Central Europe. He put it into a relation with the past – a unified independent country between the two superpowers (Germany and Byzantium.) He connected it with a recent situation in 1938, when two totalitarian regimes established in Germany and the Soviet Union threatened the region. As he wrote: *“In Europe, independ-*

348 *Prágai Magyar Hírlap*, 20<sup>th</sup> August 1931, p. 1.

349 *Prágai Magyar Hírlap*, 21<sup>st</sup> August 1925, p. 1.

350 See: *Prágai Magyar Hírlap*, 19<sup>th</sup> August 1928, p. 1; *Hiradó*, 20<sup>th</sup> August 1932, p. 1.

351 *Hiradó*, 20<sup>th</sup> August 1926, p. 1; *Prágai Magyar Hírlap*, 20<sup>th</sup> August 1926, p. 1.

352 *Prágai Magyar Hírlap*, 20<sup>th</sup> August 1927, p. 1.

353 *Prágai Magyar Hírlap*, 20<sup>th</sup> August 1937, p. 3.

354 *Prágai Magyar Hírlap*, 20<sup>th</sup> August 1927, p. 1.

355 In this case, the concept of “Slovakia” meant the Principality of Nitra.

ent Central Europe is conceivable, and even necessary, because it guarantees a harmony of the Danube's nations."<sup>356</sup> In contradiction to those ideas, opposite tendencies represented by the propositions of "magyarisation" and "thousand-year oppression" were advanced in the "Slovak national story" and accented by a large part of the Slovak political spectrum. In contrast to the traditional image of Slovaks as loyal, hard-working, uneducated and God-fearing people, the anti-Hungarian representations of "Slovak-rebel" or "Slovak-victim" were pushed forward in Czechoslovakia. From this position, especially topics such as the "fight against national oppression" emphasising the "right to revolt" and "need for change" were preferred subsequently, linked by content with the "myths of military virtue". Like it is well-known elsewhere, a number of historical events or persons gained the "national qualities" attributed to them by the romanticising Czech and Slovak nationalist literature. The disappearance of the state and the system symbolising the "national oppression" was emphasised as the "only" and "natural" solution. Similar arguments appeared in the Hungarian discourse too. However, the role of the "traditional enemy" was primarily contextualised by the Vienna Court and, eventually, the Habsburg family. After the First Vienna Award, again, the 20<sup>th</sup> day of August was for a short time an official public holiday in the territories annexed to Hungary.<sup>357</sup> However, after the end of World War II, Czechoslovakia was restored, and so there were no public commemorations of the Saint Stephen cult in Slovakia for a few decades. After the War, changes took place in neighbouring Hungary too. After several attempts to overleap the cult, the celebrations were moved to the private sector. Only since 1988 – on the 950<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the king's death – 20<sup>th</sup> August returned to public places as the Feast of Saint Stephen. Following the collapse of the Soviet bloc, it became again one of the most important state and national holidays of Hungarians. The cult of St. Stephan, which at the end of dualism stressed the unity of the Hungarian state-forming nation and was meant as a counterweight to Austrian influence in the Monarchy was gradually transformed into a purely Hungarian national holiday, unifying transcendently the divided Hungarian community. Celebrations of Saint Stephen have been associated with the celebration of Christian and national traditions which were jeopardised, from the perspective of the Hungarian national and Christian discourse, by the emergence of the Czechoslovak "national state." The celebrations after 1918 can be considered a relatively homogenous narrative which, however, had several invariants which were promoted depending on the political possibilities, while at the level of state policy in Hungary and Czechoslovakia, fundamentally different attitudes were enforced. As in other cases, the enforcement of one's "own" interpretation of history relates to the on-going political struggles and stories of history which served to legitimise particular policies. This has largely been shown nowadays as well, not only in the case of the Saint Stephen statue in Komárno, but also in the preamble of the new Constitution of Hungary in force since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012.

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356 *Prágai Magyar Hírlap*, 20<sup>th</sup> August 1938, pp. 1-2. After the First Vienna Award, some leaflets emerged in the territory of Slovakia calling for unity "under Saint Stephen". See: HETÉNYI, Martin. *Slovensko-maďarské pomedzie v rokoch 1938 – 1945* [The Slovak-Hungarian border in 1938 – 1945]. Nitra : UKF, 2009, p. 166.

357 For this period, see: KUNT, Gergely. Irredenta kultusz és háborús propaganda az iskolai ünnepeken, 1939–1944. In *Korral*, November 2008, Issue 33, pp. 41-61.

## Chapter 8

## FINIS PRESSBURG. GERMANS IN BRATISLAVA 1918 – 1948

*Michal Schvarc*

Since its promotion to a free royal town in 1291 until the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, Bratislava<sup>358</sup> was strongly linked with the German ethnic group. It were the German guests (*hospites theutonici*), who were granted extensive privileges from King Andrew III., and so they somehow pre-determined the ethnic picture of the city of Pressburg for several centuries, practically almost until modern times.<sup>359</sup> After 1918, when Germans irretrievably lost their dominance, their representatives liked to use this fact as an argument in order to maintain, or to win, minority rights for their community. The advent of the modern age, industrialisation, migration for employment, different demographic development of various ethnic groups, and, from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, increasingly intensive “magyarisation” played a key role in the change of the city’s ethnic composition.

While in 1851 the Germans constituted an absolute majority with their 74.6 % share of the population, about 60 years later in 1910, only 41.9% of Bratislava’s inhabitants reported the German language as their mother tongue. The negative demographic trend has continued throughout the following decades (in 1940 only 20.09%)<sup>360</sup> and in some way it signalled the end of German Pressburg. Indeed, the actual causes of such a decline were primarily the major political and social changes in 1918 and particularly in the period from 1944 to 1946, when a large part of Bratislava’s Germans were evacuated (under the supervision of SS) to the territory of the failing Third Reich, or they were expatriated by the Czechoslovak government into different zones of Germany occupied by the Allies.

During the three decades bounded by the breakthrough years of 1918 – 1948, Bratislava’s German population went through some dramatic changes and perhaps even more dramatic development. Who would have predicted it at the beginning of 1918 that Bratislava would become a part of four different state establishments, that in such a relatively short time it would go through six different regimes, and that just a torso would be left of the 30,000 German community by early 1949 which would be afraid to claim allegiance to their roots? Nobody, most probably, since none of Bratislava’s Germans, whether from the working class or from the middle class, could have imagined the end of Old Hungary. When more and more rumours about the inclusion of the city to the emerging Czechoslovak Republic began to appear in October and November of 1918, many inhabitants of Bratislava, including Germans, were engulfed by stress, concern, and even panic. The foundations of thousand-year-old Old Hungary were shaken, and with them, the existence of

358 The city was renamed to Bratislava in 1919 after the establishment of Czechoslovak Republic. Its former name was Prešporok (in Slovak), Pressburg (in German) or Pozsony (in Hungarian).

359 MAREK, Miloš. *Cudzie etniká na stredovekom Slovensku* [Foreign Ethnic Groups in Medieval Slovakia]. Martin : Matica slovenská, 2006, p. 73.

360 ZEMKO, Milan. *Občan, spoločnosť, národ v pohybe slovenských dejín* [The Citizen, Society, Nation in the Moving Slovak history]. Bratislava : Historický ústav SAV in the Prodama publishing house, 2010, pp. 170-173.

the old "Preßburgers". At the same time, they did not give up the hope that this would be merely a temporary solution, and that the final verdict concerning the city's future would be spoken by the Versailles Peace Conference participants. This partly explains the behaviour of the local Germans and reflects their behaviour in the period when Bratislava became a part of the Czechoslovak state. So how did they respond to the onrushing events that they could hardly affect and what did determine their initially negative attitude to the affiliation of the city to a foreign state which they viewed as an occupation?

Before we answer these questions, we think it is necessary to at least briefly outline the plight in which the Germans lived in Upper Old Hungary, or Slovakia, and especially in Bratislava at the end of 1918. This will allow us to understand the causes of their reserved and cold attitude towards the Czechoslovak Republic. During the existence of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Bratislava's Germans were a part of a more than two million of the German community of the Transleithanian part of the monarchy. The German community did not form a compact geo-demographic whole, but lived in more or less closed enclaves, or in the diaspora scattered almost throughout the whole country. These geographical circumstances caused contacts among various linguistic islands to be very limited, and mutual communication stagnated. As the German population living in Old Hungary did not constitute an ethnically homogeneous whole (they were immigrants from almost all regions of Germany), there were no bonds of nationality-based mutuality. They kept their identity isolated in individual enclaves, while relations with the mother country were gradually fading as they increasingly identified themselves with their "new homeland". In such a situation, the German ethnic group had no opportunity to create a defence mechanism to help resist the concentrated "magyarisation" at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century. On the other hand, it should be noted that Germans, and especially their intelligentsia, voluntarily abandoned their nationality, because belonging to the "natio hungarica" was associated with social upswing and prestige: *"To be Hungarian meant to be the master in the non-Hungarian ethnic group. And, vice versa – what is more important in the renationalisation process – the efforts to achieve social upswing (...) meant to become a Hungarian."*<sup>361</sup> Only a number of convinced idealists were engaged in the national movement. Most members of the German population retired to passivity caused by the actions of authorities against the *"smallest suspicion of Pan-German agitation"*.<sup>362</sup> In this regard, an exception confirming the rule were the Transylvanian "Saxons" (in 1910 there was almost a 230-thousand community), who had their own government until 1876, maintained their own school system, their "own" church and in addition to that, they received moral and financial support from the united German Reich.

With their lukewarm attitude to their own roots and weak resistance to "magyarisation" tendencies, the Germans of Bratislava joined the majority of Old Hungary's Germans. Like in other enclaves, in Bratislava we can also encounter a particular phenomenon - local

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361 SVETOŇ, Ján. Od maďarizácie k reslovakizácii Bratislavy [From Magyarisation to Reslovakisation of Bratislava] In *Slovenská Bratislava I. Sborník príspevkov k dejinám hl. mesta Bratislavy*. Bratislava : Unia, 1948, p. 273.

362 Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes Berlín (hereinafter PA AA), R 9 148. Správa nemeckého generálneho konzulátu v Budapešti z 20. 10. 1914. [Report of the German Consulate in Budapest, Hungary from 20<sup>th</sup> October 1914.]

patriotism, mixed with a relatively strongly developed Hungarian patriotism. The local Germans firstly felt to be “Preßburgers”, and only then German-speaking Hungarians. In these circumstances, the national movement, represented particularly by the Germany-Hungarian People’s Party (Deutsch-Ungarische Volkspartei) could only barely take roots in such an environment.<sup>363</sup> Only a very small circle of people, grouped around Samuel Frühwirth were involved actively for the benefit of national affairs. Lawyer Samuel Frühwirth, child of a Burgenland teacher and daughter of one of well-known and influential winegrowers, became the soul of the German associational and political life in 1920s. Similarly like for a small group of other activists, the challenging the territorial integrity of Kingdom of Hungary before 1918 was an absolute taboo for S. Frühwirth. However, after the inclusion of Bratislava in Czechoslovakia he was among the first to understand what perspectives were opened for the local Germans due to pervasive political and social changes.

But let us get back to the hectic days of autumn 1918 when it was possible to feel something dramatic in the air and when more and more frequent rumours about the city becoming a part of the “Czech state” gave rise to anxiety among German and Hungarian populations. German language press, representing the views of a large part of Bratislava’s bourgeoisie, felt a double threat in the spreading rumours: the loss of the “beloved homeland” and the acute risk of “absolute slavisation” of the city. In this context it is certainly interesting that the German public protested against both Czechoslovak and Austrian territorial aspirations. Besides fiery confessions towards Budapest, something unknown until then appeared German newspapers in Bratislava – namely the nationalist tones. Under the impression of generally widespread proposition of nation’s self-determination, Bratislava’s Germans started to demand, in addition to staying in Hungary, greater respect for their nationality rights. *“In the future, we do not want to lose anything more from our identity, from our peculiarity, we ask for strengthening and developing our national customs, our German language and dialect!”*<sup>364</sup> For this purpose, Germans began to establish their own political associations. Initially, most of the Germans in Bratislava began to unite on the platform of the Bleyer’s German-Hungarian National Council (Deutschungarischer Volksrat), seeking to maintain the territorial integrity of Hungary. Later, the Brandsch’s German National Council of Hungary (Deutscher Volksrat für Ungarn) started to play first fiddle with the Social Democrats in the foreground, which did not insist principally on inviolability of the national territory, and demanded cultural autonomy, the right of peoples for self-determination within the meaning of the Wilson’s 14 points, as well as democratisation of the situation in the country. Despite the existing differences, the two streams merged in mid-December 1918 to the German National Council for Bratislava (Deutscher Volksrat für Preßburg), demanding in the name of the Germans of Western

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363 JAHN, Egbert K.. *Die Deutschen in der Slowakei in den Jahren 1918 – 1929. Ein Beitrag zur Nationalitätenpolitik.* Munich – Vienna : Oldenbourg, 1971, p. 31. The German Consulate General also saw the cause for the Party’s weak establishment in the “unholy terror” from the Hungarian government.

364 RESCHAT, Gertrud. *Das deutschsprachige Politische Zeitungswesen Preßburgs. Unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Umbruchsperiode 1918/20.* Munich : Verlag Max Schick, 1942, p. 80.

Hungary “full self-government, unification under the administrative region with the German Land Chief as their leader”.<sup>365</sup>

Proclamations of a similar kind still did not yield the desired results. Neither did a protest of a delegation of representatives of the “autochthonous” population at the Czechoslovak ambassador in Vienna, Vlastimil Tusar, against the planned occupation of the city by the “Czech troops”. The new state power was not going to give up Bratislava, and this attitude was built mainly on geopolitical and economic grounds.<sup>366</sup> This resulted in the gradual resignation of a large part of Bratislava’s Germans on the situation, although many hoped that this would only be a temporary condition, and that the city’s final destiny would be determined by the Entente powers at the Peace Conference. This was definitely the reason why the German National Council for Bratislava stood strongly against the idea of military defence as it had been enforced by some Hungarian circles.<sup>367</sup> Thanks to this, the transfer of the city into the hands of the Czechoslovak troops on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1919 took place without any serious incidents. In the eyes of the German-Hungarian minority, the mood in the city on New Year’s Eve was gloomy: “*The streets are eerily quiet, one can just see a light now and there, but there is neither an illuminated night club, nor a merry laughter. There is no sound of Gypsy music coming out of the cafes Berlin, Deák, Reduta, Štefánia (...) No whooping or yawling of people cheering on their way home. All sit until the midnight with their families to await the New Year.*”<sup>368</sup> These were roughly the feelings which the new era of life for the German part of Bratislava’s population started with.

The relationship of the “Preßburgers” with the Czechoslovak state power was by far not ideal. The mere fact that they felt “pulled-out from the womb of the Hungarian homeland” against their will and became a part of the new state system resulted in a rather dangerous and explosive potential. The words of Samuel Zoch, the Governor of Bratislava, about the sincere enthusiasm of the local Germans over “*the fall of the Hungarian nobility*” or the freedom won “*which they never dreamed of*”<sup>369</sup> from the beginning of 1919, must be therefore taken with a pinch of salt. After all, the state authorities at that time contributed only marginally to alleviate the initial reserved attitude or even opposition of the Bratislava’s German community to the new Republic. In an attempt to legitimise the Czechoslovak’s Republic claim to Bratislava, the authorities did not hold too much respect for the non-Slovak population in their actions, despite the fact that the Minister Plenipotentiary for Slovakia Vavro Šrobár on his ceremonial arrival to the City gave a promise to the German delegation about respecting their minority rights in the areas of education and culture. A sharp controversy was incited by the Government’s regulation about renaming Pressburg to Bratislava which contained a clause prohibiting the translation of the official

365 PA AA, R 9 152. Brandschova nedatovaná správa o činnosti Nemeckej národnej rady pre Uhorsko [The Brandsch’s Undated Report on the Activity of the German National Council of Hungary], see also RESCHAT, Das deutschsprachige, p. 82.

366 JAHN, Die Deutschen, s. 40.

367 DUIN, Pieter van. Die Deutschen Bratislavas und ihre Einverleibung der ČSR 1918 – 1919. In *Historické štúdie*, 2004, Vol. 43, p. 174.

368 GAMBRINUS, Josef S.. Der schicksalschwere Silvestertag 1918 In *Heimatblatt der Karpatendeutschen Landsmannschaft in Österreich*, 1994, Vol. 42, Issue 7-8, p. 14.

369 HORVÁTH, Vladimír – RÁKOŠ, Elemír – WATZKA, Jozef (eds.). *Bratislava, hlavné mesto Slovenska. Pripojenie Bratislavy k Československej republike roku 1918 – 1919* [Bratislava, the Capital of Slovakia. Annexation of Bratislava to the Czechoslovak Republic in years 1918 – 1919]. Bratislava : Obzor. 1977, pp. 164, 177.

name in minority languages, and, especially, about exclusive use of Czech and Slovak in official communications. The latter measure, combined with mass layoffs of public and civil servants, mandatory attendance at welcoming the Slovak government and banning the distribution of press from Budapest and Vienna led to a general strike on February 12<sup>th</sup> 1919 which had a bloody end. Even the promotion of Bratislava to capital of Slovakia did not have a positive response in the German press: "*Bratislava's Hungarians and Germans will be glad to renounce their honour that Bratislava is the capital, because in such case they will not be exposed to such slavisation.*"<sup>370</sup>

The relationship local Germans had with the state power, or the state as a whole, did not changed too much in the coming years. Although they were gratified by the fact that the Republic allowed them to do what had previously been impossible, they regarded little harassments from the authorities as a kind of discrimination, compared to the state-building "Czechoslovak" nation. This was also the reason why they did not identify themselves internally with the new state and remained mostly indifferent to it, unlike to Hungary, which they saw as "their beloved homeland". This was shown in bare nudity in autumn 1938, when a part of Bratislava's Germans, influenced by the Nazi ideology and propaganda, loudly demanded Anschluss (connection) of the city to the German Reich.

As we have already mentioned, the Czechoslovak Republic opened up previously unknown horizons for the Germans, not only those in Bratislava, but all over Slovakia. They could set up their own political parties, associations or other public corporations under the Articles 7 to 9, Catch I., of the Peace Treaty of Saint-Germain-en-Laye, and the State Language Act, to have their own schools and use their mother tongue in official communications, but only in case when they reached a 20% quorum in the district of jurisdiction. All of this resulted in a revitalisation of the German school system, which had been on the verge of extinction at the end of 1918, of political life, and, last but not least, of growing national consciousness. In any case, it was not a straightforward, but a lengthy, complicated, and very sinuous process affected by two essential factors: the Hungarian and the German nationalist (Sudeten-German, or German Reich) influence. During the 20 years of Czechoslovakia's existence, Slovak Germans were unable to extricate themselves from these effects which ultimately led to the fact that they wasted a good opportunity for the drafting their own political agenda.<sup>371</sup>

After 1918, despite apparent "slovakisation" attempts by the new regime, Bratislava gradually became the centre of German political and national life. As the administrative centre of Slovakia, Bratislava had all pre-requisites for that. Political entities were created here to a much greater extent than in other language islands. There were parties, or political associations, operating either at the municipal or the national level. After the initial phase at the turn of 1918 and 1919, when a number of political groups were created and then dissolved rapidly<sup>372</sup> new political parties were established, or branches of Sudeten German parties, mainly in the context of the upcoming parliamentary elections

370 DUIS, Die Deutschen, p. 180.

371 KOVÁČ, Dušan. Slovenskí Nemci, česko-slovenské vzťahy a česko-slovenský štát [Slovak Germans, Czech and Slovak relations and Czech and Slovak state]. In *Česko-slovenská historická ročenka 2002*. Brno : Masarykova univerzita, 2002, pp. 133-134.

372 For more details see: JAHN, Die Deutschen, pp. 92-94.

in April 1920. Examples include the Farmer's Union (Bund der Landwirte – BdL), the German Democratic Freedom Party (Deutsch-demokratische Freiheitspartei – DDFP) and the German National Party (Deutsche Nationalpartei – DNP). In addition to these parties there were also German Social Democrats as candidates for the German-Hungarian Social Democratic Party (Deutsch-Partei ungarische Sozialdemokratische). At the end of 1920 the German-Hungarian social democracy fell apart and its German part joined the German Social Democratic Workers' Party (Deutsche sozialdemokratische Arbeiterpartei – DSDAP).<sup>373</sup> At the end of the 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s this unquestionably varied diapason was joined by Carpathian Germans (Karpattendeutsche Partei) and Sudeten-German Nazis - the German National Socialist Workers' Party (Deutsche Nationalsozialistische Arbeiterpartei – DNSAP). Here we can also count in the German section of the Hungarian Provincial Christian-Socialist Party. Moreover, from June 1920 there was the Slovak branch of the German Political Office (Deutschpolitische Arbeitsstelle-Zweig Slowakei) in Bratislava which became independent in August 1922 and was transformed to the German Office for Slovakia (Deutsche Geschäftsstelle für die Slowakei). It was led by S. Frühwirth with a bold ambition "to unite all Germans in Slovakia regardless of party affiliation"<sup>374</sup>, to defend their interests and fight for their rights. They did not succeed in fulfilling the main purpose - to achieve political unity of Slovak Germans. This was true both for the whole territory of Slovakia, as well as Bratislava.

This statement is fully confirmed by the results of the Bratislava City Council election in the period between 1923 and 1931. The votes of Germans were scattered virtually across the entire political spectrum. Final sums indicate that a large number of Germans voted for non-German parties (mainly the Provincial Christian-Socialist Party and the Agrarians) and German parties, and utilitarian electoral conglomerates did not receive the appropriate support from them. A brilliant example in this respect is the group called the United German Parties (Vereinigte Deutsche Parteien, which stood as candidates in the 1923 election), or the German Electoral Communion (Deutsche Wahlgemeinschaft, stood in the 1927 and 1931 elections), backed up by the Deutsche Geschäftsstelle für die Slowakei and was shaped as a coalition of nationally-oriented parties. In 1923 it won three, and in 1927 and 1931 two mandates, representing only a fraction of the German electorate's votes. The German Social Democracy did not end up any better (1, 2, 2 mandates).<sup>375</sup>

And here we arrive to the problem indicated above; to the futile efforts of the nationally-minded politicians to break Germans out of the influence of the Hungarian minority parties, or rather from under the Hungarian influence as such. Bratislava was the place where they faced this phenomenon the most. Neither the establishment of the German Reich's consulate in the city in 1922 helped too much to change the status quo, nor increasingly abundant visits from the Sudetenland and Germany. After almost eight years had passed since the annexation of Bratislava and this fact was also noticed by one of the many Reich's activists who had the following impressions from his visit to the city:

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373 JAHN, Die Deutschen, p. 116; see also: KOVÁČ, Dušan. *Nemecko a nemecká menšina na Slovensku (1871 – 1945)* [Germany and the German Minority in Slovakia (1871 – 1945)]. Bratislava : Veda, 1991, p. 71.

374 Central Archives of the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Slovakia (hereinafter CA ECAC), fond (hereinafter f.) Karl Eugen Schmidt, carton (hereinafter c.) 1.

375 *Zprávy mesta Bratislavy* [News of the City of Bratislava], 14. 9. 1931, p. 9 and 5. 10. 1931, pp. 6-7.

“[H]ungarian is still today considered the language of intelligentsia, so it often happens that if a conversation begins in German, as it is becoming livelier, changes into Hungarian, until one stops suddenly, realising having shown disrespect for the guest from the Reich.” He commented on the deeply-rooted Pressburgian local patriotism: “Everyone feels as a Bratislavan in the first place, no matter what their nationality is. Almost no national feeling can be observed among the Germans.”<sup>376</sup> True, the Germans alone could not have been blamed for their indifferent approach to their own ethnicity. At that time the Hungarian influence was still too strong to be eliminated by them. This is evidenced by a case from the beginning of 1928, when a nationally conscious group led by S. Frühwirth tried to achieve the inclusion of ten, mostly German, Bratislavan football clubs in the German Football Association in the Czechoslovak Republic (Deutscher Fußballverband in ČSR - DFV). These efforts were made in vain. The final failure was caused by frenzied activities and cluttered intrigues of the Hungarian Football Association (Magyar Labdarúgók Szövetsége) and also by some misunderstanding on the part of the DFV leaders who saw the Hungarians as suitable allies against the Czechoslovak Football Association.<sup>377</sup> What was worse, the case became a political issue which started to be discussed in Bratislava’s press. The criticism was directed against the German Office in Slovakia which morally supported the efforts of the clubs.

In this context the question of cooperation with the Hungarian minority was raised once again. After negative experiences, the grouping around S. Frühwirth unequivocally declared for a strict departure from the Hungarians in both political and cultural areas. On this occasion, the Reich’s Consulate in Bratislava, monitoring closely the trends in the German community in the city, reported to Berlin: “The local German-conscious circles are therefore also against the return to Hungary and prefer the Czechoslovak state union as less evil.”<sup>378</sup>

The efforts of a small group of nationally conscious politicians were initially also supported by the state power since their activities were helpful for its intention to distract the Germans in Slovakia from the interests of the Hungarian minority’s political leaders. In other words, the state power did everything to weaken the impact of Budapest’s revisionist policy in Slovakia. From the perspective of state authorities, creating favourable conditions for the restoration of the German school system appeared to be an ideal way to achieve this goal. The results of the regime’s condescending policy would soon be reflected in Bratislava too. While in the school year of 1918/1919 there was not a single German-language school facility (with the exception of three German-Hungarian religious schools), about 15 years later, the local Germans had 10 lower elementary schools, two higher elementary school, one grammar school, and 13 secondary vocational schools available. In the school year 1933/1934, both types of elementary schools were attended

376 PA AA, R 60 218. Report by H. Timpe from July 1926.

377 PA AA, R 73 919. Paper by Deutsche Geschäftsstelle für die Slowakei „Šport v Bratislave [Sports in Bratislava]“ from 29<sup>th</sup> February 1928. Cf. BOBRÍK, Miroslav. *Nemecká menšina na Slovensku a jej telovýchovné a športové aktivity v rokoch 1918 – 1945* [The German Minority in Slovakia and Its Activities in Physical Education and Sports in the years 1918 – 1945]. Bratislava : Slovenská technická univerzita v Bratislave, 2006, p. 50.

378 PA AA, R 73 919. Report of Consul G. Schellert to the Foreign Office from March 1st, 1928.

by almost 4,500 students of German nationality,<sup>379</sup> representing 28.6 % of the total number of school children of this age.

Although German schools in Bratislava experienced an unprecedented boom during the 20-year history of Czechoslovakia the beginnings were more than embarrassing. The Germans themselves adopted a relatively reserved stance on the possibility of introducing their mother tongue as a language of instruction. There were even cases when such an option was explicitly rejected. The German Evangelical Lyceum can be given as an example which used German as the language of instruction from 1920. This attitude, however, made the Germans lose face before the state authorities, since their actions virtually sabotaged the demands of their own political leaders. Because of that, the local press also became involved in raising awareness to promote German schools, arguing that *"this is about turning away from a foreign language and coming back to the mother tongue"*.<sup>380</sup> The German Cultural Union also helped with elimination of the dismal condition in the area of education (Deutscher Kulturverband - DKV). In autumn 1920, the Union's Presidency decided to extend the scope of action to Slovakia, where the first local group was established in Bratislava in May 1921, and S. Frühwirth became its chairman. DKV did not limit their activities only to the "capital" city, but quickly spread throughout the region. In 1924, the primary organisation in the Bratislava County merged in the Union I - Bratislava.

The Union's activities did not only bring about positive effects. Through DKV's teachers and officials from the Sudetenland the aggressive German nationalism got into Slovakia. Local Germans, especially the older generation, initially reacted dismissively to the foreign "import". They often perceived the Union's activists as "outlanders" or "freethinkers", and expressed their antipathy along those lines. But the younger generation, or the nationally sentient ones, were caught by these ideas and supported the DKV's activities wherever possible. The Cultural Union gradually became an instrument for the nationally oriented Germans, and especially for a group from which the Carpathian German Party (Partei Karpatendeutsche - KDP) developed at the end of 1920s. The Party's central office was based in Bratislava, and S. Frühwirth became the leader.

Initially, it seemed that the new political entity would not have a long life. Failure in the elections to the provincial council in December 1928 was not a happy omen. The officials were slightly encouraged by the results of the parliamentary elections in October 1929 (almost 17 000 votes), but the general election in Bratislava put them back to the harsh reality (1713 votes and two seats). Despite these fluctuations, the main proposition of the Party's agenda - to achieve unity of Germans living in Slovakia and Ruthenia on the political basis - gradually became established. It became the topic of the day mainly in the mid-1930s when increasing numbers of the local Germans let themselves be intoxicated with the economic and political "successes" of Hitler's Third Reich. At that time the control of the party was taken over by the "Sudetes" around Franz Karmasin, while the influence of S. Frühwirth and his orientation was pushed more and more into the background. After the parliamentary elections in May 1935, the Party was transformed practically to

379 Archives of the City of Bratislava (hereinafter ACB), f. Mesto Bratislava (MB; City of Bratislava), p. 2357, 152026/daň (tax)-1933.

380 RESCHAT, Das deutschsprachige, p. 91.

a branch of the Sudeten German Party (Partei Sudetendeutsche - SdP), which was also confirmed by election (held in Bratislava) of Konrad Henlein as the KdP's leader in early November of the same year.

The result of this political entity's activities among Bratislava's Germans was that nationalistic tendencies began to be manifested in every moment with an increasing intensity. This was not solely about them as this phenomenon concerned other nationalities too (mainly Slovaks and Hungarians). The rise of nationalism in the German community was indicated by growing numbers of votes for KdP. While in 1935 the Party convinced 4,907 voters, in the general election in June 1938 it won 13,283 votes (which is almost a 37% increase), which made it the strongest independently standing political party in Bratislava.<sup>381</sup> The outcome of the election was also affected by the euphoria of the Anschluss of Austria, which lured many Germans, until then thinking soberly. And so KdP was able to generate a campaign slogan: "*Preßburg ist deutsch und wird deutsch (Pressburg is German, and will be German)*". The consequences of such propaganda arrived very soon: in the hot autumn of 1938, the German population of Bratislava and surrounding communities loudly demanded annexation to the Reich. The calling "*Heim ins Reich [Home to the Reich]*" escalated after the publication of the text of the Munich Agreement, and particularly after the occupation of Petržalka by Wehrmacht, but Adolf Hitler, because of the strategic and political reasons, finally decided not to take this step which was a huge disappointment for the local Germans.<sup>382</sup>

The atmosphere in Bratislava in those days was captured very vividly by Slovak writer Zuzka Zguriška: "*In city trams, you could suddenly hear German like in Berlin's Unter den Linden. But what surprised me the most, even people who I knew were Slovaks, asked for tickets in German. And they even started to use the language to speak among themselves. Whole Bratislava was cheerily echoing with German. I really had not known before that there were so many Germans here. They spoke loudly on purpose, and when they met each other, they screamed with all their strength 'heilhitler'. Women whom I knew - and who I had thought were Slovaks - pretended not to see me. They began to dress in dirndels and men showed the world their hairy legs from under short leather pants.*"<sup>383</sup> The spectacular evocation of a city with German character did not bring about the much desired "Anschluss", yet it fitted into a newly formulated mission of Bratislava in the Reich's intentions - to be the outpost guard of Germanism at the imaginary gateway to Eastern Europe.

For their intentions, the leaders of the Deutsche Partei (DP), successor of the KdP and the only permitted Germans' organisation in Slovakia, got willy-nilly into conflict with the Hlinka's Slovak People's Party (Hlinkova slovenská ľudová strana, HSĽS), which after the declaration of autonomy of Slovakia on October 6<sup>th</sup> 1938, usurped all political power in the territory. And so in the years 1938 - 1945 Bratislava became the arena where two fundamentally different concepts stood against one another: the Slovak one, complemented

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381 It was the coalition of the Slovak Unity for the Czechoslovak Republic and Democracy which won, but it consisted of seven political parties. See: BYSTRICKÝ, Valerián. Politické rozvrstvenie spoločnosti na Slovensku vo svetle obecných volieb roku 1938 [Political Stratification of the Society in Slovakia in the Light of the 1938 General Election]. In *Historický časopis*, 1992, Vol. 40, Issue 4, p. 453.

382 KOVÁČ, Nemecko a nemecká, pp. 136-138.

383 SALNER, Peter et al. *Taká bola Bratislava* [Such was Bratislava]. Bratislava : Veda, 1991, pp. 20-21.

with a Christian dimension, and the German one, based on the vision of a binational German-Slovak city.<sup>384</sup> Using the time's Nazi terminology, Bratislava was a place of a fierce "Volkstumskampf" (nationality struggle).

The struggle for the character of the city flared in the autumn of 1938, and initially it was the Karmasin's party which was bowed to. DP representatives in the Government Commissioner's advisory board acted confidently (knowing that Bratislava remained in Slovakia only thanks to the patronage of A. Hitler) and for successful cooperation they required "to take the ethnic key into consideration in all areas of the city's administration".<sup>385</sup> In case of non-compliance with the requirements, they threatened to sabotage the cooperation. In this situation, the Slovak party wanted to help itself by preparing a census in secret, which was held on December 31<sup>st</sup> 1938. Since the census was accompanied by a number of technical and organisational shortcomings and the number of Germans in Bratislava neared the 20% quorum (21.81%), F. Karmasin refused to recognise the results as binding. The autonomous government had to retreat from such massive pressure. The same thing happened in the case of a lay-off of employees of German nationality from three of the largest companies in Bratislava at the turn of 1938 and 1939.

However, the shoe was more and more on the other foot after declaration of Slovak independence under the German "protection". Bratislava, then officially the capital of an independent state, had to take a more distinctive Slovak face. From that moment, the DP became more defensive and the relationships among Germans and Slovaks, at least at the political level, began to deteriorate rapidly which was in stark contrast to the German-Slovak friendship proclaimed by the propaganda. This is evidenced by a number of complaints preserved to date filed by the "Karmasins" about the performance of the city's Government Commissioner. They blamed him for corruption, cronyism, opulent preference of Slovaks in assigning posts in self-government's bodies, preferring Slovak companies in awarding public contracts, and misappropriation of municipal funds. Government commissioner of the city, Belo Kováč, backed by the Slovak government and President Jozef Tiso, strongly rejected the allegations. This got so far that the DP demanded introduction of the Prague model of city management, i.e. that a German executive mayor should be assigned to the Slovak mayor of the city. Despite the abundant support from the Reich's advisor for internal administration the proposal found no recognition on the Slovak side.<sup>386</sup>

An especially great indignation in the DP circles was caused by noticeable "slovakisation" of the city in the form of monolingual names (in Slovak of course) of state or public administration's offices. There were also some reservations concerning distribution of exclusively Slovak official forms. There was also complaint about the discrimination against the German name for Bratislava - Pressburg in official communications. Quite nat-

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384 ENGEMANN, Iris. *Slovakizácia Bratislavy v rokoch 1918 - 1948. Úvahy na príklade mestskej rímskokatolíckej obce* [Slovakisation of Bratislava in the years 1918 1948. Essays on the Example of the Roman-Catholic Community]. (unpublished manuscript).

385 Slovak National Archives (hereinafter SNA), f. 116-7-4/66-67. Letter of DP representatives to B. Kováč from 8<sup>th</sup> November 1938.

386 SNA, f. Úrad predsedníctva vlády (ÚPV) [The Office of the Government's Prime Minister], p. 192, 296/1942, š. 228, 1601/1941, š. 191, 5728/1941, f. 116-22-5/144-145, Bundesarchiv Berlin (hereinafter BArch) f. R 142/16.

urally, the permanent complaint of the “Karmasins” had some response in Berlin as well. The Security Service of the Reich’s SS leader (Sicherheitsdienst - SD) was so interested in the complaints that they were included in the secret summaries on the internal political situation in the Reich, in “Meldungen aus dem Reich”. In the report we read: “*Although Bratislava is still a bilingual town by law signs on public buildings are not always bilingual. Pressburg’ is not written on any of the labels, there is just the Slovak name everywhere (...)* New Slovak officials speak German very poorly and in many cases they show no effort to learn it, in order to satisfy the German population. There is a similar situation in the municipal notary office. For example, a local employee S. said to one of German clients who had asked for a bilingual form, because he was not speaking Slovak: Go to the DP, there will tell you what is in the form.”<sup>387</sup> It may be considered that some cases were deliberately exaggerated in the complaints; however, the overall intolerant trend of minority policy of the Slovak Republic<sup>388</sup> allows us to state that these reports reflected the reality of that period. The census which took place on December 15<sup>th</sup> 1940 also became a reason for discontent. In connection with the census, the DP leaders suspected the state authorities of using unfair practices, namely the purposeful movement of people of Slovak nationality into the capital city and a quick registration of temporary addresses of residence for these people. However, they were not able to support these allegations with evidence. When the press published the preliminary results of the census in Bratislava on Easter 1941 (the proportion of Germans was 22.17%), F. Karmasin strongly protested against them, arguing that “*the official result is not consistent with the real situation*”.<sup>389</sup> Due to the backlash of the “leader of the German national group”, the Slovak government abandoned the global presentation of the ethnic relations in various locations. The *Lexikon obcí Slovenskej republiky* [Lexicon of Slovak Republic’s Communities], published in 1942 bears witness to this as no data on ethnicity can be found in it.

Aryanisation was yet another problem in the relationship between Slovaks and Germans in Bratislava. In the effort “*to maintain the German character of the city*”<sup>390</sup> the DP demanded a proportion on the state-organised theft of the Jewish possessions to correspond to the percentage of the German community in the total population. This categorical demand encountered not only opposition from Slovaks, but that of Dieter Wisliceny, advisor on the Jewish issue. F. Karmasin even made his complaints to Heinrich Himmler, the almighty SS leader, but did not achieve a lot. As of the beginning of 1942, Germans in Bratislava had acquired 82 out of 170 facilities demanded,<sup>391</sup> which definitely did not

387 BOBERACH, Heinz (ed.). *Meldungen aus dem Reich. Die geheimen Lageberichte des Sicherheitsdienstes der SS 1938 – 1945*. Band 7. Herrsching : Pawlak, 1984, pp. 2346-2347.

388 HETÉNYI, Martin. *(Zjednotená) maďarská strana na Slovensku 1939 – 1945. Politické pomery maďarskej [The (Unified) Hungarian Party in Slovakia, 1939 - 1945. The Political Situation of the Hungarian Minority after the Vienna Award as Reflected in the agenda of the Slovak State Apparatus]*. Nitra : Univerzita Konštantína Filozofa v Nitre, 2011, p. 36.

389 SNA, f. Alexandrijský archív, microfilm II. C 895, 5 295 464. Karmasin’s letter to Deutsches Auslandsinstitut from 18<sup>th</sup> April 1941.

390 BArch Ludwigsburg, L 162/4290, Bl. 1312. Interrogation of F. Karmasin before the investigating judge on December 1st, 1969.

391 PA AA, R 100 610. Paper of the DP’s Main Economic Office on the Progress of the Aryanisation Process in Slovakia from March 1942.

exceed the limit of 22 % which had been determined radically before by the Party's leaders.

A growing dispute between the Cabinet and the DP about the issue of the capital city was also projected in the dispute about the future of the Bratislava castle ruins. F. Karmasin and his officials perceived the planned reconstruction of the historic building and construction of a university town, or a new Government's quarter, as further serious encroachment threatening the city's German character. By intervening at Reich's ministries or Party's offices, they finally attained that the project in preparation was to be discontinued. The issue also appeared in the agenda of discussion held between delegations of the two states in which Slovak Prime Minister Vojtech Tuka made an obligation in front of German Foreign Affairs Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop that the castle would still stand as the city's symbol.<sup>392</sup>

The said conflicts in the area of politics must have been certainly transferred to the relations among "ordinary" people of both nationalities. As a result their mutual perception changed as well. Slovaks started to see Germans as an extraneous element, and vice versa, Germans were also afraid of Slovak supremacy in the form of forced assimilation. Logically, the paths of both communities were divided. However, not all Germans, as well as not all Slovaks, were supportive of the confrontational politics of their political representatives but their voices drowned in the sea of extreme nationalism on the both sides. The outbreak of the Slovak National Uprising only confirmed this development. While the Germans of Bratislava greeted the arriving troops of Wehrmacht and Waffen-SS with exultancy and flowers, the vast majority of Slovaks, regardless of their political opinions, saw them as unwelcome guests.

At that time, the Red Army was quickly approaching the boundaries of the Slovak state and the Reich commanded evacuation of all German civilians. With regard to the progress of the front Bratislava was the last to be engulfed by an evacuation wave. At the beginning people were not eager to leave. In early February 1945, only 1,500 people left voluntarily and the situation remained the same in the coming weeks. Only when the Soviets attacked in late March were the Germans incited to evacuate. But the sudden rush of masses of people, together with a lack of transportation capacities, caused general confusion and the organised evacuation changed to running away in panic. People were leaving the city by various means of transport, most often on foot.<sup>393</sup> It cannot be established exactly how many Germans left Bratislava at the end of the war. The exact figures are only available from the beginning of March 1945 - 9,100 people. At the time of the arrival of the Red Army, on April 4<sup>th</sup>, 1945, only about one quarter (6,700) of Germans remained in the city, mostly the elderly ones.<sup>394</sup>

In post-war "Slovak and Slavic" Bratislava, there was no place for Germans, nor Hungarians, who were collectively accused of collaborating.<sup>395</sup> Those who remained, or

392 PA AA, R 61 269. Rintelenov záznam z 23. 4. 1943. [Rintelen's Record from 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1943.]

393 KOVÁČ, Dušan. *Vysídlenie Nemcov zo Slovenska (1944 - 1953)* [Resettlement of Germans from Slovakia (1944 - 1953)] Prague : Ústav pro soudobé dějiny AV ČR, 2001, p. 20.

394 SCHVARC, Michal. Evakuácia nemeckého obyvateľstva z územia Slovenskej republiky v rokoch 1944 - 1945. [Evacuation of the German Inhabitants from the Territory of the Slovak Republic in 1944 - 1945]. In *Historický zborník*, 2005, Vol. 15, Issue 1, p. 91.

395 ENGEMANN, Slovakizácia Bratislavy, p. 10.

returned home after the War, were interned in concentration camps. In Bratislava, three such camps were created: in Petržalka, Patrónka and the Vajnorská Street. At the end of 1945, the number of people of German nationality detained was almost 3,900. Along with internment they lost their Czechoslovak citizenship and all possessions. After the decision of the Allies at the Potsdam Conference, they waited for resettlement to one of the zones of occupied Germany, in poor health conditions, and often exposed to violence from supervising personnel. A large part of them were resettled until the end of 1946. Priests or members of monastic orders were no exceptions. The rest designated to be transported was expatriated by the state authorities in the so called additional resettlement. After that, 5,908 Germans remained to live in Bratislava in the beginning of 1949, and in the census held on March 1<sup>st</sup> 1950, only 1,115 people claimed German nationality.<sup>396</sup> Practically, this meant the end of Pressburg - of German Bratislava. The period which started in the autumn of 1938 came to its end. Many members of the German community could hardly realise at that time that their active support for the Deutsche Partei's policy marked the beginning of their end.

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396 VADKERTY, Katalin. Nemci a Maďari v Bratislave v rokoch 1945 – 1948 [Germans and Hungarians in Bratislava between 1945 and 1948]. In *Kapitoly z dejín Bratislavy*. Bratislava : Kalligram, 2006, pp. 487-488; GABZDILOVÁ-OLEJNÍKOVÁ, Soňa – OLEJNÍK, Milan. *Karpatskí Nemci na Slovensku od druhej svetovej vojny do roku 1953* [Carpathian Germans in Slovakia from World War II until 1953]. Bratislava : SNM-Múzeum kultúry karpatských Nemcov, 2004, p. 154.



## Chapter 9

IMPACT OF THE VIENNA ARBITRATION ON AGRICULTURE,  
INDUSTRY AND INFRASTRUCTURE IN SOUTHERN  
SLOVAKIA*Miroslav Sabol*

The positive developments in the Slovak economy during the economic boom of the second half of 1930s began to be hindered by constitutional and political changes in Central Europe of that period. The prologue to the complete disappearance of the inter-war Czechoslovakia was a short “interlude” of the so-called Second Republic of 1938 – 1939. The extortion of Nazi Germany and the appeasement policy of the European powers led to the Munich Agreement and the Vienna Arbitration in September and November 1938. Under these agreements made “about us without us”, the Czechoslovak Republic had to abandon the border areas to the neighbouring countries, which resulted in a politically, economically and militarily powerless state, left to the “mercy” of Hitler’s Germany. Slovakia lost about a quarter of the territory, as well as a quarter of its population. At the same time, however, Slovakia was given more space for independent development through the declaration of Slovak autonomy (involving own government and the Diet) on October 7th 1938. The “dark side” of the autonomy was the gradual development of a totalitarian system. All of the preceding Slovak political streams were abolished, or “voluntarily included under the wings” of the Hlinka’s Slovak People’s Party (Hlinkova slovenská ľudová strana, HSĽS). Autonomous Slovakia in truncated Czechoslovakia gradually “woke up” into the difficult economic reality. The “bitter taste got even bitter” due to the consequences of the Vienna Award in November 1938. The secession of the southern territories with a total area of more than 10,565 square kilometres in favour of Hungary had a great impact on the further developments of the economy. Hungary came forward with far-reaching territorial claims. After unsuccessful bilateral negotiations, in which claims were made to abandon even Bratislava and Nitra, and after France and Great Britain showed no interest to pander in the next act of Czechoslovakia’s liquidation, the Hungarian requirements were roofed by Germany along with Italy. The Hungarian annexation represented 8.4 % of the Czechoslovak Republic’s territory with 852,332 inhabitants.<sup>397</sup> In addition, there were 182 communities annexed, which were purely Slovak or included a Hungarian minority. In Košice the numbers constituted 62.4 % of Slovaks, 54.9 % in the district of Rožňava, 67.6% in Lučenec, 68,3 % in Levice, and in the district of Vrábľe as much as 71.7%. As soon as three days after the Hungarian occupation the annexed territory’s military commander ordered immediate displacement of all Czechs and Slovaks, who had moved there after 1918, and so 100,000 more people lost their homes. Through dismantling of the Czechoslovak interwar political

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<sup>397</sup> Devin and Petržalka were passed to Germany. In the north of Slovakia, an area of 226 square kilometres was passed to Poland with a population of 4,280. See: BAKA, Igor. *koch 1939-1940* [The Political System and Regime of the Slovak Republic in 1939-1940]. Bratislava : Vojenský historický ústav, 2010, p. 23.

system, territorial losses and the declaration of independence, the economic position of Slovakia acquired a new dimension. With the gradual decomposition of the socio-political system, authoritarian elements grew stronger in the state's economic policy. As a result of the constitutional changes, Slovakia gained its own economic ministries and important competencies in various areas of the economy. They brought a substantial expansion of the space for making independent decisions concerning the country's economic development. However, this was not very fortunate in many cases. In that period it was the political turmoil which had the greatest impact on agriculture.<sup>398</sup>

The Munich Pact was detrimental to Bohemia and Moravia. However, the territory taken by Germany did not constitute as much important food reservoirs as the Slovak southern regions annexed to Hungary. In the southern districts detached, Slovakia lost more than 1/3 of arable land (38.8 %).<sup>399</sup> The loss of usable area in southern Slovakia, with a high soil rating concerned the Slovak land of the highest quality which had been considered already before arbitration in the interwar period as the pantry of Czechoslovakia. The arable land was used to grow mainly cereals, followed by root crops and fodder, but there was also a great percentage of industrial plants and vegetables. Wheat losses accounted for 52 %, up to 70 % of natural land for growing maize, sugar beet growing lost 42 % of its areas, 34 % of barley with high-quality brewing varieties and 32 % of rye.<sup>400</sup> If we take into account that the average yield per hectare on the fertile Danube Plain was much higher than in other areas of Slovakia, the percentage representing quantity was much worse. There was a simple equation that a smaller territory had to feed more people.<sup>401</sup>

In Žitný ostrov (the Great Rye Island) in the area of Nové Zámky the Slovak fruit-growing industry lost the main base. While in case of traditional Slovak fruits (apples, pears, cherries, plums) the losses were estimated at 22 – 28 %, in the case of nuts at 37 %, and apricots as much as 61.7 %. All enterprises concerned with growing warm-climate types of fruit such as melons, peaches, cherries and chestnuts remained in the territory severed. Along with apricots all of the above were cultures which could not be grown in the more northern parts of the country due to inadequate natural conditions. The same was true for warm-climate vegetables, especially tomatoes, peppers and root crops. The losses of individual cultures were quantified in more detail by the Czechoslovak Export Institute.

398 ČIERNA-LANTAJOVÁ, Dagmar. *Podoby česko-slovensko-maďarského vzťahu 1938 – 1949 (Východiska, problémy a medzinárodné súvislosti)* [Faces of the Czech-Slovak-Hungarian relationship 1938 – 1949 (Background, Problems and International Context)] Bratislava : Veda, 1992, pp. 11-12; HALLON, Ludovít. *Zmeny orientácie hospodárskej politiky na Slovensku 1938-1939 a vznik Slovenského štátu* [Changes in the Orientation of the Economic Policy in Slovakia in 1938-1939, and the Creation of the Slovak State]. In BYSTRICKÝ, Valerián – MICHELA, Miroslav – SCHVARC, Michal. *Rozbitie alebo rozpad?* Bratislava : Veda, 2010, p. 175; PRŮCHA Václav et al. *Hospodárské a sociálne dejiny Československa 1918 – 1992*. 1. Díl období 1918 – 1945 [The Economic and Social History of Czechoslovakia in 1918-1992. Part 1 period 1918 - 1945] Brno : Doplněk, 2004, p. 427; SABOL, Miroslav. *Elektrifikácia v hospodárskom a spoloč 1938 – 1948* [Electrification in economic and social life of Slovakia 1938 – 1948]. Bratislava : Prodama, 2010, p.13.

399 *Štatistická príručka slovenského priemyslu* [Statistical Handbook of the Slovak industry]. Bratislava : UZSP, 1938, p. 14.

400 *Ibid*; CAMEL, Samuel. *Slovenská dedina (1938 – 1944)* [Slovak Village (1938 – 1944)]. Bratislava : Veda, 1996, pp. 8-9.

401 Slovak national archives (hereinafter SNA), fond (hereinafter f.) Obchodná a priemyselná komora Bratislava [The Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Bratislava] (hereinafter OPK B), carton (hereinafter c.) 54. Návrh obrody v poľnohospodárstve na Slovensku.[Proposal for a Renewal in Agriculture in Slovakia.]

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According to the Institute, the area sown with cereals was reduced to about 40 % of the original area, the area of legumes diminished by 53%, and the area sown with commercial and industrial plants diminished by 50 %.<sup>402</sup>

In the field of animal production, Slovakia lost more than 30 % of horses, about 32 % of beef cattle, about 25 % of sheep and more than about 24 % of pigs and 18% of goats. As far as quantity and financial loss is concerned, the greatest shrinkage occurred in pork. Breeding pigs was least demanding and most widespread in the southern and lowland areas. Out of 1,185,095 pigs 287,040 went to Hungary. This represented more than twice the losses in beef cattle.<sup>403</sup>

The forest lands surrendered constituted 10.6 % of the total forest area in Slovakia, which were mostly oak forests on plain lands in the districts of Moldava, Rožňava and Rimavská Sobota. Within the old borders, the forest land had been 36 % of the total area, after the arbitration it rose to 38 %. Within the new borders 1,469,570 hectares of forest land remained, which represented an area larger by 276 248 hectares than arable land.<sup>404</sup>

The tobacco industry in interwar Czechoslovakia was a thriving industry. After 1938 as much as 87 % of areas under crops remained in the Hungarian territory. Tobacco cultivation dropped from 6976 hectares to a little less than 900 ha. In the Slovak Republic there were tobacco factories for production and processing of tobacco in Spišská Belá, Banská Štiavnica, Zvolen, Bratislava, Smolník, and in Košice, which was the only factory passed to Hungary. Tobacco was stored, sold and dried in Nové Zámky, Komárno, Levice, Lučenec Rimavská Sobota, Veľký Tarkán and Nitra. The storehouse in Nitra was the only one which remained in Slovakia. From more than 700 communities where tobacco was grown, 95 were left in Slovakia, producing 1,500 tonnes compared to 14,000 tonnes in the territory annexed. Tobacco worth 60 million Slovak korunas was left in storehouses. The biggest producer of tobacco was the Central Administration of the Catholic Church's Estates, which in fact lost all its tobacco fields on the lands in Nové Zámky, Košice and Levice.<sup>405</sup>

From 30 vocational schools of agriculture providing education in the Slovak territory before 1938, 10 remained in Hungary. These schools were specialised, for example, in the teaching of vine cultivation. By 1945 only two had reinstated their activity.<sup>406</sup> The loss in Slovak agriculture was estimated at more than 10 billion Slovak korunas. However, as a result of the Vienna Arbitration the agricultural capital of Slovakia decreased from 38 billion Czech korunas at the end of the first Czechoslovak Republic to the 26 billion Slovak korunas in 1941.<sup>407</sup> It was also attributable to poor crops in 1938. In reality, the losses in Slovak agriculture were much larger and notable than those reflected in the percentage, or financial figures, because the parts annexed to Hungary provided continuous supplies for Czechoslovakia and functioned as the grain storage. The high standard of crop produc-

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402 Štatistická príručka, pp. 14-15.

403 Štatistická príručka, pp. 13-14.

404 Ibid, p. 14; CAMEL, Slovenská, p. 9.

405 SNA, f. Ministerstvo hospodárstva [Ministry of Economy] 1938-1945 (MH in short), c. 1 Tobacco Companies in Slovakia. SNA, Collection MH, c. 748. Spracovanie tabaku v roku 1938 [Tobacco Processing in 1938], Kampaň 1938/1939 [The Season of 1938/1939].

406 SNA, f. Ministerstvo školstva a národnej osvety [Ministry of Education and National Awareness] 1938-1945 (MSNO in short), c. 19. Odborné školy [Vocational Schools].

407 PAVLÍK, Vladimír. *Hospodárska štruktúra Slovenska* [The economic structure of Slovakia]. Bratislava, 1948, p. 23.

tion in this region was associated with high-quality breeding and dairy industry. Different types of agricultural cooperatives and advanced farmer associations with nearly a century of tradition concerned the associated thousands peasants whom they unburdened from worrying about sales, and provided their farms with industrial technology. 631 such cooperatives remained in the torn-away territory, of which 160 operated in purely Slovak communities. The Union of Economic Cooperatives lost 13 large storehouses worth 60 million Czech korunas and the Trade Association of Manufacturing Cooperatives lost its branches in Košice and Tornaľa.<sup>408</sup>

In 1937 – 1943 the industry all over Slovakia, including the southern regions, achieved increased production by as much as 63 %, and regarding the number of active people, the increase was of around 51 %. When considering the developments in the previous period, namely in the 1920s, the quantitative shift mentioned was a success. However, in most industries the production growth was mainly a result of maximising the use of or extending the existing enterprises. New business licenses in factory industry in a number of about 170 during the year examined concerned mainly small and medium-sized operations.<sup>409</sup>

The industry recorded losses, especially the food industry. The cut-off territories included major sugar factories, mills and other food-processing plants. The biggest loss was calculated in the milling industry although 1938 was one of a few good years for the Slovak mills. This resulted partly from the fact that, on the one hand, commodity prices were firmly fixed, and, on the other hand, the development of prices of finished goods was left to free competition, which increased revenues of mills. After the economic crisis in the 1930s, it was exactly the year of 1938 suggesting a recovery of the milling industry. However, the Vienna Arbitration put this resort back into even deeper recession. In the beginning of 1938 there were 2176 mills operating in Slovakia. 346 mills were taken by Hungary, which comprised high-capacity mills with a daily production share accounting for nearly 50 % of the total production. Before the Arbitration, the quantity of wheat processed accounted for 499,323.6 tonnes, and after the Arbitration the number dropped to 244,642.4 tonnes. The decline in production continued steadily during the war as well, because mills lost their markets in the Czech lands, where they mostly exported their products.<sup>410</sup> A similar situation occurred in the sugar industry. Before the Vienna Arbitration there were 10 sugar refineries in Slovakia. In the 1937 – 1938 season, these plants processed 60,985 wagons of sugar beet and produced 89,097.5 tonnes of sugar. The largest sugar refineries in Šurany, Sládkovičovo-Diosek, Pohronský Ruskov-Oroska were passed to Hungary. Their share in the total production amounted to less than 40 %.<sup>411</sup> The situation in the brewing industry was difficult even before 1938. The capacity

408 TILKOVŠZKY, Lóránt.  
VSAV, 1972, p. 91.

[Southern Slovakia in 1938-1945]. Bratislava :

409 Index priemyselnej výroby. [Index of Industrial Production.] In *Slovenské hospodárstvo v prvom polroku 1944. Správy Ústavu pre výskum hospodárstva*. Bratislava, 1944, p. 37; Zakladateľský ruch [The Founding Bustle]. In *Slovenský priemysel*. Bratislava, 1940, pp. 66-74; PRŮCHA, Hospodářské, pp. 530-531.

410 Štatistická príručka slovenského priemyslu, p. 38.

411 SNA, f. Ústredne združenie slovenského priemyslu [The Central Association of the Slovak Industry] 1921-1950 (UZSP in short), c. 9. Cukrovarníctvo na Slovensku po roku 1938. [Sugar industry in Slovakia after 1938.]; SNA, f. MH, c. 231. Memorandum Piešťanského cukrovaru. [Memorandum of the Piešťany Sugar Refinery.].

of the breweries was used at only 50 %, which was caused by increased consumption of beer from competing breweries in Bohemia and Moravia. Some companies used their capacity at 75 – 80 %, while others only at 20 %. Of 14 breweries, only one in Košice was taken by Hungary but that one contributed to as much as 18.4 % of the total Slovakia's production of beer, used its capacity at 80 %. It was one of the most productive breweries in Slovakia. The brewery was owned by the company of Bauernebel, which in the summer of 1938 completed an extensive modernisation of the plant. The power of propulsion engines was increased to 350 kW, which was twice the power of the interwar period. The latest technology comprised equipment such as dual digester, wort cooling in modern vats, countercurrent coolers, steel-reinforced concrete fermentation vats and metal and steel-reinforced concrete tanks. The number of bottling machines increased to 19 and the average production climbed to 416 bottles per hour. The Hungarians were not capable of managing this excellently prepared brewery in a professional way and therefore they gradually attenuated the production.<sup>412</sup> An interesting situation occurred in dairies and sheep cheese (bryndza) production facilities. Milk production fell by one-third than before 1938. This related with the surrendering of large dairy plants in Košice and Nové Zámky. The situation was different in sheep cheese production facilities. Slovakia lost a big sheep-cheese processing plant of M. Schneller and Sons in Lučenec. The Sheep Cheese Syndicate in Turčiansky sv. Martin and important plants in Horehronie, Liptov and Orava stayed in Slovak hands. Hungary, however, gradually began to push out Slovak producers mainly from the Austrian markets. The sheep cheese production in the Lučenec plant doubled, but as the production was expanded, the quality fell sharply. It was a matter of course, as the sheep cheese lumps were replaced with a cow's product. The price of the Hungarian sheep cheese oscillated between 7 to 8 Czech korunas per kilogram as opposed to genuine Slovak sheep cheese, with almost doubled price of 11 to 13 Czech korunas per kilogram. Despite the decline in exports a new customer was found - the army, consuming nearly 60 % of the Slovak production.<sup>413</sup>

Slovakia was obliged to abandon a significant proportion of ore mining, magnesite mining, leather industry, printing industry, and about a third of gas companies, to Hungary. There were huge losses in the energy industry. The only major rubber plant remained in the territory annexed to Germany.<sup>414</sup> Slovakia lost several major plants in mining and metallurgy. This concerned all of the Slovak black coal mines in Čakanovce in Košice. There were enormous losses in the mining and processing of magnesite. The occupation caused Slovakia to lose an abundant quarry in Jelšava and a factory in Košice. The greatest loss of about 30 % was in the case of iron ore, and as much as 80 % in the case of antimony ore.<sup>415</sup>

In the same period, as far as employment was concerned, the biggest employer was the metal industry with more than 22,000 people. It belonged to the strategic sectors

412 SNA, f. UZSP, c. 54. Správa o košickom pivovare Bauernebel. [Report on the Bauernebel Brewery in Košice.]; Štatistická príručka slovenského priemyslu, p. 36.

413 SNA, f. Obchodná a priemyselná komora Banská Bystrica [The Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Banská Bystrica] (OPK BB), c. 691. Bryndziarenský syndikát v Turčianskom sv. Martine. [The Sheep Cheese Syndicate in Turčiansky sv. Martin.]

414 Matador in Petržalka (Bratislava).

415 Štatistická príručka slovenského priemyslu, p. 38.

of the Slovak industry. The industry's draught horses were the new armament factories for ammunition, cannons and infantry weapons in Dubnica nad Váhom and Považská Bystrica. The 15.4% loss in this strategic industry was relatively small. Larger enterprises were mainly concentrated in central Slovakia (Považie and Horehronie). As a result of the Vienna Arbitration's decision, Slovakia lost the large Sfinx enamel plant in Filákov, the shipyard of Komárno, and smaller plants in Lučenec and Kosice.<sup>416</sup> In particular, the Komárno shipyard was regarded as the "golden egg" of the Slovak industry. In the 1930s, the entire production was taken over by Škoda in Plzeň. Until then, we can say that the plant had worked only as a repair shop. In 1938, it was a modern factory only of its type in the former Czechoslovakia. It produced tugs, towboats, steamers and tankers. Although a critical part of the shipyard's production remained in Czechoslovakia, the plant failed to meet all requirements of domestic shipping companies. The river vessels made in the Komárno shipyard did not only cruise the European waterways. Purchase orders came from overseas, South America and the Far East. However, Hungarians gradually restricted the production.<sup>417</sup> After 1938, major changes took place in the metal industry especially in export-related relationships. A great part of the products were sold to the territories surrendered following the Munich Agreement and the Vienna Award. In some cases, the exports amounted to as much as 75%.<sup>418</sup>

In chemical industry this concerned primarily the soap production plants in Košice and Levice. This was reflected throughout the war as it was a commodity in very short supply. At the end of 1938, all plants for dry wood distillation stopped production. Cutting off the railway tracks leading to Ruthenia practically made it impossible to export goods to the main business partner in Russia. The problem of how to export goods "cudgelled the brains" of many enterprises which had their business partners particularly in Russia and in the Balkans.<sup>419</sup> Interruption of road and rail routes caused difficulties not only in exports but also in supplies. The glass-making industry remained intact after the territorial changes. Slovakia did not lose a single plant. Many companies, however, had to struggle with great difficulties as soon as the first days following the territorial changes, especially in the area of supply. The glass factories in Utekáč and Katarínska Huta were completely cut off from their suppliers regarding transportation. These factories were the only ones to produce glass bulbs and radio lamps in former Czechoslovakia with 88 % of the production exported.<sup>420</sup> The paper industry was concentrated in northern Slovakia and therefore did not suffer significant losses. However, the largest plant for the production of pulp and paper was the Paper Factory, a joint-stock company (Továreň na papier uč. spol.) in Slavošovce. It was the only plant in Slovakia to produce paper rolls and corrugated cardboard, cartons, graphic and packaging papers, and various kinds of paper products. Before 1938 the plant employed over 1,800 people. In 1943, the number decreased to 999 and by the end of the war it dropped to 620. The Vienna Award had a

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416 Ibid, pp. 21-23.

417 SYROVÁTKA, Evžen. *Dopravní otázky Československa* [The Transportation Issues of Czechoslovakia] Praha, 1936, p. 365; VANĚČEK, Ján. Naše motorové remorkéry na Dunaji. [Our Motorised Tugboats on the Danube] In *Vestník pro vodní hospodářství a plavbu* č. 16. Praha, 1939, p. 150.

418 SNA, f. MH, c. 877, Slovakia's Export in 1938 - 1939.

419 Štatistická príručka slovenského priemyslu, p. 29.

420 Ibid, pp. 33-34.

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very negative impact on the overall running of the plant. The enterprise was not taken over by Hungary, unlike its subsidiary plant in Gemerská Hôrka. The cellulose production plant in Gemerská Hôrka supplied cheap soda pulp to the parent plant in Slavošovce which was needed for the production of paper rolls and corrugated cardboard. In addition to the complicated supply of the raw materials from Hungary the plant in Slavošovce faced major problems related to the tariff system as the plant had to transport all raw materials and finished products on Hungarian railways for high tariffs. The company's management decided that the factory should be moved from Slavošovce to Pohronie. The most suitable area for construction of the new plant was supposed to be in the valley of the Horn between Zvolen and Žarnovica, with plenty of raw materials, especially wood. Next to the main paper production plant a pulp mill was planned with a capacity of 40 – 50 tons of soda pulp a day. A great part of skilled workers had agreed even to move to the new region with their families. The plant's management had even drawn up plans to build worker colonies similar to the Bata's system. The project was also supported by the city officials in Zvolen, because the company of Union for the production of sheet metal had to reduce production and lay off 1000 employees. Some of them were given a promise that they would be employed at the new plant. However, the Ministry of Economy had a very negative attitude to the project. Even banks failed to guarantee the required capital in loans. Until 1945, the paper factory in Slavošovce stabilised production with great difficulty, but its subsidiary in Gemerská Hôrka experienced a disastrous impact. Until 1945 the plant reduced production of pulp by as much as 80 %. By the end of 1945, only 88 employees of 320 stayed to work there. The paper and pulp industry lost yet another modern and efficient plant of that time, also because of bad government policy.<sup>421</sup> The wood and textile industries suffered the smallest losses.<sup>422</sup>

Within the framework of the Slovak industry, the Vienna arbitration's award caused the biggest impact on the development of the energy and electricity industry. During the period of time in question, it was the backbone of the Slovak economy and sectors in the economy could not survive without its effective operation. In 1939, Budapest issued a decree under which all corporate parts of the Slovak electricity sector were taken over by the Hungarian state into its own possession, and commissioned the privately owned electricity company Győri Ipartelepek, R.T. (from Győr, Hungary) with the administration.<sup>423</sup> The company pushed forward the alternative to sell assets to third-party interested entities because it was not able to manage them effectively. In that time period there were five companies supported by the State whose task was to electrify allocated areas. The Vienna Award had a direct impact on four companies. The smallest one was on the development of the United Electricity Company of North-Western Slovakia, the United stations (Spojené elektrárne severo-západného Slovenska, SESzS), based in Žilina. As a result of other political events in Central Europe, in March 1939 the company's electrification area lost two communities Suchá hora and Hladovka, which became Polish. However, these vil-

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421 See more details: Štatistická príručka slovenského priemyslu [Statistical Handbook of the Slovak industry] In Bratislava, 1938, pp. 23-24, 33-34.

422 SNA, f. MH, c. 231. Slávošovské papierne, koncepcia novej továrne pri Zvolene. [Paper Factory in Slavošovce, the Concept of a New Factory in Zvolen.]

423 Rábske priemyselné závody, uč. s. (The Győr Manufacturing Plant, joint-stock company, GIRT in short),

lages had not yet been electrified, so the company recorded no losses on investments or income. During the year observed the supply area expanded by 19 communities in Orava and Kysuce returned to Slovakia in the autumn of 1939.<sup>424</sup> The area served by the Western Slovak Electricity Company (Západoslovenské elektrárne, ZSE) was reduced after the Vienna Award by 1,909 square kilometres, i.e. by about 25 % of the territory. Hungary received 167 communities and settlements with 164,482 inhabitants. Of these, 61 communities were electrified. ZSE lost a diesel power station in Senec. Not all communities were given to Hungary. In 1938, the communities of Devín, Petržalka and most of the community of Karlova Ves were passed to Germany. The state border crossed the Danube. On October 10<sup>th</sup> 1938 the bridgehead area on the right bank of the Danube with the communities of Petržalka (Engerau) and Ovsišťe (Haber) were occupied by the German army. The Bratislava's Municipal Power Plant signed a provisional contract with the communities of Engerau and Haber that made it possible to keep providing the occupied areas with electricity. The contract stated that the Municipal Power Plant would continue to supply electricity. The payments were to be collected by employees of the Municipal Power Plant according to the applicable electricity rates, and the bills had to be paid in Reichsmarks at an exchange rate of 8.60 RM to 100 Slovak korunas. The money collected was deposited in a branch of "Sparkasse Stadtgemeinde Hainburg, Zweigstelle Engerau" of Hainburg, to a special account, from which the money could be transferred to Bratislava upon the Power Plant's request. Until the Vienna Arbitration, only a small foreland on the right bank of the Danube which belonged to the area controlled by ZSE and included the communities of Rusovce, Jarovce and Čuňovo was supplied with electricity from the Albrecht von Habsburg's Power Station in the Hungarian community of Mosonszentjános. A part of the Záhorie region was supplied with electricity from the Western Moravian Electricity Company (Západomoravské elektrárne).<sup>425</sup> The consequences of the Vienna Award caused the greatest losses to the Southern Slovak Electricity Company (Južnoslovenské elektrárne, JSE). As much as to two thirds of the territory managed by the JSE were passed to Hungary. The losses amounted to 56 electrified communities of 93, which was 61.6 %. Hungary took from JSE 11,216 retail customers of 19,888, and 135 wholesale customers of 191 entities. The extensive curtailment of the territory and the society's assets led to considering total cancellation of JSE. However, this idea was rejected. The Company's domicile moved from Komárno to Nitra. The former main office of JSE with the state power plant in Komárno as the key energy source remained in Hungary. The gasworks in Komárno and Nové Zámky also remained in the occupied territory. Since the reorganised company of JSE lacked electric power production facility, they had to take energy from the company of ZSE, then from the power plant of the coal mines in Handlová, and partly from formerly its own power plant in Komárno, which means from Hungary. In June 1940, the supply of electricity from Komarno was stopped completely, because of poor perfor-

424 The Corporate Archives of the Eastern Slovak Electricity Company, Košice (hereinafter CA ESEC KE), f. Spisy (Records) 1929-1945 (unprocessed), Výročné správy Spojených elektrární severozápadného Slovenska (Annual Reports of the United North-Western Slovak Electricity Company, SESzS in short), 1938 - 1941.

425 State Archives in Bratislava (hereinafter SA BA), Energetické závody (Power Plants), f. ZSE, c. 1, Zápisnice správnej rady (Records of the Managing Board) 1929-1941, Výročné správy (Annual Reports) 1938-1940. Výpis platieb (List of Payments) Sparkasse der Stadtgemeinde Hainburg.

mance of the local plant on the one hand, but mainly due to the changed price increased by the new Hungarian owner, on the other hand. JSE could not accept the new price, and so compensated the loss of electricity sources by contract-based supply from the company of Baťa in Bošany. The contract was signed in 1942.<sup>426</sup> After 2<sup>nd</sup> November 1938, the Central Slovak Electricity Company based in Banská Bystrica had to abandon about a third of the supply area. The towns of Levice, Lučenec, Rimavská Sobota, and Rožňava, were incorporated in Hungary, which meant a great loss of concentrated consumption for SSE. At the end of 1938, the number of electrified communities in the territory of SSE was 164, of which 58 become Hungarian.<sup>427</sup> Due to the territorial changes in autumn 1938, the Eastern Slovak Electricity Company (VSE) lost the city Košice which had been the main centre for production as well as consumption of electricity. In Košice, there was the administrative centre of VSE and the municipal power plant which supplied the whole of the Eastern Slovak region with electricity. The uneconomical and inefficient steam power plants in Prešov and Spišská Nová Ves and several small hydro-electric power stations were not by far able to satisfy the electricity consumption in the supply region of the Eastern Slovak electrification company.

After the Vienna Arbitration, VSE was dependent on electricity supplied from Hungary, but this situation did not last long. The installation of VSE's own thermal power plant in Krompachy was nearing completion and launched operation four days before the independent wartime Slovak Republic was founded on March 10<sup>th</sup> 1939.<sup>428</sup> The original proposal for providing electricity to the Eastern Slovakia's region, promoted by the Ministry of Public Works and other governmental bodies in Prague in the 1930s, did not plan the construction of the power plant in Krompachy. The investments were to be directed to extending the operation of the thermal power plants in Uzhgorod and plans were drawn up to build a modern hydro-electric power plant in the territory of Ruthenia. It was planned to supply electricity to the Eastern Slovakia's region over a 100 kV power line from Uzhgorod. If the proposal was passed, VSE would be left without the main source of electricity after the Vienna Arbitration, as Uzhgorod and Košice were taken over by Hungary. A very complicated situation could happen in supplying electricity to Eastern Slovakia.<sup>429</sup>

The railway network built with great effort in the interwar period was interrupted in several major sections once again. Bratislava lost direct connection with Central and Eastern Slovakia on the southern route. With the Czech lands, Slovakia had a direct connection only in the section between Brno and Trenčianske Teplice. The destructive interference

426 SA BA, EZ, f. Južnoslovenské elektrárne Nitra (Southern Slovak Electricity Company, JSE), c. 7, Výročné správy (Annual Reports) 1938-1940; SNA, f. MH, c. 227. Zmluva medzi firmou Baťa Bošany a JSE z 2. mája 1942. (The Contract between the Company of Baťa and JSE dated May 2<sup>nd</sup> 1942.)

427 CA ESEC KE, Collection Spisy (Records) 1929-1945 (unprocessed) Výročné správy, Stredoslovenských elektrární (Annual Reports of the Central Slovak Electricity Company, SSE), 1938 - 1941.

428 CA ESEC KE, Collection Spisy (Records) 1929-1945 (unprocessed) Výročné správy, Východoslovenských elektrární (Annual Reports of the Eastern Slovak Electricity Company, VSE), 1938 - 1941.

429 CA ESEC KE, Collection Spisy (Records) 1929-1945 (unprocessed) Výročné správy, Stredoslovenských elektrární (Annual Reports of the Eastern Slovak Electricity Company, VSE), 1939, Collection Technická dokumentácia (Technical Documentation) 1929-1945 (unprocessed), Posudok Dr. Ing. K. Böhma ohľadne vybudovania parnej elektrárne v Krompachoch (A Review By Dr. Ing. K. Böhma Concerning the Construction of Steam Power Plant in Krompachy)

with the organism of the railway network caused by interruption of important railway lines paralysed the traffic on the transportation lines all over Southern Slovakia. Some large areas, such as all Eastern Slovakia, remained without a railway connection with other parts of the Republic, after handing over the section between Ťahanovce and Výlok. The management of the Czechoslovak Railways (ČSD) therefore sought to compensate for the disrupted freight and passenger transport using all available means, also by reinforcing bus and freight transport especially in the areas of Tisovec, Slavošovce, Muráň and Dobšiná. Hungary took over 282 steam locomotives, 51 engine-propelled machines and 5000 wagons. 35 % of the railway network and more than 1/3 motor vehicles remained in the annexed territory. Immediately after November 2<sup>nd</sup> 1938, ČSD tried to enter into toll<sup>430</sup> agreements with the neighbouring railway administrations. Hungary demanded high fees for transportation through “its own” territory. Making an agreement was a difficult process. Yet already on December 22<sup>nd</sup> 1938, toll-based transport started on the line Betliar - Plešivec (Hungarian Railways, MÁV) - Štítňik, and on 30<sup>th</sup> December, also on the line Lovinobaňa - Lučenec (MÁV) - Kalinovo. Toll-based transport was also important on the line Kostolány and Hornádom - Košice (MÁV) - Slanec, and from 6<sup>th</sup> February 1939, and, subsequently, from 8<sup>th</sup> February 1939 Kuzmice - Michalány (MAV) - Úpor. The biggest loss was the interruption of traffic over the major transportation line to Ruthenia. Practically, exports to the East were stopped. Due to the delays in concluding the toll agreement with Hungary on use of the line Kysak - Košice (MÁV) - Čop, the Government tried to solve the problem of traffic isolation of Eastern Slovakia and Ruthenia through a toll agreement with Poland. Based on this agreement, the traffic was started in mid-December 1938 through the Polish territory from transit stations of Užok, Volovec, Jasina and Medzilaborce to transit stations of Orlov - Plaveč and Popradom. The agreement on toll-based transport through Košice was entered into in early 1939, and the transport operation started in February 1939.<sup>431</sup> The road network was interrupted in many places. By the end of 1938, the Slovak government presented a new concept of construction of road networks which had been previously developed by the central government in Prague. The foundation was to link the eastern and western parts of the Republic. The plan was to build 1st-class roads in the valleys of the Váh, the Nitra and the Hron, which would be connected to a future motorway. It was also important to interconnect Slovakia and the states along the Danube. Attention had to be focused also on the area along the border with Moravia. In parallel with addressing these issues of communication, the Government’s attention was to be focused on the construction of lower-class roads, according to the slogan: “*A good road to every community*”,<sup>432</sup> The development of the road network continued with the construction of good-quality state roads, which was launched in the second half of the 1930s. The geographical orientation of the main routes, however, had to comply with the strategic aims of Germany. In 1939 – 1943 280 km of new state roads were added which demanded costs of 0.805 billion Slovak korunas. Over this period, the

430 Domestic traffic between two points within the same state, in which a part of the journey leads through the territory of a foreign state.

431 KUBÁČEK, Jiří.  
2007, p. 131.

[The History of Railways in Slovakia]. Bratislava: ŽSR,

432 SNA, f. MH, c. 1, Cestná koncepcia slovenskej vlády.

proportion of hard-surfaced roads in the total area of the road network increased from 13 % to 28 %. A positive phenomenon was the acceleration of the development of bus lines. For example, in 1942 buses transported 8.3 million passengers on lines to the length of 1829 km, representing an increase in passenger numbers from 1938 by nearly 6 million. Since 1939, the volume of traffic increased by 360 %.<sup>433</sup> The loss of southern major roads ultimately gave rise to the construction of a complex road communication network and increased the interest of passengers in personal transport.

The Vienna Arbitration mainly affected ordinary people who were taken the opportunity to feed their families. The worst impact was on Czech and Slovak small farmers who owned less than 5 hectares of land. 47,000 hectares of land remained in the territory detached which had been owned by about 1,654 families. This group of people literally fought for survival as tillage was their only livelihood.<sup>434</sup> Another group were people who lived in mostly Slovak villages and whose property was divided by the new boundary. While their houses remained on the Slovak side, the fields they worked on remained in Hungary, and they were not allowed to get to their lands. They did not understand at all the Slovak side's major arguments emphasizing the strictly revisionist and nationalist character of the Hungarian government. They were not even bothered by the attitude of the neighbouring Hungarian minority's to the Republic or the ethnically motivated reprisals against the Slovak population in the territories annexed to Hungary in 1938 – 1945,<sup>435</sup> which was understandable, if they had nothing to eat. Consequently more and more threatening letters appeared on the desks of government officials. Citizens demanded joining Hungary,<sup>436</sup> which was caused by very poor coordination by authorities responsible for providing supplies to the population. Even more puzzling was the attitude of the competent persons to citizens who remained in Hungary's territory in strategic enterprises. The Central Office for information and assistance to refugees in Bratislava provided for jobs and housing for the evacuees from the released territory. A large part of Slovak experts remained in the Hungarian territory, mainly in power stations and rail-

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433 Cestné práce za Slovenskej republiky. [Road Transportation Concept of the Slovak Government. Road Works during the Slovak Republic.] In *Skúsenosti pri stavaní ciest na Slovensku. [Experience in Building Roads in Slovakia.]* Bratislava, 1943, p. 31, Autopreprava Slovenských železníc. [Vehicle Transport of the Slovak Railways.] In *Slovenský priemysel [The Slovak Industry]*, 1943, p. 85 – 86; Cesty. [Roads.] In *Slovenský priemysel [The Slovak Industry]*, 1943, p. 91 - 92.

434 SNA, f. MH, c. 254, Poľnohospodárstvo na južnom Slovensku. [Agriculture in Southern Slovakia.]

435 MICHELA, Miroslav. Okupácia či návrat? [Occupation or Comeback?]. In *História*, 2007, Vol. 7, Issue 6, pp. 42-43.

436 From all letters, it is just enough to read one sent by the citizens of the Slovak community in Nandraž in the Revúca district: "To the Head of the Slovak Government, Dr. Tiso, Dear Dr. Tiso, Šaňo Mach, and other leaders, current leaders of the Slovak nation, Revúca district, the present day's land of Slovakia wants to be annexed to Hungary. We have got nothing to eat, and no money to buy clothes. We can truly sing Slovak songs, like this one: "Born as Slovaks we are, and starved

*half of the field in the territory of Jelšava, that means in Hungary. We can neither saw nor mow a meadow, and soon the whole village will go there to the Ministry asking you for food. Unfortunately, we have lived up to these time when we have to eat not bread but stone. So far, the whole valley of Revúca wanted to be only with not we'll burn the whole Slovakia and you'll burn there too".* State Archives Poprad, f. Četnícke a žandárske stanice [Police and Gendarmery Stations] 1914-1944, c. 5, Odpis listu predstaviteľov obce Nandraž slovenskej vláde 25. [Copy of the Letter from the Representatives of the Community of Nandraž to the Slovak Government 25<sup>th</sup>].

ways, and worked there until April 1942, which the Slovak side benefited from too. The Office first examined whether their minds were Slovak before they could be placed in certain occupations but without counting their period of service in their retirement income. Most of them were accepted for positions not corresponding to their qualifications, as beginners, or just assistants.<sup>437</sup>

Slovakia suffered a major impact of losing its southern territory that had been its grain storehouse and basis of food production. The resignation of the most fertile area of the Republic, the loss of major industrial enterprises, interruption of transportation and railway routes, as well as the violent division of the Slovak districts caused serious difficulties in economy and short supplies. In general, the living conditions of all peoples in the areas annexed to Hungary, not only Slovaks, worsened after the Vienna verdict. The official Hungarian propaganda about the southern Slovak territory claimed for many years that "it is very much ruined and exhausted with regards to economy", while knowingly concealing the higher agricultural production's quality and performance in those areas. The territorial gain, politically acclaimed, did not mean economic benefit for Horthy's Hungary. In fact, it was rather the opposite. The agrarian territory of southern Slovakia was severed from its natural market and incorporated into the vast Hungarian agricultural industry which had already been failing to cope with the growing sales difficulties. Of 400,000 tonnes of wheat produced in Southern Slovakia only 200,000 tonnes were consumed locally. It was a serious problem for the Hungarian agricultural policy to find a place for the remaining wheat and other agricultural products. What was in surplus in the Hungarian territory was lacked in Slovak storehouses. Shortly after November 1938 the Hungarian economists expressed their view that the agricultural production would have to be restricted in the "returned territory", in the interest of the mother country. Industrialisation was even less desirable for the weak Hungarian industry. It was decided that in economic terms the "liberated" areas would become merely a consumer territory. Practically, this meant that southern Slovakia, whose "owner was changed" under the Vienna Award, was given a status of a colony, and its economic situation deteriorated significantly.<sup>438</sup>

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437 SNA, f. MH, c. 11. Slovenskí zamestnanci v Maďarsku [Slovak Workers in Hungary].

438 ČIERNA-LANTAJOVÁ, *Podoby*, pp. 13-14; DEÁK, Ladislav. *Slovensko v politike Maďarska v rokoch 1938 - 1939* [Slovakia in Hungarian Politics between 1938 - 1939]. Bratislava : Veda, 1990, pp. 127-128.

## Chapter 10

SLOVAKIA AS THE SUBJECT OF POLITICAL CONTACTS  
BETWEEN POLAND AND HUNGARY IN THE NEUTRAL  
EUROPEAN STATES DURING WORLD WAR IIDušan Segeš<sup>439</sup>

The study presented discusses in detail the conspiratorial diplomatic relations between the representatives of Hungary and Poland in the neutral European countries during World War II. These contacts had two planes: the first primary plane, from the perspective of relevance and importance were the attempts by Hungarian diplomacy focused on the groups of Western Allies in the neutral countries to probe into their attitudes and the conditions for Hungary's "jumping out" from the system of Nazi Germany's allies. The second plane, which was organically linked to the first one, were the discussions about the future political order of Central and Eastern Europe and as a part of these, also the realisation of ideas about the future status of Slovakia.

The Poland-Hungarian relations in World War II were friendly, which made the communication easier, including the diplomatic (albeit unofficial) contacts. This was mainly a result of the traditional sympathies between the two nations and states, heavily exposed to the contemporary state propaganda (the notional peak were the joint celebrations after the occupation of Ruthenia), and, secondly, of the relatively generous helpfulness of the Hungarian authorities to the civilian and military refugees who left Poland after September 1939 and stayed in Hungary.<sup>440</sup> Leon Orłowski was the official Polish Envoy to Budapest until 15<sup>th</sup> January 1941, and had a strong position in the Hungarian governmental circles. The friendly approach to the Poles was grudgingly watched by Germans, who often intervened in the running of the Hungarian government. Until the occupation of Hungary by German troops in March 1944 there was an active Polish conspiratorial basis which provided for courier connection between occupied Poland and the West.<sup>441</sup>

The diplomatic contacts between Hungary and Poland intensified in the beginning of 1943. They were determined by global political and military factors. The situation at the fronts at the turn of 1942 and 1943 was not optimistic from the perspective of Nazi Germany and its allies. In that time, at the latest, alternatives were considered increasingly more often and louder in the corridors of government buildings in Budapest and states of the Axis alliance. In this context, one must strictly distinguish between historical documents from the time from testimonies or later recollections of top Hungarian politicians, written mostly in exile after World War II.<sup>442</sup> The attempts of Budapest to establish a connection

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439 From January till August 2013, Dušan Segeš was the Fellow of the Imre Kertész Kolleg Jena.

440 See more on the subject from the recent literature: ANTAL, József. *Schronienie uchodźców*. Warszawa : Fron-da, 2009.

441 KLISZEWICZ, Leonidas A. B. *Placówki wojskowej łączności kraju z centralą w Londynie podczas II Wojny Światowej. Tom I. Baza w Budapeszcie*. Warszawa – London : Adiator 1998.

442 This is particularly true of the memories of M. Kállay: KÁLLAY, Nicolaus. *Hungarian Premier. A Personal Account of a Nation's Struggle in the Second World War*. New York : Columbia University Press, 1954.

with the British, American, and, last but not least, Polish diplomats followed the turnover on the Eastern Front. The activation of Hungarian diplomacy was also influenced by the ghostly vision of the country being potentially occupied by the Bolshevik Soviet Union, or increased intervention from Germany to Hungary's internal affairs. The attitude of the Allies to these attempts was conclusive, and in terms of the Hungarian-Polish contacts and discussions on the topic of Slovakia, attention must be paid to the idea that the federation was the binding element of the talks between Hungary and Poland.

The position of the Allies to the states of the Axis was also determined by the requirement of their unconditional surrender arranged among F. D. Roosevelt, J. V. Stalin and W. Churchill during the secret conference held in Casablanca from 14<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> January 1943. However, some modifications for each allied superpower were not precluded. The consistently dismissive attitude of Great Britain to the Hungarian attempts to establish contacts changed in the beginning of February 1943.<sup>443</sup> The British Government realised that if the states of the Axis were encouraged by and in contact with the Allies – of course given that they accept the conditions of surrender with no reservations – their loyalty to Germany could be undermined. In doing so, it was clear that it was not possible to adopt a single political line for the procedure in respect of each of them.<sup>444</sup> The Soviet Government clarified its position to the contacts with the Hungarians in the memorandum submitted by Commissioner M. Molotov of 7<sup>th</sup> June 1943, in which all the plans to create a federation with the participation of Hungary were rejected, but it did not veto the contact with Hungarian emissaries, the so-called peace-feelers.<sup>445</sup>

The decision of the “big three” was authoritative for the Polish government. The embassies in the countries where contacts with the diplomatic representatives of the Axis could be considered (Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Vatican and Turkey) the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych – MSZ) were instructed to be vigilant and refuse Poland to support one state of the Axis at the expense of another one, as for example in the dispute between Hungary and Romania over Transylvania.<sup>446</sup> These instructions simultaneously betrayed the Polish government's intention to integrate the

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443 At that time, the following opinion prevailed in the Foreign Office: “We have no desire to see Hungary torn to pieces, or to penalize the Hungarian people for the follies of their government.(...) Our attitude will be influenced by the practical steps taken by the Hungarians themselves.” A record by F. Roberts from 26<sup>th</sup> February 1943, quoted according to: VERESS, Laura-Louise – TAKACS, Dalma. *Clear the Line: Hungary's Struggle to Leave the Axis During the Second World War*. Cleveland : Prospero Publications, 1995, p. 90.

444 The National Archives, Kew, Surrey (hereinafter TNA), Foreign Office (hereinafter FO) 404 (Confidential Print), Call Number 29, a wire from A. Eden to Halifax and C. Kerr, 10<sup>th</sup> March, 1943.

445 ČIERNA-LANTAYOVÁ, Dagmar. *Podoby česko-slovensko-maďarského vzťahu 1938 – 1949. (Východiská, problémy a medzinárodné súvislosti)* [Images of Czech-Slovak-Hungarian relations 1938 – 1949. (Scopes, problems and international context)]. Bratislava : Veda, 1992, p. 31; JUHÁSZ, Gyula. *Hungarian Foreign Policy 1919 – 1945*. Budapest : Akadémiai Kiadó, 1979, p. 249.

446 KOŁODZIEJ, Edward. Rola polskich placówek dyplomatycznych i konsularnych w latach 1939 – 1945. In *Władze RP na obczyźnie podczas II wojny światowej (Materiały do dziejów polskiego uchodźstwa niepodległościowego)*. In BŁAŻYŃSKI, George (ed.). *Władze RP na obczyźnie podczas II wojny światowej (Materiały do dziejów polskiego uchodźstwa niepodległościowego)*, tom I. London : Polish Cultural Foundation, 1994, pp. 798-799.

state of the Axis into federation schemes, while deliberately not mentioning specifically any potential member countries.<sup>447</sup>

### Federalism as a Connecting Point

Since the beginning of the war, the Central-European regional federation represented an important point on the agenda of Poland's government-in-exile. The most significant results were achieved through the cooperation with the Czechoslovak government-in-exile: the Joint Declaration of 11<sup>th</sup> November 1940, in which Poland and Czechoslovakia declared their intention to create a post-war confederate union, and the declaration of January 1942, in which the governments of the two countries agreed on the basic principles of the future confederation. The Czechoslovak Government's deviation from the principles of the Czechoslovak-Polish Confederation and the increasing inclination to Moscow, which had been visible since the summer of 1942, did not mean the Polish Government's resignation from the pursuit of their goal. In considering the political alternatives at the turn of 1942/1943, the deviation led to a deeper interest of the Polish MSZ in Slovakia and Hungary.

A synthesis which indicated a new, more proactive, approach of the Polish Government to Hungary was the message from Foreign Minister Edward Raczyński to Polish Ambassador in Washington Jan Ciechanowski from 26<sup>th</sup> November 1942. In it, Count Raczyński criticised E. Beneš and informed Ciechanowski that negotiations on the Polish-Czechoslovak confederation had been interrupted. He pointed out the need to pay greater attention to the Hungarian question, but with great caution, because "*Hungarians are often unaware of the boundaries and compromise their friends*". In addition, Raczyński considered it desirable that the fraternal associations of Hungarian Americans and Slovak Americans or their political organisations in the U.S.A published a statement in favour of the federation in Eastern Central Europe.<sup>448</sup>

The change of the political line of federalist ideas was embodied in practice by Polish Prime Minister General Władysław Eugeniusz Sikorski during his official visit to the U.S.A when he preferred in discussions with the American statesmen a bloc of states of Southern and Eastern Central Europe to a (con-)federation with Czechoslovakia.<sup>449</sup> Sikorski held secret talks in America with Milan Hodža, who was a declared advocate of the federalist idea and was in an open opposition to E. Beneš and the Czechoslovak government-in-exile, and even with Otto von Habsburg.<sup>450</sup>

447 Archiwum Akt Nowych (Archive of New Records - hereafter AAN), Warsaw, fond (hereinafter f.) Akta Instytutu Hoovera (Files from the Hoover Institution - AIH), Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych (Ministry of Foreign Affairs - MSZ), reel no. 64, p. 289, message of MSZ to the PR Embassy in Bern no. 88, 7<sup>th</sup> February 1943.

448 AAN, f. AIH, MSZ, reel no. 395, letter from E. Raczyński to J. Ciechanowski no. 49/C/15, 26<sup>th</sup> November 1942.

449 BRANDES, Detlef. Konföderation oder Ostpakt: Polnisch-tschechoslowakische Beziehungen während des Zweiten Weltkrieges. In HEUMOS, Peter (ed.). *Polen und die böhmischen Länder im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert. Politik und Gesellschaft im Vergleich. Vorträge der Tagung des Collegium Carolinum in Bad Wiessee vom 15. bis 17. November 1991*. München : Oldenbourg, 1992, pp. 260-261.

450 The details of conversations between W. Sikorski and the two persons are unknown, but were confirmed by their later testimonies. See: The Archive of the Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum (hereinafter AIPMS), London, f. Ministerstwo Spraw Wewnętrznych (Ministry of Interior - MSW), Call Number A.9.VI.3/1, an excerpt from the letter from T. Kuźniar to J. Librach dated 28<sup>th</sup> October 1943; a conversation between Józef Potocki and Archduke Joseph Karl of Austria on 18<sup>th</sup> October 1943 in Lisbon. AAN, Collection AIH, MSZ, reel no. 27, pp. 712-713.

Developing the plans to create a federation was not the expression of a political “outdatedness” of the Polish Government. Also in late 1942, the federation projects in Central and East-Central Europe were vividly discussed in the analytical department of the British Foreign Office - at first in the Foreign Research and Press Service (FRPS) and from April 1943 in the Foreign Office Research Department (FORD). Hungarians had a strong sympathiser and lobbyist in Carlile Aylmer Macartney who prepared several memoranda on the future configuration of Central Europe (including a study explicitly devoted to the issue of the Hungarian-Slovak border). Macartney also led the Hungarian broadcasting of the B.B.C radio station.<sup>451</sup> Addressing current and future European issues was also the subject of debates and analyses of various Advisory Committees within the U.S. Department of State, where the idea of a Mid-European Union still persisted.<sup>452</sup>

Polish federalist concepts were closely observed by the Hungarian Government and its diplomatic representatives. In Budapest, the project of the Polish-Czechoslovak confederation was perceived mostly with resentment. In January 1942, Minister of Foreign Affairs László Bárdossy criticised the Polish efforts to create a union with Czechoslovakia, and wished for “*a complete change of direction of the Polish politics as regards the old traditions of the Polish-Hungarian friendship.*”<sup>453</sup> Another view was presented by István Bethlen, who in an interview with 1<sup>st</sup> Secretary of the U.S. Embassy in Budapest Howard K. Travers expressed sympathies for the Allies and Poland, considering it absolutely necessary to find a common basis for the post-war Polish-Czech-Hungarian cooperation.<sup>454</sup>

A year later, the Hungarian Envoy to Portugal Andor Wodianer made no secret of his concerns in front of Jan Szembek about the dangers of Soviet domination in Central Europe. He considered the integration of the states lying between Germany and the Soviet Union as the starting point and Poland as the only country to do this task. Wodianer realised that the formation of a compact Central European bloc would be complicated by the disagreement of the USSR and internal conflicts among prospective members of the bloc.<sup>455</sup> In early March 1943, Aladár Szegedy-Maszák, Head of the Political Department of the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said during a visit to Stockholm at the Polish Embassy in Sweden to Norbert Žaba that Hungarians perceived the involvement of Poland in the federation plans for the order in Europe with great sympathy, and would like to join the federation.<sup>456</sup>

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451 BERETZKY, Ágnes. *C. A. Macartney. A Devoted and Frustrated Friend of Hungary (1939 - 1945)*. Online: <http://www.ssees.ucl.ac.uk/confhung/beretzky.pdf>.

Some of Macartney's comments evoked vigorous protests of the exiled Czechoslovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

452 ŁAPTOS, Józef - MISZTAL, Mariusz. *American Attitudes to the European Integration. State Department Debates on the Mid-European Union 1942 - 1944*. Kraków : Wydawnictwo Naukowe Akademii Pedagogicznej 2000. For details on Hungary see: ROMSICS, Ignác (ed.). *Wartime American Plans for a New Hungary: Documents from the U.S. Department of State, 1942 - 1944*. Boulder, Colorado : Social Science Monographs, 1992.

453 AAN, Collection AIH, MSZ, Box 11, Folder 10, p. 16. Report by J. Librach on an interview with A. Wodianer. Lisbon, 20<sup>th</sup> January 1942. Secret.

454 AAN, Collection AIH, MSZ, Box 11, Folder 10, p. 12. Report of the Polish Embassy in Lisbon to MSZ, Nr. 3/tj/3, 10<sup>th</sup> February 1942.

455 AIPMS, Collection 85 (Jan Szembek), Call Number 85/3, Letter no. 2 from J. Szembek to E. Raczyński, 28<sup>th</sup> January 1943.

456 AAN, Collection AIH, MSZ, reel no. 27-28, p. 546-547, Report of the P.R. Embassy in Stockholm for MSZ no. 52/S/18, 13<sup>th</sup> March 1943.

## OVERCOMING THE OLD BORDERS

The decision of exiled Czechoslovak officials to discontinue negotiations with Poland in May 1943 was the decisive impulse that led to the modification of the Polish federation concepts. Paradoxically, this allowed the Polish Government to abandon the concept of an exclusive, two-member “club”, and formulate a federation programme on broader foundations, and thus become more open to other countries, including Hungary. The Soviet factor was restricting. After the Soviet-Polish diplomatic relations had been interrupted, Poland, as the main promoter of federation concepts in the camp of the Allies, found itself in the position of an object decided about by Anglo-Saxons and the USSR. It was also the reason why a line was defined by MSZ by which no specific federalist concepts were allowed, because of the suspicion of Soviets about the plan to create a *cordon sanitaire*. Only the principle and benefits that would accrue to the victory of the Allies from the cooperation of the states could be discussed.<sup>457</sup>

Besides the traditional sympathies, an important link between Poland and Hungary were the shared concerns about the Soviet rule in Central Europe. The verbal attacks of the USSR on the Polish Government in the message sent from MSZ on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1943 to the Polish embassies in Bern and Ankara preceding the interruption of diplomatic relations after finding out the Soviet crime (massacre of Polish officers) in Katyń in April 1943 were interpreted as the beginning of a major communist offensive on the entire European continent.<sup>458</sup> Prime Minister Miklós Kállay exaggerated the importance of anti-Bolshevism and the role it could play in the common Hungarian and Polish process.<sup>459</sup> Even after cessation of diplomatic relations with the USSR the Polish government could not afford to take any steps that could possibly be interpreted as an expression of hostility toward the Soviet Union. Anti-Bolshevism was associated with the disagreement of the Polish and Hungarian governments with the politics led by Edvard Beneš, which they almost identically interpreted as an attempt to “pave” the way for the Soviet Union in Central Europe. Kállay, in turn, feared that after the war the “Red Earl” Mihály Károlyi (supported by the exiled Czechoslovak Government) would return to Hungary as a leader of a political body recognised by the Allies. According to the Hungarian Prime Minister, this scenario would mean that Hungary would become a political satellite of Beneš.<sup>460</sup> In his secret attempts to contact the Allies, Kállay walked on very thin ice. The Prime Minister’s chair shook heavily under him in April 1943, when Miklós Horthy was confronted during a visit to Castle Klessheim in Germany by the evidence that Hungarian emissaries had made some attempts (the mission of Albert Szent-Györgyi in Istanbul) to negotiate with the Allies, presented to him by Joachim Ribbentrop, and, subsequently, Hitler wanted Horthy to dis-

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457 AAN, Collection AIH, Ministerstwo Informacji i Dokumentacji (Ministry of Information and Documentation – MID), reel no. 71, p. 721-722, Record of the Meeting with the Minister T. Romer held on 19<sup>th</sup> August 1943, 21<sup>st</sup> August 1943. The end of the record reads: “*In general, Minister Romer is this moment against any political and propagandistic appearances to the outside on a broader scale.*”

458 AAN, Collection AIH, MSZ, reel no. 64, pp. 301-302.

459 JUHÁSZ, Gyula. *Magyarország külpolitikája 1919/1945*. Budapest: Kossuth Könyvkiadó, 1975, p. 297; Same author: *Hungarian Foreign Policy*, p. 227.

460 KÁLLAY, Hungarian Premier, p. 385. Compare VERESS – TAKACS, *Clear the Line*, p. 105; JUHÁSZ, *Hungarian Foreign Policy*, p. 233.

miss Kállay in the interest of the “Hungarian-German friendship” Admiral Horthy refused to do so.<sup>461</sup>

Equally significant was the hope of Poles and Hungarians based on the calculation that the Allies would carry out military invasion in the Balkans. In October and November 1942, W. Sikorski tried to win the minds of W. Churchill and F. D. Roosevelt to launch a second front in the Balkans. He suggested that the Polish troops in the Middle East join the military operation under the command of General Władysław Anders. The Balkan military strategy planned that the Allied invasion of the Balkans would also allow Romania and Hungary to break away from the Axis and join the Allies.<sup>462</sup> A part of the Hungarian government circles had similar expectations and related political calculations. However, the Allied landing in Sicily dampened any similar hopes.

### Venue: Lisbon

The crucial exchange of opinions between the Hungarian and Polish diplomats in World War II took place in neutral Portugal. Both countries had their embassies in Lisbon.<sup>463</sup> The main players in the secret contacts between Hungary and Poland were Envoy Andor Wodianer, diplomat Jan Szembek, and Colonel Jan Kowalewski. Szembek, who recorded thorough detailed notes from his working meetings and conversations (those from the pre-war period were published in book form),<sup>464</sup> was the “grey eminence” of the Polish diplomacy. In his long career, he also acted as the Ambassador of Poland to Hungary (1919 – 1923). During the term of Józef Beck, he was the Secretary of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych, MSZ). After evacuation from Poland, he moved to Portugal, via Romania and France, where he lived until his death in 1945. His views were always appreciated in the exiled MSZ. Colonel Jan Kowalewski was a seasoned military correspondent. In the interwar period he went to a number of missions as a military attaché, including Moscow. On 15<sup>th</sup> January 1941 he was appointed the head of the Polish Information Centre for Contact with the Continent in Lisbon (Placówka Łączności z Kontynentem oraz z krajów kontynentu z centralą informacyjną) by Polish Minister of Interior Stanisław Kot. He led the “Tripod” (Trójnóg) operation focused on secret contacts with the representatives of Romania, Italy and Hungary in the interest of anti-German sabotage. Andor Wodianer served as Ambassador of Hungary in Portugal from May 1939. According to the memoirs of László ‘Leslie’ Dálnoki Veress, emissary of the Minister of Foreign Affairs Miklós Kállay, he was “*a tall, elegant, friendly gentleman, a staunch anti-*

461 CORNELIUS, Deborah S. *Hungary in World War II. Caught in the Caldron*. New York : Fordham University Press 2011, pp. 246-249.

462 BRANDES, Detlef. *Großbritannien und seine osteuropäischen Alliierten 1939 – 1943: Die Regierungen Polens, der Tschechoslowakei und Jugoslawiens im Londoner Exil vom Kriegsausbruch bis zur Konferenz von Teheran*. München : Oldenbourg, 1988, p. 377; ROSEN-ZAWADZKI, Kazimierz. *Próby sfederowania Środkowo-Wschodniej Europy (1939 – 1943)*. In *Studia z dziejów ZSRR i Europy Środkowej*, 1965, Vol.1, p. 196.

463 Envoy Józef Potocki, Envoy Karol Dubicz-Penther, Jan Szembek, and others worked in the Polish Embassy in Lisbon. See: KOŁODZIEJ, Rola polskich, pp. 788-789. Compare with: BATOWSKI, Henryk. *Z dziejów dyplomacji polskiej na obczyźnie (wrzesień 1939 – lipiec 1941)*. Kraków : Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1984, pp. 221-222.

464 ZARAŃSKI, Józef (ed.). *Diariusz i teki Jana Szembeka (1935 – 1945), tom IV*. London : Instytut Polski i Muzeum im. Gen. Sikorskiego, 1972; GRZEŁOŃSKI, Bogdan. (ed.). *Szembek, Jan. Diariusz wrzesień - grudzień 1939*. Warszawa : PAX, 1989.

*Nazi of partly Jewish origin*<sup>465</sup> It was exactly his attitude towards Germany which made him an ideal diplomat for Kállay to fulfil confidential diplomatic tasks related to probing oriented to the Western Allies.

The contacts between Hungary and Poland intensified in the summer of 1942, when the Hungarian Embassy in Lisbon was reinforced with two officials charged among other tasks with making contacts with the Poles. However, their arrival reflected mainly the attempt of Hungary to get ready for the case of defeat of the Axis. One of them was Peter Bazovský, who came there in August. Previously, he had served in the Hungarian Consulate in Pittsburgh (1941). The Hungarian diplomats in Lisbon presented the view to the Poles that after the war the superpowers would determine finally how to divide their control of Europe. Small and medium-sized states would not be able to influence their decision so therefore it was their task to make arrangements among themselves in advance. Hungary wanted to start talks with Czechs, and considered an agreement with Slovakia "if possible". In exchange for promoting the ideas of Poland's restoration, with borders in the Carpathian Mountains and access to the sea, the Hungarians demanded in the Axis circles that Poland should support Hungary, after the victory of the Allies, in terms of traditional and historical cooperation between the two states. Local representatives assessed the activity of Hungarians in Portugal in August 1942 as a "*well-considered political action*".<sup>466</sup> In the context of the Hungarian Government's attempts to contact the Allies in 1943, the Hungarian-Polish meetings in Lisbon were exceptional in several respects. The head of Polish diplomacy, Count Edward Raczyński, during his stay in Portugal in February 1942 entrusted Jan Szembek with the task of preparing reports on the situation of Germany's satellite states, and later authorised him to present the official position of the Polish government in the talks with Hungarian diplomats in Lisbon.<sup>467</sup> Prime Minister M. Kállay hoped that Poles would play an important role in the Hungarian Government's contact with the British.<sup>468</sup> The faith in Poland was also voiced by Elemér Újpétery, Secretary of the Hungarian Embassy in Portugal, when he mentioned Vatican, Poland and Jews in his response to the question in March 1943 about who the Hungarians would rely on most after the war.<sup>469</sup> The impulse for the Polish-Hungarian contacts in Lisbon was the arrival of Kállay's Emissary László Veress who was an employee of the Press Department at the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Veress contacted Colonel Jan Kowalewski who teamed him up with the British.<sup>470</sup>

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465 VERESS, Laura-Louise – TAKACS, Dalma. *Clear the Line: Hungary's Struggle to Leave the Axis During the Second World War*. Cleveland : Prospero Publications, 1995, p. 93.

466 AAN, Collection AIH, MSZ, c. 11, Folder 10, pp. 16-18, Report by J. Librach. Lisbon, 25<sup>th</sup> August 1942. Secret.

467 PISZCZKOWSKI, Tadeusz. *Między Lizboną a Londynem. Z sekretów dyplomacji polskiej w czasie drugiej wojny światowej*. London : Instytut Polski i Museum im. Gen. Sikorskiego, 1979, p. 14. Raczyński devoted only a mention to the contacts with Szembek. See: RACZYŃSKI, Edward. *W sojusznicznym Londynie. Dziennik ambasadora edwarda Raczyńskiego 1939 – 1945*. Warszawa: Niezależna Oficyna Wydawnicza, 1989, p. 154.

468 KÁLLAY, Hungarian Premier, p. 369, 388.

469 AAN, f. AIH, MSZ, reel no. 27, pp. 543-544. Report by K. Zdziarski on the conversation with E. Újpétery sent from MSZ by Envoy J. Potocki on 10<sup>th</sup> March 1943. Újpétery wrote memories dedicated to his service in the diplomatic mission in Portugal: ÚJPÉTERY, Elemér: *Végállomás Lisszabon. Hét év a magyar királyi külügy szolgálatában*. Budapest : Magvető, 1987.

470 L. Veress's memories of the Lisbon mission see: VERESS – TAKACS, *Clear the Line*, pp. 91-94. Compare with: JUHÁSZ, Hungarian Foreign Policy, p. 221.

### In the Spotlight: Slovakia

The Slovak question was a separate aspect of the Polish-Hungarian diplomatic contacts in World War II. The efforts to eliminate the political plans of the Czechoslovak Government and E. Beneš opened up space for thinking about a common solution to the Slovak question. Already in the winter of 1942 the Polish Government's circles paid more attention to the political configuration schemes in which an important role had to be played by Hungary and Slovakia as an autonomous element. In parallel with the shift of attention to the southern line - i.e. a vertical axis of the federation schemes - Slovakia was considered more often as a separate unit to be integrated into a regional federation after the war.

In Europe, Hungarian diplomatic representatives and peace-feelers in Europe acted as experts on the current situation in Slovakia. However, their views generally did not correspond with the political reality and the society's attitudes in Slovakia, and did not go beyond the frame of the schematic picture of Slovakia and Slovaks, which were prevailing in the Hungarian circles throughout the interwar period. For instance, in March 1943 Ferencz Csiky, Hungarian Commercial Attaché in Turkey, said to Zbigniew Szczerbiński, the Polish Consul General in Istanbul, that the older generations of Slovaks had already been disgusted with constant changes and wished to return to Hungary; and, conversely, the whole younger generation allegedly spoke out in favour of the restoration of Czechoslovakia.<sup>471</sup> Consul Szczerbiński later recorded opinions of András Frey, Prime Minister Kállay's Emissary and a correspondent of the *Magyar Nemzet* daily.<sup>472</sup> Frey emphasised the growth of nationalist sentiments in Slovakia and expressed the view that Slovaks would not "*be willing to conform to Prague*". Frey thought that grouping Hungary and Slovakia in a federation would be a suitable solution to the dispute between the two countries.<sup>473</sup>

Nevertheless, it was Portugal to play the central role in the exchange of views. In January 1943, shortly after defeating the Second Hungarian Army on the River Don in Voronezh, Wodianer told Szembek that he had not the least doubt that the "Axis" would lose the war. He was also reserved regarding the possibilities of anti-German actions and particular steps of the Hungarian Government, for which, as he said, it was not the right time.<sup>474</sup> A few days later Wodianer appealed for the integration of Central European states as an effective means of defense against the Bolshevik dominance. He saw Czechoslovakia and Ruthenia to be a bridge for the Soviets on their way to penetration into Central Europe, and expressed reservations about Edvard Beneš, the main supporter of this concept. He considered the Slovak question as the principal problem of the Hungarian-Czechoslovak relations. Wodianer claimed categorically that Hungarians held no territorial demands on Slovakia and that in Budapest there was "*no one who could have imagined that members of parliament from Slovakia could sit in the Hungarian Parliament*". Furthermore, he stated

471 AAN, f. AIH, MSZ, reel no. 27, pp. 540. Report of the P.R. Consul General in Istanbul Z. Szczerbiński for MSZ, no. 1/III/43, 17<sup>th</sup> March 1943.

472 On the service of Frey as the Government's Emissary, see Admiral Nicolas Horthy, op. cit., p. 246, Paper 2  
473 Ibidem, pp. 386-389, Report of Consul Z. Szczerbiński for MSZ no. Z.S./13/X/43, 11<sup>th</sup> October 1943.

474 AIPMS, f. 85 (Jan Szembek), Call Number 85/3, Letter no. 2 from J. Szembek to E. Raczyński, 21<sup>st</sup> January 1943.

that Slovakia should be separate and be a part of the sphere of influence of Poland and Hungary.<sup>475</sup>

The exchange of views on the Slovak question between Poland and Hungary met with the interest of the Polish government-in-exile. It resonated not only in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs but also the Ministry of Interior which obtained information from its own communication network independent from MSZ. In late March 1943 Szembek called Raczyński's attention to the importance of the role that Poland could play in resolving territorial disputes among the Axis states. He considered it unacceptable that the role of an "arbitrator" was played by Benes only, whose politics were in Szembek's words "*apparently crossing with ours in the most important area for us*".<sup>476</sup>

Szembek explained the departure points of the Hungarian politics in the letter to Raczyński from April 1943. He claimed that "*Hungarians in Trianon were treated worse than Germans in Versailles*", which was a popular quip of the Hungarian propaganda after World War I. Szembek was sure that the attitude of Hungarians to Poland was very positive and that because of their fear of the Soviets they would look for rescue in a bloc of states lying between the Baltic Sea and the Mediterranean Sea. He supposed that there was a substantial change in the way the Hungarian elites thought compared to 1914.<sup>477</sup>

The Szembek's observation was correct, but there were many questions on the way to the understanding between Hungary and Slovakia, or Hungary and Romania, for which the Hungarians had fundamentally different opinions incompatible with the views of the neighbouring states. In the eyes of the governmental circles of Great Britain and the U.S.A, the disputes between Hungary and the neighbouring countries were a substantial problem when the Hungarian emissaries tried to establish contacts with the Allies. The attempts of Budapest to consolidate the territory of the Saint Stephen's Crown were not understood in these countries for obvious reasons and intensified the already deep-rooted reluctance against Hungary. The Polish Government was aware of this problem and in the instructions for its embassies in the neutral states it stressed that Hungarians needed to resolve satisfactorily their territorial disputes with neighbours in order to improve its position in the Allied circles. In the spring of 1943 encouraging news made it to London from Bern and Lisbon which reflected Hungary's will to solve the disputes with Romania and Yugoslavia.<sup>478</sup> The political reports written by Slovak Republic's Envoy in Budapest Ján Spišiak for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bratislava from spring 1943 indicated a warmer tone of the Hungarian political circles toward Slovakia. However, there was a continuing tension in the mutual relations: in the second half of March 1943 Spišiak was received by Prime Minister Kállay, who emphasised the support for independent Slovakia, but he defi-

475 AIPMS, f. 85 (Jan Szembek), Call Number 85/3, Letter no. 2 from J. Szembek to E. Raczyński, 28<sup>th</sup> January 1943.

476 Ibidem, Letter from J. Szembek to E. Raczyński no. 11, 25<sup>th</sup> March 1943.

477 As Szembek wrote, Hungarians "*must sober up – and today no Hungarian sees the question of Slovakia and Transylvania as back then.*" Ibidem, Letter from J. Szembek to E. Raczyński No. 14, 8<sup>th</sup> April 1943.

478 A. Ładoś, Poland's chargé d' affaires in Switzerland, informed MSZ about "*frenetic efforts of the Hungarian party to settle relations with Yugoslavia*". AAN, f. AIH, MSZ, reel no. 64, p. 303, Message from the Polish Ambassador in Bern to MSZ no. 68, 24<sup>th</sup> February 1943. A message was sent from Lisbon to London about purported talks between the Polish and Romanian ambassadors on the topic of Hungarian and Romanian union with autonomous Transylvania. AIPMS, f. 85 (Jan Szembek), Call Number 85/3, Report by J. Librach, 11<sup>th</sup> February 1943.

nately refused the possibility of revisiting the Vienna Arbitration, namely the Slovakia's request to return Košice.<sup>479</sup> From the Hungarian point of view, the friendliest offer was the promise that Hungary would make no further territorial claims against Slovakia.<sup>480</sup>

There were similar talks on the link between Budapest and Bratislava and therefore it was almost impossible to move forwards on the way towards mutual understanding which had to be the theoretical prerequisite to "jump out" together from Germany.<sup>481</sup> However, even in the later period, there were some signs of mild optimism in J. Spišiak's messages sent to Bratislava. The Slovak Ambassador conveyed not only the thoughts of Hungarian political elites but he also noticed the evolution of political opinions of Polish resistance organisations in Hungary whom he had contacts with. Spišiak watched closely the Polish conspiratorial press and informed Bratislava about any mentions of Slovakia's participation in the Central European bloc.<sup>482</sup> In August 1943 Spišiak had an opportunity to learn about the Hungarian Government's growing efforts to come to an agreement with Bratislava: Antal Ullein-Reviczky, Head of the Press Department of the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs insisted that Hungary and Slovakia agree "*until someone else will come*".<sup>483</sup> At the end of November 1943, Spišiak notified the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bratislava that this trend had intensified which consisted of stressing the importance of Slovakia's autonomy. In doing so, he expressed the belief that Hungarians were progressing "*hand in hand*" with the Polish Government and the Polish resistance organisations in Hungary.<sup>484</sup> Apparently, the deciding factor to encourage these lukewarm attempts of Budapest oriented to Bratislava was the fear of occupation of the Slovak territory by Wehrmacht and the negative consequences resulting from this option to Hungary. The largest historically determined obstacle, at that time probably insurmountable, had been the attitude of the Slovak government, and ultimately also the Romanian and Croatian governments to Hungary, which was characterised particularly by distrust. This was also true vice versa. The Polish Government was well aware of this fact and took it into account when considering and contriving the post-war order of Central Europe.

The post-war configuration perspectives, territorial issues and settlement of relations among neighbouring countries were gradually specified in the continuing contacts between Poland and Hungary in Lisbon. All speculations related to Hungary's plans to

479 ČIERNA-LANTAYOVÁ, Dagmar. Problém vztáhu s Maďarskom v aktivitách politikov a diplomatov Slovenského štátu (1939 – 1945) [Problem of relations with Hungary in the activities of politicians and diplomats of Slovak state (1939 - 1945)]. In *Z dějin Visegrádského prostoru*. Brno : Masarykova univerzita, 2006, pp. 240-241.

480 JUHÁSZ, Hungarian Foreign Policy, p. 223.

481 For details on the subject of eventualities common action Hungary's and Slovakia's common action in 1943 – 1944, see: JANEK, István. *Pokus ministerského předsedy Miklóse Kállayho o zorganizování společného vystoupení z války s vůdci Slovenska v letech 1943 – 1944*. In *Slovanský přehled*, 2006, Vol. 92, Issue 4, pp. 536-537.

482 Spišiak wrote in his memories that "*unofficially and based on a convention*", he worked since the interruption of the Hungarian-Polish diplomatic relations as "*a regular informant of the Polish underground circles about the news in the diplomatic and political area, as far as Hungary was concerned*". The Archive of the Museum of the Slovak National Uprising (hereinafter AMSNP ), Banská Bystrica, f. XII, Call Number 51/97, Prof. Dr. Ján Spišiak: *Spomienky z Budapešti*. [Memories of Budapest.] *Doplňky* [Supplements], Vol. 2, pp. 37-38. GNIAZDOWSKI, M.: *Kontakty piśsudczyków*, op. cit., p. 131 and on. See also: SPIŠIAK, Ján: *Spomienky z Budapešti 1939 – 1944*. [Memories from Budapest 1939 / 1944] Bratislava: SAP, 2010.

483 Cited according to: ČIERNA-LANTAYOVÁ, Podoby, p. 29; Same author: *Problém vztáhu*, p. 239.

484 GNIAZDOWSKI, Mateusz. *Kontakty piśsudczyków ze Słowakami w latach 1939 – 1945*. In *Niepodległość*, 2005, Vol. LV (XXXIV), p. 141.

“jump out” of the Axis camp. In this context, on 21<sup>st</sup> May 1943 Jan Szembek reported to London that Hungarians were ready to give their consent for joining the federation and conclude a truce “with Czechs and Slovaks”. He warned that any attempt to “pass” Slovakia and Ruthenia under the rule of Prague would hit strong resistance from every Hungarian government.<sup>485</sup> Through this way of thinking, Budapest refused to take note of the development of political events in 1939 – 1943 including the Allies’ support for restoring pre-Munich Czechoslovakia.

When Szembek met with Wodianer in July 1943, he raised the Polish Government’s requirement to have Hungarians specify their official attitude to the Slovak question, preferably in the form of a memorandum. Wodianer stated then that “thanks to a lucky coincidence”, he had an expert on Slovak matters in the Embassy - Ludovít Bazovský, who presented his views regarding the Slovak question, in the presence of Szembek, Wodianer, Colonel Kowalewski and Romanian Pangal and analysed the conceptual frameworks of Beneš, Štefan Osuský, Milan Hodža, and Karol Sidor. Bazovský found it impossible to maintain post-war independent Slovakia. According to him the most logical solution was to create a federal union of Slovakia and Hungary. He did not miss noting that Hungary, in this respect, “works very poorly in the Slovak territory”.<sup>486</sup> The contacts between Poland and Hungary caused wrinkles to appear on the forehead of the Czechoslovak Government. It responded with a note which Hubert Ripka addressed to the Foreign Office. The Office replied: Secretary of State William Strang charged Envoy Owen O’Malley with the task to stress to the the members of the Polish Government that Great Britain was greatly interested in the Polish-Czechoslovak federation and discourage them from “flirting” with Hungarians.<sup>487</sup>

The mention of the Polish-Czechoslovak federation three months after the adjournment of negotiations was purposeful and was supposed to additionally motivate the opposition of the British to the contacts between Poland and Hungary. It should be noted in this context that O’Malley had a close relationship with the Hungarian issue, as until April 1941, when the diplomatic relations between Great Britain and Hungary were interrupted, he had served as the British Ambassador in Budapest. Some of O’Malley’s opinions raised doubts on the Czechoslovak side, for example, when Jan Skalický, Envoy at the Polish Government stressed in a long conversation with him that if Hungary continued to think in the categories of Hungary, it would never learn to cooperate politically with the neighbouring countries, O’Malley replied that “Hungarians do not count with Slovakia any more - whatever he would do, they have not given up on Ruthenia, which is a different question”.<sup>488</sup> In the summer of 1943 the Hungarian attempts to contact the Allies reached the culmination point. At that time, two memoranda were delivered to the Foreign Office which outlined a political vision of Central Europe and also addressed the Slovak question, from the perspective of Hungarian politicians. Károly Schrecker presented in his memorandum

485 PISZCZKOWSKI, *Między Lizboną*, pp. 79-80.

486 AIPMS, f. 85 (Jan Szembek), Call Number 85/3, Letter from J. Szembek to E. Raczyński, 4<sup>th</sup> July 1943.

487 TNA, f. FO 688, Call Number 29/16, Letter from W. Strang to O. O’Malley, 5<sup>th</sup> August 1943.

488 Skalický further stated that O’Malley had been influenced by information from Poland, and “also largely adopts the Polish arguments on some issues”. Central Military Archives – Military History Archive, Prague (hereinafter CMA – MHA), f. FMBSÚMV, sub-collection 20, Call Number 20-3-24, Report by J. Skalický no. 45/43/dův. (confidential) from 27<sup>th</sup> August 1943.

dated 12<sup>th</sup> May 1943 a Hungarian-Polish union which could be joined by Slovakia and the Czech lands, but not Czechoslovakia. Aladár Szegedy-Maszák dedicated more space for Slovakia. In his memorandum, he called for maintaining an independent Slovak State after the war and did not exclude the formation of a Hungarian-Slovak federation.<sup>489</sup> In this context, it is worth noting that while the memorandum of K. Schrecker is located in the archives of MSZ, the document given to the British by A. Szegedy-Maszák probably remained unknown to the Polish government.<sup>490</sup>

Everything indicates that not all information about the secret steps taken by the Hungarian emissaries was sent to Lisbon which was the centre of Polish-Hungarian contacts. In mid-September 1943, Szembek received six memoranda from Envoy Wodianer specifying the opinion of the Hungarian governmental circles about various political and territorial issues. Szembek discussed them in detail with Sándor Hollan, counsellor of the Hungarian Embassy and sent them to T. Romer. He did not conceal his view that the Hungarian Government did not understand completely the critical situation it had found itself in.<sup>491</sup> The memorandum *L'état actuel du problème slovaque (The Current Status of the Slovak problem)*, dated 15<sup>th</sup> September 1943, deserves thorough attention, as it declared that Slovakia is in all respects an integral part of the Carpathian Basin. The decision of the Paris Peace Conference to "rip" this territory out of its natural environment and expose it to the mercy of "*political and economic imperialism of the Czechs*" was considered a fatal mistake and violation of the right to self-determination. The memorandum also states that the "*fiction of Czechoslovak ethnic and national unity*", was a lie of the "*little clan*" led by E. Beneš and T.G. Masaryk which was to be proved ultimately by the disintegration of the Czechoslovak Republic and the formation of the Slovak State. The argumentation used to explain the events leading to the formation of the Slovak Republic by those who drafted the memorandum are also interesting: they admitted that the Slovak State was established as a direct result of the Munich Agreement; they also thought it natural that after the defeat of the Third Reich "*all political creatures*" of Germany, including the Slovak State, would disappear. Therefore, the question was what should follow. In order to prevent the destabilisation of Central and Eastern Europe the authors of the memorandum thought it impossible to return to the status quo of 1939. They criticised the activities undertaken by E. Beneš in exile and expressed the belief that the Slovak nation would not accept the requirement for being subdued to the "*Czech ethnic, political and economic imperialism*". In the next section the authors of the memorandum defended the right of Slovaks to self-determination. They stated that the crimes committed by the Slovak Republic's dignitaries should be punished, but at the same time they excluded application of the principle of collective guilt, as "*it has nothing to do with the right of Slovaks to consider themselves as a sovereign nation, independent of the Czechs*". They regarded the question of the future of Slovakia as crucial for the safety of Central and Eastern Europe. "*In the Czechoslovak concept - as the memorandum reads - the territory of Slovakia and Ruthenia is to serve as a conduit for the entry of Soviet Russia into the Danubian Lowland*

489 For details see JUHÁSZ, Hungarian Foreign Policy, pp. 244-245; ČIERNA-LANTAYOVÁ, Podoby, p. 30.

490 For a transcript of K. Schrecker's memorandum, see AAN, f. AIH, MSZ, reel no. 60, pp. 98-99. There is a signature of Minister T. Romer on it from 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1943.

491 Ibidem, reel no. 27, pp. 744-746, Letter from J. Szembek to T. Romer no. 31, 16<sup>th</sup> September 1943.

*and the Czech lands*". However, it would mean a "Bolshevik domination" not only in the region but also in the Balkans, and therefore it was "absolutely unacceptable" not only for the Slovak nation, but also for Poland and Hungary. The fact that Slovaks rejected such a "horizontal Bolshevik and Pan-Slavic" concept and demanded the right to self-determination was considered as the most important fact. The authors of the Hungarian memorandum postulated that in geopolitical and economic terms Slovakia had been an integral part of the Carpathian-Danubian Lowland and therefore in political terms it had to form a part of a vertical security system that best suited "its needs as well as the needs of its two neighbours" - Hungary and Poland.<sup>492</sup>

On 10<sup>th</sup> September 1943, Szembek presented postulates to T. Romer which the Hungarian government had agreed to in a secret meeting in connection with the efforts to "jump out" from the Axis camp. Ambassador Wodianer informed Colonel Kowalewski and Szembek that the Hungarian Government decided to stand out against Germany the moment the Allied troops enter Yugoslavia. He presented to them the text of a statement addressed from the Allies, saying that they should guarantee the state borders of Hungary as in 1919, and with the exception of Transylvania, cede the resolution of "all other issues" to the Peace Conference to make a decision. Wodianer explained to Szembek that these issues include Ruthenia, Bačka, and the relationship to Slovakia. In Szembek's opinion, this position of the Hungarian government was "a very modest starting point" because it did not contain an "element of revisionism, which has been a part of the whole Hungarian politics over the past twenty years."<sup>493</sup> The letter from Szembek to Romer was supplemented with the the Ministry of Interior's report in which it was a *sine qua non* condition for Hungary to accept the borders from 1919. The final decision on the issue of borders with Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia had to be left to arbitration, but Transylvania had to remain in Hungary, since - as Hungarians argued - Romania was a "state, which is the enemy of the Allies".<sup>494</sup>

There was yet another important aspect in the Polish-Hungarian contacts: the Polish government developed a political offensive aimed at preventing the signing of the Czechoslovak-Soviet treaty of alliance. The conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the three Allied powers in Moscow scheduled for 19<sup>th</sup> October 1943 created an opportunity for the Polish Government to inform the Department of State and the Foreign Office about its position. It expressed Poland's continued support for the federalisation agenda in Central Europe, emphasising strongly that "we would not be indifferent to the possibility, if the countries were occupied by Soviet troops only because it would mean encirclement of

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492 Ibidem, pp. 764-768, L'État Actuel Du Problème Slovaque, annex to the letter from J. Szembek to T. Romero no. 31, 16<sup>th</sup> September 1943 (T. Romer read it on 24<sup>th</sup> September 1943).

493 Ibidem, pp. 772-773, Letter from J. Szembek to T. Romer no. 30, 10<sup>th</sup> September 1943 (T. Romer read it on 15<sup>th</sup> September 1943).

494 Ibidem, pp. 742-743, Report of MSW, 19<sup>th</sup> September 1943.

*Poland by Soviet influences*". In the end of the memorandum, there was an absolute rejection of the Beneš's plan to sign a treaty of alliance with the USSR.<sup>495</sup>

In this context, MSZ considered it very important to keep contacts with Hungarians who had to speed up the preparations for "jumping out". The letter from T. Romer to J. Szembek dated 4<sup>th</sup> October 1943 contained a view from the perspective of the Allies regarding the situation in Hungary, which, according to the head of diplomacy had to be "*sent as soon as possible to the Hungarian authoritative circles*" to facilitate their "*preparation of a realistic action plan*".<sup>496</sup> The material elaborated by J. Wszelaki was named the **Hungarian Propositions (Tezy węgierskie)**. As in the previous cases some space is devoted to the Slovak question. The attention was drawn to the problem known to be very sensitive: that of the Hungarian-(Czech)-Slovak border. "*At first glance it might seem, - J. Wszelaki reasoned - that Hungary does not have many chances because the issue of recognition of integrity of Czechoslovak borders from 1938 appears to be at an advanced stage in the Allied circles*". However, everything depended on the development of the situation at the front to decide, according to Wszelaki, whether Ruthenia could ultimately become a part of the Soviet Union and not Czechoslovakia. Further contemplations are optimistic: "*It is not necessarily the case. The present day's Hungarian-Slovak border lies further from the other ones, it is least "endangered" by Anglo-Saxon troops, it is based on ethnographic evidence more than any other new Hungarian borders, and while being the target of heavy fire by Beneš, it is under no attack, or less attacked by Slovaks*". Another point of the propositions was the assumption that Hungary's armed secession from the Axis camp did not necessarily have to bring about an analogous reaction from Slovaks. This assumption led Wszelaki to conclude that Budapest "*needs not open the question of the borders with Slovakia*". He supposed that even if Slovaks were to expel Germans from the country, "*people like Sidor would get to rule, at least for some time, who also will not or definitely should not open the question of borders with Hungary, as they will have other things to worry about*". If the Anglo-Saxon troops were to get to Hungary before the Red Army, Hungarians, unlike Slovaks, would be able to "*gain some time, and keep for some time the new territories acquired from Czechoslovakia, otherwise the Slovaks will not expel Hungarians from Ruthenia*". This was supposed to give Hungarians some "*time to prepare the atmosphere*" in which a decision about the issue of the borders would be made.

The Romer's message from London supported the Hungarian territorial postulates and approved the decision of the First Vienna Award from November 1938. One could only speculate how Sidor and his followers mentioned in the memorandum would respond to the Polish position. The probability that they would agree is minimal. It should be noted, however, that Wszelaki's calculations had been based on the assumption that Slovakia

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495 National Archives of Canada (hereinafter NAC), Ottawa, T. Romer, Call Number MG 31, D 68. Diplomatic Activities. File 3: London, General, October 1943, Instructions for talks in London and Washington, 4th October 1943. MSZ sent the instructions to the Polish Embassy in the U.S.A. on 5<sup>th</sup> October 1943 and J. Ciechanowski presented this view to C. Hull, whom he gave the Polish Government's memorandum. The National Archives and Record Administration (hereinafter NARA), Washington DC, f. T 1244, Relations with the Soviet Union, 1940 - 1944, Relations with Poland, 1940 - 1944, reel no. 4, p. 366, record by C. Hull from the meeting with J. Ciechanowski, 6<sup>th</sup> October 1943. See Memorandum in the same source, pp. 367-370; cf. PPRMRP, Part 6 (lipiec 1943 - kwiecień 1944), Document no. 200 B, pp. 157-158.

496 AAN, f. AIH, MSZ, reel no. 27, pp. 730-732, Letter from T. Romer to J. Szembek, 4<sup>th</sup> October 1943.

would have “*handed itself over*” under the protection of Poland, in which case the Polish Government would be in a stronger position in deciding about the border between Slovakia and Hungary. The Polish opinion is also described in the message from J. Wszelaki dispatched by MSZ to Ambassador J. Ciechanowski in Washington on 14<sup>th</sup> October 1943. The report noted in particular the dissenting positions of the Polish Government and the Foreign Office to the Czechoslovak-Hungarian border. According to Poles, Hungarians had to release Bačka and Banat on the one hand; however, on the other hand, “*if they were to abandon the former Czechoslovak territory, it would not mean anything other than that they were to let Germans in the territory governed by Hungarians*”. It would have been equally detrimental if the Hungarian troops had retreated from Ruthenia, because from the Polish perspective it would mean leaving this territory to Germans or “*Soviet partisans*”.<sup>497</sup>

The fact that the attitude of the Allies to Hungary at this time left very little space for some moving boundaries is evidenced also in the record of a conversation between Frank Roberts, head of the Central Department of the Foreign Office, and the legal counsellor of MSZ Władysław Kulski held on 6<sup>th</sup> October 1943. Roberts presented in brief the attitude of the Allied superpowers to Budapest’s peace overtures: the Allies expected Hungarians to sabotage the collaboration with the Third Reich; Hungarians had to be ready to accept unconditional surrender, when asked for it by the Allies, although this would represent a major risk to Hungary. Then the Allies would be prepared to guarantee the independence of Hungary, but with the condition that the Hungarians “*immediately restore the territories they have occupied to the states joining the Allies*”. According to Roberts the FO informed Budapest it must abandon any dreams of restoring the countries of the St. Stephen’s Crown.<sup>498</sup>

On 8<sup>th</sup> September 1943 Minister of Foreign Affairs Jenő Ghyczy informed György Bakácz-Besseney, who probed into the attitude of American and British diplomats in Bern, and also Wodianer in Lisbon, given the risks that Hungarians “*jump out*” of the Axis camp. As Ghyczy thought, an effective help from Hungary to the Allies would be that it would not take any action that might provoke Germany to occupy Hungary, which would certainly involve Slovaks, Romanians and Croats and be used as an “*opportunity to satisfy their territorial claims*”.<sup>499</sup>

The decision of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the three Allied powers in Moscow in October 1943 marked definitely the end of Hungarian hopes to “*jump out*” of the Axis camp which also influenced the Hungarian-Polish political talks in Lisbon linked with these hopes from the beginning. A sort of epilogue, which is also a symptomatic example of misinterpretation of contemporary political reality, is the letter by J. Szembek sent on 5<sup>th</sup> November 1943 to Minister T. Romer. Szembek wrote it shortly after talking with Ambassador A. Wodianer. He had concerns particularly about the information that the Allies guaranteed the integrity of Czechoslovakia. Szembek supposed that probably no one except Beneš would seriously consider restoration of the Czechoslovak Republic with borders from 1920. Referring to the relationship between Slovaks and Czechs,

497 AAN, f. AIH, MSZ, reel no. 27, pp. 720-723, Letter from T. Romer to J. Szembek, 14<sup>th</sup> October 1943.

498 AAN, f. AIH, MSZ, reel no. 27, pp. 725-728, record of W. Kulski, 6<sup>th</sup> October 1943, Top Secret.

499 JUHÁSZ, Hungarian Foreign Policy, p. 262.

he expressed the view that in 1938 “*the connection of Slovakia with the Czech lands was arranged upon mutual understanding*” and doubted heavily whether it would be possible “*to hammer [Slovaks] into the Czechoslovak State as merely a province*”. He continued to regard the boundaries from before Trianon as the foundations for post-war Hungary. However, the political reality at the turn of 1943/1944 looked quite different than that perceived by Szembek who had probably remained in 1938 in his political thinking. A concise description of this character considered by many as the gray eminence of the Polish diplomacy was outlined by Tadeusz Piszczkowski, who then worked for the Polish Ministry for the Peace Conference in the detailed work on Polish-Hungarian contacts in Portugal: “*In his reports, Szembek often constructed own thoughts on the future European order (...), in which he as if accidentally mention Czechoslovakia or the Czech lands. Maybe it was just a “bad habit” from the period of cooperation with Beck, or an expression of his mistrust concerning the partner to the January’s [1942] confederation treaty. Conversely, what linked him to Hungarians and Romanians were sympathies and close relationships.*”<sup>500</sup>

The importance the question of Slovakia as a subject of secret political contacts between Poland and Hungary declined steadily with the decline of their intensity in late autumn 1943. Ultimately, these contacts were prohibited for all heads of Polish embassies by Minister T. Romer.<sup>501</sup> After the German occupation of Hungary in March 1944 Andor Wodianer refused to obey the new government and was recalled from the post of ambassador.<sup>502</sup>

The critical reflection of the international situation after the Tehran Conference and signing of the Czechoslovak-Soviet Treaty of Alliance in December 1943 caused that Hungarian governmental circles were less interested in Poland. Budapest was aware that the position of the Polish Government deteriorated rapidly, and that it would not therefore be reasonable to associate more hopes with it.<sup>503</sup> Such a change in the attitude was also pointed out by the Polish officials in Lisbon involved in contacts with Hungary and Romania: on 10<sup>th</sup> December 1943 the correspondent of the Ministry of Interior (MSW) warned the political headquarters in London about the fact that the representatives of Hungary and Romania who had recently sought the Polish support looked for direct contacts with the English and Americans. He also stated “*they do not see us as an actor to be reckoned with any more*”. Equally significant was the correspondent’s information that Germany had started to be interested attentively in the Hungarian and Romanian contacts with the Allies in Portugal.<sup>504</sup> This mental shift in the political calculations of the Hungarian governmental circles is also reflected the December report of the Polish conspiratorial base crypto-named “Romek” operating in Budapest, which concluded, referring to some “*well-informed circles of the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign*

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500 Ibidem, p. 14.

501 AAN, Collection AIH, MSZ, reel no. 67, p. 207-208, Message from MSZ to the P.R. Embassy in Bern no. 598, 16<sup>th</sup> December 1943.

502 AAN, f. AIH, MSZ, c. 28, folder 14, p. 65, telegram from P.R. Embassy to MSZ no. 98, 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1944.

503 The report of the Polish intelligence service from Budapest informed MSZ about a “pessimistic exposé” of J. Ghyczy in before the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Hungarian Parliament. It was pointed out that reliance on Poland and hopes associated with the federation concepts were losing the support of Hungarian political circles as a result of the USSR’s opinion regarding Poland. Ibid, reel no. 27, p. 373, Report by Lieutenant-Colonel S. Gano of 7<sup>th</sup> January 1943.

504 AAN, f. AIH, MSZ, reel no. 43, pp. 604-605, Message from MSW to MSZ based on information from a correspondent in Lisbon (Continental Action) from 10<sup>th</sup> December 1943.

## OVERCOMING THE OLD BORDERS

*Affairs*” that, given the international events, Hungary was forced to weaken its orientation in Poland and seek other partners to defend their interests and that the partner should be the government in Bratislava. However, the information was not true and the success of the above-mentioned attempts to bring Hungary and Slovakia together was illusory because of insurmountable antagonisms. The Polish government realised that too, as it received a report from Lisbon on 25<sup>th</sup> March 1944, one week after the occupation of Hungary by German forces, suggesting a failure of these attempts. Another phenomenon was a rise in E. Beneš’s popularity in Slovakia. Pro-Czech and pro-communist tendencies spreaded increasingly as the report noted.<sup>505</sup>

The importance of the aforementioned Polish-Hungarian accounts and concepts consists particularly in the fact that it reflects the evolution of views of the Polish and Hungarian political elites concerning Slovakia and the Slovak question during the World War II. As shown in the cited documents and memoranda, these concepts were quite clear-cut: they defined the order of political relations in Central Europe, and in this context also the border between Slovakia and Hungary, the Czech-Slovak relationship, and the status of Slovakia. Although the proposition suggesting a continuity of “anti-Czechoslovak” attitude of the Polish Government before and during World War II does not describe the true nature of the Polish foreign policy, there is a parallel in the Lisbon episode of the Polish-Hungarian contacts with the interwar period. This concerns certain patterns of thoughts and resulting reflections. The parallel was set first of all by the person of Jan Szezbek, “number two” of the Polish pre-war diplomacy, operating as *spiritus movens* of the contacts with Hungary in Portugal in 1943. Szezbek built on the premise that the Treaty of Trianon and the model of order arising from it were invalid. Jan Wszelaki, who drafted the Hungarian propositions and considered the provisions of the First Vienna Award of November 1938 as the departure point for demarking the post-war boundary between Slovakia and Hungary, identified himself gradually with the territorial postulates given by this premise. Nonetheless, these premises were out of reality, and the chances, purely theoretical, or rather illusions, disappeared in the quick succession of military and political events.

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505 AAN, f. AIH, Poland. Poselstwo Czechoslovakia, reel no. 7, p. 84; AAN, f. AIH, MSZ, reel no. 44, p. 277. The Mood in Slovakia, report of A.K. (Akcja Kontynentalna) from Lisbon, 18<sup>th</sup> February 1944 (received in MSZ on 25<sup>th</sup> March 1944), secret.

MARÍNA ZAVACKÁ

## Chapter 11

## IDENTITY AND CONFLICT. COMMUNIST ACTIVIST IN LOCAL ENVIRONMENT (1949 – 1956) \*

Marína Zavacká

After losing the monopoly on information in early 1990s Communists somehow disappeared from the history of Slovakia. A mass of people, presented by the preceding time's propaganda literally as the "movers of history", "the leading power of the society", vanished quite unnoticed. In the official public discourse, the concept of *Communism* was evacuated, and perceived as "the regime" or "the ideology", or, at best, only symbolically referred to with the names of several top Communist Party officials. Questions given to the public for debate in relation to this phenomenon have also an interesting feature: much attention is given to the question of origin of Communism and to its zero point too often – meaning from where did "that" (alien) Communism come "to us", to Slovakia, while questions related to the whole era, such as *why* Communism did so well there and why its effect is still so noticeable today are disregarded.<sup>506</sup>

Interpretations of the period examined arising in Slovakia after 1990 have strikingly apparently copied the dichotomous vision of the "socialist society" during the Cold War period. By opening many previously forbidden topics, attracting attention to historical protagonists who had not been spoken about, mostly to people persecuted by the Communist regime, historians and publicists not only erased the "villains" as full-fledged historical actors from the overall field of view,<sup>507</sup> but mostly resigned to do research on the social environment, social relations and ways of accommodation to the changed conditions. There are only rare references to the fact that the Communist dictatorship was significantly participatory,<sup>508</sup> focused at diversity of individual citizens' strategies and motives of participation in the regime's activities. The scheme used to distinguish "clear" victims and clear criminals features only bearers of clear-cut and well-articulated attitudes, which can then be sorted clearly (and easily).

This study is an attempt to introduce the lower rank regional Communist activists into the picture. These people defined themselves as "Communists" and were perceived as Communists by people around them. Therefore, they seemingly fit into the category whose homogeneity and uniformity is consistently suggested by interpretations resulting from

\* The chapter is a re-edited version of the article: ZAVACKÁ, Marína. Komunistický aktivista v lokálnom prostredí, 1949 – 1956 [A Communist Activist in Local Environment, 1949 – 1956] In KILIÁNOVÁ, Gabriela – KOWALSKÁ, Eva – KREKVIČOVÁ, Eva (eds.). *My a tí druhí v modernej spoločnosti : konštrukcie a transformácie kolektívnych identít*. Bratislava : Veda : Historický ústav SAV : Ústav etnológie SAV, 2009, pp. 542-554.

506 PIPES, Richard. [Russia under the Old Regime]. Praha : Argo, 2004, p.7.

507 Even the first books on this topic were able to push through grant research projects just because they were profiled as "complementary" to the works dedicated to the victims. See: PEŠEK, Jan et al. *Aktéri jednej éry* [The Players of an Era]. Prešov : Vydavateľstvo M. Vaška, 2003 or VANĚK, Miroslav – URBÁŠEK, Paul (eds.). *Vítě* [Winners? Losers?]. Praha : Prostor, 2005.

508 For the concept of participatory dictatorship see: FULBROOK, Mary. *The People's State. East German Society from Hitler to Honecker*. New York : Yale University Press, 2005, p.12.

both opposite ideological poles. At the same time, any associations with the notion of *conflict* usually pose them in opposition to a “class enemy” or a “regime’s victim”. This perception indicates continued subjection to the contemporary presentation of the regime of Communists as that of winners where the concepts of unity and power figured as synonyms. With regard to such propagandist constant of the non-conflicting internal “unity” which the Communist Party used to construct its social authority, any public admission of the presence of an intra-party conflict or a conflict between the “Party” and the “masses” was fraught with the risk of undermining the political positions in the eyes of the public. As a result such references were subjected to strict censorship<sup>509</sup> and became publicly acknowledged only at designated occasions in ritualised form of obediently accepted “criticism” and conscious “self-criticism”.

However, the analysed sources, which in this case comprised a collection of minutes of district party conferences,<sup>510</sup> show much greater variety of conflicts which the activists found themselves in.<sup>511</sup> They differed in intensity (ranging from a violent conflict to an emotional mismatch), duration, degree of articulation, number of people involved, as well as in strategies of solution. Their subjects were also diverse, based on forced-upon authority, an unacceptable dogma, broken promise etc.

Records from meetings at the district level combine two qualities essential for a reliable source. A lower degree of formality which did not impede participants so much in speech, allowed them to discuss beyond approved texts to respond frequently *ad hoc*. Nevertheless, the level of the event’s significance demanded production of extensive protocols, in which the typists took non-spun detailed minutes or extensive paraphrases of all debates. The element of conflict was present in form of complaints, in explanations provided or requested, and requests for help from higher authorities. Thematic analysis suggests that “the other side” in the conflict were often far from officially identified enemies.

By narrowing the scope of conflicts to those identified on class basis or by the use of the “class” argument as the primary interpretive framework, numerous lines of social tensions originating in the previous periods and being of non-political origin, remain out of the focus of historians

### Old Communists in new times

From the beginning, the new regime proclaimed its aim to be the re-education of the masses with the goal of creating the “new man for the new era”. In the post-victory period, this “new era” was distinctly characterised by the need to stabilise the positions, which was accompanied by a change in the personnel policy’s priorities. The Communist party retreated from idealisation of revolutionarism (spontaneity), and a strictly organised

509 In cases where it was no longer possible to conceal the internal conflict, or even when an instruction came to unleash a wave of purges, their object was labelled not only as someone with an unacceptable opinion, but ostracized as “intruder”, “spy”, that “not ours from the very beginning”. By ritual rejecting such person the party would become “absolutely united” again.

510 The Slovak National Archives (hereinafter SNA), collections originating from the Archives of the Institute of History of the Communist Party of Slovakia (AUD KSS), ÚV 2 (Central Committee), the Party’s district conferences. Reference structure: archival unit number, district, Minutes from the District Conference, year, delegate, organisation represented.

511 See also: DAVIES, Sarah. “*Us against Them*”: *Social Identity in Soviet Russia, 1934 – 1941*. In *The Russian Review*, January 1997, Vol. 56, pp. 70-89.

individual taking no independent uncontrolled initiatives become the model character. As a result, an ordinary Communist who had been defined for decades by the environment and by himself or herself as a “*firebrand*” with a lack of respect for formal authorities and prone to anarchy, lost a substantial part of his or her identity. These members were, however, not satisfied with such a retreat from action to ritualisation of political life, and as a result they retreated from the party’s activities. In the first years after the Communist accession to power, many of them were ousted from the party during the campaign of “re-registration” of membership cards, for the reasons of recklessness, failure to conform to the party line and passivity.

The confidence of ordinary members in the party’s power markedly decreased. From 1945 the party was joined en masse by people who had hoped they would become a part of a strong body which would change the world and, in particular, support their interests in the current one, and give them the means of power to take care of themselves. These members, for whom the amount of the social capital obtained by joining the party corresponded at the least to the required investments, were paradoxically coming from that social strata on which the party built its collective identity: low-skilled workers, including those who were new-comers to factories as a result of the state-directed industrialisation process and farmers from newly emerging cooperatives. Yet the environment of stagnating post-war reconstruction and failing supplies reduced the credibility of the party’s proclamations about the rapid arrival of a happy future. Moreover, local activists were the first to face public criticism in case of public dissatisfaction. This was reflected in their unwillingness to accept functions and responsibilities at the local level, not only in the Party but also in Collective Farming Cooperatives (Jednotné roľnícke družstvo, JRD), local governments – “national committees” (Miestny národný výbor, MNV) and different front organisations, mandatorily unified in the National Front.<sup>512</sup>

A smaller group who at least temporarily benefited materially from its membership were those workers whom the party “elevated” to executive positions. The most notable sacrifice that they had to offer to the organisation was the membership stamp fees calculated by salary. Promotion of selected cadres to better-paid positions actually included a strategy aimed to receive investment of party authority, as these cadres then manifested their “gratitude” for this post every month. However, the payment discipline was poor and sources indicate presence of different ways of regular circumventing the contribution rules.<sup>513</sup> Disobedience of party discipline also concerned member registration. Rural men commuting to factories in the city claimed to the factory party organisations that they were paying fees at home, and vice versa.

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512 “For example, in the village of Môlča, where the Communists were the first to oppose establishing the Collective Farming Cooperative.” SNA, fond (hereinafter f.) ÚV 2, carton (hereinafter c.) 488, Banská Bystrica, 1956, Ján Koša, Village Organisation of the Communist Party of Slovakia (DO KSS) in Badín; “*In the village*

*tive Farming Cooperative.*” SNA, f. ÚV 2, a.u. 1139, District Conference in Stropkov, 1956, Comrade Gavula.

513 “*Comrade Longauer, the director of Piesok factory, has to pay 750 a month and pays 300, comrade Michael Molnár has to pay 600 and pays 250, and also Emil Rusko, who is a shock-worker, has to pay 300 and pays only 40 Czechoslovak crowns. This way we could name a lot of cases.*” SNA, f. ÚV 2, c. 505, Brezno 1951, comrade Miškovský. [Note: These are amounts before the currency reform of 1953.]

### A Communist's family and its priorities

A specific group of disillusioned and thus potentially conflicting members and supporters were rural women,<sup>514</sup> whose responsibility for the family's survival in the supply misery strengthened their focus on immediate tangible reward in return for the time and energy they or members of their families invested into political activities. They confessed openly that they had joined the regime's front organisations (less often directly the party) only because of the material rewards promised at the recruitment, and were determined to leave as soon as they would discover that the promise would not be fulfilled. The value of their membership as a purely social capital, with no material goods, did not balance off the time investment necessary for long hours of sitting in the meetings. In the gender-split dichotomy of the public and the private sphere the concepts of "Party" and "meeting" were also perceived as enemies of family life, taking away husbands and fathers from homes. Their frequent reality as a men's club with a lot of idle talk held whilst getting drunk made them synonymous with the concept of a "pub".

The urban residents participating in official political activities, especially those with jobs requiring higher skills, could benefit from higher chances of promotion, lobbying opportunities or timely information on arrival of goods in short supply. In the countryside, however, the time losses for both women and men were clearly disadvantageous in terms of family economy.<sup>515</sup> The immediate gains were small (if any), and failed to compensate for the absence of an adult family member in the house. An increased social visibility associated with a function brought increased risks for an activist as well as for his family, especially in moments of radical shifts of the official political line of the party. A countryside party member easily got into a conflict in relation to the senior authorities, and also in relation to his own family. Through dissatisfaction with a party member's contribution to the family economy the wives or mothers of Communists frequently became opposed to the party as a whole. Documents indicate that such discontent was often presented publicly, both in the form of discussions promoted by the regime, and in traditional and partly even ritual forms of informal communication: in laments when men arrived home late, in neighbourly gossip or when queuing for lacking goods of daily use. The presence of party activists in a family exposed its other members to other negative effects too. Within a local community they fell under constant suspicion that they have some hidden benefits. In other cases they were ridiculed that despite so much political efforts the person in question is unable to "take care" of the family's well-being. A fruitful way of taking advantage of a husband's or a father's membership in the party was to use it as a shield against attacks from ideological positions. In an atmosphere of omnipresent fear of political punishment for "anti-state speech", female relatives of party members dared

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514 ZAVACKÁ, Marína. The Geschlechter- und auf den Familienthematik Kreiskonferenzen Kommunistischen der Partei der Slovakia 1949 – 1958. In KRAFT, Claudia (ed.). *Geschlechterbeziehungen in ostmitteleuropa nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg : soziale Praxis und Konstruktionen von Geschlechterbildern*. München : R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 2008, pp. 125-136.

515 The family could benefit mostly from the party membership of its member in a managerial position with a great potential for corruption, e.g. the heads of factories, shops or offices who were empowered to "allocate" different commodities, board- members in wealthier cooperatives, or any officials with an influence on assessment and redistribution.

to be much more outspoken than wives and mothers of the non-partisan or of politically persecuted persons.<sup>516</sup>

Party members were burdened with lot of formal requirements. Firstly, similarly to the Christian tradition, they were expected to live up to the proclaimed ideal. They were expected to possess all qualities of a model citizen: law-abiding, taking initiative at work, exemplary in family life, and being active in community. They were expected to be bonded by group solidarity which was supreme to that of the family, and be immune to the “obsolete phenomena” of ideologically condemned social stratifications. They were obliged to strive for permanent self-improvement and self-education. They had to serve the others as a source of knowledge indispensable for successful orientation in the changing world and in the expected ‘new’ future. Discord between these requirements and real characters is too noticeable to be explained by simply referring to human weakness. It is also interesting to observe the exclusive arguments when speakers wanted to label someone’s behaviour as unworthy of a member of the party. The objects of criticism were not only merely deviating from the ideal type but represented the absolute opposite. Every year, critical remarks at district level were targeted focused on officials avoiding their work, untrained committee members, heads of elementary organisations refusing to join the cooperative, notorious alcoholics, or persons abusing their offices.

In the first half of the 1950s, after a rapid decrease in the percentage of workers in the party, we can even find complaints about expulsion “only because they did not pay membership fees and failed to perform basic duties”.<sup>517</sup> The responsibility for fulfilling the obligations specified in the statutes as fundamental was transferred from individual members to management of organisations. Instead of leading a group of conscious comrades, officials were entrusted with persuading ordinary members to subscribe to party’s press and with explaining its contents, recovery of fees, and similar tasks. In contrary to the assumptions of idealists and the propaganda’s claims, the concepts such as “active Communist”, were not pleonasms.

### **Exchange of generations: the successors and the ungrateful ones**

The re-education campaign organised by the regime to produce a new man resulted also in an escalation of the otherwise permanently present generational conflict. Inside the party (including its young cadres), two images clashed heavily. There was a “young man”: a personification of the new era, educated, and untainted by the ancient regime. It was this quality which was to make him superior to older generations. The second model type was an old comrade, meritorious, who had made personal sacrifices for the sake of the Communist Party’s victory. These sacrifices were expected to safeguard enduring authority of the older members over the new members and, especially, the younger ones. This intra-party generational conflict emerged extremely clearly in the environment the man-

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516 *“It happens that a Communist’s wife curses even more than a non-Communist’s wife... Say, if you convinced at least your wives and won them for the Party!”* SNA, f. ÚV2, c. 484, Banská Bystrica, 15<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> March, 1952, comrade Knapková; *“Comrade Kostiviar’s mother-in-law spells awful curses regarding the party.”* SNA, f. ÚV2, c. 486, Banská Bystrica, 13<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup> March, 1954.

517 SNA, f. ÚV 2, c. 486, Minutes of the District Conference in Banská Bystrica, 1953, Juraj Ľaluška; SNA, f. ÚV2, c. 486, Banská Bystrica, 1953, Comrade Hirschner, Dolný Harmanec.

datory party education. At common instruction meetings which belonged to the basic obligations of a party's member many meritorious members often felt uncomfortable and inferior. (It ended up much worse when intellectually unfit but politically meritorious members attempted to lead youth training.)<sup>518</sup> They often did not understand the lectures, lacking the necessary reading practice, and even their rich personal experiences with "class struggle" did not facilitate significantly their adoption of the new rhetoric. The lingering self-confidence of rebels and winners led them to oppose the organisers of the trainings: "*The old Communists were taught to crush the old bourgeois system and they think that it's tolerable even today.*"<sup>519</sup> "*Especially the elderly Communists think that they need no learning, that they know everything.*" When intellectually unfit but politically meritorious members attempted to lead youth training, it ended up even worse.<sup>520</sup>

Youths not only managed the theoretical tasks more easily and had more courage to avoid duties, but they were quick in adapting to the new rhetoric and using it for the benefit of their group's interests. Also within this generational group, young workers and peasants – members of those professional groups from which the power derived its authority – were the first to lose interest in the political activities in the totalised state. Centrally managed recruitment campaigns aimed at young workers failed to bear a visible effect. The persisting memories of mass organisation of youth largely relate to the studying youth who were not only more easily controllable, but could also be blackmailed more easily by the regime. The working and peasant youth, however, did not respond to calls to join political activities. A report from the district of Brezno from 1954 mentions that out of a total of 9,000 local young people only 1,700 were organised in the centralised Youth Union and only 800 of them actually participated in some lectures and political courses. Village and district party organisations were failing to meet the quota for numbers of newly admitted members and candidates. It was also difficult to find a politically acceptable vocabulary to explain this phenomenon. If people who had been brought up in a local children's organisation and the Youth Union were inactive the educator could have got blamed. If the regime about to "prevail all over the world" in the future confessed that there was not enough support from its own youth (i.e. its own future) it would be in a contradiction with its own dogma. As a result, the laments of old comrades about thankless and immature youths were subject to strict censorship.

Since the existence of a youth organisation figured in the evaluation of local Party branches, representatives of the generation groups negotiated and concluded agreements on the Party's support for traditional forms of entertainment, which were subsequently shown as pro-regime activities. Older comrades had to stifle their complaints about slipping from the political work to organisation of purely 'cultural' evenings and the younger

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518 A discussion input of Vincent Giertli, the Head Secretary of the District Committee of the Czechoslovak Youth Union (OV ČSM) in Brezno, captures a piece of that time's atmosphere: "*This comrade was not able to explain to them even the simplest issues, and the present Union members, who were not up to necessary political level, made fun out of him, and laughed at him straight away. When this comrade was invited to the second lecture, he expressed himself as follows: 'I am definitely not coming to your meeting any more, not even for God's sake.'*" SNA, f. UV2, c. 508, Brezno, 1953.

519 SNA, f. ÚV 2, c. 1137, Stropkov, 1954. Ján Complák, SNB (Police Corps).

520 SNA, f. ÚV 2, c. 488, Banská Bystrica 1956, comrade Ján Koša, Village branch of the Communist Party of Slovakia in Badín.

ones added *pro forma* few “political” points to their programmes. In the final reports both groups interpreted youth entertainment or amateur performances as activities leading to education of the masses and consolidation of the socialist collective.

### **Alien Elements: City, White Collars and Authorities**

The image of lecturers at mandatory courses for rural Party cadres reconstructed from the participants’ feedback contained traces of older stereotypes of unreliable “intelligentsia”, torn off from “the people”, and looking down on their audiences. As a typical professional in this field was perceived a younger person (at least by their looks), a city dweller, somebody with “proper” education. They came to “speak”, to give lectures, but not to work, to “do” anything physically, which did not work well for their prestige in the rural environment with manual work ethics. “*We have got 100 activists and what they are doing and who are they - should we not call them ‘cabinet Communists’? The dedication of our female and male comrades is attested while building socialism in our village, therefore we should take a proper look at all those Communists in the city.*”<sup>521</sup> Since lectures were perceived as an inevitable evil which simply had to be attended by a certain number of people, the rank and file Communists at the meetings proposed that specific age or professional groups should be “sacrificed” for it: Youngsters who “have time to roam in pubs” or white collars who keep just “debating” and “do not labour like the shock-workers do”. There were even calls for excusing miners from duty of reading the Communist newspaper *Pravda* (The Truth) based on the argument of their hard work.<sup>522</sup>

In cases when local party officials got into conflict with such party’s objectives that disturbed an existing and accepted village status quo they were often able to skilfully use the regime’s rhetoric in favour of their community. Although there was an initial prevailing “revolutionary” wave of statements in argumentation that automatically associated anything new (and young) with “better”, the ever changing definition of an enemy and constant campaigns calling for its disclosure within the party allowed the local officials, skilled in the use of that period’s rhetoric, to use official phrases for questioning almost any new commands with no fear of reprimand. For example, an appropriate selection from a set of official phrases, coined during the monster process with Communist secretary Rudolf Slánský and consequent wave of purges in the highest echelons of the party, any new regulation or request coming “from above” could be safely put off (in fact, sabotaged) for long periods of time. It was just necessary to “consciously” point out the need to “thoroughly verify” that a command does not actually come from some “hidden enemy of the working class”. After all, just recently the enemy was revealed in the rank of leaders! Many trends of modernisation could have, thus, been openly rejected from conservative positions, which already ceased to be contestable as being *a priori* against the regime. Moreover, innovators were accused of becoming “separated from the masses”, and further labelled with politically efficient phrases such as “inappropriate imitation of the West”, “cow-towing to the imperialists”, and retreating from the “traditions and values” of “the people”.

521 SNA, f. UV 2, c. 488, Banská Bystrica, 1956.

522 SNA, f. ÚV 2, c. 491, Banská Štiavnica, 1949, comrade Makovnfk.

### The limits of solidarity among the comrades

In rural areas, hierarchical political organisation, abolition of autonomy in decision-making, and centrally planned activity exacerbated conflicting moods and their manifestations in relation to the phenomenon of “city”, “landlord”, “centre”, “strange”, “competing” and “the one from outside who does not understand us”. Old stereotypes of perceiving power as alien changed the subject of such relationship from “our, Communist power” to anonymous disliked “authorities”. Although the state and the Party constantly presented themselves through the propaganda as “bodies providing for the people”, the negative perception of them being “demanding” continued to hold a strong position in public opinion. The level of hierarchical distance at which a body became “no longer ours” varied occasionally. A rough indicator of the degree is the point at which a lower-ranking member of a hierarchical rank considered it necessary to misrepresent results of work to a superior and did not rely on automatic understanding for one’s failure.<sup>523</sup> At a suitable cadre constellation, an ordinary party member could feel homely while visiting a district party office, but more frequently even the leadership of the local branch was viewed as alien by commuting workers. In some cases the local village community managed to symbolically adopt alien elements or indeed corrupt them deliberately, and to win them over in conflict with the “power” they represented.<sup>524</sup>

In contrast to bonds to the authorities “above” and “outside”, traditional local ties and client networks survived: family, kinship, neighbourhood, church-affiliation and regional affiliation. In terms of ideology, solidarity within the party and fidelity to its political line was expected to be superior to any other social relationships, including family. However, in moments of clashes with ideological dogmas, the old ties prevailed. By retreat to the “traditional” argument about the need for peace in the family, Communists managed to excuse themselves from non-compliance even with the essential requirements imposed on party members (e.g. not attending the church, atheistic upbringing of their own children and joining the cooperative). The functionality of broader family and countrymen structures was reflected in the successful opposition of particular village communities to centralised economic and human resources check-up policies. This resulted in partial sabotaging of total collectivisation of land (through generous assignments of officially “permitted” household allotments), in evading the compulsory ostracism of rich farmers-kulaks in native communities<sup>525</sup> and soft application of harsh principles of cadre policy. Black market was another strategy developed to defy alien higher “authorities”. In a situation of a daily commodities shortage, of requisitions of private crops and unreliability of

523 Compare: HARRIS, James. Resisting the Plan in the Urals, 1928 – 1956. Or, Why Regional Officials Needed “Wreckers and Saboteurs”. In VIOLA, Lynne (ed.). *Contending with Stalinism. Soviet Power and Popular Resistance in the 1930s*. New York: Cornell University, 2002, pp. 201-228.

524 In 1956, the district committee had to cancel stable allocation of instructors for all village party branches and opted for ad hoc assignment for different occasions because ... they “got assimilated” within the assigned environment too much, “established themselves in it, and in many cases covered up shortcomings that emerged in the organisation’s work”. SNA, f. ÚV2, c. 488, Minutes of the District Conference in Banská Bystrica, 1956, comrade Ján Považan, Secretary of the District Committee of the Communist Party of Slovakia.

525 “The chairman of local branch of the Communist Party of Slovakia (MO KSS) valued kulaks more than members of the Communist Party, and, of course, only those kulaks, from whom he could expect some tangible support” SNA, f. ÚV 2, c. 1157, Veľké Kapušany, 1952.

scheduled supplies, the insufficiency affected all members of the community; from housewives looking for needles, to the cooperative's chairman unable to make tractors work due to lack of spare parts. As a result, everyone depended on client networks of compatriots capable of source, lend, repair, organise, give advice, mediate, execute and deliver.. If a local party official, i.e. in the position of a chairman of a village branch party or of the cooperative, wanted to benefit from these networks (and there was nothing else to do if he wanted to survive), he had to use his authority and related competencies to contribute to the service of the community and not the superior bodies. This practically resulted in, for example, approving additional permits for killing livestock for persons caught with illegal meat,<sup>526</sup> issuing positive references and provision of jobs for countrymen with check-up problems ("class-alien" family background, but also pilferers or drunkards). The limits of local group's solidarity were not clearly defined. (It was influenced also by numerous internal conflicts, such as neighbours' envy and suits over inheritance among siblings.) However, it was mostly limited to 'close' persons to whom commitments could be assigned by traditional standards to help their neighbours without immediate adequate consideration.<sup>527</sup>

The Communist regime not only tried to eliminate the power of such persisting networks but in selected cases focused its propaganda purposefully on their cultivation and extension beyond the former boundaries. The regime presented the United Agricultural Cooperative as a common property "like in the family", working in the factory as a construction of a "shared house", and the expropriated crops as being used for feeding "our children". It cannot be said, however, that it would achieve striking successes. Among the groups who rejected to sacrifice themselves for the "others", we can find neighbouring cooperatives refusing to share seeds in short supply, as well as workers refusing to work "for the sportsmen" representing their factory.<sup>528</sup> Towns in one region lobbied against each other to win allocation of public institutions and village councils blackmailed the factory boards by conditioning recruitment of new workers with factory patronage over village construction projects. Even in such conflicting cases, the local Communist activists were able to take advantage of the code preferred by the regime and lead a "politically correct" discourse to their benefit. For example, leaders of one village accusing another village of usurping a shared fire station strengthened their own positions by labelling the rivals as "conducting imperialist and colonialist policy".<sup>529</sup>

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526 "There are (...) those involved in illegal slaughters, further persons who falsified contingents when they were in the allocation commission, and no action has been taken against them so far, which creates conflicts (...) [The people] say that if one is a Communist, then he can do so, and nothing will happen to him." SNA, f. ÚV2, c. 1157, Veľké Kapušany 1958, Michael Kuzma, "Then it is very difficult to keep the class struggle in the countryside, when officials have their hands tied with kulaks." SNA, f. ÚV 2, c. 488, Banská Bystrica 1956.

527 DUNBAR, Robin. *Grooming, Gossip and the Evolution of Language*. London : Faber and Faber, 2004. inclines to an approximate number of 150 people (mostly relatives), whose help can be used by an individual in such way (also mediated).

528 "I've heard rumours that our sportsmen are just slacking. (...) When a worker in the USSR goes to represent, then his co-workers are eager to substitute him in work." SNA, f. ÚV 2, c. 486 Banská Bystrica, 1954, comrade Kováč, Ľubietová.

529 "In the past, the village of Podlavice led an imperialist and colonial policy against the village of Skubín." SNA, f. ÚV 2, c. 484 Minutes Banská Bystrica, 1952, Ondrej Kollár, Skubín.

The conflicts reported at the district conferences of the Communist party as well as the verbal clashes erupting just there on the spot, suggest that a regional political activist got into conflict because of his membership in a proclaimed social elite quite frequently, while opponents rarely coincided with the image of a “typical” enemy as was presented by official propaganda.

Even during the party conferences the actual identification of Communists with the Party’s collective evidently remained merely one of multiple identities of participating delegates. Verbally its symbolic superiority was confirmed, but it was often denied immediately by particular situational arguments. Already the general blueprint for organising such conferences required presentations on behalf of different professional groups (teachers, nurses, policemen, workers and farmers) plus women. Furthermore, for various reasons, individual speakers accentuated their family status (for example “mother of three”), working performance (“chairman of a successful cooperative”), social origin (“from a poor family”), and so on.<sup>530</sup> In arguments presented in favour of group interests the identity of the “Communists” present used to be primarily localised to the particular local branch (mostly based in their village), and their terms of address crossed the boundary between “we, Communists from X” and “we, inhabitants of X” without a hesitation, while the object of complaints was at least symbolically off the site – in the factory, in the other village, in bodies of the National Front, the Central Committee of the Party. It sounds paradoxical, but with a certain amount of extraterritoriality even the offices of the local government and other local authorities could be perceived as alien by the local Communists, if the employed clerks were appointed “from outside”.

Classification of the “other side” of the conflict was thus extremely variable. Persons who played an active or passive role in a conflict situation put themselves in opposition to a variety of “others”. Sometimes these were superior employees (from some level) or simply aliens, not necessarily hostile, but apparently not socialised within the given environment, who were suspect of not being able to sufficiently grasp the issues under dispute, lacking natural empathy of a countrymen, not catching a hint, to whom things had to be thoroughly “explained” and “clarified”. In order to avoid unnecessary problems, lengthy explanation and arguments, these people were often subject to misleading, using “adjusted” or fake reports, concealment of inadequate data, and so on. The position of the “other side” could also be filled by competing party organisations or insufficiently supportive social organisations of the National Front. Also the members of the community itself, including merited party members, could become subject but also object of internal conflict, mostly due to some discreditable and uncontrollable behaviour which disturbed smooth rituals, if they were no longer able to function as a linking element between the outer world and the community, or they publicly “disgraced” their local party branch (e.g. notorious drunks). In order to neutralise such problematic comrades, lower-ranking officials were generally willing to tolerate and even bring about an intervention of the “authorities” into their own local environment.

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<sup>530</sup> For classification of identities compatible with the desired accentuation of loyalty see also: FITZPATRICK, Sheila. *Suplicants and Citizens. (subchapter Presentation of Self)*. In *Tear off the Masks! Identity and Imposition in Twentieth-Century Russia*. Princeton University press, 2005, pp. 172–181.

## OVERCOMING THE OLD BORDERS

According to the domestic propaganda, elements alien to Communists (foreign agents, militarists, bourgeois elements, kulaks, former factory owners and revanchists) were blamed as a source of failures and obstacles in the effort to build the new regime. However, for local party activists the most common source of problems and conflicting situations were persons from their immediate surroundings, to whom they did not, and even could not, dare to have a decidedly negative relationship: the immediate family, neighbours, compatriots... They were not ideological opponents in the classical sense, but represented a source of conflict since it was for them the activist clashed with officially superior objects of loyalty – the political party, its interests, and directives.



## Chapter 12

## TWENTY YEARS WASTED? CONSTRUCTING A NARRATIVE OF 1989 IN SLOVAKIA\*

Adam Hudek

The fall of the socialist dictatorships in Central Europe in 1989 represented a political, cultural and mental revolution which fundamentally influenced the future developments in this region. The year 1989 is also the breaking-point in European history. The fall of the communist regimes was a major division line which changed the continent's face quickly and quite radically. Liberal democratic Europe has "expanded" in a way no one predicted 20 years ago. The Central European states broke away from the group of countries with "real socialism" that had crumbled down slowly, and joined the elite club of the most advanced and wealthiest democracies.

Based on the attitudes to 1989 two basic opinion groups can be identified in the Central European countries. One inclines to ignorance and oblivion, while pointing out the obsolescence, unnecessary reopening of old wounds or thick line after the past. The second attitude demands and emphasises the necessity to work on, and, subsequently, "face up" to the past, also in the form of condemning and punishing the crimes of non-democratic regimes. However, in no case it can be said that the dichotomy of a thick line versus commemoration copies the right-left division of the political spectrum in the post-communist countries.

Ultimately, the opinion prevailed in Central Europe that it was necessary to somehow "come to terms with the totalitarian past", and incorporate it into a new, post-communist narrative. Of course, the calling for coping with the communist past from the environment of politics can be viewed in most cases as an integral part of the political propaganda. Especially when one can see that the state power was in fact doing very little in favour of this process. The communist past was formally "erased" mainly by elimination of the official symbols of the communist power - especially monuments and street names. On the other hand, it should be noted that a significant part of the political elites supported the scientific research of the anti-communist resistance and only a few of major politicians allowed themselves to sabotage it openly.

There is no doubt that Germany was the main example for the post-communist countries with its process of coming to terms with Nazism, and, after 1989, with the communist past in the former German Democratic Republic. We can say that the new leaders of Central European democracies saw Germany as a country that had managed to achieve visible successes. In this case, the quote of British historian Timothy Garton Ash was true when he described Germans as the "world champions in coping with the past".<sup>531</sup> How-

\* The chapter is a re-edited version of the article: HUDEK, Adam. Formovanie obrazu pádu komunizmu na Slovensku [Shaping the image of the fall of Communism in Slovakia]. In IVANIČKOVÁ, Edita et al. *Kapitoly z histórie stredoeurópskeho priestoru v 19. a 20. storočí : pocta k 70-ročnému jubileu Dušana Kováča*. Bratislava : Historický ústav SAV vo vydavateľstve Typoset print spol. s.r.o., 2011, pp. 145-158.

531 SPOHR, Julia. *Auseinandersetzungen mit der totalitären Vergangenheit. Deutsche und tschechische Wege nach 1989 - Ein Vergleich*, s. 2. [online]. Available at: <http://www.stiftung-aufarbeitung.de/downloads/pdf/2007/art18190107.pdf>.

ever, it turned out very quickly that the call for a popular, but very unclear and often controversial “coping with the past” in Central Europe would necessarily be affected by the current political agenda. As Ferenc Glatz, a Hungarian historian, noted, the political aspects of historical writing in this area had always been very strong, and historians in their works traditionally emphasised the state-national aspects.<sup>532</sup> While in the case of some historians the links to national-state interests have loosened after 1989, in the perception of political elites, the political aspects of historical research are still very strong. It seems that Central European society and especially its politicians have been obsessed with the past for a long time. Such an obsession, however, tends to be very selective, primarily subordinated to political objectives. As a result, the entire socially inevitable<sup>533</sup> process of coping with the communist past has been clearly motivated politically from the very beginning.

This fact largely influences also the research of the ground-breaking events of 1989 and their inclusion in the national narratives. The anti-communist resistance and the fall of the communist regimes have become a part of the politics of history and the socio-political discourse. The fight against communism and its final “rejection” is one of the most important aspects of legitimising the democratic regimes in Central Europe which have established their identity primarily on “the founding myth of the fall of communism”.<sup>534</sup> The legitimacy of Central European democracies is largely based on the rejection of socialist dictatorship<sup>535</sup> and the symbolic significance of its fall in 1989. On the other hand, a strictly negative perception of the communist past is typical only for a relatively small group of anti-communist activists. Most people in Central Europe have their own memories of the communist period. This means that there is no generally accepted idea in the society as to how coping with socialist dictatorship should look like. This point raises the question of the role and status of the historical science. To what extent is the work of historians relevant to the formation of knowledge and opinions in society? To what extent can it compete with other means influencing the historical thinking?

According to historian Zdeněk Beneš, the historical thinking as a whole represents a form of historical information interpreted within a society in all its various forms. It is implemented in three basic types.<sup>536</sup> The historical science creates only one of them - the historical knowledge. It includes a complex of investigative results obtained by historians using accepted scientific methods and procedures. On the other end of the spectrum there is the historical consciousness that denotes non-reflected or very poorly reflected sum of historical information. This information reaches the recipient “spontaneously” through various sources of information occurring in his or her surroundings: mass media,

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532 GLATZ, Ferenc. Politics and Historical Science in the Countries of the Soviet System. In GLATZ, Ferenc (ed.). *The Soviet System and Historiography 1917-1989*. Budapest : Institute of History of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 1995, p. 11.

533 One should rather speak of “coping” with something; the definitive “settlement” could hardly be achieved.

534 MAYER, Françoise. Češi a jejich komunismus. *Paměť a politická identita*. [Czechs and their Communism. The Memory and Political Identity] Praha : Argo, 2009, p. 19.

535 KOPEČEK, Michal. In search of „National Memory“ The Politics of history, Nostalgia and the Historiography of Communism in the Czech Republic and East Central Europe. In KOPEČEK, Michal (ed.). *Past in the Making, Historical revisionism in Central Europe after 1989*. Budapest, New York: CEU Press, 2008, p. 77.

536 BENEŠ, Zdeněk. *Historický text a historická kultura* [Historical Text and Historical Culture.] Praha : Univerzita Karlova, 1995. pp. 147-180.

literature, discussions with friends and acquaintances etc. The most important form of historical thinking is the historical consciousness. It consists of a systematised whole of historical information, in which historical knowledge is applied together with various mythologised interpretations of the past. Historical consciousness is the most prevalent form of historical thinking in a society.<sup>537</sup> The historical culture as an expression of collective historical consciousness shows which parts of the past are considered by the society as determining and how it evaluates them. The question is to what extent the historical science is involved in its formation. Certainly, it cannot be argued that the historical consciousness of the society is affected and shaped substantially by the scientific papers written by professional historians only.<sup>538</sup>

One of the key assumptions for accepting the work done by historians should be the effort to achieve value-related neutrality. This is what distinguishes historiography from the ideologically biased interpretations emerging from the political environment. There should be a clearly noticeable tendency in historiography to emancipate oneself from the politics (although full independence is an unattainable ideal rather than a possible reality.) A professional historian should go beyond the simple “coming to terms with the past” and the daily agenda of the on-going political debate.<sup>539</sup> However, this development is also hampered (among others) by a chronic shortage of “theoreticity” in the mainstream historiography manifested by considerable indifference to fundamental methodological issues. Although the historical science in the post-communist states was freed from the grip of Marxism-Leninism, in most cases it returned to the traditional empirical-positivist positions and the nationalist paradigm. In short, the introduction of new topics was not automatically followed by the elaboration of new methods.<sup>540</sup>

The characteristic and long-criticised feature of ethnocentrism of Central European historiography<sup>541</sup> applies also to the theme of anti-communist resistance. In researching this phenomenon, the individual historiographies are devoted primarily to their national specificities, although the efforts to intensify cooperation and compare research results is becoming increasingly visible.

The fundamental problem related to the national paradigm is the fact that it operates with the idea of the existence of a homogeneous nation and national consciousness while emphasising the need to draw a positive picture of the “national history.” The result is a narrative about the national suffering, losses, and casualties caused to the nation etc. This view, however, does not take into account the particular experiences of individuals who make the proclaimed national community. This creates a paradoxical picture in which “the nation suffered” while most of its members felt no suffering. The majority of the

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537 Ibid.

538 NODL, Martin. Možné přístupy ke studiu dějin české historické vědy v letech 1945-2000. [Possible Approaches to the Study of the History of the Czech Historical Science in 1945-2000.] In *Soudobé dějiny*, 2001, Vol. 8, Issue 1, p. 21.

539 GJURIČOVÁ, Adéla – KOPEČEK, Michal. Soudobé dějiny po soudobých dějinách? Česká demokracie a politika po roce 1989 jako historikum. [Contemporary History after Contemporary History? The Czech Democracy and Politics in 1989 as a Historically Important Issue. In Gjuríčová, Adéla - KOPEČEK, Michael (eds.). *Kapitoly z dějin české demokracie po roce 1989*. Praha : Paseka, 2008, p. 10.

540 KOPEČEK, In search, p. 77.

541 For example: BARTOŠEK, Karel. Czechoslovakia: The State of Historiography. In *Journal of Contemporary History*, 1967, Vol. 2, Issue 1, pp. 143-155.

society in the Central European socialist dictatorship had lived peacefully, “did not fight for freedom every day” and also the year of 1989 did not necessarily mean a positive milestone for everybody. As historian Tony Judt noted about the period of Czechoslovak normalisation: “*It must be said that the most Czechs and Slovaks were not openly unhappy about their destiny.*”<sup>542</sup> The historical analysis of 1989 based on the picture of a nation struggling against oppression is untenable, not only because of its essentialism. First of all, it should be noted that a “homogeneous national community” cannot be the smallest unit of the research in the case of the fall of communism in Central Europe. Twenty years after the event it appears that the memory of 1989 and its importance is often more dividing than joining force in the society.

There are several parallel planes of discourses, several competing or overlapping “memories”<sup>543</sup> and resulting interpretations. However, the question is how the historical science can reflect on this fact. In this case, the professional historiography must respond to different interpretations which claim to be in the dominant position of the official “picture of the fall of communism”. One of them is the radically anti-communist view which sees the communist past as a constant struggle between “totalitarian regime” and the “freedom fighters”. The soviet model of the socialist dictatorship is presented as a system imposed from the outside which is incompatible with the long-term development trends in Central Europe. This generally unacceptable political regime supported by “renegades” as the leaders of the Communist Party was destroyed in 1989 after many years of fighting by nationwide revolution led by dissidents. Similar interpretations raise legitimate criticisms among historians<sup>544</sup>, but survive because they are useful. The advantage of the theory of communism as a foreign import maintained by Soviet military is that it takes away the responsibility for the existence of the communist regime from the majority of the society.

However, the black-and-white picture of how the socialist dictatorship worked is acceptable only for a minority of the society (although in many cases very influential). Such interpretations of life under the communist regime are primarily provided by the memories of dissidents. Their experiences and interpretations, however, are in a significant contrast with the experiences of the majority population. As historian James Krapfl wrote in his very interesting book titled *Revolution with a Human Face* the exclusive interest in activities done by the elites is still typical for the scientific texts about the fall of communism. J. Krapfl assumes that if the revolution of 1989 was a democratic revolution, the

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542 JUDT, Tony. *Postwar. A history of Europe since 1945*. New York : The Penguin Press, 2005, p. 617.

543 Dissidents, former communists, nationalists, “ordinary people”, political elites, intellectuals, and various combinations of these and other ideal types.

544 YURCHAK, Alexej. *Everything was forever, until there was no more. The last Soviet generation*. Princeton University Press, 2006. For criticism of the interpretation of the past in the Czech and Slovak environment, see: PULLMANN, Michal. *Konec experimentu. Přestavba a pád komunismu v Československu*. [The End of an Experiment. The Rebuilding and the Fall of Communism in Czechoslovakia.] Praha : Scriptorium, 2011; PULLMANN, Michal. Sociální dějiny a totalitnehistorické vyprávění. [The Social History and Totalitarian Historical Narrative.] In *Soudobé dějiny*, 2008, Vol. 15, Issue 3-4, pp. 703-717.

*demos* - the people - should be the focus of our attention. Instead, we have got historical, political and sociological analyses, which are largely focused on the elites.<sup>545</sup>

The strength and considerable monopoly of the dissident insight of the fall of communism causes the hindering of scientific research in the Czech Republic and Slovakia as it narrows the range of research problems. According to historian Martin Franc, the proposition that the fall of the regime is attributable mainly to the long-term frustration of citizens in consumption and not the political developments is strictly refused especially by a part of the former dissidents. This relates mainly to the ethos of pre-November political opposition which emphasises the moral aspects of anti-communist resistance.<sup>546</sup> The official questioning of the “dissident narrative” by historians can lead to very tense discussions even with personal attacks.<sup>547</sup>

This raises a legitimate question as to why the former dissidents in the successor countries of Czechoslovakia and leaders of the anti-communist demonstrations maintained the position of respected “interpreters” of the events leading to the fall of communism, although many of them enjoy almost no public sympathy nowadays. The answer is probably that professional historiography is weak and has failed to assert an alternative interpretation of the period.<sup>548</sup> Historians still cannot break the strong tradition of “dissident memorialism”.

The Slovak media which have got the best opportunities to shape the public discussion still prefer dissident memories to a scientific analysis done by professional historians. Some of those who participated in the events of 1989 got into the position of almost indubitable expounders<sup>549</sup> of the fall of communism. There is also a striking absence of historians in the annual television programmes dedicated to the “Velvet Revolution”. Even if historians are invited to participate in such type of programmes, it is not primarily because of their professional focus, but rather because they were actively engaged in the events of 1989. The Slovak situation was accurately assessed by former dissident Ján Budaj: “*The celebrations of freedom in the media bring to us every year always the same mixture of facts described superficially, similar photos, a sort of well-established “November mythology.” This is exactly the opposite of a critical reflection which the latest Slovak history would need. Instead, we have merely got some media sediments of memories of the events’ protagonists, usually tinged with political interests and personal reasons for which many of us identify this or that as heroism, while, on the contrary, downplay or rewrite other issues.*”<sup>550</sup> Budaj sharply criticises historians who, according to him, allow such a state of

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545 KRAPFL, James. *Revolúcia s ľudskou tvárou: Politika, kultúra a spoločnosť v Československu po 17. novembri 1989* [Revolution with a Human Face: Politics, Culture, and Community in Czechoslovakia after 17<sup>th</sup> November 1989]. Bratislava : Kalligram, 2009, p. 19.

546 FRANC, Martin. Ostalgie v Čechách.[Ostalgies in the Czech Republic.] In GJURIČOVÁ, Adéla – KOPEČEK, Michal (eds.). *Kapitoly z dějin české demokracie po roce 1989*. Praha : Paseka, 2008, p. 194.

547 Czech historian Michal Pullman experienced this type of smear campaign after he published his book titled *Konec experimentu. Přestavba a pád komunismu v Československu* [The End of an Experiment. The Rebuilding and the Fall of Communism in Czechoslovakia].

548 However, in the Czech environment, this proposition now quickly fades away.

549 It seems that many of them believe they actually have got a monopoly to the one and only correct interpretation of the 1989 events.

550 BUDAJ, Ján. Reflexie nad okružným výročím a jednou knihou o Nežnej revolúcii. [Reflections on the Anniversary and a Book on the Gentle Revolution.] In *Pohlady*, 2009, Vol. 24, Issue 2, p. 15.

knowledge by their passivity: “[I]n Slovakia the basic research in archives is still not completed, there is even not a historian specialised in November.”<sup>551</sup> However, J. Budaj was also very quick to show his limits in the acceptance of professional historiographical results. During a presentation of a book on November 1989,<sup>552</sup> written by professional historians, he almost caused a scandal because some facts and dates had been construed differently in the book than he imagined. This type of behaviour points to a specific “memory problem” of direct actors of revolution. Relying on individual memories quite logically leads to errors and mistakes. This came up in the inspiring and well written book by Petr Pithart *Devětaosmdesátý* (The Eighty Ninth).<sup>553</sup> In a review of the book published in *Lidové noviny*, Petr Zídek criticised it for “numerous embarrassing mistakes”<sup>554</sup> which resulted from relying solely on memory. Another participant of the 1989 events, Vladimír Ondruš<sup>555</sup>, realised the problem of the human memory’s insufficiency while writing his book. In one of the debates about the events he described in his book, he admitted: “I found out quickly that human memory is misleading and many events in my memories actually happened at another time, and had different consequences. I had to start relying on documents.”<sup>556</sup> However, Ondruš speaks mainly of Czech documents, because due to specific political developments in Slovakia in the “post-revolutionary period,” the archives of Verejnost’ proti násiliu (the Public Against Violence, VPN) were practically inaccessible for a long time. In the Czech Republic and Germany the archives of similar type have been managed and made accessible since the early 1990s mainly by specialised historical institutes. After the VPN ceased to exist Slovak documents were passed to the private Foundation of Milan Šimečka. The then director (former dissident,) Peter Zajac, refused to deliver the documents to the Slovak National Archives. The reason was the reluctance to give the documents to the custody of a man installed in the National Archives by the populist-nationalist coalition led by Vladimír Mečiar.<sup>557</sup> The VPN archives have been passed to the Slovak National Archives quite recently. One of the consequences is that the Slovak historians lack basic materials concerning the period between 1989 and 1992. The current situation in the November discourse in Slovakia further strengthens the position of direct actors of the anti-communist demonstrations. However, there is almost no interpretive unity among them, not even regarding some of the key data.

551 Ibid. Ján Budaj expressed himself in a similar way in a more comprehensive interview with the SME daily on 17th November 2008. Available at: <<http://www.sme.sk/c/4178242/jan-budaj-havel-robil-tajne-dohody-s-komunistami.html>>

552 ŽATKULIAK, Jozef et al. *November '89. Medzník vo vývoji slovenskej spoločnosti a jeho medzinárodný kontext*. [November '89. A Milestone in the Slovak Society's Development and its International Context.] Bratislava : Historický ústav SAV vo vydavateľstve Prodana, 2009.

553 PITHART, Petr. *Devětaosmdesátý*. [The Eighty Nine.] Praha : Academia, 2009.

554 ZÍDEK, Petr. Pithartův rok 1989. [Pithart's Year 1989.] In *Lidové noviny*, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2009. Available at: [http://www.lidovky.cz/pithartuv-rok-1989-0ks-/ln\\_noviny.asp?c=A090704\\_000104\\_ln\\_noviny\\_sko&klic=232377&mes=090704\\_0](http://www.lidovky.cz/pithartuv-rok-1989-0ks-/ln_noviny.asp?c=A090704_000104_ln_noviny_sko&klic=232377&mes=090704_0).

555 Prime Minister of the Slovak Post-November Government. Is the author of: ONDRUŠ, Vladimír. *Atentát na* [The Assassination of the Gentle Revolution.] Bratislava : Ikar, 2009.

556 BLAŽEKOVÁ, Eva. Politický hon na čarodějnice (prepis diskusie). [Political Witch Hunt (Transcript of the Discussion).] In *Nové slovo*, 2010, Issue 6. Available at: <http://www.noveslovo.sk/clanok.asp?id=18529&cislo=6/2010>.

557 Interview with Peter Zajac on this Issue is available at: <http://www.oks.sk/article.php?577>.

The “dissident narrative” has also got a considerable group of critics outside the community of historians, in the Slovak case primarily from the post-communist left wing, since in contrast to the situation in the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary, an absolute majority of figures of the anti-communist resistance in Slovakia has supported right-wing parties. The critics, however, include also nationalists who blamed dissidents for not supporting the break-up of Czechoslovakia in their majority, and technocrats despising the moral aspects of anti-communism.

As shown in the 20<sup>th</sup>-anniversary celebrations of the fall of communism in Slovakia in 2009, the fact that left-wing political elites, despite their popularity and political influence, cannot quite break through what they perceive as a dissident monopoly on the interpretation of the Revolution, gives rise to a considerable frustration among them. At a conference of the ASA (Analyses, Strategies, Alternatives) left-wing think-tank, Speaker of Parliament Pavol Paška had an emotional speech on this subject. He accused former dissidents of having stolen the right to command millions of other people, who might have stood in the Revolution’s squares too, how to see the fall of communism: “*They tell them to shut up and keep going because we are the chosen ones, who are now entitled to say - this is the holy truth and the rest of you have to conform.*”<sup>558</sup> At the same conference, Prime Minister Robert Fico claimed that there were not only the “fighters for democracy” standing on the November’s tribunes, but also people who had plotted their plans to gain power and pursue economic interests in advance.<sup>559</sup> The speeches given by both left-wing politicians had the form of attacks on political opponents, but also pointed out the actually existing problem of elitist and unilateral interpretation of the fall of communism. The subsequent anniversary celebrations showed clearly that even 20 years after the fall of communism there was no generally accepted historical interpretation of the event.<sup>560</sup>

In the search for allies, the critics of the “moralistic” dissident approach to anti-communist resistance pointed out the similarity of their lives in communism to the lives of “ordinary citizens”. The difference between the “dissident” and the “folk” view of the fall of communism is quite aptly illustrated by two reviews of the publication by Slovak ethnologists titled *Hodnota zmeny - zmena hodnoty* (The Value of Change - the Change in Value).<sup>561</sup> The book is constructed on personal testimonies of individuals and offers a glimpse into the daily lives of specific groups of people before and after 1989. In a brief review, Martin Bútorá, a former dissident and a representative of the Slovak intellectual

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558 BARIAK, Ladislav. Paška: Sloboda nestačí, potrebujeme plný žalúdok. [Freedom is not Enough, we need a full stomach.] In *Aktualne.sk*. Available at: <http://aktualne.centrum.sk/domov/politika/clanek.phtml?id=1195332>. The speech as a sound recording: <http://tv.sme.sk/v/12734/paska-uraza-ma-ze-ma-majuzabolshevik.html>.

559 TÓDOVÁ, Monika. Paška: Uráža ma označenie bolševik. [It Insults me to be Called a Bolshevik.] In *SME*, 13<sup>th</sup> November 2009. Available at: <http://www.sme.sk/c/5108310/paska-uraza-ma-oznacenie-bolshevik.html>. The speech as a sound recording: <http://tv.sme.sk/v/12741/fico-si-november-1989-vsimmel.html>.

560 It is very typical of the celebration’s progress that after the end of journalists pointed out that in addition to two parallel memorial meetings for invited guests in two theatres in Bratislava no one thought to organise a public remembrance for ordinary citizens, despite the fact that both camps claimed to be supported by them.

561 PROFANTOVÁ, Zuzana et al. *Hodnota zmeny - zmena hodnoty. Demarkačný rok 1989*. [The Value of Change - the Change in Value. 1989 - the Year of Demarkation.] Bratislava : Ústav etnológie SAV, 2009.

elite, selected quotes<sup>562</sup> pointing out the oppressive form of the regime. Another reviewer, Martin Hric, an older-generation journalist, who took on the role of a speaker of a “ordinary citizen” acknowledged the fact that the respondents in the book are the elderly, because “a 24-year old “analyst” with milk on his chin has got nothing to compare based on his personal experience.”<sup>563</sup> Subsequently, the author provided various examples, often absurd, that “a number of post-November achievements are greatly compensated by a number of disadvantages.”<sup>564</sup> Hric concluded his short review by a statement which was quite clearly directed against the dissident insight into history: “[O]ur past has not been a black hole, and our history did not start from scratch on the 17<sup>th</sup> November.”<sup>565</sup>

It is now clear that the Central European dissidents are losing the battle for the popularisation of their own liberal, moralistic narrative of the fall of communism. Nationalists, populists and technocrats gradually asserted their own form of the historical discourse to suit their objectives. It turns out that the tradition of anti-communism is useful for the political elites of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and worth noticing by the society only when it is linked to a national or state paradigm. As noted by historian Michal Kopeček: “All of that proves the society’s great demand to reflect on the communist past, and also of course the new wave of politicisation of the post-war history. The symbolic centre of this renewed interest in the recent past is a problematic concept of national memory, or nation’s memory, existing as an outcome of a symbiosis of strong politically and culturally motivated anti-communism, unreflected return of the ethnocentric historical paradigm, and the unrestrained postmodern memorialisation culture.”<sup>566</sup>

This process was also manifested in the creation of specialised institutions responsible for documentation, research and evaluation of the crimes of communism (and Nazism.) The model for similar institutions is the so-called Gauck office in Germany dealing with documents of the Stasi (East German secret police.) However, this governmental office does not claim the role of an institution carrying out scientific research, and certainly does not address a political agenda or building the national identity.<sup>567</sup> Nonetheless, this cannot be said about the office’s followers. The largest and oldest institution of this kind outside of Germany, the Polish Institute of National Remembrance - Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes against the Polish Nation<sup>568</sup>, declares with an appropriate pathos in its programme to “preserve the memory of the patriotic traditions of fighting against occupiers, Nazism and Communism” and to document “citizens’ efforts to fight for an independ-

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562 BÚTORA, Martin. Stopy sveta, ktorý dnes už chýba. [Traces of the World Missing Today.] In *SME*, 9<sup>th</sup> March 2010. Available at: <http://kultura.sme.sk/c/5276137/stopy-sveta-ktory-uz-dnes-chyba.html>.

563 HRIC, Martin. Hodnota zmeny. [The Value of Change.] In *Pravda*, 30<sup>th</sup> December 2009. Available at: [http://nazory.pravda.sk/hodnota-zmeny-0dy-/sk-nkom.asp?c=A091230\\_102442\\_sk-nkom\\_p12](http://nazory.pravda.sk/hodnota-zmeny-0dy-/sk-nkom.asp?c=A091230_102442_sk-nkom_p12).

564 Ibid.

565 Ibid.

566 KOPEČEK, Michal. Historická paměť a liberální nacionalismus v Česku a střední Evropě po roku 1989. [The Historical Memory and Liberal Nationalism in the Czech Republic and Central Europe after 1989.] In GJURIČOVÁ, Adéla – KOPEČEK, Michal (eds.). *Kapitoly z dějin české demokracie po roce 1989*. Praha : Paseka, 2008, p. 263.

567 KOPEČEK, In search, p. 88.

568 The Institute was established by law in 1998, and began working on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2000.

ent Polish state, in defense of freedom and human dignity".<sup>569</sup> The Institute was established despite fierce opposition by the post-communist Left and being vetoed by President Aleksander Kwasniewski, one of the most famous advocates of drawing a "thick line" between the present and the past.

Enforcement of creating the Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes in the Czech Republic was clearly linked to the term of the right-wing Civic Democratic Party (Občanská demokratická strana, ODS) and, like in Poland, its establishment was accompanied by the opposition of the left-wing part of the political spectrum. The Slovak Nation's Memory Institute led by former dissident Ján Langoš was originally established and operated as a documentation centre, similar to the Gauck Institute. After the death of J. Langoš in 2006 the election of a new director in the Slovak Parliament embroiled the Institute into the political struggle among political parties. The establishment of the Hungarian House of Terror museum<sup>570</sup> for documentation of the crimes of totalitarian regimes was also perceived as a political act. Although the museum was established by the state the critics see it as a child of the right-wing government of Viktor Orbán. In their opinion, it was established in order to compromise the post-communist left-wing Socialist Party. "*The House of Terror is reducing the memory of terror to a level of false, cheap and repelling political propaganda,*" András Mink, a Hungarian historian, said.<sup>571</sup>

The fact that these institutions are seen as branches of particular political parties or interest groups has caused that the results of their work are rejected by pointing out their ideological conflict of interests. The Slovak and Czech institutes are often accused of deliberately compromising particular public personalities. It also induces a decline in trust and credibility of the scientific and historical knowledge and its originators.

As mentioned above, the legitimacy of Central European democracies is based to a large extent on the rejection of the communist regime<sup>572</sup>, and its collapse in 1989. Moreover, in the Slovak (and the German) case, the fall of communism is the starting point for the making of a new (renewed) state. Therefore, the emerging official national stories must somehow accentuate the topic of anti-communist resistance. However, it is useful for political elites to emphasise mainly the events the majority of society can identify itself with and which contribute to the formation of a positive image of the national community, its heroism, and resistance to oppression. This is the reason why formal and pompous celebrations have been focused mainly on mass protests against communism. These acts of resistance have been glorified exactly because of their "nationwide" nature. In this form, they fit into the preferred paradigm of national history, because they tend to homogenise society and not break it apart.

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569 See the Institute's website: <[http://www.ipn.gov.pl/portal/en/1/2/Institute\\_of\\_National\\_Remembrance\\_Commission\\_for\\_the\\_Prosecution\\_of\\_Crimes\\_agai.html](http://www.ipn.gov.pl/portal/en/1/2/Institute_of_National_Remembrance_Commission_for_the_Prosecution_of_Crimes_agai.html)> It is interesting to note that the Polish version of the Web page does not include the declarative statement about the Institute's objectives in the same form.

570 Open since 2002.

571 FULLER, Thomas. Stark history / Some see a stunt : Memory becomes battleground in Budapest's House of Terror. In *New York Times*, 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2002. Available at: [http://www.nytimes.com/2002/08/02/news/02iht-budapest\\_ed3\\_.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2002/08/02/news/02iht-budapest_ed3_.html).

572 KOPEČEK, In search, p. 77.

The speech of Pavol Paška mentioned above, criticising the dissidents' purported feeling of exclusivity, was an apparent example of disagreement with what he saw as undermining the nationwide nature of the Velvet Revolution.

Many of the direct participants pointed out the fact that people who had joined the Communist Party<sup>573</sup> in the 1970s and 1980s from opportunistic reasons, had no moral right to usurp the credit for the fall of the regime. However, this type of criticism was against the "vision" of celebrations, as they had been planned to be in a spirit of national reconciliation, to highlight the courage of the entire community, and not a few "heroes". For post-communist Central Europe, the interpretation of the history of anti-communist resistance is mainly of "therapeutic" importance. It should assure the society that the system of socialist dictatorship was not accepted passively and that there was a tradition of resistance. This argument subsequently became the foundation for the creation of a new national narrative. In the Polish and Hungarian histories, mass protests against communist power had established themselves as heroic periods of the national narratives a long time ago. In the Czech Republic this position was occupied by the events of 1968. In Slovakia, even more attention than to 1968 is drawn to the activities of the Catholic resistance. In this regard, it is worth noting one peculiarity of the Slovak case. While particularly in Poland and Hungary, the fight against communism in the national stories was directly associated with the struggle for national freedom against external oppression<sup>574</sup>, in the Slovak case, this automatic link is missing to some extent. In his definition of the Slovak anti-communist resistance, former dissident Ján Čarnogurský stressed: *"Any resistance to communism in Slovakia which would claim support for the national traditions, was labelled by the regime as a continuation of the Slovak Republic in 1939-45, and a sign of "clero-fascism". (...) Therefore, in Slovakia the resistance to the communist regime had to have its focus outside national framework. Some ideological reference frameworks could be taken into account, namely the Christian one, some kind of democratic socialism, and the civil-liberal one. The Christian resistance to communism became the dominant stream."*<sup>575</sup>

However, from the perspective of the nationalist and paternalist wing of the Slovak political elites, the anti-communist resistance in Slovakia gained importance only if it could be combined with the struggle for national emancipation of Slovaks. This is one reason why the creation of the independent Slovak Republic in 1993 started to be emphasised as one of the most important consequences of the fall of communism in Slovakia. From the perspective of both left-wing politicians and nationalists, such an interpretation has brought undoubtable benefits. Most of the former dissidents were against the breakup of Czechoslovakia. Thus, nationalists could publicly denounce them as being "against independence". The leader of the leftist party SMER, Robert Fico, repeatedly described 1989 as the first step towards the independent state. This interpretation made it possible for the post-communist left-wing to transfer the meaning of 1989 from the fight against the

573 It also applied to all three leaders of the Slovak Republic in 2009: President Ivan Gašparovič, Prime Minister Robert Fico, and Speaker of Parliament Pavol Paška.

574 This is a definition and description of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 as well as the Polish struggle against Nazism and Bolshevism.

575 ČARNOGURSKÝ, Ján. Odpor proti komunizmu. [Resistance to Communism.] In *Impulz*, 2005, Issue 2. Available at: <http://www.impulzrevue.sk/article.php?26>.

communist regime to the “fight for independence” (in which the Slovak left-wing representatives had been involved actively).

The emphasis on the national paradigm and constitutional changes in Slovakia largely overshadows the meaning of the fall of communism which is often relegated to be a beginning of a “really” important process. The specificity of the Slovak case is well illustrated by historian Ľubomír Lipták: *“The coup of 1989 was ahistorical, so to speak. (...) The masses on the Slovak squares were little excited about the fact whether the country was returning to times before 1968, 48, 45, or 39. What prevailed was the “year zero syndrome”, a thick line after the past, and a desire for a brand new start. However, the historical myths kept under the lid for 40 years, quickly came to attention.”*<sup>576</sup> In contrast to the “ahistoricity of the coup” the issue of status of Czechs and Slovaks in the common state had some strong historical connotations. In Slovakia any periods of instability led traditionally to opening the nationality-related issues. Similarly as in 1968, the calling for democratic changes in 1990 was also put aside very quickly by the demand for a “fair” constitutional arrangement. Also in the Slovak historiography, the breakup of Czechoslovakia and the nation-building issue became a more attractive topic than the fall of communism. The interest in the national topics has generally prevailed for a long time in Slovak historical culture, while the issues of democracy and totalitarianism have been typically sidetracked.

In the narratives of the nationalist wing of former historians in exile such as Milan Ďurica and František Vnuk, the fight against communism coincided with the efforts to achieve “national freedom”.<sup>577</sup> According to this narrative, communism was brought to “Catholic Slovakia” from Czech lands by force, and implemented against the will of the Slovak population. The most effective way to get rid of the communist regime was the fight for Slovak independence. Subsequently, this view led to claiming that anti-communist resistance in common Czechoslovakia had actually been unnecessary. Such a scheme took the responsibility for the functioning of the socialist dictatorship away from the “nation”.

Stressing the fight against communism as a pretext for sympathising with extreme right-wing views has also appeared in other Central European countries. Hungarian historian András Mink describes how the anti-Soviet uprising of 1956 lost its democratic tradition in favour of right-wing extremists who have interpreted the event as an effort to return to the inter-war authoritarian regime. As A. Mink adds: *“From the perspective of this new anti-communist revisionism, after the regime change in 1989 Hungary should have turned back to its genuine historical roots and to the national character of the pre-1945 period.”*<sup>578</sup> It should also be noted that in the Central European states, parties, which give hope to similar radicals to at least partially implement their ideas, get to rule on a regular basis.

There are many various interpretations of the anti-communist resistance and the fall of communism existing side by side in Central European states. Each of them has its own

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576 LIPTÁK, Ľubomír. *Storočie dlhšie ako sto rokov*. [A Century Longer Than a Hundred Years.] Bratislava : Kalligram, 2011, p. 262.

577 In the form of a struggle for maintaining autonomous Slovakia. See: KATREBOVA-BLEHOVA, Beata. Das slowakische politische Exil in Österreich, 1945 – 1955: Von der Flucht, Intervention und Repatriierung bis zum antikomunistischen Widerstand der Weissen Legion. In HRABOVEC, Emilia – KATREBOVA-BLEHOVA, Beata (eds.). *Slowakei und im 20. Jahrhundert*. Wien, Berlin : LIT Verlag 2008. pp. 173-215.

578 MINK, András. The Revisions of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution. In KOPEČEK, Michal (ed.). *Past in the Making, Historical Revisionism in Central Europe after 1989*. Budapest, New York : CEU Press, 2008, p. 176.

meaning for specific groups of the society. In the review written by Patrik Eichler, about the already mentioned book by Petr Pithart: *“One way or another, the symbolical winner of the second round of interpreting November 1989 and the normalisation period will be the social stream which will be the first to generate its coherent interpretation.”*<sup>579</sup> To make it possible for professional historiography to actually participate in the shaping of the society’s historical consciousness, it must firstly identify a way in its analysis of the transformation period how to combine the basic views of the society’s various parts and their historical experiences into a commonly accepted whole. In contrast to Slovakia, this process has already been launched successfully in the Czech Republic. The main reason for the difference is because professional historians play a stronger and more active role in enforcing the scientific approach in the process of interpretation of the post-communist transformation process.

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579 EICHLER, Patrik. Mezi dobou a jejím obrazem. [Between the Time and its Image.] In *Listy*, 2009, Issue 4. Available at: <http://www.listy.cz/archiv.php?cislo=094&clanek=040901>.

## CONCLUSION

Czech historian Michal Kopeček began one of his lectures on the historical memory with a quote which fits very well into the conclusion of this book: “*Someone once said that happier nations do not have to worry so much about history, and, therefore, their national culture can be based on philosophy and art. Less fortunate nations, meaning those who lose more often, must pay more attention to their history. As a result, basis for their national culture and often also national obsession is the history.*”<sup>580</sup> Being obsessed with history and its interpretation is typical of all the countries in Central Europe. Since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, close links were established in this region between the historiography and the political developments of the nations, which led not only to “politisation of history” but also to “historisation of the politics”. How else could the situation have developed in the area where the borders, forms of government and state configurations changed every few years? A joke about a man who was a citizen four different states without leaving Mukacheve, in fact accurately describes the tragic absurdity of the Central European historical developments. However, it did not concern individuals only, but whole groups. As Michal Schvarc writes in his study: “*Who would have predicted it at the beginning of 1918 that the city of Bratislava would become a part of four different state establishments, that in such a relatively short time it would go through six different regimes, and that just a torso would be left of the 30-thousand German community by early 1949 which will fear to claim allegiance to its roots?*”

The 20<sup>th</sup> century in this region is typical for radical changes of state borders, ruling regimes and ideologies. Each of these events usually brought the politically motivated need for the reconstruction and revaluation of national histories according to the actual demands of new ruling power. The propaganda was often merging with the interpretation of the past in order to enable the politicians “to usurp” the useful parts of the history for themselves and negate the rest. The current state was presented as a “logical outcome of the national history”. There are whole generations who had a first-hand experience of several re-interpretations of the official version of history. “*These generations could legitimately get the impression that the official interpretation of history changes more often than those who interpret it.*”<sup>581</sup>

The frequent changes in the official interpretation of history and the need to adapt the national narratives to ideological schemes took a lot of energy from the Slovak historical science and constantly forced it to operate within narrow ethnocentric borders.<sup>582</sup> In the case of Slovakia, these borders were even getting smaller and smaller. The construction

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580 KOPEČEK, Michal. *Spory o „dědictví“ demokratické opozice ve střední Evropě, autenticita a dějinná paměť* [Disputes over the “Legacy” of the Democratic Opposition in Central Europe, Authenticity and Historical Memory]. [online] Available at: <http://www.cz.boell.org/downloads/kopecek.pdf>.

581 MARUŠIAK, Juraj. Sloboda (nielen) pre históriu [Freedom (not only) for History]. In *Forum Historiae*, 2009, Vol. 3, Issue 1, p. 2 [online]. Available at: [http://www.forumhistoriae.sk/forum/vyzva\\_z\\_blois/marusiak.pdf](http://www.forumhistoriae.sk/forum/vyzva_z_blois/marusiak.pdf).

582 PECH, Stanley Z. Ferment in Czechoslovak Marxist Historiography. In *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, 1968, Vol. 10, Issue 4, pp. 502-522; BARTOŠEK, Karel. Czechoslovakia: The State of Historiography. In *Journal of Contemporary History*, 1967, Vol. 2, Issue 1, pp. 143-155.

of the Czechoslovak history after 1918 was, among other things, focused on detachment of the Slovak national story from the Hungarian context, and its attachment to the Czech context. In this light the representations of Hungarians as “hereditary enemies” and “oppressors of Slovaks” were further strengthened. After the division of the Czechoslovak state, the Czech context disappeared too and the territory of today’s Slovakia remained to be studied only in terms of the Slovak nationality. This development resulted in the existence of several parallel or competing stories. However, in the context of the Slovak historiography the nationalist paradigm remains to be constantly present and reproduced. The nationalist canon is also one of the most influential societal determinants.<sup>583</sup> The Slovak intellectual and cultural elites have long been deeply divided concerning the choice “folk vs. citizens” - there is an unresolved tension between demands for national liberation and the advancement of personal liberties. However, this situation is typical for many younger nation states, which have an “*especially strong tendency to project their national histories back in time in order to legitimate their striving for a nation state or their recently acquired status as a new nation state. The construction of a centuries-old continuous and uninterrupted development of the nation state depends on such backward projections.*”<sup>584</sup> Even in the historic community opinions exist, that there is necessary to take the national perspective into account when “writing history”: “*The existence of the sovereign Slovak Republic naturally requires to perceive its own history in accordance with the positive assessment of the entire nation’s ethnogenesis.*”<sup>585</sup>

This points to the fact that the Slovak historiography makes an imperfect use of the opportunities that have arisen after the political changes in 1989. The rapid increase in demand for new research topics was not accompanied by acceptance of the latest methodological approaches in the historical science: “*Thus, the “liberalization” of historical studies after 1989 brought about the restoration of old conceptual models rather than the introduction of the new ones.*”<sup>586</sup> The general trend is pointing more towards rehabilitation of the traditional empirical-positivist historiography and the nation-centred narrative. The new methodological approaches to historical research are still very often viewed with considerable scepticism, rejected as useless, or even harmful.

At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, however, a visible shift occurred in the Slovak historiography, both thematic and methodological, away from the political history and the nation-centred paradigm of history. The aim of this publication is to document this shift and also to analyse the historical roots of ideas and patterns of thought present in the Slovak (and Central European) space today.

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583 MICHELA, Miroslav. Pripomínanie a kanonizovanie minulosti. Úvaha na margo niektorých diskusií o dejinách Slovenska. [Commemoration and Canonised Past. Commenting on the Some Discussions on the History of Slovakia.] In MERVART, Jan - ŠTEPÁN, Jiří (eds.). *České, slovenské a československé dějiny 20. století*. Hradec Králové : OFTIS, 2008, p. 14.

584 BERGER, Stefan. National historiographies in transnational perspective: Europe in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In *Storia della Storiografia*, 2006, Issue 50, pp. 13-14.

585 Opinion of Slovak historians, archaeologists and linguists. [online] Available at: <http://komentare.sme.sk/c/3670575/ad-vlada-a-premier-sme-3-1.html>.

586 KOPEČEK, Michal. In search of „National Memory“ The Politics of history, Nostalgia and the Historiography of Communism in the Czech Republic and East Central Europe. In KOPEČEK, Michal (ed.). *Past in the Making, Historical Revisionism in Central Europe after 1989*. Budapešť, New York : CEU Press, 2008, p. 81.

The research into the Slovak history represents an analysis of the society in which, despite the continuing industrialisation and modernisation, the elements typical of pre-industrial communities of the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (religiosity, rural society, the emphasis on broad family ties) survived, and still persist.<sup>587</sup> As stated by anthropologist Juraj Buzalka, the changes during the 20<sup>th</sup> century were of short duration to bring a complete cultural transformation, but long enough for the society to change structurally.<sup>588</sup> The rapid modernisation of Slovakia led to increasing divergence between economic and technical modernisation factors on the one hand and the cultural and social processes on the other.<sup>589</sup> This situation was also reflected in the process of democratic political socialisation in Slovakia, which had to face the deeply rooted patterns of behaviour especially in small peasant communities. Slovak political scientist, Miroslav Kusý, argues that Slovaks are still not a nation, but a group of compatriots; that the local identities are stronger than the national one.<sup>590</sup>

The research of Slovak history is an analysis of a culturally, ethnically and socially heterogeneous community. Different concepts of identities competed in this territory, which were interlaced and combined with each other. The concept of national identity was strongly competed by religious and local identities. Even at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there were complaints from Slovak elites that a Slovak Protestant feels closer to his Hungarian counterpart than to a Slovak Catholic. In this regard, the Jews with no clearly defined boundaries between religious and ethnic identity were a characteristic group.

The process of nationalisation, supported by the political and intellectual elites, led to increasingly conflicting situations in the heterogeneous society. Although not everybody endorsed the policy of confrontation, such voices were drowned in a sea of ultra-nationalism of the rivalling parties. The first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was also the time of new, radical ideological lines, proclaiming radical remodelling of the then societies. Fascism and communism created their own interpretations of history. In particular, the communist regime set the “inevitability of historical development” as the basis for its legitimacy, which was the reason why its officials strictly controlled the official national narrative. Both ideologies mentioned became the opportunity to implement their visions of a “new society”, with the inevitable tragic consequences that changed the face of the region forever.

The fall of communist regimes in the East Central Europe in 1989 started a radical reconstruction of the national narratives. The building of the liberal democracies needed to be based on the “coping” with the “non-democratic past”, especially, but not exclusively, with the communist era. The anti-communist struggle is one of the most important legitimisation aspects of the Central European democracies. Their legitimacy is to a substantial extent based on the rejection of fascist and communist regimes. Therefore, the opinion prevailed in Central Europe after 1989 that it is necessary to somehow “come to terms” with the “totalitarian past”, to incorporate it into a new, post-communist master narrative.

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587 MUSIL, Jiří. Czech and Slovak society. In MUSIL, Jiří (ed.). *The end of Czechoslovakia*. Budapest, London, New York: CEU Press, 1995, p. 90.

588 BUZALKA, Juraj. *Slovenská ideológia a kríza*. [Slovak ideology and Crisis.] Bratislava : Veda, 2012, pp. 67-68.

589 MUSIL, Czech, p. 90.

590 KUSÝ, Miroslav. *Eseje*. [Essays.] Bratislava : Argo, 1991, p. 59.

However, it turned out very quickly that the call for a very unclear and often controversial “coping with the past” in Central Europe would necessarily be affected by that period’s political agenda. Here emerges the question about the role and goals of the professional historical science in this process. To what extent is the work of historians relevant to the formation of knowledge and opinions of the society? To what extent can it compete with the other means and instruments influencing the image of the past and present?

After more than 20 years after the fall of the communist regime the community of Slovak historians heads toward a more autonomous position of history whose role is not defined by the political commitments but academic inquiry and critical discussion. New approaches and methods enter into historiography even if slowly and warily. Nevertheless, the so called “islands of positive deviations” are growing stronger, thanks to increasing international exchange and interdisciplinary cooperation. There is a hope that this process will progress into a pluralist, open-minded historical culture.

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