

The *Ludáci* and the Communists: Rivals? Allies? Opponents?

Abstracts

Benko, Juraj: Socialist Ideology in Confrontation with the Religious Slovak Environment in the First Quarter of the 20th Century

Ideologies of Socialism (Communism) and political Catholicism participated markedly in the political discourse of interwar Slovakia. Their political representations – the Social Democratic (or Communist) Party and the People’s Party – operated here as stable components of the political and public spheres. After the Republic came into existence in 1918, both ideological movements strove to reassert themselves as mass political parties in order to shape the political identity of the population by means of their own particular discourse. However, their aspirations were both stimulated and restrained by the cultural background of the Slovak, still partially urban, partially rural, society. Such an environment was held over by traditionalism and strong religiosity.

The first part of the paper discusses the confrontation and conflict between the Socialist ideology and the political Catholicism both in general and at a concrete political (discursive) level. The second part is an analysis of the specific relation of the Socialist ideology to Christianity, church and religiosity in theory and praxis, and the ways of coping with this phenomenon in the Slovak society in the first quarter of the 20th century.

Šuchová, Xénia: “Autonomy vs. the Right to Separation?” (The Communist concept of the national and the so-called “Slovak” questions in the first half of the 1920s)

The article deals with the ambiguous concept of the national and the specifically “Slovak” questions as applied by the Czechoslovak Communists in the first half of the 1920s. Two contradictory concepts – the Austro-Marxist slogan of cultural and territorial autonomy within a multinational state and the Bolshevik claim to national self-determination leading to the separation from such a state – were followed by different streams of the former “Marxist Left” and, later, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (CPC). Since the Party’s activities were legal within the framework of parliamentary democracy, the search for some kind of autonomous application of the Communist International resolutions on national policy, which were binding for the Party, was marked with sharp factional struggles. On the one hand, the faction of Slovak “Communists-Nationalists” (Slovak: “*nacionálni komunisti*”), belonging to the radical Left, challenged the concept of cultural autonomy and broad local self-government formulated by the moderate leaders of the Communist Party. On the other hand, it faced the slogan of full political autonomy voiced by the Slovak People's Party in accordance with the Pittsburgh Agreement. The Resolution on the National Question adopted by the 5th Congress of the Communist International held in 1924 eliminated all differences. As a result, the uniform “revolutionary” solution to the national question was definitely imposed upon the CPC’s policy by the Executive of the Communist International in 1925.

Hertel, Maroš: The Communists, the *Ludáci* and the Hungarian Irredentists

At first sight, concepts concerning the position of Slovakia at the international scene after WW I proposed by the Communists, the Autonomists (Slovak: *ludáci*) or the Hungarian Irredentists may not seem interrelated. Nevertheless, a deeper study into these proposals reveals certain points of contact among them. It is because they wanted to attain the same goal but suggested different ways to do so. First of all, they called for the abolishment of the *status quo* produced by the coming-into-existence of the Czechoslovak Republic. Whilst the Autonomists, represented

by the Slovak People's Party, demanded equality between the Czechs and the Slovaks in their own common state, the Irredentists desired to restore the *status ante* the year 1918, and the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia forwarded a novel solution to the national question in terms of proletarian internationalism. The activity of Irredentists resulted in contacts of the representatives of these three concepts.

Martuliak, Pavol: Land Reform in the Policy of the Leading Political Parties in Slovakia in the 1st Czechoslovak Republic with a Special Focus on the 1920s

In the First Czechoslovak Republic, Slovakia remained its backward agrarian part because of its less developed economic structure. The Slovak agriculture suffered from unequal distribution of land, which caused the "hunger for land" among the poorest farmers – a majority of the Slovak population. The land reform, expected to solve this problem, was carried out according to laws issued by the Parliament, usually in agreement with the Agrarian Party's policy.

The study briefly outlines the development and results of the reform. It also shows the relations and political attitudes of Hlinka's Slovak People's Party and the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia to the land reform and its accomplishment in Slovakia. The focus is on the 1920s.

Katuninec, Milan: Christian Trade Unions in Cooperation and Confrontation with the Communist Trade Unions

When the First Czechoslovak Republic came into existence, favourable conditions made way to founding trade unions in Slovakia. The rise of Christian trade unions was viewed not only as an effort to solve the workers' status according to the papal encyclical *Rerum Novarum* but also as materialization of Christian political parties' interests. Since several political parties presented themselves as Christian ones, several Christian trade unions operated in Slovakia.

The Christian Social Trade Union Association of Workers turned into the most important trade union organization in Slovakia when Rudolf Čavojský became Chief Secretary in autumn 1923. Čavojský also deserves credit for the participation of the Association in concluding collective agreements and strengthening its position among trade unions.

Although the study concentrates on cooperation and confrontation between the Christian and the Communist trade unions from 1939 on, it also briefly deals with the period when the Christian trade unions held the monopoly position in Slovakia.

Rákosník, Jakub: Limited Effects of Slovak People's Party Trade Unions in the 1930's

This article is concerned with the position of Christian Socialist trade unions interrelated with Hlinka's Slovak People's Party within the Czechoslovak Labour movement in the 1930's. During this period, the Slovak Christian Socialist trade unions were relatively weak and the growth of their membership was relatively slow in comparison with their rivals. Their weakness was caused by a number of both structural and political factors. The most important one stemmed from the structure of population which, in comparison with the Czech lands, showed fewer employees. So, their success was dependent on nationalism of Hlinka's Slovak People's Party and its trade union central. Another cause of their weakness was in their main rivals (Social Democratic and Communist unions), able to operate throughout the country. Moreover, the Communists managed to effectively use the Nationalist rhetoric and the Czech radical Nationalist trade unions (National Democratic) ran their organizations in Slovakia with relative success. Unlike their rivals, the Slovak Christian Socialist trade unions neither had nor wanted to have their organisations in the Czech lands. Furthermore, the Christian Socialist trade unions did not seem to be able to undermine the firm position of the left-wing political parties held in major factories in Slovakia at that time. They gained power only after the prohibition of other trade unions in 1939.

Arpáš, Róbert: Hlinka's Slovak People's Party's Attitude to the Czechoslovak-Soviet Treaty of 1935

From 1922 on, the Czechoslovak-Soviet diplomatic relations were modified by the Provisional Treaty which, however, did not represent the *de iure* status. The situation changed in the 1930s in the context of international political affairs. After the diplomatic *de iure* recognition of the Soviet Union by Czechoslovakia on 9 June 1934, the new Czechoslovak-Soviet Treaty – now a treaty between allies – was signed on 16 May 1935. The orientation of the Czechoslovak foreign policy towards Moscow was refused by Hlinka's Slovak People's Party (HSPP). They doubted the possibility of identifying the Soviet Union with a role of the peace actor and internationally responsible partner. It feared that the agreement was only the first step to the goal of Communists – the world revolution, proletarian dictatorship and government of the Soviets in Europe. The Party carefully observed and critically commented on the deepening of the relationship between Prague and Moscow. Instead of the orientation towards Moscow, they preferred a close co-operation with the Catholic and Slavic Warsaw. But Poland regarded Czechoslovakia as a regional competitor and was not interested in a correct relationship. The HSPP was not able to recognize the real aims of Poland at the international scene and to produce their own realistic concept of foreign policy.

Zemko, Milan: The Czechoslovak-Soviet Alliance from the Standpoint of the *Nástup* Fortnightly

The fortnightly paper called *Nástup mladej slovenskej autonomistickej generácie* (“The Ascent of the Young Slovak Autonomist Generation”, abbreviated to *Nástup* – Ascent, issued in 1933-1940), lead by the Ján and Ferdinand Ďurčanský brothers, stood like Hlinka's Slovak People's Party, on the right wing of the political spectrum in the First Czechoslovak Republic and unambiguously rejected the ideas and practice of the Soviet Communism, the Third International and the domestic Communist Party. This was also why *Nástup* was principally against any kind of alliance between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union as it considered both that country and the world Communist movement controlled by Moscow Bolsheviks as subversive not only of the Christian (Catholic) faith and morality but also of the social system respecting Christian values. Moreover, they refused the so-called Jewish-Bolshevik roots of Communism and the Soviet Union. At the same time, *Nástup* doubted the credibility and potential of the Soviet Union as an ally of Czechoslovakia because of political trials going on in Moscow, officially justified by the alleged treason of the tried Soviet politicians and soldiers.

Fremal, Karol: The Relations of the Illegal Communist Party of Slovakia to Hlinka's Slovak People's Party, Hlinka's Guard and Hlinka's Youth in 1939-1943

During World War II, Hlinka's Slovak People's Party (HSPP) and the Communist Party were opponents, trying to politically eliminate each other as the most powerful enemy and rival. After taking over the power in Slovakia on 6 October 1938, the first steps of HSPP were to put the Communist Party and its organizations and associations under ban. After the Slovak National Uprising broke up, the Slovak National Council, which had incorporated representatives of the Communist Party, used its first resolution issued on 1 September 1945 for getting rid of HSPP and the regime it represented. After the 1945 liberation, activities of this political party and its mass organizations were not restored. The study analyses and clarifies the relationship between these rivals in 1939-1943, i.e. in the first period of Slovak Resistance movement and in the period of relative consolidation of the Slovak state's regime.

Zavacká, Marína: May Day Festivals in the Slovak Regime's Press in 1939-1943

The First of May has remained rooted in the public memory as an exclusively “Communist

holiday”. In an attempt to distinguish one-self from the previous totalitarian regime, the Communist power not only neglected but even censored the Socialist dimension of its predecessor. The wartime regime was continuously labelled as “reactionary”, “conservative” and “right-wing”. The post-1989 historiography has focused on the description of both regimes, partially in comparative studies (e.g. the concepts of totalitarianism). It has approached them as two regimes produced by two distinct sets of individuals and embedded in two different sources of ideology and power (the U.S.S.R. and Germany). There are almost no hints to mutual connections and even support, to the adoption and “inheritance” of rhetoric, rituals, programmes and activists. Dealing with the wartime May Day rituals, the study exploits period papers as an interesting source of political and medial discourse which echoed in public celebrations during the following forty years.

Syrný, Marek: The relation between the Communist Party of Slovakia and the political Catholicism in Slovakia in 1945-1947

After World War II, only two political parties – the Communist Party of Slovakia (CPS) and the Democratic Party (DP) – were legal. After the War, it was impossible for the political Catholicism, compromised by the participation in the totalitarian regime of the First Slovak Republic and collaboration with the Nazi Germany, to be represented by its own political party. Shortly after the 1945 Liberation, both the DP and the CPS made attempts to integrate non-compromised Catholic politicians. The relatively good relationship between the CPS and the political Catholicism lasted until the Church educational system was nationalized. This act of carried out by the CPS was strongly contested and the Catholic politicians decided to initiate the process of forming a Catholic political party. Their decision was later supported by the CPS because such a party seemed to be an appropriate instrument for weakening the influence of the Democratic Party. But after the political Catholicism got integrated into the DP, the Communists responded with constant attacks directed against the Party. In autumn 1947, the pressure culminated in an event referred to as the conspiracy against the State. As a result, the leading representatives of the political Catholicism and politicians of the DP were accused by the State Police influenced by the CPS of collaborating with illegal groups. That was why some Catholic politicians demanded consensus with and moderate policy towards the CPS.

Varinský, Vladimír: The White Legion as a Form of the Anti-Communist Resistance in Slovakia: The establishment and activities of the Legion in Slovakia

This study analyses the origin of the idea to organize the anti-Communist resistance through the so-called White Legion. It compares the goals of the founders of the White Legion Transmitter with the actual achievements of the resistance movement in practice. This analysis is backed against documentary evidence related to the suppression of the White Legion in Slovakia by the State Security forces. The study also attempts to assess the role of these forces in the process of establishing and planting the White Legion in Slovakia.

Pešek, Jan: The “Shadows of Hlinka’s Party” inside and outside the Communist Party of Slovakia after 1948

Two “shadows of Hlinka’s Slovak People’s Party” seem to have harassed the Communist Party of Slovakia (CPS) after the turnover in February 1948, when it became the governing party. They both emerged from the country’s recent history – the period of the Slovak Republic in 1939-1945 and, to a certain extent, the course of events in 1945-1948. The first “shadow” standing over the Party was the so-called “Bourgeois Nationalism”. Its manifestations began to be compared to the “spirit of Hlinka’s Party“ (“spirit of *Ludáctvo*”) to such an extent that these two were taken for identical phenomena. The second shadow gathered directly inside the CPS from those members who had behind them the “past” as members of Hlinka’s Slovak People’s

Party, the Hlinka Guard, the Hlinka Youth or the Hlinka Guard Emergency Units. Whilst the first “shadow” was only devised to be purposefully implanted from outside into the then political situation, the second one was borne directly inside the Party ranks, and so objectively existent. Being deformed under the pressure of the permanent campaign against the “Bourgeois Nationalism and the spirit of „Ludáctvo”, it took on a dangerous shape. Both of the “shadows” retreated only at the beginning of the 1960s (more precisely at the end of 1963) when the leaders of the regime were compelled to re-evaluate the accusations, seemingly unshakeable up to that time, and rehabilitate the so-called Slovak Bourgeois Nationalists.

Rusková, Mária: The “Slovak Bourgeois Nationalism” and the Policy of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia after the 20th Congress of the CPSU (1956-1960)

The aim of this study is to show methods used by the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (CPC) after 1956 to keep the vision of threat from the “Slovak Bourgeois Nationalism”. The reasons why the CPC did not intend to rehabilitate the people accused of “Slovak Bourgeois Nationalism” were ideological, political, and personal (the desire to hold power). The ideological and political reasons may be explained by the fear that to renounce the “Slovak Bourgeois Nationalism” means to completely renounce the “Slovak Nationalism”. It should be pointed out that the “Bourgeois Nationalism” was an important tool for the Communists in conducting their power policy. The feeling of insecurity concerning the maintenance of power beset the CPS in 1956 in relation with the situation in Hungary and Poland. The personal reasons were dominated by the fear of losing positions, which concerned mainly Novotný, Široký, Bacílek and others. The official causes of the existence of and direct pressure on the “Bourgeois Nationalists” were removed after 1956. However, the situation changed only little because the official Communist propaganda on the threat from the “Slovak Bourgeois Nationalism” survived in Czechoslovakia till the end of the 1960s.

Kárník, Zdeněk: Studies in Political Extremes in Slovakia and the Grant Project on “The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and Radical Socialism in Czechoslovakia in 1918-1989”

The aim of this research paper is not to study the key topics constituting the main theme. Instead, the focus will be on the functioning of political extremes in the Czech lands and in Slovakia. Moreover, extremist ideologies imported from other countries (Ruthenia, Czech lands, Hungary) will not be discussed, either, despite the fact that Bolshevism and Fascism *did* exist as trans-national phenomena. The fact that Communism played a greater role in Slovakia than in the Czech lands is important and must be taken into consideration when social conditions are being analyzed. The problem of Fascism in Slovakia appears to be even more interesting especially when the extent of its influence on the Slovak population is examined. It is highly satisfactory that the Slovak historiography has made great progress over the last few years to find answers to some of these difficult questions. Much of this advance is due to the fact that the Slovak historiography has succeeded in overcoming its former provincial level.