

FORUM HISTORIAE 2028/1

Russophilia in Modern Slovak History: Genealogies, Transformations, and European Entanglements

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Russophilia has formed part of Slovakia's political and cultural imagination for approximately two centuries. Its meanings, proponents, and political functions have nevertheless shifted profoundly in response to changing regimes, geopolitical constellations, and social conflicts. From nineteenth-century projects of national emancipation and ideas of Slavic reciprocity, through responses to revolution, the world wars, Bolshevism, the rise of the Soviet Union, and communist dictatorship, to post-socialist transformation and the contemporary digital age, Russia has acquired a succession of different and often contradictory meanings in the Slovak context. It has figured as the presumed protector of small Slavic nations, a cultural model, a revolutionary center, a liberator, an occupying power, a geopolitical counterweight to the West, and the embodiment of an alternative civilizational order.

Despite this long history, Russophilia remains insufficiently conceptualized in scholarship. Existing research has generally approached it through individual figures, political movements, particular historical periods, or the history of Slovak-Russian and Slovak-Soviet relations. Far less attention has been devoted to its transformations over time, its social functions and emotional underpinnings, or the transnational networks through which representations of Russia circulated. The relationship between Russophilia and Slavophilism, Pan-Slavism, Sovietophilia, anti-Americanism, anti-Western sentiment, and more recent visions of Russia as a defender of national sovereignty and "traditional values" likewise remains undertheorized.

Rather than treating Russophilia as either a coherent ideology or an enduring attribute of Slovak national identity, this thematic issue proposes approaching it as a historically mutable repertoire of favorable representations, political projections, emotions, argumentative strategies, and social practices associated with Russia. Such an approach raises the question of whether alignment with Russia necessarily expressed genuine identification with a Russian political or cultural model, or whether it frequently operated in a reactive mode—as an instrument for criticizing immediate social and political realities, existing configurations of power, or a variously defined "West."

We invite contributions from political, social, cultural, and intellectual history; the history of ideas and emotions; literary history; historical sociology; media studies; and related fields. We particularly encourage comparative and transnational studies that situate the Slovak case within Central, Eastern, Southeastern, or broader European frameworks. Submissions should nonetheless engage substantively with Slovakia, Slovak political or cultural milieus, or actors connected to Slovak history.

Possible topics and research questions include, but are not limited to:

- conceptual and semantic histories of Russophilia, Russophobia, Slavophilism, Pan-Slavism, and Sovietophilia;
- representations of Imperial Russia within the Slovak national movement and nineteenth-century political thought;

- Russia and Slavic reciprocity in literature, journalism, religious thought, education, and popular culture;
- transformations in attitudes toward Russia after 1917 and the differentiation between Russophilia, Bolshevism, and Sovietophilia;
- political, cultural, and emotional representations of the Soviet Union in interwar Czechoslovakia, during the Second World War and after 1945;
- official representations of the Soviet Union and their reception, appropriation, adaptation, or rejection under communist rule;
- the Warsaw Pact invasion of 1968 and its impact on attitudes toward the Soviet Union and Russia;
- continuities and discontinuities in pro-Russian attitudes after 1989: Russophilia, anti-Americanism, Euroscepticism, anti-elitism, and broader anti-Western attitudes in the discourses of nationalism, populism, political radicalism, conservatism, and the far right;
- the gendered, generational, regional, confessional, and social dimensions of Russophilia;
- pro-Russian narratives, disinformation ecosystems, and digital media in the twenty-first century
- competing representations of Russia, critiques of Russophilia, and the history of anti-Russian attitudes.

Submission deadline: 30 November 2027

Submissions Language: English

Length: 15 to 30 standard pages (1 800 characters per page)

Style: submissions must follow the “[Style Manual for the Authors](#)” (Manuscripts that do not comply will be rejected or returned upon receiving for correction).

All articles will be subject to a double-blind peer-review process.

Manuscripts should be submitted in MS Word format (.rtf, .doc or .docx) via the [Submission form](#).

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