PROGRESS

Journal for political theory and practice

Publishers
Foundation “For Serbian People and State”, Belgrade
Institute for Political Studies, Belgrade

For the publishers
MA Ljubica Bertović, Director
Miša Stojadinović, PhD, Principal Research Fellow, Director

The journal is published three times a year.
The first edition of the journal “Napredak” was published on Vidovdan, on 28th June 2020

Print run: 300 copies • Printed by: Birograf, Belgrade
Address of the Editorial Board: Palmira Toljatija 5, Belgrade

http://fondacijasnd.rs/casopis-napredak/

Papers are sent electronically
This themed issue is published in Serbian, English and Slovak

CIP - Каталогизација у публикацији
Народна библиотека Србије, Београд

32(497.11)

PROGRESS : journal for political theory and practice / editor-in-chief Zoran Jevtović. - [English ed.]. - Vol. 5, no. 1 (2024)- . - Belgrade : Foundation “For Serbian People and State” : Institute for Political Studies, 2024- (Belgrade : Birograf). - 24 cm

Tri puta godišnje. - Povremeno sa tematskim br. -
Preuzima numeraciju srpskog izd. - Drugo izdanje
na drugom medijumu:
Напредак (Београд. Online) = ISSN 2683-6114.
- Prevod dela: Напредак (Београд) = ISSN 2683-6106
ISSN 3042-0261 = Progress (Belgrade)

COBISS.SR-ID 143948297

Vol. VII / No. 1
2026.

Thematic issue

Serbo-Slovak Socio-Cultural Ties:
THREE CENTURIES OF FRIENDSHIP
Guest-editor Nebojša R. Kuzmanović, PhD

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Book Review

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UDC 930.85(497.11:437.6)
316.722(=163.41)
316.722(=162.4)
Editoral
Received: 23.3.2026.
Accepted: 27.3.2026.
doi: 10.5937/napredak7-65970

Serbs and Slovaks: from Tatra Mountains to Gračanica!

Ties between Serbs and Slovaks are specific in many ways. First of all, they are ancient: their origins can and should be sought in the shared Slavic homeland and followed through the early meanderings of migrations and the battles on the borders which seem to be Slavic historical destiny. In addition, they lasting, permanent ties, and as such not a relic of the past, a proof of former connection, but a live force, a bloodstream that connects the two organisms to this day, regardless of the fact that the passage of time, thanks to the borders of great empires, initially split them into two, then three, faiths that, each in their own way, shaped the understanding of the world, themselves in history, and consequently, shaped the paths along which the two peoples took to meet their own destiny.

The ties that bind Serbs and Slovaks do not require vow renewals. They were never violated nor defaced, seeing as there had not been a historical moment in which the Slovak state did not know how to properly determine itself towards the Serbs, their fate and aspirations. What is perhaps most important is that there has never been a moment in which the Slovak people behaved in a manner unworthy of their shared destiny. For us, this fact is all the more significant because it is possible that, at times of historical turbulence, a state authority may emerge which, enchanted by "lofty" ideas, false values, or simply corrupted through betrayal, becomes self-absorbed and detached from the national spirit, severing all ties with its own roots and veering into dark corridors (at least we Serbs know what that looks like). In such moments, the national spirit arises, as a warning, as a bulwark, and as a guide. The Slovak people and the Slovak state have never reached such a divergence, at least when it comes to their relationship with the Serbs (as for others, we leave it to our Slovak brothers to resolve themselves).

Due to all this, Serbian-Slovak ties exist even when invisible. When people do not talk about them, sing about them, when people do not "beat the drums" about the closeness of the two peoples. They are unaffected by our recollection of them. They are implied, and the days when we live this truth are its best confirmation. Serbia has as good of a relationship with very few states as it does

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with Slovakia, and no country populated by Slavic peoples is so strongly oriented toward the Serbs. No country represents a Slavic people in whom the Serbs find a safer harbour and support (if we set aside the derivative connection between the Serbs and the Russians, and what arises from those ties, which are often irrational, elusive, and thus resemble an expression of almost boyish infatuation).

Or maybe the lack of that "boyish infatuation" is precisely what makes Serbo-Slovak ties everlasting. For all of us who have ever been in love (or still are) know that in that state of mind, we frequently overlook the actual problem, just as we are prone to finding one where it is not present. In that disconnect, our love expands and contracts, in grows and then falls, it blurs and enlightens, it becomes crystally clear and unattainable, burdened by apprehension about how the other person will infer our gesture, willingness, intentions…

Everything aforementioned is not present in Serbo-Slovak relations. Yet, this does not mean that our relations are mathematically calculated, icy, boiled down to who will earn more, who will profit, who will accomplish a short-term goal. On the contrary! Our relations mirror those of a stable couple which tested its infatuation against rational, external challenges, a logic that is not ours but with which we are forced to fight. From it, we came out closer than before, aware that possible differences do not serve to shake our stability but as an instigator for mutual communication, a call to reconnect and speak once more, recognizing that we each walk our own path, master our own fate, and hold the power of our own redemption.

The writings before you are but a modest contribution to a conversation that has endured for centuries. They offer an overview of the interwoven destinies of Serbs and Slovaks, revealing a common denominator; not hidden, but manifest that defines who we are: brothers whose shared spirit originates in the Tatras, soars above the Pannonian Plain, and, like a whirlwind, sweeps across Avala toward the heights of Lovćen and the Dinaric Alps, descends to the rolling Adriatic, and finds its ultimate home in Kosovo and Metohija.

These works further illuminate the musical ties between Serbs and Slovaks. This thematic issue reveals that Vojvodina was once home to Viliam Figuš-Bystrý, the composer of Detvan — the first Slovak opera — as well as Mikuláš Schneider-Trnavský. The latter was a prominent choirmaster who, during the years of the struggle for full Serbian national emancipation, successfully directed the "Beseda" Serbian Church Choral Society in Veliki Bečkerek.

By reading these lines, we may also learn that the first Slovak Sokol Society was founded in Srem, in Stara Pazova, and that the Slovak Sokol members were the only ones who, without any difficulty, joined the newly formed South Slavic Sokol organization in 1919–1920. We may also learn that modern Serbian–Slovak relations were established primarily through literature, through which, thanks to Kollár, Šafárik, Štúr, Vuk, Njegoš, Branko, Matica srpska, and Matica slovenská, Serbs and Slovaks first recognized one another and then came to know each other more closely. That, inspired first by Štúr and later by his disciple Miletić, they fought together as revolutionaries against Magyarization, as well as volunteers of the Great War on fronts stretching from Russia, through France, to Thessaloniki… and that, ultimately, they perished together while resisting Germanization and total extermination in the war from 1941 to 1945.

And yet, all those lines are nothing but just one in a line among many manifest expressions of the deeper, spiritual ties between the two Slavic people, ties that endure precisely insofar as the spirit itself is greater and more enduring than anything that is self-defined by physical matter. For if matter depends on time (and thus comes into being, grows, decays, and ultimately disintegrates into final disappearance), the spirit remains beyond time, beyond geography, as their origin, as a guiding force, a direction that, in times of the disintegration of matter indicates the path to be taken in the process of constructing a new one.

Today, that idea, as an expression of a shared spirit, is being realized by Serbs and Slovaks in the cultural sphere, through cooperation between Matica slovenská, Matica srpska, and the Archives of Vojvodina, in the realm of memory culture, through efforts to restore the monument erected in 1928 in Stara Pazova in honour of Serbs and Slovaks, heroes of the Great War, and finally, in the political sphere, through the strong ties between the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Slovakia, primarily thanks to the fraternal relations between the Slovak Prime Minister and the Serbian President.

Finally and equally importantly, Serbia exceptionally appreciates the fact that Slovakia has never recognized the so-called "independence" of the fake state of Kosovo. That is why even today as throughout all these centuries, those fraternal ties are built by Serbs and Slovaks, the “ordinary” people, workers and peasants, who, by traveling from one country to another, socializing, marrying, singing and grieving together, and meeting at Gazimestan, in Gračanica and Dečani, demonstrate that everything great achieved in the life of a nation is grounded in “small” connections and “small” aspirations, which are steadfastly pursued despite all possible trials, not because they bring any short-term benefit, but because they express the truth that the only true path is the one to which the soul and the heart call you.

For Serbs and Slovaks, this is a path traversed in a firm embrace!

Bratislava and Belgrade

Photo: Freepik

Articles

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UDC 930.85(497.11:437.6)
061:001.32(497.113)
061:001.32(437.6)
Original scientific article
Received: 10.3.2026.
Accepted: 16.4.2026.
doi: 10.5937/napredak7-65606

Serbs and Slovaks, Matica Srpska and Matica Slovenská: Two centuries of trials and experiences

Abstract: Two Slavic peoples, Serbs and Slovaks, Slovaks and Serbs, serve as a good example of nations with close common origins, who, throughout their existence, have not easily forgotten this shared heritage. This common origin enables them even today, after many centuries, to understand each other well and to have meaningful dialogue. A developed consciousness of kinship, rooted as much in the facts of common origin as in the realities of mutual understanding, allows these two peoples not only to examine the obscure and unclear events of the past but also to project related visions of the future. Only by combining these two profound and distant temporal dimensions, expressed in the intersection we call the ever-relevant present, should one seek to construct one's collective, national destiny and concrete historical reality. Such construction, in turn, should not rely solely on adapting to general, global, externally imposed circumstances but also on actively shaping a sense of meaning that reveals itself to a Slavic people as a credible value of human life, the kind of life that is possible in this time and in this world.

Keywords: Serbs, Slovaks, Matica Srpska, Matica slovenská, Georgije Magarašević, Pavel Jozef Šafárik, Ján Kollár, Svetozar Miletić

Two Slavic peoples, Serbs and Slovaks, Slovaks and Serbs, serve as a good example of nations with close common origins, who, throughout their existence, have not easily forgotten this shared heritage. This common origin enables them even today, after many centuries, to understand each other well and to have meaningful dialogue. A developed consciousness of kinship, rooted as much in the facts of common origin as in the realities of mutual understanding, allows these two peoples not only to examine the

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obscure and unclear events of the past but also to project related visions of the future. Only by combining these two profound and distant temporal dimensions, expressed in the intersection we call the ever-relevant present, should one seek to construct one's collective, national destiny and concrete historical reality. Such construction, in turn, should not rely solely on adapting to general, global, externally imposed circumstances but also on actively shaping a sense of meaning that reveals itself to a Slavic people as a credible value of human life, the kind of life that is possible in this time and in this world.

Unity in the Habsburg Empire

Scattered across the vast expanse of the world, Slavs may sometimes feel that their shared reality does not exist or that it is merely a product of pure fiction. Accordingly, the Serbian historian and archimandrite Jovan Rajić, in his invaluable work *History of Various Slavic Nations, Especially Bulgarians, Croats and Serbs* (1794), drew attention to the large number of names applied to Slavs, noting that "the Slavic peoples have grown and multiplied so much that, after being divided and given different names, it is hardly possible to count them all." (Rajić, 1794, pp. 68). Many of these names are ethnonyms, used to denote peoples and their subgroups, but some are derived from the names of places and regions where they lived. Such toponymic designations can introduce considerable confusion, misidentifications, and unfounded assumptions of identity. That the life of every individual – and indeed of entire peoples – is filled with trials does not require special emphasis, for this simple truth ought to be known to every person. One should continually strive to recognise where the most perilous obstacles of diverse trials lie and where such obstacles may render the path exceedingly difficult to traverse.

Leaving aside the medieval, Cyril and Methodius-era commonality, it can be said that the Serbs and the Slovaks laid the foundations of their key avenues of cooperation at the very beginning of the 19th century, at a time when certain Slavic groups began to recognise themselves through specific characteristics that demanded not only an acknowledgement of Slavic unity but also the highlighting of the particularities of individual peoples. These peoples had emerged as branches of the pan-Slavic mass, ready to shape autonomous worlds with their own distinct languages, religions, histories, cultures, and other specific traits. In such circumstances, it was prudent to cultivate the uniqueness of each Slavic nation, yet one must by no means lose the awareness of the common bond, which is not merely a museum phenomenon or a relic of a long-past history, but an active, living reality that ought to be nurtured through direct communication between members of the two peoples and their respective cultures. Finding themselves within the framework of the same state, the Habsburg Empire, a realm that, over the centuries of its consolidation, increasingly developed grand expansionist and imperial ambitions – the Serbs and Slovaks naturally turned to one another, for in many respects their destinies were very similar. Both peoples, within the Habsburg monarchy, were like two small streams within a vast lake, where the real danger threatened that the waters of these streams might simply merge into the great imperial whole and, as a result, their distinctiveness disappear entirely.

The Habsburg Empire was a vast mixture of peoples, and within this whole the number of Slavs was indeed enormous. For example, in the first issue of *Serbske letopisi* (1824), Georgije Magarašević presents statistical data indicating that, at the time of the publication of the first issue of the journal, the Austrian Empire contained 12.2 million Slavs, 5.23 million Germans, 4.5 million Italians, 3.8 million Hungarians, and so on (Chronicle of Matica srpska, 2023, pp. 37). In other words, the Slavs numbered slightly fewer than the combined total of Germans, Italians, and Hungarians (13.53 million). It is therefore no surprise that censuses in the Austrian Empire were conducted in ways that attempted, through various means, to obscure the national structure – much as today, within the European Union, and under its pressures in other states within its sphere of influence, similar procedures are pursued by imperial strategies designed to facilitate the assimilation of so-called small nations. Data from the beginning of the 20th century (1907), presented by historian Alan Taylor, show that the population of Austria-Hungary was such that there were 23.5 million Slavs (45% of the total population), 12 million Germans, 10 million Hungarians, and three million Romanians, (Taylor, 2001, pp. 298-301) with the number of Slavs once again slightly fewer than the first three nations – Germans, Hungarians, and Romanians (25 million). At the same time, the very numerous Italians are absent from this count, as they had, in the meantime, succeeded in establishing their own unified national state.

It is entirely evident that the European Union's assimilation policy closely resembles that of the Habsburg Empire. At the same time, it is equally clear that the European Union, unlike the role model of over a century ago, has, at least until recently, succeeded in offering far more attractive positive incentives that lead to assimilation processes. In other words, small yet related peoples, such as the Serbs and the Slovaks, can indeed support one another in navigating these complex historical processes, both in the past and in the present. There exists at least one shared and crucial dilemma for all small nations of the world, especially within such mega-state formations as the Habsburg Empire once was, or as the European Union is today. This dilemma can be formulated as follows: Do small nations wish to survive or to disappear? Are materially attractive factors sufficient reason for the sense of belonging to a small nation to be completely forgotten and repressed from consciousness? More specifically, what possible exit strategy exists for small nations under such complex circumstances? Put even more precisely: Is it possible to enable the material advancement of small nations without triggering the effect of submission to assimilation mechanisms, and without leading to the eventual disappearance of that nation? These are questions that undoubtedly demand valid answers, both with respect to the historical situation and the contemporary context.

The spirit of Serbian–Slovak solidarity: Georgije Magarašević and Pavel Jozef Šafárik

Old books, as well as literary and scholarly journals of long, continuous publication, can be highly valuable sources of knowledge and direct lessons on the path to collective, national self-awareness. Among the Slovaks, such a journal is *Slovenské*

pohľady, founded in 1846, while among the Serbs it is the *Letopis Matice srpske*, founded in 1824. These two long-running, continuous journals represented, in themselves, effective bridges over which the exchange of Slovak and Serbian cultural assets took place in the fields of literature, linguistic self-consciousness, philology, and culture in the broadest sense. In the establishment of *Serbske letopisi*, which was renamed *Letopis Matice srpske* in 1873, active participation came not only from the chief editor Georgije Magarašević but also from the Slovak scholar Pavel Jozef Šafárik. At the time, Šafárik was the director and professor at the Orthodox grammar school in Novi Sad, while Magarašević was only a professor, so the two colleagues collaborated closely from the very beginnings of the journal. Šafárik authored a considerable number of texts on the pan-Slavic past as well as the Serbian past and the histories of various Slavic peoples. The foundation of scholarly knowledge regarding Slavic unity on the pages of the *Letopis* was developed precisely thanks to Šafárik. Between 1824 and 1950 (according to research and cipher resolutions by Marko Maletin), a total of 27 of his texts were published, several of which appeared in multiple instalments (See, Maletin, 1968, pp. 401-402). The connection between Pavel Jozef Šafárik and Georgije Magarašević, as well as between the Novi Sad Gymnasium and the city of Novi Sad with the Slovak philologist, represents one of the most remarkable links established between the two brotherly nations (See, Šafarik, 1963; Šafarik, 1996). Šafárik resided in Novi Sad from 1819 to 1831, which was for him a precious period of knowledge accumulation and direct engagement with old Serbian books, both manuscript and printed. On the basis of this insight and knowledge, he developed a substantial part of his Slavic activity, which would only be fully revealed in published works after this Novi Sad period and would have a profound impact on scholarship.

Already in the first issue of *Serbske letopisi*, Šafárik warned of a disturbing type of discourse prevalent in the scholarship of that era, which was marked by serious forms of racism: "Any Slav who takes into his hands some book on history, geography, pilgrimage, or ethnography, or on statistics and politics, written in a foreign language – and how many are there who do this every day? – must indeed take it with caution; for he must already prepare himself in advance to find himself and his people despised and mocked. Two-thirds of all such books, which deal with these matters, contain nothing else, if they mention the Slavs at all, whether all Slavs in general or only certain branches, than ridicule and disparagement of their national character." (Šafarik, 1824, pp. 101). From this text by Šafárik, it is clear that the Slavs, regardless of their particular branch, faced a common problem: they were subject not only to certain prejudices but even to unambiguous racist ideological preconceptions. For this reason, cooperation among all Slavs on various levels was not only desirable but absolutely necessary.

During this period – specifically throughout the first half and the entirety of the 19th century – Slovaks and Serbs forged their closest bonds within the framework of their education. These encounters took place in Buda and Pest, Győr, Vienna, Pozsony (Bratislava), Prešov, Modra, Banská Bystrica, Timișoara, and other centres across the Habsburg Empire. This rapprochement originated as early

as the 18th century; according to the research of Risto Kovijanić, prominent Serbian participants included Pavle Julinac, Teodor Janković Mirijevski, Jovan Muškatirović, Dositej Obradović, Joakim Vujić, Atanasije Stojković, and others (See, Kovljanić, 1973; Kovljanić 1979). In the 19th century, in addition to authors whose work spanned both centuries (of whom Julinac is the sole exception), a significant number of younger creators emerged. Their education tied them to the geographical environments where these encounters with Slovaks occurred—particularly with Slovak writers, activists, and ideologues such as Ján Kollár, Ľudovít Štúr, František Palacký, Ján Tomka Sásky, and others. Beyond the exceptional contribution of Šafárik, the participation of other Slovaks in establishing the Serbian educational and cultural infrastructure, both within the Austrian Empire and the Principality of Serbia, must not be overlooked. In this regard, the significance of figures such as Andreas Volny and Janko Šafárik is particularly noteworthy. On the Serbian side, a great number of diverse creators emerged who had been educated in these centres of interaction; notable among these students were Svetozar Miletić, Đura Daničić, Jovan Jovanović Zmaj, Jovan Grčić Milenko, Jovan Bošković, Kosta Trifković, and others. On an intellectual level, the communication between Serbs and Slovaks was of profound mutual benefit. Long-standing periodicals – replete with primary source material, analytical essays, and literary works – offer vital landmarks for tracing the historical journey of these small nations through space and time.

The Spirit of Slovak-Serbian Unity: Ján Kollár and Svetozar Miletić

Poetry undoubtedly establishes the most luminous landmarks along these paths: like fireflies, poems emerge in the densest darkness, illuminating the way in a manner that proves not all hope is irretrievably lost. One such "firefly" is a collection of three sonnets by Ján Kollár which, in a translation by Georgije Magarašević, was published in *Serbske letopisi* [Serbian Annals] in 1827.[2] In a unique way, these sonnets highlight Slavic kinship as a compelling thematic challenge for the creation of refined lyrical structures. Kollár inspired many Serbian students and future intellectuals by teaching them how to think, prompting them to contemplate various forms of kinship within humanity, and leading them to recognize not only an intellectual affinity but also the potential for political solidarity.

In the first of the aforementioned three sonnets, appearing under the collective title *Sonnets of Mr. Joan Kollar, Translated from the Czech Language*, the poet presents a lyrical reflection on the possibility of creating the image (*obraz*) of an Angel, both through verbal description and visual media. In both instances, the primary mystery lies in the requirement to depict how that which is sensory-elusive and essentially purely spiritual can become accessible to human senses at all. Consequently, the poet precisely indicates that through this process – which is as much painterly as it is poetic (as he addresses both expressive possibilities here) – this challenge of the creative method must

[2] All subsequent quotations are from, Serbska letopis, No. 10, 1827, pp. 89-91

be resolved, so that it indeed becomes possible to perceive the angel both sensorily and spiritually: "His spirit you can almost see / As it through the clarity of the body permeates." According to the poet's vision, this discernment of the intangible spirit within certain aspects of the corporeal can only rest upon the ability to somehow materialize the phenomena of pure, positive human spirituality (*duševnost*), which find their most profound expression on the angel's face. In this regard, the poet singles out the eye above all, which should be depicted such that it shines toward both heaven and earth, and whose primary, luminous substance is defined by faith and love: "Let the eye shine to heaven with sound faith, / And with pure love to the earth below." Besides the eye, the poet highlights the forehead and the mouth, which must simultaneously express both the absence of worry and the lightness of joy, without which no angelic being can exist. Therefore, the poet advises that no negative emotions, but only positive ones, should appear on the angel's face: "Nor should the forehead frown / When the little lips smile with a jest." Angels are thus, from the standpoint of spiritual aspects, defined as a synthesis of faith, love, and joy; this thematic structure is articulated in the first two quatrains of Kollár's.

In the tercets that follow in this sonnet, the poet concentrates on two characteristic motifs. In the first tercet, the motif of two wreaths appears, which are meant to "encircle the hair, / where flowers, as well as the colours of the rainbow / of its time and region, tremble." It is noteworthy, therefore, that in this image of two wreaths upon the angelic head, subtle coloristic aspects of sensory reality predominate. Thus, the image of hair emerges (though it is not specified whether it is black, brown, or fair), followed by the image of flowers (with neither the species nor the colour defined), and finally, the "colours of the rainbow" are mentioned; here, the chromatic structure of the rainbow spectrum is significantly clearer and can be quite palpably presented to the senses. The poet does not explicitly state the nature or type of these two wreaths; however, within the associative field, two historically and mythologically well-known forms naturally suggest themselves: one is the wreath of poetic glory, most often composed of laurel, awarded to those who are *poeta laureatus*; the other is the wreath of martyrdom, composed of thorny branches, borne upon the brow of the greatest of all martyrs, the God-man Jesus Christ. It would appear that the poet endeavours to maintain both forms of wreaths within the visual field: the one that leads toward eternity through earthly, social recognition, as well as the one that, through martyrdom, is revered only in heaven and in eternity. In any case, there is an evident ambiguity into which the poet leads us with this wreath motif—an uncertainty as to whether the wreath is an expression of social acclaim or of suffering, an expression of something emphatically positive or negative, an expression of joy or of pain.

The poet offers an answer that is at once certain, not entirely unequivocal, yet remarkably striking in the final tercet. In this stanza, he presents that which decisively indicates the angelic nature of the depicted being: "But into all of that, breathe the magical traits / Of Slavic tenderness; / You shall see her in a wretched likeness." In the poet's view, an angel cannot be truly depicted unless its face

possesses – in addition to the aforementioned faith, love, and joy – "Slavic tenderness". Yet, remarkably, what becomes of this Slavic tenderness? While it most befits the angelic countenance and is capable of bestowing precious "magical traits" upon the face it graces, it is simultaneously characterized by its appearance in a "wretched likeness" (*v podobiju hudom*). Its likeness (i.e., its appearance) is "wretched" (*hudo*) – meaning uncomely, poor, or even ill-fated – yet despite such a state, "Slavic tenderness" possesses the capacity to produce something supernatural, miraculous, and ethereal in the beings or images where it manifests.

Through such a lyrical structure and reflective discourse, Ján Kollár raises many questions of profound importance for the entire Slavic world, both then, in the 1820s, and now, at the turn of the 21st century. In the interim between the 19th and 21st centuries, much has changed within the global sphere, the Slavic world at large, and the worlds of individual Slavic nations. These nations have attained statehood; at the dawn of the 21st century, they are developing with significantly greater success and with the realistic expectation that the conditions of their existence are oriented toward further prosperity. Yet, despite the fact that the process of Slavic emancipation has progressed significantly in a positive direction, it remains quite evident that certain aspects of the "wretched likeness" (*podobiye hudo*) continue to disfigure the Slavic countenance. Consequently, this face is no longer inherently beautiful in its own right, but it likely still retains the capacity to evoke something magical and miraculous. In the two-century span that separates the historical publication of Kollár's poems from the current publication of modern Slovak and Serbian poets in the anthology *Slavic Tenderness* (*Nežnost slovenska*), some things have changed while others have remained nearly identical: it is demonstrated in various ways that Slavs, with striking frequency, confer more benefit upon others than upon themselves!

On the eve of the revolutionary events of 1848, the "Serbian youth" of Pressburg and Pest – primarily through the dedicated efforts of Svetozar Miletić – published the almanac *Slavjanka* in Buda in 1847. This publication featured the most significant poetic contribution from Pavle Popović Šapčanin, followed by Svetozar Miletić, and subsequently Jovan Đorđević, Metodije Mladenović, Jovan Ilić, Nikola Vukićević, and Stoján Radonić (See, Kovaček, 2006, pp. 35-54). In this almanac, alongside five other poetic works, Svetozar Miletić published the eponymous poem "Slavjanka", in which he depicted the awakening of the Slavic peoples, the rising of their sun, and the radiance of the "sun of glory" shining upon them. These events are set on Ascension Day (*Spasovdan*); indeed, a concluding note indicates the poem was composed "on Ascension Day". The poem features a varying refrain, where two versions of the final verse appeared across all ten sestets: "The gracious Ascension Day" (*Blagi danak Spasovdan*) occurs seven times, while "The bright Ascension Day" (*Beli danak Spasovdan*) occurs three times. The motif of the "gracious/bright day" appears in all ten sestets, utilizing anadiplosis at the conclusion of each stanza, as well as variations within the verses themselves. Consequently, the final two verses of the first stanza read: "The dawn heralds the bright

day, / The bright Ascension Day", while the same position in the final stanza reads: "A gracious day has dawned for you – / The gracious Ascension Day." (Miletić, 1999, pp.61-62)

In terms of genre, the poem functions as a true *budnica* (a patriotic awakening song), aimed at mobilizing all Slavic peoples – and specifically the Serbs – toward the monumental historical tasks that lie ahead for the Slavs. Within this national-awakening and political poem, Miletić employs the metrical pattern of the symmetrical octosyllable (widely prevalent in many Slavic folkloric traditions) and its catalectic form in the final two verses of the sestet stanzas. Through this structure, he depicts the *Slav-gora* (Slav-mountain), the abode of *Slava* (Glory), who summons the Slavic nations and the Serbian youth to her side. This mythical figure of *Slava* is modelled after the Angel described by Ján Kollár; she is entirely imbued with luminous energy and the accompanying spiritual layers that fill this radiant, divine substance: "When Slava stepped before them: / The whole mountain trembled from her, / As if the sun hovered over it, / All the light of heaven gathered: / To hasten the bright day, / The gracious Ascension Day." Regarding the manifestation of these spiritual substances, the poet particularly emphasizes love, grace, wisdom, and Salvation (*Spasenije*): "Love shines from her eyes, / Her chest is the throne of grace, / Her clear brow the abode of wisdom, / Above it the wreath of Salvation: / for it shall celebrate the Bright day, / The gracious Ascension Day." The poem subsequently mentions a certain "Book of Secrets" containing divine messages regarding the origin of heavenly light (*svita*): "And she reads the little book of secrets, / Brought down from the heavens above, / Where it is written by God's own hand, / From whence the dawn falls upon the world: / When the bright day descends, / The bright Ascension Day." Finally, the poet points to the significance of Liberty (*Sloboda*) and the song that celebrates it, as well as the importance of the Angelic figure who aids in the preservation of divine laws on earth. The blooming of flowers serves as a testament to the natural rhythms kept in force by these divine laws: "When Liberty cries out its song, / As if the face of an Angel sounds the trumpet, / If she smiles – the mountain buds, / If she walks – flowers spring up behind her; / And the bright day dawned, / The bright Ascension Day."

The beauty of flowers in this world, therefore, serves as a constant reminder of God and the operation of divine laws; thus, the act of picking and gifting flowers carries the significance and purpose of disseminating the divine faith and an order grounded in the authority of the Lord. Consequently, the group of young Serbs venturing toward "Slav-gora" is tasked precisely with gathering flowers from that enchanted Slavic mountain to distribute them throughout the world: "Young Serbs pick flowers, / Woven into a single bouquet: / 'Behold, Slavjanka! More joyfully, / The Slav places a blossom on his helmet: / When he celebrates the bright day, / The gracious Ascension Day.'" The allegorical signal indicating that the Slavs place flowers specifically upon a *helmet* – a piece of military equipment – rather than a civilian article of clothing such as a hat or cap, is particularly noteworthy. It is as if this choice foreshadowed the events that would unfold just one year later during the revolutionary upheavals of 1848. In those events, both Slovaks

and Serbs were compelled to take to the barricades to secure the national rights that had been denied them within the Habsburg Empire – rights which even the Hungarian revolutionaries of 1848 were unwilling to grant to the Slavic peoples.

The Ascension Day (*Spasovdan*) of which Svetozar Miletić sang is not merely a day of salvation for the Serbs, but for all other Slavs as well; in the Serbian political thought of that era, these two perspectives were inextricably linked, just as they were in the thought of the Slovaks. In this "mirroring" of Ján Kollár within Svetozar Miletić – as well as in many other figures who bridged Slovak and Serbian cultures and connected these two nations with other Slavic peoples – Serbs and Slovaks operated from the standpoint of civic ideals proclaimed by the French Revolution, expressed in the rallying cry: *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity!* These programmatic positions were not permitted to all within the complex, multi-ethnic Habsburg Empire, and the Slavs were the first compelled to highlight this injustice and revolt against such a state of affairs. Consequently, Miletić structures the final stanza of his poem as if the ideals he discusses are truly universal and humanitarian, enabling cooperation among the many peoples and nations of the world: "And to him who loves brotherly harmony, / Offer him a single flower, / Let it serve him in his glory: / Then let your voice sound the praise: / A gracious day has dawned for you—The gracious Ascension Day!" At that time, Ascension Day for Serbs, Slovaks, and all other Slavs was envisioned as an Ascension Day for all humanity. This is undoubtedly a confirmation of the universality of the ideals of the French Revolution and the specific manner in which the Slavs understand and interpret such ideals.

Matica srpska and Matica slovenská: Towards Intercultural and Transcultural Dialogue

Only through profound mutual understanding, underpinned by full respect for specific national cultures, can we facilitate the desired intercultural dialogue and the development of a transcultural European sphere that does not seek to submerge the distinctive identities of small nations. It is only within such a framework that we can establish a shared intellectual perspective – one in which cultural differences are perceived as an enrichment of the European landscape rather than as obstacles to the implementation of "melting-pot" projects, wherein nations are reduced to a mere "ethnic mass" tasked solely with serving as carriers of labour and consumer potential, defined exclusively by the trajectories of international capital movement. And capital – as is well established – remains fundamentally indifferent to potential visions for the humanization of the world. This indifference persists unless such a vision can be shown to serve the acquisition of profit, at which point capital will exert every effort to co-opt and instrumentalize that vision, transforming it into a mere source of revenue and surplus value. We must collectively resist such an exclusively economistic and utilitarian conception of contemporary society in order to secure the dignified survival of our two peoples, Serbs and Slovaks, as well as all other numerically small nations.

In accordance with such objectives, it is imperative that we maintain a rigorous practice of dialogue and a series of responsible exchanges of

ideas. Such efforts – one must hope – will prevent the gravity of the subject from being compromised by the pressures of politicking or economism, or by bureaucratic or flippantly media-driven reasoning. Furthermore, these efforts must be safeguarded against various forms of ideological imposition emanating from major centres of power, as well as from the majority outvoting of dissenting views in favour of "conforming" positions. The envisioned discourse must remain the free expression of free individuals who seek to nurture institutions of human conviction and build societies that regard the freedom of individuals, social strata, and entire nations as the ultimate prerequisite. These norms of elementary freedoms serve as the foundation for a society open to new and more humane perspectives on existence. Should this be achieved, there is hope for us all – for the institutions we represent, and for the political communities and societies in which we operate. It is the hope that even if we remain a distinct voting minority, we can still persevere by remaining true to our identity without endangering others. For freedom is meaningful only if it encompasses the right to be different – provided that such difference does not fundamentally jeopardize the rights of others to their own difference.

In practical terms, this implies that the 1999 bombing of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the military operations cynically titled "Merciful Angel" cannot be interpreted as an act of defending freedom; rather, they must be understood precisely as an assault on liberties and the destruction of the established civil order. While the current era sees the consolidation of the rights of marginalized groups – including gay, lesbian, and transgender individuals, the Roma, Black people, members of colonial communities, migrants, and various specific phenomena within the scope of social and cultural queer theory – one should not so readily overlook the obligation to secure the rights of entire nations. From the perspective of military-hierarchical and state-bureaucratic apparatuses, such nations may be regarded as somewhat atypical or peculiar. This obligation is particularly urgent when such nations in no way endanger the fundamental norms of international law. In this context, it necessitates a careful concern for the rights of Serbs and Albanians, as well as all other minorities in Serbia. It should be noted that these minority rights, dating back to Socialist Yugoslavia—and subsequently within the Republic of Serbia – were established at a level far exceeding both past and present European standards. To bomb such a Serbia constitutes a "crime of crimes", an act that cannot be justified by any serious, morally or legally grounded argumentation.

The "crime of 1999" serves as an ominous harbinger of a highly uncertain future for those who are disfavoured by powerful and unscrupulous centres of political, state, and military authority. In this context, the destiny of Europe would largely depend on its capacity to uphold the fundamental right to difference for those who are deemed unsympathetic and undesirable. Should the spirit of military-administrative subjugation of small European nations prevail, it will lead to the demise of the very idea of Europe, which is inconceivable without dialogue and a substantive understanding of the Other. In this sense, the role of small nations in the construction of Europe ought to be immensely important and incomparably greater than their actual economic, political, and military power. Without heeding the voice of small nations,

the spirit that gave rise to the European Union will be extinguished within Europe. When that foundational essence and core idea is betrayed, we can realistically anticipate numerous other forms of betrayal and significant distortions. A substantial dialogue about all such events and processes is already underway and will undoubtedly continue in the years and decades to come.

It is indisputable that by addressing the fundamental issues that led to the creation of the Slavic Matica institutions, we are merely strengthening and consolidating the foundational, original, and declarative spirit of a united Europe. Observing the contributions of our two institutions – Matica slovenská and Matica srpska – to cultural history and the desired strengthening of the national identity of both Slovaks and Serbs, I believe the positive results are more than evident. Perhaps less visible, though nonetheless certain, are the contributions of these two institutions to the construction of a Europe founded on tolerance, multiculturalism, and transculturality. In this regard, all Slavic Matica institutions could certainly achieve much more, but this will only realistically occur if the mutual relations between these entities are elevated to a higher degree of substantive understanding and a civilized resolution of existing problems. The attempt to create some kind of overarching, superior authority to unify existing institutions is not a recipe for success. On the contrary, it would lead to specific forms of concealing existing problems and the introduction of a series of mimicry-based procedures. We, who have experienced the "hard" or "less-hard" forms of communist statehood, can surely accurately assess how forms of "Ketman" (as defined by Czesław Miłosz) can appear even in entirely different, post-communist circumstances – circumstances which are declaratively opposed to every form of hypocrisy and social deformity of that type, but which in practice increasingly legalize specific forms of "Ketman" as a standard mode of behaviour. The criteria of political correctness increasingly open the door for such deformed manifestations of language, speech, action, and human conduct.

When considering the paths of cooperation between Matica slovenská and Matica srpska, it should be noted that these two institutions somehow managed to survive within the Habsburg Empire, though at that time their elementary existence was seriously threatened. Matica slovenská thus suffered a hiatus in its continuity for nearly four and a half decades: abolished in 1875, it had to wait for the collapse of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire to resume its work, being eventually restored in 1919 within the new state of Czechoslovakia. The figure most responsible for the creation of this state was, without doubt, Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, who became the country's first president. It is, however, noteworthy that Masaryk – due to his consistent criticism of Austrian-Hungarian propaganda directed against the Kingdom of Serbia on the eve of the First World War – was elected an honorary member of Matica srpska in 1927 as an expression of belated recognition.

Since its re-establishment in 1919, Matica slovenská has operated continuously to this present day. The interruptions in the continuity of Matica srpska were significantly shorter but more frequent. The first interruption was caused by the attempt of the Hungarian administration in 1836 to ban the institution for "formal-legal reasons"; however, after a year

and a half of persistent legal advocacy, the leaders of Matica restored the institution's operations in 1837. The second interruption occurred during the revolutionary events in Pest in 1848–1849, a period marked by a bloody conflict between the Hungarian army and the Serbian national movement. The third and fourth interruptions were caused by the First World War (1914–1919) and the Second World War (1941–1945), with the institution having to wait for regular peacetime circumstances to resume serious cultural work. The strong understanding between Serbs and Slovaks was further bolstered by the decisive stance of the Slovaks that a new state, Czechoslovakia, should be formed upon the ruins of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire following the First World War. On the other hand, the territories of Bačka, Banat, Baranja, and Srem were annexed to the Kingdom of Serbia, and subsequently to the newly formed Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes; these decisions were precisely those reached at the Great People's Assembly in Novi Sad on November 25, 1918, where the most prominent participants were representatives of the Slavic peoples – Serbs, Bunjevci, Slovaks, and Rusyns. The founding of the Matica slovenská in Bački Petrovac in 1932 also contributed to this cooperation, demonstrating that Slovaks in the Vojvodina region and throughout Serbia represented a vital and reliable link between the two nations.

It must also be emphasized on this occasion that the ties between leading figures in the spheres of culture, Slavic solidarity, ideology, and politics were established much earlier – in the 18th century, when Serbian Šajkaši (river flotilla troops) and frontiersmen settled in Komárno, and particularly during the Romantic period when young Serbs studied in Pozsony (modern-day Bratislava) or Trnava, while some young Slovaks came to work in the Serbian Gymnasium in Sremski Karlovci or Novi Sad. Furthermore, representatives of the two nations often met in Buda, Pest, or Vienna, where they quickly found a common language. This was an era when relations were nurtured by figures such as Andreas Volny, Pavel Jozef Šafárik, Ján Kollár, and Ľudovít Štúr on one side, and Georgije Magarašević, Jovan Hadžić, Teodor Pavlović, and Svetozar Miletić on the other.

Slovaks and Serbs know each other relatively well and possess a substantive mutual understanding—a relationship that has endured for at least two centuries. For those of us who today care for Matica slovenská and Matica srpska, and who contribute to the cultural development of the two nations, it is a privilege not only to be aware of the contributions of our great predecessors but also to provide new content and direction to these positive relations in our own time. Deeply convinced of the strength and significance of such contributions, I am also certain that Matica srpska and Matica slovenská today, in the third decade of the 21st century, are not only capable of formulating cultural policies beneficial to the nations they represent, but are also able to provide the authentic and active contributions necessary for the stabilization of at least this part of Europe inhabited by Serbs and Slovaks.

The Serbian and Slovak testimony to peaceful and tolerant inter-ethnic relations – and to efforts directed toward authentic contributions and the building of a significantly broader cultural and political space in today's Europe – should be taken into serious account and considered earnestly.

Founding Assembly of Matica Slovenská, Bački Petrovac, August 15, 1932
Photo: Museum of Vojvodina Slovaks

For if the Slovaks were able to survive the trials of life under the Habsburg Empire, and the Serbs the trials of both the Ottoman and Habsburg Empires, they will surely know how to survive and overcome the challenges of life in contemporary Europe and the European Union. For Europe itself, and particularly for the survival of the European Union, it is far better – even salvific – for numerically small nations to emerge from the realm of darkness, silence, and invisibility. Should this fail to happen, Europe will negate the finest part of its own tradition, and that part of its heritage of which we should all be ashamed, and which we must avoid at all costs, will prevail.

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UDC 930.85(497.11:437.6)
061:001.32(497.113)
061:001.32(437.6)
930.25(497.113)
Original scientific article
Received:10.3.2026.
Accepted: 16.4.2026.
doi: 10.5937/napredak7-65605

Development of Slovak-Serbian cultural and scientific ties: Matica slovenská's cooperation with Matica srpska and the Archives of Vojvodina

Abstract: The text provides an overview of specific events and activities organized by or attended by the Matica slovenská, in efforts to strengthen Slovak-Serbian ties, especially those between the Matica srpska and Matica slovenská. In that context, the text lists the congresses organized by the two institutions, which represent a platform for cooperation of the two Maticas and the Slavic peoples' institutions, which developed significant cooperation during their existence in the field of the two peoples' history research and culture. The text also features significant anniversaries of both Maticas, as well as planning joint publishing projects and joint participation in cultural events.

Keywords: Serbian-Slovak cooperation, Pavel Jozef Šafárik, Congresses of Slavic peoples' Maticas and institutions

Introduction

Long-term friendly relations between Slovak and Serbian cultural institutions have started acquiring a new, more dynamic dimension in recent years. Martin-headquartered Matica slovenská, which was founded in 1863 during the era of Hungary and the Habsburg Empire, has been systematically developing cooperation with significant institutions in Serbia, primarily with Matica srpska, which was founded first in 1826, and as such was a symbol of cultural awakening of the Slavic peoples. Its cooperation with the Novi Sad-based Archives of Vojvodina is equally as intense, which is also marking

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a significant jubilee this year – a centennial of its founding.[2] The cooperation relies on historical ties between the Slavic peoples, the tradition of scientific and cultural exchange and the care for Slovak community in Vojvodina. History has taught us to speak in a language of mutual respect and support, which we aim to preserve and improve upon.

When discussing Matica slovenská, it should be emphasized that the pillar of Slavic cultural, scientific, and social cooperation has existed since its very inception. Slavic contexts have been an immanent part of Slovak native life throughout all its historical stages, up to the present day. Slovak patriot, historian, librarian, archivist, and registrar assistant professor Anton Augustín Baník (1900–1978), offered in the late 1940s perhaps the most precise definition of the attitude Matica slovenská had toward ideas of Slavic reciprocity. Among other things, he stated: "Traditions of the Slovaks are inextricably and deeply tied with the history of the entire Slavs. Matica slovenská is simultaneously the historical protector and live carrier of the spirit of Slavic solidarity of Slovaks. More precisely, Matica slovenská came into existence as a reflection of a direct show of sublime feelings, imbued with Slavic brotherhood, on the occasion of the thousandth anniversary of the arrival of the Slavic apostles Constantine Cyril and Methodius among our ancestors. Apart from that, Matica slovenská has developed over time in a way that it has become the front-most protector among its sister institutions in the Slavic space of the initial, original meaning of the original idea, as conceived in the first third of the last century. However, Matica slovenská, as an organization of the lovers of the Slovak people, is not just an institution that relies on the Slavic brotherhood's higher interests. It carries out its mission simultaneously on the broad social foundation of universal brotherhood, on the sincere rapprochement of man with man, and therefore has a positive attitude towards every honest citizen of any nationality, especially when they also have a special understanding, respect, or love for the life efforts and needs of Slovaks" (Group of Authors, 2020, p. 99).

After all, a truly clear Slovak and Matica proof of the embodiment of Slavic cooperation was the historically first president of Matica slovenská, Bishop Štefan Moyses (1797–1869). In him, the Slovak, Slavic and humanistic ideal of the native national aspiration found its supreme model, especially since he was not only a great Slovak, an enthusiastic Slav and a noble man, but also a deeply religious high church dignitary and benefactor, who was deeply touched by social injustices. The first president of Matica slovenská actively participated in the fight for cultural and political rights of Slovaks and South Slavic national movement. He also developed close cooperation with the representatives of Czechs, Moravians, Serbs, Croats, and Ruthenians[3] in the

[2] Available at: https://slovenskeslovo.sk/matica-slovenska-posilnila-spolupracu-s-krajanmi-a-archivom-vojvodiny/

[3] A similar concept was advocated by another great Slav and Ruthenian-Slovak hard worker Adolf Dobriansky (1817–1901), who was also a member of the second wave of national revival, but he also belonged heavily to the third Štúr phase. Dobriansky even proposed a plan for the creation of a form of state formation of Czechs, Moravians, Slovaks and Ruthenians, more than eighty years before the creation of the first Czechoslovak Republic in 1918. More in the documentary: *Adolf Dobriansky – Visionary of Slavic unity*, published on March 19, 2021 [online], available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=skv2_V88MA8

context of growing Magyarization and Germanization in 19th-century Central Europe under the Habsburg Monarchy. In his everyday practical life, Štefan Moyses uncompromisingly defended the basic national and cultural rights of Slavic peoples and did not hesitate to risk his social position (Group of Authors, 2020, p. 99).

The same was true of the second Vice-President of Matica slovenská, Karol Kuzmány (1806–1866), who was a part of the second wave of national revival, that is, the Generation of Paneslavia,[4] represented by individuals such as Ján Kollár and Pavel Jozef Šafárik, and characterized by intensive contacts and cooperation within the wider Slavic space, including the Serbian cultural and intellectual milieu. In the Slovak historical context, we divide the national revival into three phases and it is certainly no coincidence that the period of the emergence of the first maticas coincided with the second wave, namely the Slovak branch of the Generation of Paneslavia (1820–1835).

In the words of the contemporary matica historian Michal Eliáš (1934–2018), the Slavic maticas rank among the most important national-cultural associations, not only in the context of European history. They emerged as the first national and cultural institutions with a range of tasks essential for the formation of national communities. Alongside the national principle, they also promoted a civic principle – they united national communities regardless of religious affiliation, political belief, or social status. Through their rich publishing and cultural activities, they made a significant contribution to raising the cultural level of the people and to the development of science, literature, the arts, and education. They established national libraries, literary museums, galleries, and other institutions that foster national, European, and global culture. By developing cultural ties, they contributed to bringing peoples closer together and to maintaining national consciousness. In Europe, we do not know of other cultural associations that have endured for so long and had such a wide scope of activity as the Slavic maticas. For their multifaceted work, they deserve respect, prestige, and recognition not only within individual nations but also within Europe, the European Union, and the world as a whole (Eliáš, 2010, pp. 18–19). It may be added that the same applies to the continuous cooperation between Matica srpska and Matica slovenská, which, albeit with varying intensity, has lasted throughout the 19th and 20th centuries up to the present day. It can therefore be concluded that, at present, Serbian–Slovak matica relations are experiencing their next historical renaissance.

Contemporary and historical cooperation starting point

The relationships between the Slovak and Serbian cultural milieus have deep historical roots. It is a fact that collective historical memory is, in certain respects, relatively short, and that scholarly literature often emphasizes the 19th century as the period marking the beginning of intensive Slavic

[4] The term "Paneslavia" (Všeslávia) was first used by Ján Kollár in the poetic composition "The Daughter of Sláva" ("Slávy dcera"), and later in his work *Sermons* (*Kázně a Řeči*).

cooperation. However, significant exchanges in education, art, and literature can also be observed in the 18th and 19th centuries: many Serbs (and not only Serbs from Southern Europe) studied at Slovak universities and grammar schools, particularly in Bratislava, Košice, and Kežmarok. At the same time, prominent Slovaks, representatives of the Slovak national revival, such as Pavel Jozef Šafárik and Ján Kollár, along with the reformer of the Serbian language, Vuk Karadžić, drew on each other's knowledge through the collection and systematization of the rich treasury of folk creativity. These Slavic connections cannot be reduced solely to the 19th century, quite the contrary. Population movements, personal contacts, and shared linguistic and cultural influences point to continuity of ties reaching further into the past, shaping a Slavic cultural and social milieu long before the era of modern national revivals in the 19th century. If we take into account the well-known scope of cultural and educational exchanges among Slavic peoples, it seems highly unlikely that they originated only within the past two centuries. Despite the fact that systematic historical research has focused primarily on more recent history, the historical echoes of Slavic mutuality must be much older and more deeply rooted in the cultural consciousness of both peoples.

There are many more examples of historical connections and Slavic cooperation in earlier history, but for reasons of scope, we will focus on only a few. The very existence of Samo's Empire (623–658) points to an attempt by West Slavic tribes to create the first precursor of a state formation of our ancestors, to free themselves from Avar domination, and at the same time to resist the Germanic pressure of the Frankish state in the 7th century. The Chronicle of Fredegar refers to this polity as Samo's Empire, which encompassed the Lusatian Serbs, Slavic tribes in the territory of Bohemia, as well as Moravian, Danubian, and Carantanian Slavs.[5] The names of several important West Slavic leaders have been preserved in history, such as Dervan, Valuk, and the central ruler Samo. Although the chronicles remain silent about events following Samo's death, it is likely that supratribal structures persisted in various forms. In 833, Frankish chroniclers record the emergence of another political entity of the West Slavs, later known as Great Moravia. The unification of the principalities of Moravia and Nitra, belonging to the same Slavic tribe, indicates the continuous development of political and social structures that built upon Samo's Empire (Durec, Gešper, 2023, pp. 15). From Great Moravia emerged the mission of Constantine Cyril and Methodius, who laid the foundations of Slavic literacy, ecclesiastical and early state administration, schools of philosophy, legal education, and a Slavic understanding of Christianity, which later spread to the Eastern

[5] The Byzantine writer Jordanes, in his 6th-century work *The Origin and Deeds of the Goths* identifies three Slavic tribes – the Veneti, the Antes, and the Sclaveni. Here, the Sclaveni are understood as a distinct Slavic tribe. Later, primarily Western chroniclers referred to all of them collectively as Slavs. The original ethnonym of the Slavs is still preserved by the Slovaks (Slovensko) and the Slovenes (Slovenija). Jordanes also recorded that the Slavs, together with the Goths (a Germanic tribe), exerted strong pressure on the southeastern part of the Roman Empire in the region of the lower Danube as early as the 4th century AD.

and Southern Slavs of the time. It should also be noted that both Matica slovenská in Turčiansky Svätý Martin (1863) and Matica slovenská in Ljubljana (1863–1864) were founded on the occasion of the millennium of the arrival of Constantine Cyril and Methodius.

The aforementioned connections would require a much more thorough analysis. If we return and make a conceptual leap toward Slovak–Serbian relations in the modern era, an exceptionally important figure was the prominent Slavist and thinker Pavel Jozef Šafárik, who served as a kind of living bridge of Serbian–Slovak cooperation (Parenička, 2025, pp. 55). As principal and professor of the local Orthodox grammar school, he spent 14 productive years (1819–1833) in Novi Sad and nearby Sremski Karlovci, making a significant contribution to the development of Serbian cultural and scholarly life. At the same time, he inscribed himself into the history of Matica srpska, becoming one of its first honorary members already at the time of its founding. He also actively published his works in the oldest continuously published scholarly journal, the *Letopis Matice srpske* (*Matica Srpska Chronicle*). P. J. Šafárik thus represents an important link among Slovak, Moravian, Czech, Lusatian Serb, Slovenian, and Serbian national, cultural, and scholarly life, with an influence extending even into the 20th century, when many of his ideas were realized (such as the creation of the states of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia after World War I in 1918). It is precisely from the historical legacy of P. J. Šafárik that contemporary cooperation between Slovak and Serbian institutions emerges, grounded in mutual respect, scholarly exchange, and support for Slavic cultural identity.

Congresses of maticas and Slavic cooperation

An important pillar of the international cooperation of Matica slovenská is represented by the congresses of maticas and cultural institutions of Slavic nations. As such, they build upon the historical tradition of Slavic reciprocity and cultural cooperation among Slavic peoples. The first European Congress of the Maticas of Slavic Nations was held in 2007 in Martin, and its final memorandum established guidelines for the years to come: "We, the representatives of the maticas of Slavic nations, at our first European Congress held from March 26 to 28, 2007, in Martin (Slovakia): I. declare that we perceive Europe as a continent of equal cultures, languages, and national identities, as a common home of cooperating nations, in which the Slavs occupy an irreplaceable place. II. support and promote the humanistic, democratic, and Christian traditions of Europe, which form the foundation of the cultural, spiritual, and social development of our continent in the 21st century. III. agree with a new form of democratic cooperation among maticas and recommend to the executive authorities of our states that the historically established maticas become an integral part of state cultural policy in the coming decades. IV. call for cooperation with other organizations that accept and support Slavic reciprocity and the values of European belonging. V. express the will to meet at future European congresses of Slavic maticas, thereby preserving and developing our cultural heritage. VI. Recommend to the decision-making structures of the EU that they accept the integrative aspirations of other Slavic

nations to become full and valued members of an integrated Europe" (Eliáš, 2010, pp. 146).[6]

The second European Congress of the Maticas of Slavic Nations was also held in Martin, from July 31 to August 3, 2013. The third European Congress of the Maticas of Slavic Nations was held on February 4, 2014, in Ljubljana and indirectly contributed to the adoption of new legislation guaranteeing more substantial state funding for the activities of Matica slovenská by the Slovenian authorities.[7] These events have become an important platform for discussing the future of Slavic cultural institutions in a globalized world.

The fourth European Congress of the Maticas of Slavic Nations can be considered a significant turning point, which was held from June 4 to 6, 2019, in Martin. The congress was dedicated to important historical anniversaries – primarily the centenary of the restoration of Matica slovenská in 1919, as well as the commemoration of the Memorandum of the Slovak Nation of June 6–7, 1861 (Group of authors, 2020, pp. 101-102). The gathering brought together representatives of numerous Slavic cultural institutions, historians, Slavists, and cultural workers, and special mention should be made of the active participation of the Matica srpska delegation led by its president, Professor Dragan Stanić. It was precisely the Fourth Congress in Martin in 2019 that elevated the mutual interactions of Slavic maticas to a new dimension and announced future congresses. As its core message, we also cite the still-relevant statement of representatives of Slavic scholarly, cultural, and social institutions: "We, the participants of the 4th Congress of Maticas and Institutions of Slavic Nations, held at the initiative of Matica slovenská on June 5 and 6, 2019, in Martin, on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of its restoration, as legitimate representatives, have adopted the following statement: In the ongoing processes of globalization, liberalization, the rise of information, internet and cyber technologies and wars, of the post-industrial age and postmodernity, Slavic maticas and cultural institutions of Slavic nations must continue to promote and disseminate traditional conservative values, above all Christianity and patriotism. Particularly within the Slavic and European environment, we seek to preserve the Cyrillo-Methodian tradition, to support the establishment of pan-Slavic and national identity and historical consciousness, in which lies the essence and perspective of the Slavic civilisational mission. We develop this mission on the principles of the heritage of Saints Cyril and Methodius as patrons of Europe" (Group of authors, 2020, pp. 310).

On the occasion of the 160th anniversary of Matica slovenská, the Fifth Congress of Slavic Matica Institutions and Slavic Peoples was organised, which also marked the opening of the anniversary

[6] Representatives of 12 maticas from 8 European countries attended the congress. The congress addressed four main thematic areas: 1. Maticas of Slavic nations as a cultural, spiritual, and social phenomenon in Europe; 2. Slavdom and the Slavs in Europe at the threshold of the 21st century; 3. National integrity as a pillar of identity; 4. Cooperation among maticas in strengthening national and cultural identity. For more detail, see: Eliáš, 2010, pp. 140–148.

[7] Matica slovenská in Ljubljana, unlike Matica slovenská in Martin, is not a public-law institution but rather a citizens' association.

Marián Gešper and Nebojša Kuzmanović during an official visit to Matica slovenská in Serbia (Novi Sad)
Photo: Matica Slovenská

celebrations in Martin. It was held on 3 and 4 August 2023, with delegations from several Slavic countries, including Serbia, in attendance. Representatives of Matica srpska, along with other scholarly and cultural institutions, engaged in discussions on the possibilities for developing cultural cooperation, the preservation of Slavic cultural heritage, and the strengthening of national identities in the contemporary world. It was during these negotiations that contacts between Slovak and Serbian partners were significantly deepened, leading to the development of concrete research projects and publishing activities (Madura, 2023, p. 2).

Following this congress, several projects between Matica slovenská and Matica srpska developed fully, which was particularly evident in the field of Slovak–Serbian cultural cooperation. Building on the Fifth Congress, a delegation from Matica Slovenská visited Serbia from 13 to 16 November 2023, led by President Marián Gešper. At the headquarters of Matica srpska in Novi Sad, the delegation was received by its President, Dragan Stanić. The discussions focused on the historical connections between the Slovak and Serbian national movements, the shared cultural heritage of Slavic peoples, and the legacy of Pavel Jozef Šafárik, as well as the *Letopis Matice srpske*, which in 2024 celebrated its 200th anniversary (Perný, Schvantner, Gešper, 2023, pp. 23–25). The delegation also deliberated on the development of cooperation between Slavic Matica institutions, the future organisation of the Congress of Slavic Matica Institutions, and joint scholarly and publishing projects. During their visit to the Association of Writers of Serbia in Belgrade, an agreement was reached to publish a special Slovak–Serbian issue of the literary

journal *Slovenské pohľady* (Slovak Views) in 2024. The journal will feature the literary and cultural work of Serbian authors, as well as Slovak authors residing in Serbia. This represented a significant step towards deepening cultural exchange between the Slovak and Serbian cultural milieus, while simultaneously highlighting the importance of the Slovak community living in Vojvodina and, more broadly, in Serbia.

A positive development has been the shortening of intervals between the congresses of Slavic Matica institutions. This was largely due to joint projects, professional exchanges, and visits, which generated new scholarly topics for future sessions. Another milestone in Slavic Matica cultural exchange – particularly Slovak–Serbian cooperation – was the Sixth Congress of Slavic Matica Institutions, held on 11 and 12 September 2025 in Martin, as part of the international academic conference *The Second Wave of National Revival*. The event was dedicated to the legacy of prominent figures in the Slavic cultural sphere, notably Pavel Jozef Šafárik and Jan Kollár (Seman, 2025, pp. 5–7).

The conference was held on the occasion of the 230th anniversary of the birth of Pavel Jozef Šafárik and was organised under the patronage of Matica slovenská in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic. During these days, Martin became a centre of Slavic scholarly and cultural cooperation. Delegations from Matica institutions, research institutes, and universities from several countries participated in the congress and conference. In addition to Slovakia, representatives came from the Czech Republic, Serbia, Slovenia, Montenegro, Hungary, Bulgaria, Austria, and Germany. The Serbian side was primarily represented by members of Matica srpska from Novi Sad, researchers from the Archive of Vojvodina, and representatives of Matica slovenská in Serbia, based in Bački Petrovac. The academic programme of the conference was devoted to reflecting on the figures of the second wave of national revival, including, alongside Pavel Jozef Šafárik and Jan Kollár, Samuel Tomášik, Martin Hamuľjak, Karol Kuzmány, and Adolf Dobriansky.

Particular attention was paid to Serbian figures who acted as a bridge to Slovak personalities and supported their work. In the nineteenth century, in the territory of present-day Vojvodina – which at the time was a Serbian region within Hungary – such figures included, above all: Stefan Stratimirović, the Serbian Metropolitan in Karlovci, who supported Slavic scholarly activities; Georgije Magarašević, a writer and editor of the *Letopis Matice srpske*, in whose work Pavel Jozef Šafárik also participated; and Lukijan Mušicki, an important poet and church dignitary, with whom Šafárik collaborated directly, including with representatives of Matica srpska in Novi Sad. In Serbia itself, Šafárik's key partner was Vuk Stefanović Karadžić, linguist, collector of folklore, and reformer of the Serbian language, with whom he developed an intensive scholarly collaboration (Parenička, 2025, pp. 26–28).

The discussions were consistently focused on the importance of developing Slavic reciprocity, national cultures, and Slavic studies in Central Europe. The outcomes of the most recent conference are to be published in a bilingual Slovak–Serbian scholarly volume, being prepared by Matica slovenská in collaboration with Matica srpska and the Archive of Vojvodina. This project represents yet

another tangible expression of the intensive scholarly cooperation between Slovak and Serbian cultural institutions.

Matica Slovenská's Support for Vojvodina Slovaks and Cooperation with Matica Slovenská in Serbia

The cooperation between Slovak and Serbian institutions holds profound significance for the Slovak national minority in Vojvodina, which represents one of the oldest Slovak communities in the diaspora. Matica Slovenská is committed to long-term support for the cultural life of Slovaks from the so-called "Lower Land" (Dolná zem), the preservation of the Slovak language, and the presentation of authentic historical heritage. Joint projects with archives, scientific institutions, and cultural organizations in Serbia facilitate thorough research into the history of the Slovak community, the protection of historical documents, and their presentation to the general public. A significant portion of these activities is carried out by Matica Slovenská in Serbia, headquartered in Bački Petrovac, which is one of the oldest and most prominent cultural organizations of Vojvodina Slovaks. This organization stems from the same cultural roots as Matica Slovenská and, as such, currently serves as a guardian of the cultural identity of Slovaks in Serbia. A delegation from Matica Slovenská participated in the Slovak National Festivities (Slovenské národné slávnosti) in Bački Petrovac from August 8 to 10, 2025, where they were received by the President of Matica Slovenská in Serbia, Juraj Červenák. The meeting reaffirmed the traditionally excellent ties between the Slovaks of Vojvodina and the national headquarters in Martin.[8]

Symbolically, the excellent relations and mutual respect toward Matica Slovenská in Serbia and the Slovak community in Serbia were reaffirmed by the ceremonial unveiling of a bust of Janko Bulík, the first president of Matica Slovenská in Yugoslavia. A bust was dedicated to this prominent Slovak – born in Kovačica, a dedicated Matica official, jurist, and anti-fascist executed by the German Nazis – within the Alley of National Figures at the Matica Slovenská complex in Martin. This act served as a poignant reminder of the historical ties between Slovaks in Slovakia and those residing in Serbia. The ceremony was attended by a Serbian delegation led by the President of Matica Srpska, Dragan Stanić; the President of Matica Slovenská in Serbia, Juraj Červenák; and the Ambassador of the Republic of Serbia to Slovakia, Aleksandar Nakić.

Two visits as part of cooperation with Archive of Vojvodina in 2025

The development of cooperation between the two Matica institutions was marked by two visits in 2025. A delegation from the Matica slovenská, led by its

[8] Matica slovenská Information Centre: The delegation of Matica slovenská participated in the Slovak National Festivities and visited Matica slovenská in Bački Petrovac. Published August 15, 2025. [online] Available at: https://matica.sk/prve-oficialne-stretnutie-matice-slovenskej-s-novym-vedenim-matice-slovenskej-v-srbsku-bolo-vedene-v-konstruktivnom-a-pragmatickom-duch

President, Marián Gešper, visited Serbia from 10 to 14 February 2025. They were received by the Director of the Archive of Vojvodina, Nebojša Kuzmanović, PhD. The visit aimed to deepen collaboration in the fields of historical research, the preservation of archival materials, and the study of the cultural heritage of the Slovak community in Vojvodina. The Archive of Vojvodina is one of the most significant archival institutions in Serbia, managing extensive collections of documents concerning the history of Vojvodina and the Slovak minority in the region. As a result of the discussions, a cooperation protocol was signed, providing a framework for joint historical and archival research, the publication of scholarly works, the organisation of conferences and professional seminars, the digitisation of archival materials, and the exchange of specialists and researchers. During their working visit, the delegation from the Matica slovenská held a number of important meetings with representatives of Slovak and Serbian cultural scene. The delegation visited the Archive of Yugoslavia in Belgrade, as well as the Pavol Jozef Šafárik Slovak Cultural Centre in Novi Sad. Members of the Matica slovenská also visited the town of Kisač, where they were welcomed by photographer, publicist, and member of the Assembly of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, Pavel Surovi. The programme continued with a visit to the Karlovci Theological Seminary of Saint Arsenije in Sremski Karlovci, where the delegation was received by the Rector, Jovan Milanović. An important component of the programme was a working meeting at the headquarters of the Matica srpska in Novi Sad, where discussions were held with its President, Dragan Stanić. Simultaneously, the delegation engaged in negotiations with representatives of the Slovak community in Vojvodina, including the then-President of the Matica slovenská in Serbia, Branislav Kulik[9].

A significant event in the development of Slovak–Serbian relations was also the participation of a Slovak delegation in the Tesla Global Forum 2025, held from 28 to 31 August 2025 in Novi Sad and other cities in Vojvodina. The event brought together 28 members of Matica slovenská from Slovakia, led by its President, Marián Gešper. The delegation included members of the Young Matica from Lučenec, Sečovce, Košice, and the municipality of Humenné, as well as members of the folklore ensemble Hemlon, headed by Miroslav Kerekanič, a member of the Board of Matica slovenská. The programme encompassed a visit to the headquarters of Matica srpska in Novi Sad, a professional programme at Radio Television of Vojvodina, meetings with the Slovak and Rusyn editorial offices of this institution, expert lectures dedicated to the legacy of Nikola Tesla, and a visit to the Archive of Vojvodina. The delegation was accompanied by the Slovak writer from Vojvodina, Martin Prebuđila (Seman, 2025, p. 19).

Participation of Matica slovenská in Matica srpska anniversary event

A significant moment in mutual relations was the recent participation of a delegation of Matica slovenská in the ceremonial celebration marking the

[9] Matica slovenská Information Centre: Deepening the unique international cooperation of Matica slovenská with the Archives of Vojvodina and Slovak compatriots. In: Slavic Horizon, vol. 5, no. 1–2/2025, pp. 15–16.

200th anniversary of the founding of Matica srpska in Novi Sad, held on 16 and 17 February 2026. This anniversary served as a reminder of the importance of the oldest Slavic Matica, while simultaneously affirming the deep cultural ties between the Slovak and Serbian peoples. The meeting of representatives of the two Matica institutions created opportunities for further professional dialogue, joint projects, and the development of cooperation in the fields of publishing, history, and linguistics. A particularly important outcome of the negotiations was the handover of the responsibility for organising the Congress of Slavic Matica institutions to Matica srpska. Matica slovenská will support this initiative through contacts and other forms of cooperation, with the aim of holding the congress in Novi Sad in the autumn of this year. The event will be organised to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the founding of the first Slavic Matica – Matica srpska in 1826.

Past and future of Serb-Slovak brotherhood

The mutual cooperation between Matica slovenská, Matica srpska, and the Archive of Vojvodina represents a unique example of Slavic cultural solidarity and scholarly collaboration. Its aim is not only the preservation of historical heritage, but also the creation of new research projects that contribute to a better understanding of shared history, as well as cultural and political ties. At the same time, it constitutes an important cornerstone of joint efforts and historical partnership between the sister states – the Slovak Republic and the Republic of Serbia. As in the past, so too today, Slovaks and Serbs must actively cooperate and seek pathways for their development in these highly turbulent and seemingly challenging times, not only in Europe but also on a global scale.

Developments have shown that we must not abandon the importance of such a heritage; on the contrary, we must strengthen Slovak–Serbian fraternity in the fields of culture, science, and politics, particularly in these complex times. This also constitutes the foundation of our cultural development and the preservation of our numerically small, yet proud, Slavic and European nations. We are obliged to follow the shining example of our forebears – from the earliest Slavic periods, through the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries, and up to the present day.

Matica institutions, as historical national establishments, continue in the twenty-first century to fulfil their fundamental mission in a distinctive manner – the preservation of collective historical memory and cultural heritage, the strengthening of national consciousness, and the formation of future, new, and progressive generations of national elites essential for our European survival. It may therefore be confidently asserted that, even in an era of globalisation processes and civilisational upheavals, the Matica institutions remain one of the pillars of national culture and Slavic reciprocity.

The cooperation between Slovak and Serbian cultural institutions thus represents not only a continuation of historical tradition but also a significant contribution to European cultural heritage and the wider Slavic world, which is founded upon respect for national identity and cultural diversity.

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UDC 930.85(497.11:437.6)"18/20"
Original scientific article
Received: 6.3.2026.
Accepted: 14.4.2026.
doi: 10.5937/napredak7-65515

Introductory remarks on Serbian-Slovak cultural ties since the 19th century to the present, basic outline

Abstract: The proto-study outlines the basic contours of Serbian–Slovak cultural relations from the 19th century to the present. It traces the genealogy of reciprocity from the idea of Slavic cooperation, represented by figures such as Ján Kollár, Pavel Jozef Šafárik, and Svetozar Miletić, through Czechoslovak–Yugoslav relations in the 20th century, to contemporary forms of exchange. It places particular focus on parallels and cultural contacts, the role of Slovaks in Vojvodina, and the activities of contemporary actors. The text emphasizes the importance of cultural cooperation as a perspective for the further development of relations in the 21st century.

Keywords: Serbia, Slovakia, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, culturology

The following proto-study is a kind of introductory note presenting initial results at the outset of a research project by a Slovak scholar from Slovakia on the topic of Serbian–Slovak relations. The subject is exceptionally interesting and stimulating, and in many areas remains underexplored, which makes it valuable for understanding both cultures. For this reason, it represents a challenge for a cultural scholar, as well as a matter of responsibility toward cultural history.

I. 19th century, maticas, Slovaks, Serbs, and Slavism

In the 19th century, cultural ties between Slavic nations were created inspired by the idea of pan-Slavic reciprocity and thanks to the legends of national revivals (Kollár, Šafárik, Štúr, Palacký, Kuzmány, Karadžić, Miletić, Kopitar, Prešern, Zmaj, Gaj, Ševčenko, Mickiewicz, Pushkin, Gogol, Tolstoy), that connected Slavic national cultures and their

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national revivals, as well as the existence of *maticas* as original Slavic institutions (Matica slovenska was inspired by the Matica srpska, in which P. J. Šafárik.[2] was one of the founders). If we overview the history of communications between Slovaks and Serbs, we will find many ties through the Slavic reciprocity in the 19th century, then through the communication at the Czechoslovakian-Yugoslav level, and currently once again at the Serbian-Slovak level. Stanić also points to the sonnets of Ján Kollár in Magarašević's translation in Serbian Chronicle from 1827, connected with Slavic reciprocity, adding that Kollár inspired many Serbian students, and that the title of the anthology *Slavic Tenderness* also derives from his poems about angels. The Serbian poet, literary critic, playwright, literary historian, president of Matica srpska, and university professor Dragan Stanić[3] (1956), who writes under the pseudonym Ivan Negrišorac, highlights encounters between Serbs and Slovaks in the first half and throughout the entire 19th century in Budim, Pest, Győr, Vienna, Pressburg (Bratislava), Prešov, Modra, Banská Bystrica, Kežmarok, and other cities (where they met with Kollár, Štúr, Palacký, Tomka-Sásky). Among Serbian writers, he mentions Miletić, Bošković, Trifković, Zmaj, Grčić, and others, adding that this communication was mutually beneficial (Stanić, 2024, pp. 37–65). In this context, Ľudovít Štúr, one of the most prominent Slovaks of the 19th century, writes about the Serbs as one of the "most distinguished Slavic peoples, who, in domestic, social, and public life, have preserved what is purely Slavic more than all other Western and Southern Slavic peoples" (Štúr, 1956).[4]

In the context of historical ties between Slovaks and Serbs since their medieval proximity, through Saints Cyril and Methodius, to the beginning of the 19th century, Stanić particularly emphasizes the ex-

[2] An international conference on this topic (collection of works in preparation) dedicated to Kollár and Šafárik was held on that topic in Martin (Slovakia).

[3] Professor Dragan Stanić attended school in Sirig, and then went on to study literature at the Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad, while he dedicated himself during the 1960s to neo-avant-garde and Serbian poetry. He devoted his graduate thesis to a semantic analysis of Jovan Dučić. His international reputation was shaped by his work as a professor of the Serbian language at the University of Michigan, but he also worked as a dramaturge at Radio Novi Sad, and as an assistant at the Faculty of Philosophy in Niš and in Novi Sad, where he still teaches today. He became secretary, and later president, of Matica Srpska, as well as editor-in-chief of the *Matica srpska Chronicles*. In addition, he is a member of the Association of Writers of Vojvodina, the Novi Sad Writers' Association, and the Slovak Writers' Association. He has received numerous awards in the field of culture and speaks several languages. Within his scholarly work in literary studies, he has focused on the 19th and 20th centuries (Njegoš, Bećković, Radulović, Todorović, Tucić, Despotov, Petrović, Šalgo, Nastasijević, Drainac, Ristić, De Buli, Ilić, Vuk, Milovanov, Selimović, Pavlović, Danojlić, Pavić, Kapor, Nogo, Maksimović, Novaković, Sladoje). He concentrates his research on archetypal currents and fixed thematic verticals which, although they change forms under new historical circumstances, retain their fundamental function, essential for understanding Serbian literature and culture.

[4] "The most recent history of the Serbian people is similarly intertwined around two extraordinary men, Black George (Karađorđe Petrović, ed. note) and Miloš Obrenović, the first of whom began the work of liberating his people from the vile four-century-long Turkish yoke, and the second carried it through and completed it. For us Slovaks, the story of Serbia's liberation is very memorable and worthy of all our attention and reflection, partly because it shows what firmness of mind, determination, and perseverance can achieve…" (Štur 1956)

change between the journals *Slovenské pohľady* and *Matica srpska Chronicles*, the texts of Pavel Jozef Šafárik (27 texts on Pan-Slavic reciprocity), and his collaboration with Georgije Magarašević. This relates to Šafárik's work at the Novi Sad Grammar School from 1819 to 1831. For a broader understanding of Šafárik's work in the context of the South Slavs, the study by Milan Krajčovič, published in 1989, is especially valuable. He notes, for example, that Šafárik prepared his first Slavic work, *History of the Slavic Language and Literature of All Dialects*, in Novi Sad, together with Martin Hamuljak (Krajčovič, 1989). At the same time, Stanić semantically links the poems of Svetozar Miletić to the context of the historical tasks of the Slavs (the realization of universal civic ideals of freedom, brotherhood, and equality among the Slavs in the Habsburg Monarchy), as well as to mystical-messianic connections (the day of salvation of the Serbs and Slavs), in relation to Kollár's symbol of the *Angel* and Miletić's *Slav Mountain* (Stanić, 2024).

If we were to look for ideological analogies between the Serbian and Slovak contexts of national revival, they would be the May Assembly [5] of 1848 and the Memorandum Assembly in Martin in 1861 (Viršinska, 2015) (or, in the context of ideas, the progressive but unsuccessful Demands of the Slovak Nation of 1848, which, however, can more likely be traced to the Memorandum – Stefan Stratimirović's Plan for the Liberation of the Serbs from 1804) (Sotorović, 2010). More precise chronological analogies can be found, for example, in the Slovenian context,[6] while a different context and a time shift existed between Serbian and Slovak development in the 19th century. Although the processes of emancipation in the Serbian context began earlier, their full realisation took place only after the First World War because of complex cultural-political and geopolitical circumstances (analogies here being the formation of Czechoslovakia and the formation of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia).

When significant figures are considered, Slovakia and Serbia/Yugoslavia are additionally linked by Janko Šafarik, a Serbian scholar and nephew of the famous P. J. Šafarik, who laid the foundations for systematic field archaeological research in Serbia (Hornjak, 2016); Igor Branislav Štefánik, brother of M. R. Štefánik (Kuljik, 2023); the Evangelical priest, playwright and publicist, maternal grandson of Ján Štúr and paternal grandson of Hurban, Vladimir Hurban Vladimirov (Prebuđila, 2025); Ján Čajak, a Slovak writer and translator born in Bački Petrovac; Ján Branislav Mičátek, teacher, poet, linguist, and Matica worker active in Kisač (Ormis, 1935); Ján Bulík, founder of Matica slovenská in Yugoslavia and anti-fascist,[7] and his successor Samuel Štarke,

[5] Compare the terms: May Assembly and the Demands of the Slovak Nation.

[6] For example, there is the analogy of the creation of the tricolour flag in 1848; the anthem *Zdravljica* emerged at the same time as Matuška's *Nad Tatrou sa blýska*; the codification of the language was likewise based on the Central Slovak dialect; and the creation of Matica took place with a difference of only one year (1863, 1864). Matica slovenská and the project of a parallel Slovak-Slovenian history, *Matica.sk*

[7] Matica slovenská in Martin unveiled his bust in 2025. "Immediately after its founding, Matica had 350 full members. Its first president was Dr Ján Bulík, and its vice-president was Samuel Štarke, one of the proponents of the idea of founding the Gymnasium in Petrovac, a bishop of the Evangelical Church... later president of Matica slovenská in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia..." (Obšust, Kuzmanović, 2023, p. 89)

a distinguished Matica activist; the editor of *Slovenské pohľady* and *Cultural Life*, Andrej Mráz from Petrovac; and many others...[8]

* * *

When researching relations between Serbs and Slovaks, one cannot fail to mention the publication by Michal Eliáš, in which the author also deals with Matica srpska, noting that Serbian history was shaped by centuries of battles with the Turks, while the Battle of Kosovo and the fall of Smederevo caused the long-term subjugation of the Serbs and, consequently, the absence of their own literature, science, newspapers, etc. Eliáš emphasises that the impetus for the founding of Matica srpska was the establishment of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (1825), while its founding is linked to the meeting of its founders on Saint Sava's Day[9], initiated by J. Hadžić, and to the periodical *Letopis* (he also highlights P. J. J. Šafarik, who influenced its chief editor, Magarašević). He adds that the first phase was marked by disputes over language, the suspension (1835) and renewal of activity (1836), later the move from Pest to Novi Sad, the revival of activity in 1864, multiple attempts to shut it down, the modernisation of Letopis, the publication of Čajak's survey of Slovak literature and the translation of Vajanský's novel *Suchá Ratolesť*, the celebration of its centenary in 1926 and resistance to political attacks, the period of occupation administration, post-war renewal and expansion of activities, the publication of the Serbo-Croatian orthography together with Matica hrvatska, the adoption of the Law on Matica srpska in 1992, and the publication of a bilingual collection on Serbian-Slovak literary ties (1991) (Eliáš, 2010, pp. 20–25). The study by Maroš Meliharek (Meliharek, 2023) also delves deeply into the period of the founding of Matica srpska, informing the Slovak reader about the contexts surrounding its establishment. If, up to this point, we have written about Slovaks from Serbia or about Serbs, in this case we are dealing with a text by a Slovak from Slovakia, devoted to Karadžić, the Serbian uprising against the Ottoman Empire, the national revival of the Serbs, or the Yugoslav partisans. Meliharek emphasises that Matica srpska, which in 2026 celebrates two hundred years of existence (founded in 1826, it was the first in the family of Slavic Maticas), was the first major social, cultural, and publishing association of the South Slavs. According to the author, the roots of the emergence of national movements and the creation of Maticas also came indirectly from the Great French Revolution, whose ideas of sovereignty, self-determination, and equal rights also influenced the peoples of the Balkans (the author notes that Stefan Živković translated Jean- Jacques Rousseau's *The Social Contract* (cf. Perný, 2012)), who at that time were living under the rule of the

[8] Ján Sirácky, Štefan Homola, Branislav Abafi, Miloš Krno, Ján Kvačala, Ján Paľik, Ján Branislav Mičátek, Academician Ján Kmeť, the Štúr follower Jozef Podhradský, and others. Aleksander Matuška also visited Yugoslavia; likewise, the DAV movement writer Andrej Sirácky from Petrovac was born and worked there, as was the poet and physician Andrej Ferko from Kisač.

[9] Saint Sava is a respected and significant political and religious figure of the Serbs, the first Serbian archbishop who negotiated the independence of the Orthodox Church.

decaying Ottoman Empire, while he also conveys a more detailed picture of Serbian history connected with the uprisings, the exodus of the Serbs, and the diplomatic policy of Miloš Obrenović. It should be added here that, for a basic knowledge of the history of Serbian culture in the Czech and Slovak environment, the illustrated collective monograph of the same title, published in 1995 in the Czech language, is indispensable (Group of authors 1995); in 2013, the book *History of Serbia*, the work of six historians, was also published, and it likewise includes an expansion into Czech-Serbian relations (Pelikan, Havlikova, 2013). In his study, Meliharek points out that Vojvodina constituted the core of Serbian intellectual life. Matica srpska was founded by intellectual circles from Pest and Novi Sad, with an executive board, councils, and various types of membership, while Magarašević, Šafarik, and Mušicki founded *Letopis*, which is still published today and deals with topics of language, literature, history, religion, folklore, and Serbian culture. Figures involved in the founding of Matica srpska included the writer Jovan Hadžić, who also took part in the preparation of the *Civil Code* and wrote a history of the Serbian Uprising, as well as Gavrilo Bozitovac, Jovan Demetrović, Josif Milovuk, Petar Rajić, Avram Rozmirović, Georgije Stanković, and Teodor Pavlović, who also founded *Serbski narodni list* in Budim. However, Matica srpska and its beginnings were also connected with language disputes (Vuk's language reform versus Hadžić). *Letopis* also published reviews of the works of Bernolak, Kolar, Šafarik, and Herkeľ (Schwarz, 2026). Meliharek adds that the first phase of Matica srpska's existence laid a stable foundation for further development of its activities, when it began a rich publishing and scholarly work.

* * *

The writer and social scientist, current director of the Archives of Vojvodina, member of Matica srpska and Matica slovenská, the Society of Writers of Vojvodina, and the Society for Culture, Art and International Cooperation "Adligat" Nebojša Kuzmanović, PhD (1962, Gradačac) was awarded the Extraordinary Prize of Matica slovenská in 2025 at the VI Congress of Maticas and Institutions of Slavic Peoples, precisely for the development of Slovak-Serbian cultural relations (this award is by no means merely formal but is based on actual cultural practice).[10] Kuzmanović, who previously published the significant book *Romanticism in Serbian-Slovak Literary Relations* (Kuzmanović,

[10] Nebojša Kuzmanović, PhD, graduated from the Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad, where he studied Serbian and comparative literature (he wrote a rare and essential doctoral dissertation on Serbian-Slovak literary relations during the Romantic period and has been systematically researching this topic for years). After his studies, he worked as chief editor and editor for several periodicals and publishing houses, where he published his essays, reviews, and studies, becoming known to both Serbian and Slovak readers. He also became actively involved in cultural policy (roles in the municipality of Bačka Palanka, Provincial Deputy Secretary for Culture, etc.). He has published dozens of books focusing on philosophy, cultural studies, intercultural relations, ethnology, and literary history. He has received more than fifteen awards. His most recent was awarded by Matica slovenská in 2025 (also presented to the translator of this work, Martin Prebuđila) for the development of Slovak-Serbian cultural relations, symbolically at a conference dedicated to the figures who connect Slovaks and Serbs—Ján Kollár and Pavel Jozef Šafárik.

2023), has just published another work, a book of essays entitled *Toward the Slavic Equivalence* (Kuzmanović, 2025), with the subtitle *Writings on Literature*, translated by Martin Prebuđila, a Slovak writer living in Serbia (1960, Obrenovac, Serbia).[11] Kuzmanović oscillates between philosophy, literary criticism focused on the analysis of poetry, aesthetics, and cultural studies in general. This study and the initial motivations for interest in the topic of Serbian-Slovak cultural relations are based on the foreword of that book; however, it builds on the author's other varied works (Kuzmanović/Kuzmanović 2023a; 2023b; 2024; 2025a–f; Obšust, Kuzmanović, 2023). In his new book, Kuzmanović opens the doors to unknown worlds of research at the intersection of philosophy, history, and poetry, extending even to mystical reflections on who we are, why we are here, and what the meaning of human existence—whether Serbian, Slovak, or Slavic—lies behind the backdrop of cultural history.[12] Although Danilo Kiš states that a person writes out of despair and hopelessness—when there is nothing else to do, referring to the idea that enlightening people is a futile task, since only a fool would write books knowing that no one will read them—this existentialist observation should be supplemented by the fact that Kuzmanović's books already have a real impact on Serbian-Slovak literary relations. They have the potential to be read, reflected upon, and even to influence the future, at least among intellectuals in Slovakia and Serbia These are not texts for the general public, but they will be appreciated by people in the intellectual sphere who raise serious questions in the fields of history, philosophy, and literature.

Daničić, Zmaj, Vuk, and Miletić are also connected with Slovakia, Kuzmanović emphasises. Essentially, one can speak of the penetration of the second and third waves of national revival with Serbian figures, which was also confirmed at the Martin Conference on the second wave of national revival.

The first of those to whom Kuzmanović, referring to Kovijanić (Kovijanić, 1939), dedicates his study is Đuro Daničić, who, as a seventeen-year-old, becomes acquainted with Štur's followers as a representative of the Pan-Slavic idea. It is precisely in that environment, where he becomes Štur's student, that he translates, writes poems, aphorisms, and treatises, and the idea of reforming the literary Serbian language is born, even before he meets Karađorđe in Vienna. Daničić was acquainted with Slovaks Janko Štur, Andrej Hodža, and Pravoslav Červenak (Kuzmanović, 2024).

[11] Martin Prebuđila has also made a significant contribution to the development of contemporary, especially literary, relations between Slovakia and Serbia, which was also the subject of his presentation at the VI Congress of Matica and institutions of Slavic peoples. Martin Prebuđila is the author of numerous translations of Serbian and Slovak poetry and prose. Together with Miroslav Demak, in collaboration with Matica srpska and the Slovak Literary Centre, he participated in publishing a bilingual anthology of Serbian and Slovak poetry after 1945, entitled *Slavic Tenderness*.

[12] The author wrote the texts during his postgraduate studies at the Faculty of Arts in Novi Sad. The year 1999 was marked by tragic events affecting the Serbian, Slovak, and Yugoslav people during the US bombing. It is not surprising that the author, with his deep reflections on the world, turned to existentialism, which is also developed in his philosophical books (Kuzmanović, 2025e; 2018).

The second is Jovan Jovanović Zmaj, who also enrolled in the Evangelical Lyceum in Bratislava in 1850 at the age of 17, but also worked in Modra and Trnava, attending both Catholic and Evangelical schools. He passed his exam under the Slovak language reformer Martin Hattala. The author also learned that Zmaj's father had been educated in Slovakia, which contributed to Zmaj's admiration for the Slovaks. This was reflected in his writing of protest poems against the closure of Matica slovenská. Zmaj also called for better understanding among Slavic peoples and the strengthening of relations both with the Slovaks and with the Serbs and Croats. Zmaj's bust was unveiled in Modra, Slovakia in 2016.[13]

As a third, Kuzmanović mentions Svetozar Miletić, a prominent fighter for the national rights of Slovaks, Serbs, and Romanians, who has a commemorative plaque on the building of Matica slovenská / originally the Slovak League in Bratislava. Miletić advocated for the Slovaks when Matica slovenská was closed and protested this act in the Hungarian Parliament. He spent three years in Bratislava, worked in both Evangelical and Catholic educational environments, and, according to Kovijanić, formulated his views directly under the influence of Štur, whom he regarded as a supporter of Pan-Slavic solidarity and an adherent of Kollár, Čomjakov, and Mickiewicz.

All the aforementioned contexts are elaborated in detail in the seminal book R*omanticism in Serbian–Slovak Literary Relations* (Kuzmanović, 2023). In the first part, Kuzmanović examines the historical background (from Great Moravia, through the Enlightenment and rationalism, to Romanticism among the Serbs), then proceeds to Slovak Romanticism. The culmination of the book is a detailed analysis of the relationships of the aforementioned Serbian figures, specifically the attitudes of Daničić, Karadžić, and Zmaj toward the Slovaks, and finally of other Serbian Romanticists toward the Slovaks. This is accompanied by sections on Serbian literary societies in Slovakia and a list of Kovijanić's works in the Slovak language, with the author identifying Rista Kovijanić and Ján Kmeť as the key figures of his research.

The renowned Vuk Karadžić, Kuzmanović notes, began collaborating with the Slovaks in the early 1820s, specifically with Martin Hamuljak (they exchanged around ten letters), but he also cooperated with Czech and Slovak classicists such as Palacký, Kollár, Šafárik, and Benedikti-Blahoslav, particularly on collections of folk poetry and through mutual influence within the context of Pan-Slavic reciprocity (Kollár admired the Serbian language and also influenced the Yugoslav idea). What connects him with Štúr is that both were codifiers of their respective languages; they even met (in 1845 in Bratislava and in 1846 in Vienna) and exchanged books Kuzmanović adds that, in the case of Štúr and Vuk, this represents a symbolic link between the Serbian and Slovak literary languages, mutual assistance during the Revolution of 1848, as well as exchanges between Serbian and Slovak literature (Kuzmanović, 2023, pp. 92–98). Petar Petrović Njegoš met Štúr in Vienna,

[13] Jovan Jovanović Zmaj (1833–1904), *Epocha.*

and Štúr was familiar with his work, held him in high regard, and published one of his poems in the journal *Orol tatranský*, translated by Štúr's follower Bohuslav Nosák, although there is speculation that the poem may have been dedicated to Štúr himself. Even in a brief overview, one cannot omit mentioning Branko Radičević in the context of Štúr's critique of his poetry (Kuzmanović, 2023, pp. 102). Kuzmanović also mentions Jozef Podhradský in the context of literary criticism, likewise a follower of Štúr who worked in Serbia and was the only one to convert to Orthodoxy. Podhradský is discussed in detail by the Matica scholar Jozef Schwarz, who notes that he spent two-thirds of his life in Serbia, wrote in the Serbian language, and that his daughter Albina was the author of the first drama written in Serbian.[14]

Kuzmanović's writings extend into cultural anthropology, ethnology, and ethnoculturology, as he seeks to identify comparative, archetypal analogies within Slavic literature and mythology (with significant overlap with the work of the Russian-American linguist Roman Jakobson and the structural anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss—here focusing primarily on Serbian–Russian connections). He frames this within an analysis of Serbian–Slovak relations [15] as a paradigmatic example of Slavic reciprocity, as initiated by Kollár and Šafárik. The author is also well-versed in and cites major philosophers and cultural theorists, from Kant and Lipovetsky to Spengler, which lends his texts a higher intellectual dimension. In a 2001 essay on Slovak–Serbian relations, Kuzmanović synthesizes this knowledge and raises questions concerning serious cultural and philosophical issues related to the crisis of Western cultural development (the decline of postmodernism, Western European uniformity, the suppression of small cultures, comparisons with the Tower of Babel), while identifying in Slavic reciprocity a response for both Slovaks and Serbs as a defence against these processes.

In its concrete, practical form of Slavic reciprocity, Nebojša Kuzmanović refers to Slavic studies congresses, film, music, church exchanges, and mutual visits. In his contribution, he notes that the least cooperation had occurred in the field of literature, which is a situation that has changed significantly

[14] Jozef Podhradský, *Matica.sk*

[15] Kuzmanović highlights the often-overlooked fact that from the late 17th century to the first half of the 20th century, more than 2,500 Serbian cultural figures and intellectuals, writers, philosophers, teachers, and scholars, were educated in Bratislava, Košice, Kežmarok, Modra, and other Slovak towns. He also emphasizes the influence of Šafárik, Kollár, and Štúr on Serbian culture and the Yugoslav idea. He notes that the Serbs maintained the closest relations with the Slovaks among all nations. He further points to the connection through Tomašik's anthem-like song Hey, Slavs, for which Kovijanić remarks that only a small number of Yugoslav citizens were aware of the Slovak origin of the Yugoslav anthem. Perhaps the Sixth Congress of Nationalities and Institutions of Slavic Nations, together with the scholarly conference on the second wave of national revival, as well as research on Serbian–Slovak relations conducted in the summer of 2025, have at least partially corrected this situation. On the other hand, in the 19th century Slovaks were familiar with a poem by the Romantic poet Juraj Zvestoň Bula, which links the defeat at Bratislava (in 907 CE, when the Great Moravian ruler Mojmír II was killed) with the Battle of Kosovo: "Bratislava, Bratislava, There fell the glory of the Slavs... Hey, Kosovo, fair field, You brought sorrow to the Serbs. Above you flew the banner of Tsar Lazar, Of him an ancient tale still lives...").

since the time of his writing, as will be discussed at the end of this study. Through Kollár, he here draws on Milosavljević, Kmeť, and Kovijanić. This contribution demonstrates that Kuzmanović does not understand the program of Slavic reciprocity merely as a theoretical construct, but has also personally contributed in practice to the realization of this idea, which in the 19th century appeared utopian, and yet, thanks to small steps, has produced very concrete results, at least in the cultural sphere.

In the context of analysing Serbian authors, in his most recent book Kuzmanović devotes considerable attention to the poetry of the Serbian/Yugoslav neo-symbolist Ivan V. Lalić. In it, he reconstructs profound philosophical undertones within so-called protohistory and explores various reflections on how history might have developed had it not been "written by the victors," thereby questioning official history. In this view, each layer of time carries its own history, and past events are intertwined with our own constructions.

An essay on the Serbian poet, critic, and Nobel Prize in Literature nominee Miodrag Pavlović is dedicated to the field of theology, specifically comparative religious studies, primarily reflecting sceptically on the pre-Christian period and its merging with Christianity. There is a provocative dualist thesis that Serbs are simultaneously pagans (in the sense of Slavic cultural foundations) and Christians (Orthodox), and that if Serbs forget their distant past, they will be left without a future.

Another author who attracted Kuzmanović's attention is the first Serbian postmodernist, Danilo Kiš. He examines Kiš's texts on the meaning of literature, traces the roots of his thinking to Sartre, analyses his anti-ideological stance, and critiques chauvinistic nationalism, which arises from destruction and denial born of fear, envy, and a lack of knowledge of other languages and cultures (for example, when major literatures fail to recognise minor literatures or the literatures of national minorities). By describing individual authors, Kuzmanović brings insights into Serbian literary culture closer to the Slovak reader.

For the Serbian-Slovak context, perhaps the most significant aspect is the presence of Slovaks—more precisely, Lower Slovaks (also referred to as compatriots, Slovaks abroad, Vojvodina Slovaks, and before 1989 as Yugoslav Slovaks) in Serbia (compare: Sirácky, 1968, pp. 181-191)[16] (specifically in parts of Vojvodina)—an ethnic group of Slovaks, mostly Evangelicals, who settled in parts of Serbia in the 18th and 19th centuries, as well as in Hungary, Romania, and Croatia in several waves, seeking religious freedom (for more details, see Sirácky, 1985; Bednarik, 1966). In Serbia, the Slovaks established their own Matica slovenská in Yugoslavia (for mutual education, it is important to mention the trilogy by Ján Babjak, which deals with the history of Matica slovenská in Yugoslavia, published by the Archive of Vojvodina) (Babjak, 2023a, 2023b, 2023c). They also founded various associations, educational, cultural, or church institutions, theatres, dance and folklore societies, libraries, artistic associations, and so on. It is significant that the Slovaks in Slovakia

[16] Note: However, the 80-year-old Association of Slovaks from Yugoslavia, led by Samuel Jovanković, is still active today and publishes its yearbook.

(compare: Perný, 2023) and the Slovaks in Bački Petrovac created the first credit cooperatives as collective units based on the principle of "one person, one vote" in all of Europe, even under the same name "Gazdovsko društvo," which may explain why the idea of self-management was so popular in former Yugoslavia. From the latest cultural research—conducted in collaboration with the author of this text and Evangelical pastor Dr Branislav Kulik—among Slovaks from Serbia and Serbs, on a sample of 100 respondents from 8 to 16 August 2025, it emerges that Slovaks and Serbs maintain above-standard relations (positive attitudes in the context of coexistence prevailed both from Slovaks toward Serbs and from Serbs toward Slovaks), and that thanks to institutions, churches, monuments, or named schools and streets, there remains a strong awareness of the visionaries of Pan-Slavic mutuality: Kolar and Šafárik on the Slovak side, and Miletić and Karadžić on the Serbian side, as well as a generally positive attitude in terms of Yugoslav identity.[17] In the research by Kuzmanović and Obšust, frequently citing Ján Siracki, it is noted that the maintenance of the Lower Slovak identity in Serbia was supported by Lutheran confessional identities, education (the "Ján Kollár" Gymnasium), Matica slovenská in Serbia, and Slovak national celebrations (Obšust, Kuzmanović, 2023, p. 89).

II. Cultural intermezzo: 20th century, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia

Although the presented study focuses on the 19th century and the present, it is impossible to avoid informative development of the relations between Serbs and Slovaks in the 20th century. Basic information is provided by the collection of papers published in 1968 by the Slovak Academy of Sciences (Hrozienčik, 1968). F. Jakab emphasises that this topic is addressed in numerous studies by Gladky, Hrobák, Deák, Hradečný, Stojkov, Mitić, Starčević, while the author notes that "sensitive contacts between both partners – Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia – were visible throughout the interwar period..." (Jakab, 2025). A dedicated conference on this topic was also held in Belgrade in 2018.[18] Slovakia and Czechoslovakia, as well as Serbia and Yugoslavia (the fact that both nations were part of common states cannot be overlooked when considering cultural history),[19]share the historical experience of

[17] A separate study will be published on this topic: Kulik, Branislav, Perni, Lukáš, *Research Among Slovaks and Serbs.*

[18] Regarding the history of relations between Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, see *Glas naroda.*

[19] Trade exchange was extensive (for example, the company Jugočeska); weapons were exported, and the Škoda and Brno Zbrojovka factories were also active. Yugoslavia, in turn, supplied Czechoslovakia with grain, tobacco, and ores. There was also an exchange in the field of technical expertise (for example, the architect Jiří Stibral designed spa facilities in Kupari, Croatia, while Jože Plečnik contributed to the transformation of Prague Castle from the opposite side). For the Czechoslovak context, Vegeta was popular. A film about Štefánik is also being made, played by the Yugoslav actor Zvonimir Rogoz. Miletić Street in Bratislava, named after the renowned Serbian, is also a symbol of cultural bridging between Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. A commemorative plaque in honour of Miletić was placed on the Matica slovenská building in Bratislava. For interest, it should be added that Masaryk was also a follower of Kolar (Czechoslovak–Yugoslav relations, *Wikipedia*).

multiethnic states that emerged after the collapse of Austria-Hungary. Already in the interwar period, Czechoslovakia, Romania, and Yugoslavia (between 1918 and 1919, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes) cooperated within the defensive bloc, the Little Entente, against the revision of Trianon (Deák, 1968, pp. 235–268). When Czechoslovakia was established, during the demarcation of borders, the creation of a corridor along Lake Neusiedl to Yugoslavia was even considered, which would have connected the Slavic territories present there at the time, but that project was rejected. Instead, Czechoslovak trains were permitted to operate on the Bratislava–Rijeka line (Klimko, 1980, p. 110). The context of compatriots at the time of Czechoslovakia's formation was analysed in more detail by Jan Boćik, who refers to Sirácky, noting the founding of the Czechoslovak Union in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (1921) to encompass the activities of compatriot associations. It gathered 73 Czech and Slovak settlements (Petrovac, Gložan, Pivnice, Kovačica, Padina, Aradac, Erdveik, Stara Pazova, etc.), with the most active associations being those of academics and women (Boćik, 2014, pp. 12–17). The first cooperation between Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, which had also developed into cultural exchanges among scientists and artists, was cut short by the complex political context of the Second World War, as well as domestic political problems. In the context of the pre-Munich situation, it is worth highlighting a statement of solidarity made by the speaker at the Yugoslav demonstration of Yugoslav–Czechoslovak friendship, Ivo Lola Ribar: "If Czechoslovakia is attacked, Yugoslav youth will be ready to defend it…", while according to student registrations, as many as 60,000 people were prepared to voluntarily defend Czechoslovakia's independence (Čutkova, 1968, p. 345). The Czechoslovak–Yugoslav context is linked by anti-fascist resistance – on the Slovak side, the Slovak National Uprising and the Slavic dimension of liberation (the post-war renaissance of Slavic messianism in new conditions),[20] and on the other side, the Yugoslav anti-fascist resistance led by Tito, which is

The topic of relations between Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia is studied at the Department of Balkan Studies at Masaryk University in Brno.

[20] Mass celebrations at Devin Castle, the symbol of the Štur family, were held in a pro-Slavic spirit, as documented in a rare book. Devin scholar Michal Chorváth writes in the introduction: "Therefore, it is no surprise that the idea of Slavic reciprocity strongly revived during this war. The Germans ensured this, fully understanding that in the modern world, the Slavs carry the idea of social progress and are deeply concerned with issues of their political freedom… The idea of Slavic reciprocity is nothing new, and in its noble Kollár form, in which it was upheld by oppressed Slavic peoples, it threatens no one. Its victory in this Second World War is a victory for humanism and for the right of Slavic peoples to their independence alongside other free peoples of the world." Chorváth adds that the Slovak nation has a tradition in Kollár, Šafárik, Holý, and Štúr. The founding of the All-Slavic Association and All-Slavic Day at Devín is experienced as a magnificent manifestation of freedom. The future president of the Czechoslovak Republic, and in the meantime political prisoner, Gustáv Husák, writes about the unification of Slavic peoples in the ideas of Holý, Kollár, Šafárik, and Vajanský in the context of "when you say Slav, let a man speak." Laco Novomeský here mentions Cyril and Methodius, their persecution, and also Kollár; he additionally highlights the context of equal belonging of Slavic peoples in the All-Slavic world. The poet and politician L. Novomeský was simultaneously the president of the All-Slavic Association in Bratislava. The speech of the Davist and future executed political prisoner Vladimír Clementis begins with letters from Šafárik from Novi Sad, letters from Kollár from Pest, and letters from

analysed in greater detail in the latest studies in the Matica slovenská proceedings.[21] In this context, Hrozienčik notes, for example, that Radio Free Yugoslavia broadcast information about the Slovak National Uprising, and in turn, the insurgent Pravda reported on the struggle of the Yugoslav army, while a greeting telegram from the Slovak National Council to Marshal Tito's General Staff contained text in the spirit of anti-fascist solidarity: "Your country itself has never given up the active fight against German fascist invaders and was able to resist for a long time successfully, isolated from the main Allied armies. We know that we, like your partisans, are part of the vast Allied armies…" (Hrozienčik, 1968, pp. 389, 391). After 1945, embassies were established in Prague and Belgrade, consular offices in Bratislava and Zagreb, and the Society of Friends of Tito's Yugoslavia was founded, which later merged with the Czechoslovak–Yugoslav Society for Cultural and Economic Relations (Kolaržova, 2014). The first successful economic agreement was also established.[22]

In 1946, Tito[23] visited Prague, and Czechoslovak experts helped implement major construction projects in Yugoslavia. In the context of culture, it should not be forgotten that in 1948 Czechoslovakia published *The Bridge on the Drina* by Nobel laureate Ivo Andrić (Andrić, 1948). Tito also met with representatives of the National Front, the Slovak intelligentsia, which had emerged through collaboration in the processes of the Slovak National Uprising. They also sympathised with representatives of the patriotic, Pan-Slavic, and federalist-oriented intelligentsia, which had developed from members of the modernist journal DAV, published during the interwar period.[24]

Štúr from Modra, which were found with Srezniewski. He does not forget Palarik, Radlinský, Holý, nor Saints Cyril and Methodius. This rare publication is both a testimony and a document of the Slovak intelligentsia's initiative to follow the Slavic path after the war. Quote according to: Mrlian, 1945.

[21] The publication *They Fought for Our Freedom* (Koňariková, 2024) contains chapters prepared by the authors that map the fates of Matica Slovenská members in the resistance and partisans who operated in Yugoslavia, specifically in the region of Vojvodina (northern Yugoslavia), and vice versa, Yugoslavs, including Serbs, who operated in the town of Turjec alongside the brothers William and Bohuš Žingor. The book does not focus solely on Slovak territory but also covers the activities of Slovak actors abroad — including in Yugoslavia, Hungary, and Bulgaria — and their participation in the European anti-fascist movement. The book presents specific cases of cooperation or parallel resistance activities between Slovaks and Yugoslavs. It identifies at least 50 individual participants of the Slovak National Uprising from the Slovak communities in Vojvodina — from the regions of Bačka, Srem, and Banat. Contributions by S. Jovankovič, A. Chorváth, and K. Obšust point to specific military units, diplomatic missions, crimes against the Slovak population, and the significance of cultural figures in Yugoslavia. The book contains the first historical study of war crimes against Slovaks in Vojvodina, based on documents from the Archive of Vojvodina. J. Tkač, in his contribution on the Vojvodina Slovaks in Yugoslavia during the Second World War, describes the founding and operations of the Slovak brigade, which operated on the Srem front (1944–1945).

[22] Imports included grain, raw materials, and semi-finished products; Czechoslovakia sent industrial machinery and fuel, assisting in the reconstruction of industry.

[23] Tito also visited the Barrandov television studios.

[24] DAV – a generation of interwar leftist artists, critics, and politicians gathered around the eponymous journal, whose members, after the journal was banned, became involved in the anti-fascist resistance, the establishment of the insurgent

As a result of the split between Stalin and Tito in the post-war period, relations cooled. DAVists [25] such as Husák, Clementis, Okáli and others came under suspicion in the state security investigation because of their positive views towards the federalist concept of Yugoslavia and Tito, also in the context of the so-called *trials against Tito's spies and subversives in Czechoslovakia*[26] (because of his views, Clementis was accused and labelled a *Titoist, Zionist, bourgeois-nationalist traitor in the service of American imperialism*) (cf. Perný 2023b, *Rudé právo,* 20. 11. 1952, pp. 3–6). Participants in the Slovak National Uprising, Ernest Otto and William Žingor, as well as the historian Ján Sirácky, were also accused of Titoism[27] (Koňariková, 2025). The DAVists were rehabilitated in the 1960s, although this did not restore their health, nor Clementis's life. Symbolically, the rehabilitated Dr Gustáv Husák, already president of federal Czechoslovakia, visited the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Macedonia) in 1973, where he met Marshal Tito.[28]

underground Slovak National Council, the Slovak National Uprising, and the post-war period. They were tried in the 1950s in staged trials for their patriotic, Slavic, and federalist views. They were rehabilitated in the 1960s, contributing to the establishment of the Czechoslovak federation. The generation also included future officials of Matica slovenská — Novomeský, Clementis, Okáli — as well as the future president of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, Gustáv Husák. The DAVists emphasised the contribution of Kollár, Šafárik, and Štúr and updated it for the post-war context of the modern unification of the Slavic peoples (Perný, 2021; 2022; 2023b).

[25] For the Serbian-Slovak context, and for the DAVists in particular, it is extremely important that Andrej Sirácky — teacher, philosopher and political scientist — worked in the educational circle of *Sládkovič* and served as editor of the journals *Národný život* and *Slovenská jednota*. He also headed the public education department of Matica slovenská in Yugoslavia (see: Sivičeková, 2014).

[26] Compare: The Trial of the Titoist Spies and Subversives in Czechoslovakia, *Wikipedia*; The Trial of the Subversive Group of Bourgeois Nationalists in Slovakia, *Wikipedia*.

[27] Interestingly, the English version of Wikipedia cites the Polish author Maria Turlejska under the heading "Titoism", writing that at the time it seemed that Clementis would play the role of the "Czechoslovak Rajk", while the scope of suspicion spread across southern Moravia to Prague; Otto Šling, more than 50 people, Šling, Švermová, Clementis, Husák and Novomeský were arrested and labelled traitors, spies, saboteurs or wreckers. As a result of torture and threats, the charges were confirmed, but the only one who did not confess despite torture was the future president, Gustáv Husák (thereby saving the lives of, for example, L. Novomeský, D. Okáli and other DAV members). Compare: "Titoism", Wikipedia, and Perný 2023b; 2025.

[28] In 1973, Dr Gustáv Husák met Marshal Tito in Yugoslavia during an official visit to the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and at the same time to the Socialist Republic of Serbia in Belgrade. At that time, already a modern city of one million inhabitants, Belgrade had become a symbol of modernisation, as had the Macedonian city of Skopje, rebuilt after the earthquake, which Husák also visited. In this anti-fascist context, Husák laid a wreath of red carnations at the Monument to the Unknown Hero on Avala near Belgrade in memory of the "sons and daughters of the Yugoslav peoples who fell in the struggle for freedom and independence". Husák also planted a tree in Friendship Park in New Belgrade, which had been established on the occasion of the first Conference of the Non-Aligned Countries in 1961. During the official talks between Tito and Husák, they discussed securing lasting peace in Europe and reaffirming friendly relations between Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. The visit also included issues of economic cooperation and visits to enterprises

From the late 1950s onwards, relations between Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia gradually began to improve. In the 1960s, Yugoslavia concluded an agreement with the CMEA, Antonín Novotný visited Yugoslavia, and Josip Broz Tito came to Prague (interestingly, he also visited the Slovak village of Špačince). As part of the Prague Spring, the Yugoslav model of self-management also became popular in Czechoslovakia (*Bóka*, 2017), where it inspired economic reformers (e.g. Šik, 1965).

In Czechoslovakia, Yugoslav filmmakers such as Lordan Zafranović, Rajko Grlić, Srđan Karanović and Goran Paskaljević studied or worked at FAMU (Barešová, 2019), as did even the world-famous Emir Kusturica, who was inspired by the Czech director Otakar Vávra, whose work thematically intersects with the magical realism of Juraj Jakubisko's films, which was also the subject of a comparative thesis (Sláviková, 2021). In the context of film culture, Yugoslav and Czechoslovak partisan films made to the same formula[29] as well as comedies that became well known in both cultures.[30] Slovaks also acted in Yugoslav films.[31] In Czechoslovakia, films about Native Americans[32] were also known for their Yugoslav context (locations, actors).

(a chemical plant from which Czechoslovakia imported synthetic fibres and plastics; the tobacco factory in Prilep; and the agricultural combine in Belgrade). Yugoslavia was presented in the television documentary by "Filmske novosti" as a dynamically developing socialist country, and at the end it quotes Tito: *"The visit of Comrade Husák and his associates was a major contribution to the further development of relations between our two countries.* It showed that our peoples have much in common and that it is essential for us to develop our mutual relations together..." (Filmske novosti 46/1973, Gustáv Husák in Yugoslavia, 1973, *ČSFD.sk*)

[29] In the SFRY, these included films such as *Three* (1965), *The Demolition Squad* (1967), *The Battle of Neretva* (1969), *The Bridge* (1969), *Walter Defends Sarajevo* (1972), *Sutjeska* (1973), *Partisans* (1974), *Partisan Squadron* (1974), and *The Fall of Italy* (1981). In Czechoslovakia, they included *Wolf's Holes* (1948), *Captain Dabač* (1959), *Death Is Called Engelchen* (1960, 1963), *Zvoni za bos* (1965), *The Day That Never Dies* (1979), *Insurgent History* (1984), the co-production *Soldiers of Freedom* (1977), and especially *Occupation in 26 Pictures* (1978). See more in the journal *DAV DVA*.

[30] In the SFRY, for example, there were *Hot Wind* (1980), *Who's Singin' Over There?* (1980), *The Adventures of Borivoje Šurdilović* (1980), and *The Marathon Family* (1982), while in Czechoslovakia there were, for example, *Lemonade Joe* (1964), *Mareček, Pass Me the Pen!* (1976), and *Run, Waiter, Run!* (1981). (For more information, see Barešová, 2019).

[31] For example, Ivan Palúch appeared in the film *The End of the World Is Almost Here* (1968), while Rapaičová and Furková appeared in the SFRY–Czechoslovak film T*he Death of Mr Goluža* (1982). Among the first films of Slovak-Vojvodinian production was *Mišo* (1985), a Yugoslav film adaptation of a short story by J. Čajak Jr., with the actor Dušan Jamrich in the leading role.

[32] The adventure westerns of Harald Reinl and Harald G. Petersson, starring Pierre Brice and Lex Barker, were based on Karl May's Winnetou books (the first instalment was filmed in 1963 and became the second most-watched film, seen by 12 million viewers), although filming did not take place only in Yugoslavia (Plitvice Lakes). Among the actors and extras were also Yugoslav performers such as Milivoj Popović-Mavid, Hrvoje Svob, Sime Jagarinac, Gojko Mitić, Vladimir Krstulović and Ilija Ivezić.
In the Yugoslav westerns *The Big Snake Chieftain* (1967) and *Sons of the Great Bear* (1966), alongside Yugoslav actors there were also Slovak actors, for example Ťapák, Majerčík, Adamovič and Jablonský.

Marshal Tito visiting Prague in 1968 alongside Svoboda and Dubček
Source: Novi Sad Radio

As for music, it should be recalled that the popular singer Karol Duchoň, winner of the Golden Lyre[33] and the subject of the recent film *Duchoň* (2025), not only had a mother from Petrovec (Oľga Lačoková), but also popularised two originally Yugoslav songs: "Song About December" (1971) ("Jedne noći u decembru" by Kemal Monteno, 1971) and "Elena" (recorded by Pro Arte, composed by Đorđe Novković, 1974), the latter appearing as the B-side of the 1976 single "Po slovenských dolinách". Slovaks also associate Yugoslavia with the release of foreign LP records by the record label *Jugoton*, which were also distributed in Czechoslovakia (unofficially on the black market).[34] Yugoslav music production was known mainly to those Slovaks from Czechoslovakia who visited the SFRY during their holidays.[35]

[33] Analogies to this include, for example Hasan Dudić or Predrag Živković Tozovac.

[34] Music lovers still have records by The Beatles, The Rolling Stones and Deep Purple in their collections to this day.

[35] Among the best-known Yugoslav musicians in Czechoslovakia were the Croatian group Srebrna krila, Oliver Dragojević, the Bosnian band Bijelo dugme (featuring the famous Goran Bregović), the Croatian-Macedonian singer Ljupka Dimitrovska,

If we focus on Serbian-Slovak exchanges in visual arts (in "both Yugoslavias"), this includes the well-known Kovačica naïve art (Zuzana Halupová, Martin Jonáš, etc.)[36] listed by UNESCO, as well as modern creators such as Zuzka Medveďová, Cyril Kutlik, Jan Konjarek, Mira Brtka, Milan Sudić, Pavel Pop, Pavel Čan, and many others, whose works are analysed by the art theorist, Slovak from Vojvodina, Vladimír Valenčík (Valenčík 1997; 2004; 2022; 2023; 2025). In the context of exchange, the exhibition *Yugoslav Art* at the Slovak National Gallery emerged, recorded in Film Week,[37] which included works by Mladen Srbinović, Jakob Savinšek, Miljenko Stanic, and Zlatko Price. In the context of art, one can mention Ivan Meštrović (the statue of Martin Kukučín in Bratislava), and for a purely Serbian context with European influence, the artist Nadežda Petrović is notable.

Finally, but not least importantly, during the 1960s, 70s, and 80s, this period is represented by architectural modernism and late modernism, monumental monuments, experimental or structural urbanism in the SFRY (commonly referred to as brutalism), documented on the SPOMENIK website,[38] which also reflects modernism in the development of Czechoslovakia.[39]

Regarding the cultural context, it should be added that the Yugoslav coast was among the most popular destinations for Czechoslovak citizens during the socialist period, and tourist contacts were the first lively elements of mutual relations. For Slovaks in Slovakia, Serbia, and the former SFRY, it remains an extremely attractive destination, largely thanks to the tourism experience of

the Serbian-Yugoslav singer Miki Jevremović, the Bosnian rock band Divlje jagode, and many others, although these performers were known mainly to those citizens who visited Yugoslavia, for example during their summer holidays. At present, J. Handlovská (whose mother is originally from Sarajevo), who sings Serbian, Croatian and other songs, deserves credit for popularising Balkan music. The popularisation of Balkan songs was also supported by DJ Fero Hora, who edited the programme *Pop Antikvariát* on Slovak Radio and introduced the segment *Melódia Stredomoria*. Fero Hora, *STVR*.

[36] Zuzana Halupová, Wikipédia; Martin Jonáš, Galéria insitného umenia.

[37] *Yugoslav Art at the Slovak National Gallery, 4th edition, SFD, 1958.*

[38] Compare: https://www.spomenikdatabase.org/what-are-spomeniks; Brutalism in Yugoslavia, Wikipedia; in the context of monuments and memorial sites in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, see: Skrak 2023a, 2023b, 2024, 2025

[39] The rebuilt Skopje, destroyed by an earthquake, is considered unique, as are the residential district of New Belgrade, Sava Centre, Genex Tower, Novi Zagreb, SPENS in Novi Sad, Hotel Haludovo Palace, Hotel Zlatibor, and Hotel Vrbak. In the Czech Republic, buildings such as the headquarters of ČSSZ in Prague or in Drakulov were constructed in this style. Classic examples of modernism, late modernism, and brutalism in Czechoslovakia include the SNP Bridge in Bratislava, the Monument to the Slovak National Uprising in Banská Bystrica, the Slovak National Gallery building, the Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra, the now-demolished Historpolis building or the spa in Trenčianske Teplice, Slovak Radio, the new building of the Slovak National Theatre, the Crematorium in Bratislava, the Federal Assembly building in Prague, the New Stage of the National Theatre in Prague, and the thermal complex in Karlovy Vary. Currently, the popularisation of the topic of brutalism is being undertaken, for example, by: Peter Salaj (author of the books *Modern Bratislava* and *Guide to the Architecture of Bratislava*). On the Yugoslav side, these include, for example, architects Bogdan Bogdanović, Dušan Džamonja, Miodrag Živković; on the Czechoslovak side, for example, Vladimír Dedeček, Ivan Matušík, Martin Kusý, Josef Lacko, Konček Skokek Titl, Dušen Kuzma, and Ferdinand Milučký.

Gustáv Husák and Marshal Tito in Belgrade, 1973
Source: Film News

the whole generation of "Husák's children"[40] with the former Yugoslavia.[41] Slovaks experience the peoples of Yugoslavia through a nostalgic lens (the phenomenon of Yugonostalgia)[42] as a community of nations and multiethnic relations based on the harmonising and peacekeeping dominance of Slavic culture, pluralism, equality, tolerance, and independence (membership in the Non-Aligned Movement).[43] Slovaks in Slovakia generally continue to view Yugoslavia positively as a society in

[40] "Husák's children" is the term for a generation of children born during a significant population wave in Czechoslovakia, which resulted from pro-family policies (loans for new parents, birth allowances, housing solutions, and mass construction of apartments), leading to an increase in the birth rate. See entry: Husák's children, Wikipedia.

[41] For example, Plavi Horizonti, a well-known beach on the Luštica Peninsula near Tivat (Montenegro), was one of the most popular destinations for tourists from Czechoslovakia in the 1970s and 1980s (Visit of regional representatives: Montenegrin Tivat has more than just tourist potential, Dnevnik CZ).

[42] The term "Yugonostalgia" resonates as both a cultural and political phenomenon, see: Yugonostalgia, Wikipedia.

[43] Non-Aligned Movement, Wikipedia.

which every nation had equal rights. They experienced it as freer, more democratic, and more self-managed, and it also opened the doors to Western culture and emigration (Yugoslavia became the only place where Eastern inhabitants could meet those from the West, a kind of link between two worlds), with freer access to Western music and products, as well as the famous Yugoslav hospitality.[44] There is less information, for example, about the persecution of churches and their representatives or political opponents, which was the other side of the project. Although it can be said that these Yugonostalgia attitudes among Slovaks in Slovakia are idealised, recent research shows that even today, among Slovaks in Serbia with more experience, there is a positive view of the former Yugoslavia. There is also a dual identity: many, in addition to their Serbian, Bosnian, Rusyn, or Slovak ethnic affiliation, also embraced a Yugoslav identity as a symbol of the equal-concept (now non-existent) state. Mixed Serbian-Slovak marriages also contribute to the Yugoslav identity in Serbia.

III. The breakup of Yugoslavia, problems, and visions of the Slavs with question marks

After Tito's death, but even more so after 1989 – also as a result of various geopolitical contexts (the breakup of the Yugoslav federation), changes in political regimes (the installation of Western capitalism), wars (ethnic and religious conflicts, the bombing of Yugoslavia in 1999, the Serbian-Croatian conflict, the Kosovo issue, the secession of Montenegro, etc.), and other complex circumstances – ties were once again severed and complicated. Since the breakup of Czechoslovakia and the SFRY, only fragmentary texts can be found analysing solely Slovak-Serbian, Slovak-Macedonian, Slovak-Slovenian, Slovak-Croatian, Czech-Serbian, etc. relations, and this knowledge is scattered like shattered glass.[45] [46] Dragan Stanić writes that in the days following the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Slovak Republic, while resolving its issues with the Czech Republic, moved towards European

[44] These ideas are reflected in the nation's collective consciousness through media images, articles, blogs, reports, etc., with different focuses, such as: Đivanović, TV News, SME, Travelistan, Blog N, Pravda, Dobre Novine, Emefka. Jancura, in an article for *Pravda,* writes that "[...] it was therefore not easy to obtain the necessary documents for traveling to Yugoslavia. This involved a foreign exchange certificate, i.e., a permit for selling currency issued by the Czechoslovak State Bank, and an exit clause for the passport from the then police, called the SNB... However, Belgrade readily approved entry visas for Czechoslovak citizens, especially after August 1968. At that time, around 80,000 Czechs and Slovaks were vacationing in Western countries and the former Yugoslavia." [...] In the summer of 1988, almost a quarter of a million Czechoslovak tourists visited resorts on the Adriatic. According to data from the 1980 *Encyclopaedia of Slovakia*, the largest number of people took part in foreign holiday travel through trade unions. In 1979, this amounted to around 31,000 people. In addition, 9,850 children of trade union activists took part at that time in international Pioneer holiday programmes in Eastern Bloc countries.

[45] Studies and publications described as "compatriot-oriented" dominate, i.e. those focused on the Lowland Slovaks in Serbia, but the relationship between Serbs and Slovaks in Slovakia is also analysed separately.

[46] For example, V. Malperová, E. Maňová, T. Móri, Koprivicová, Petrovičová, Štěpánek, and Hladký.

integration, whereas Serbia drifted and, in the course of the programmed breakup, attempted to protect Yugoslavia and the part of the Serbian people living in various parts of Yugoslavia (Stanić 2024, p. 53). This process of transformation is also reflected by the Canadian-Yugoslav director Boris Malagurski in the film *The Weight of Chains*, in which he argues that the breakup of Yugoslavia was planned by the West,[47] although it must also be acknowledged that this was connected to Slavic divisions (which only needed to be slightly inflamed, for example through various national campaigns, in order to flare up again). Ján Kollár described this very aptly: "Let us protect ourselves from dull, intolerant, and hateful patriotism, for it is often merely an excuse for the darkest deeds, recognises no one but the enemy alongside one's compatriots, and often serves as an apparent justification for violated human rights and the abuse of violence against weaker neighbours or compatriots belonging to another nation..." (Kollár, 1954). This criticism was directed at anyone who is uncritically and excessively "proud of their nationality and their people", thereby preventing unity. Kollár, who promoted the unification of the Slavs, and, as Timura notes (Timura, 2018, pp. 224, 225), reproached the Slavs for quarrelling. Samuel Jurkovič felt similarly, stating that the greatest obstacles are our "selfishness and mutual slander", by which we harm ourselves (Perný, 2023a, p. 19). Kollár and Šafárik, aware of the weaknesses of the Slavs ("stinginess", "greed", "quarrelsomeness") and their disunity, therefore had only minimalist aims during the monarchy – cultural, literary, book, and scholarly exchange.

Inspired by Herder's prophecy about the humanistic mission of the Slavs, representatives of the "all-Slavic" generation were convinced that the Slavic peoples were destined for humanity, humaneness, and the understanding of goodness, truth, and beauty; that the meaning of their existence was not national isolation, hostility, or war, but peace, cooperation, humaneness, and the harmonisation of reality. This utopian ideal is even more relevant in the unstable 21st century. Kuzmány also writes that humaneness must remain the highest principle of all systems concerning human activity, as well as in social life, because humaneness is the destiny of man (Timura, 2018, p. 271).

Dostoevsky built on Kollár's ideas of cooperation among nations, stating in the journal *Grazhdanin* that the need to serve humanity and brotherly love towards other nations, even at the expense of one's own interests, is the task of the Russians. A similar adaptation can also be found in Vladimír Mináč, who refers to Dostoevsky and believes that the mission of the Slovaks is "[...] to become a true Slovak, a complete Slovak, means to become a brother to all people..." (Mináč, 1993). Similarly, Ľudovít Štúr emphasises that "ultimately, it is about humanity, of which we, together with all the other nations of the world, are members" (Štúr, 1987, p. 20). In that spirit, Nebojša Kuzmanović also presents his book. Knowledge of one's own culture is not possible without knowledge of another, because "learning from others helps us to know

[47] The same applies to the extensive privatisation of strategic enterprises after the breakup of Czechoslovakia (author's note).

ourselves better and to make ourselves visible in others, because we cannot exist by ourselves. Only through diversity, and never through uniformity and monotony, does the uniqueness of a culture develop and its vitality endure..." (Kuzmanović, 2023, p. 5)

It is a historical fact that the Slavic phenomenon constituted a significant component in the state-building foundations of three states built on Slavdom and anti-fascism: the USSR, the SFRY, and the ČSSR, with interruption due to war over the course of several decades.[48] The ideas developed by Kollár, Šafárik, Hollý, and Štúr were thus partially realised in practice, albeit only for a certain period and within different borders and regimes, ranging from monarchy and capitalism to socialism. Vladimír Clementis perceptively wrote that "[...] Kollár's emphasis that reciprocity 'does not consist in the political unification of all Slavs', i.e. in the creation of a single Slavic state, and his focus on reciprocity in the literary and cultural sphere, stemmed from a realistic assessment of the possibilities and circumstances of the Slavic peoples at that time. Kollár was too great a spirit not to be aware of the political roots and political influence of the literary reciprocity he proclaimed. The resonance of his *The Daughter of Sláva* and his study on reciprocity, especially among the Czechs, Yugoslavs, and Ukrainians, could not leave anyone in doubt on this matter..." (Clementis, 1946, p. 9). Šafárik also hinted at something similar at the Slavic Congress: "Well then, when other nations consult about us and decide our future, let us also consult about ourselves and our future..." (Šafárik, 1848).

Thus, the Slavs have historically demonstrated that they are capable of working together,[49] creating real structures, modern federal communities that generate cultural artefacts, economic relations, international cooperation, and resistance to dictatorships, fascism, and imperialism. However, the historical experience of their division, especially in the case of Yugoslavia, also reveals internal conflicts and the fragility of such cooperation, which is likewise connected to quarrels and national egoism, criticised by 19th-century figures. The Slavic peoples must learn this lesson if they do not wish to be assimilated, subjugated, colonised, or absorbed because of internal disputes.

Slovakia's four-time Prime Minister Robert Fico stated during Serbia's Statehood Day on 18 February 2026 in Bratislava, in the presence of Serbian dignitaries, that "[...] the ideas of Slavdom are becoming ever stronger and will play an ever greater

[48] Hypothesis: What the 20th century would have looked like had the SFRY, the USSR, and the ČSSR not disintegrated, had they been freer, democratically reformed, and remained cohesive and cooperative, is a question to which we do not know the answer.

[49] In general, hard work as an anthropological symbol of the Slavs, especially among the Slovaks, is described not only by Šafárik but also by the well-known Slovak writer in the popular generational novel *The Millennial Bee* (Jaroš, 2014), inspired by Márquez. The bee here, as the mother of the Slavs, is interpreted in a mythological sense, referring to hard work and perhaps also to queen bees. This is also connected with human creativity in the context of the progress of nations, with the aestheticization and humanisation of reality. This parallel is also noted by Prime Minister R. Fico, who is familiar with the context of Slovak history and who, in his address in the cited collection *Matica slovenská in national history* (p. 7), writes (also aware of the Serbian origin of the word): "When the Slovaks could not have their own king, they established a matica: 'matica', which in the closely related Slavic Serbian language means a beehive, a source, the queen bee."

President of the Republic of Serbia Aleksandar Vučić and Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic Robert Fico at the Trilateral Summit of the leaders of Serbia, Slovakia and Hungary in Komárno, the Slovak Republic, on 22nd October 2024
Photo: Dimitrije Gol

role in Europe".[50] These words are not merely formal, since the four-time Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic personally took part in the unveiling of the busts of Clementis (2007, 2023) and Mináč (2022). He has also paid tribute to Dubček (2016) and Husák (2024), figures who (both) met Josip Broz Tito (1965, 1973) and who transformed the idea of Slavic cooperation in practice into the modern and anti-fascist context of the 20th century (albeit within the confines of the ideological dogmatism of the time, which these figures at times transcended on the basis of their personal qualities). If the idea of Slavic cooperation and Slavdom is to survive, it needs a new update for the contexts of the 21st century, for the present transforming world. It must respond to the contradictions of postmodernity as

[50] Robert Fico delivered a speech on Pan-Slavic reciprocity on the occasion of Serbia's Statehood Day, DAV DVA, 2026.

well as the post-Covid era, and refocus on the idea of social justice, cultural and economic cooperation, humanism, peace, modern patriotism, and the protection of cultural heritage (both traditional and modern). Cultural cooperation could mark the beginning of a renaissance of this idea, whether within or outside the framework of the EU.

IV. Current state and vision for the future

There are currently Slavic countries forming autonomous republic inside and outside the EU, however, the conditions for deepening cultural and economic cooperation in the new geopolitical conditions of the 21st century are being created. However, culture, science, literature, and art must always serve as the starting point of this cooperation.

In 2014, the international conference of Slovaks and Serbs was held, resulting in a collection of papers. However, here, too, we mainly find the context of Serbs and Lowland Slovaks, that is, there is no focus on Slovaks in Slovakia (collective authors., 2014). At the 6th Congress of Matica Institutions and Slavic Nations, Martin Prebudjila provided detailed information on the genesis of literary cooperation since 2011, when cooperation between Slovaks in Serbia and Slovaks in Slovakia was agreed upon within the Association of Slovak Writers, and later continued with the visit of Radomir Andrić and the Writers' Association of Serbia in 2013. At that time, a Cooperation Agreement was established, including the participation of Serbian and Slovak writers in literary festivals, bilingual publication of books, publishing in periodicals on both sides, and mutual support of both national literatures internationally. [51] In his contribution, Prebudjila described in detail the implementation of these collaborations through concrete activities in 2014, 2015, 2016, and 2017, with an overview extending to the present day.

The Slovak culturologist Dalimír Hajko published two books in 2013 and 2019 in which he analyses poetry from the lowland region as well as the poetry of Serbian authors (Hajko, 2013; 2019). In conclusion, it should be added that cooperation is currently deepening within the cultural triangle of Matica slovenská, Matica srpska, and the Archives of Vojvodina (Slovaks, Serbs, and Slovaks in Serbia). [52] This cultural exchange in Serbian takes

[51] Prebudjila states "It was in fact the result of several prior meetings, both at literary gatherings in Belgrade and Bratislava, as well as at our literary events in Bački Petrovac, and, of course, as a result of the long-standing work of the then Commission for Literary and Publishing Activities of the Committee for Culture of the Slovak National Council. Suddenly, the literature of Vojvodina Slovaks, together with translations of Serbian poetry and prose, became much more present in the pages of *Literary Weekly* and *Slovenské pohľady*, as well as Serbian translations in our journal *New Life*, but also Slovak literature in Serbian periodicals such as *Literary News, Matica srpska Chronicles*, and the journals *Zlatna greda, Stig*, and others. Considerable space would be required to list everything that has been translated and published during this period…" (Prebudjila, M., Serbian–Slovak Literary Connections at the Beginning of the New Millennium, paper from the 6th Congress of Matica Institutions and Slavic Nations, 2025, forthcoming).

[52] Delegations of both maticas also communicated with standout figures of literary culture such as Zoran Đerić, Selimir Radulović (*Matica srpska Chronicles*), Nenad Šaponja, Veselin Mišnić, Vidal Maslovarić, which resulted in Serb-Slovak issue of the magazine *Slovenské pohľady* (ed. Radoslav Žgrada).

President of the Republic of Serbia Aleksandar Vučić and Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic at the Palace of Serbia, during Prime Minister Robert Fico's visit to Serbia, November 21, 2024
Photo: Dimitrije Gol

place in various forms (e.g., participation in congresses of the Slovak diaspora, mutual visits and student exchanges – the International Diaspora Festival, TESLA FORUM, literary discussions for Slovaks from the lowland region, publication of books in Serbia and Slovakia, reporting on activities in journals, and active scholarly research on figures from Serbia and Slovakia).

* * *

In 2014, the bilingual anthology of Slovak and Serbian poetry *Slavic Tenderness* (Stanić 2024) was published, with an introductory commentary by the President of Matica srpska, Dragan Stanić.[53] The anthology features authors born after 1945 who have experienced socialism, the construction

[53] It contains works by Serbian authors Rajko Petrov Nogo, Stevan Tontić, Miroslav Maksimović, Miloslav Tešić, Milan Nenadić, Duško Novaković, Radmila Lazić, Novica Tadić, Zlata Kocić, Vojislav Despotov, Bratislav R. Milanović, Selimir Radulović, Đorđe Sladoje, Nikola Vujčić, Ivan Negrišorac, Đorđe Nešić, Dragan Jovanović Danilov, Saša Radojčić, Dragan Hamović, and Milena Marković, as well as Slovak authors: Michal Huda, Miroslav Demák, Miroslav Bielik, Zlata Matláková, Ján Švantner, Ján Tazberík, Peter Mišák, Margita Ivaničková, Dana Podracká, Juraj Kuniak, Jozef Leikert, Martin Prebudjila, Ladislav Čáni, Erik Ondrejička, Pavol Tomašovič, Igor Válek, Ingrid Lukáčová, Olga Glušiková, and Martin Hudík.

of capitalism, as well as open military imperialism in 1999.

Stanić compares Milan Rúfus and Gojko Đogo, adding that both poets reflect the division of the world into two blocs. According to Stanić, the fate of Slovakia is neither heroically rebellious (Jánošík), nor Catholic-Enlightenment (Bernolák), not Evangelical-Lutheran (Štúr, Hurban), nor Czechoslovak (Kollár, Masaryk), nor state-communist or reformist (Dubček); however, this fate was best understood by Rúfus through his poetic vision of Slovakia (Stanić 2024, pp. 49, 50). On the other hand, in his critical poetry he cites the poet Đogo, calling for freedom of speech while criticizing atheism and dogmatism. In this context, Stanić the liberalization of the SFRY, but also the bloody outcome of the disintegration of the multinational state,[54] as well as the "barbaric" NATO bombing of the Yugoslav/Balkan peoples (Nogo's poem "And Behold, the Serbs"), drawing an analogy with Western colonialism's treatment of ethnic groups. He portrays the Serbs as the "Indians of Europe."

Stanić emphasizes that there is a bridge between the 19th and the 21st centuries in both the global and Slavic worlds, embodied in the "shame on the face of the Slavs." It is noteworthy, and not coincidental, that even today there are studies and books which, even at the level of official scholarly institutions, promote anti-Slavic sentiment with the aim of intimidating or ostracizing Slavic cultural cooperation as a "pro-Russian agenda," which represents a purposeful and propagandistic conflation of pan-Slavic reciprocity with pan-Russianism. [55]

[54] In this context, it is necessary to mention the postmodern–surrealist, deconstructionist, comic, and dramatic film *Underground* (1995) by Kusturica and Kovačević, with music by Bregović. The film is essentially a parable of Yugoslav history, which it portrays, with a strong dose of irony and sarcasm, as an illusion (the resistance heroes are kept underground in the illusion of an ongoing war under the pretext of weapons production). Ultimately, however, it returns to the need for a grand narrative, as it dramatically depicts the wars and the breakup of Yugoslavia as a nostalgia for unity. The film portrays the spontaneity of the Balkans in both its positive and negative aspects, at times slipping into stereotypes. It combines dark humour, pain, spontaneity, love, betrayal, suffering, while, behind all the irony, ultimately opening up a call for unity and peace among peoples. The film is avant-garde in that it represents what, in accordance with the philosophy of Michael Hauser, may be described as the avant-garde of "interregnum art." The exhaustion with grand narratives (of modernity) is to be replaced by an exhaustion with small narratives (of postmodernism and deconstruction), followed by a return to grand stories, a sense of history, narrative frameworks, and large ideas (Slavic unity, Christianity, God, social justice, nation, peace) within the context of what may follow postmodernity (i.e., from modernity, through postmodernity, to neomodernity) (cf. Perný, 2023). This return to authenticity and the desire for truth are embodied in the character of the naïve Ivan, as if invoking the biblical "blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:3). He weeps, refuses to accept the loss of illusion, and rejects the fact that Yugoslavia no longer exists. He also refuses to go to Italy and symbolically encounters his lost monkey, finding himself in the midst of civil war, beating Marko, and choosing death before saying: "God, forgive me." Biblical symbolism continues in Marko's line: "A war is not a war until a brother raises his hand against a brother." Amid apocalyptic scenes, a white horse and an inverted Christ appear, while the film concludes with a utopian scene in which all are young and gathered around one table, reminiscent of the Slovaks feasting for a thousand years in Jakubisko's *The Millennial Bee*.

[55] For example, Academician J. Marušiak of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, with the aim of indirectly ostracizing Slavic cultural cooperation, and in the context of alleged "pro-Russian rhetoric" as opposed to the "Western civilizational orientation of Slovakia," writes: "In the current period, the Slavophile discourse has primarily asserted itself as a transnational identity

Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic Robert Fico at the reception organized by the Embassy of the Republic of Serbia in the Slovak Republic on the occasion of the Statehood Day of the Republic of Serbia, in Bratislava on 18 th February 2026
Photo: Matej Ondreicka

This is confirmed by Stanić's assertion that little has changed since the 19th century in the context of the stereotyping of Slavs.[56] Stanić argues (Stanić, 2024) that Slovaks and Serbs have under-

project. Although its actors did not openly question the ideas of European integration and Euro-Atlantic cooperation in matters of security, they perceived them with reservation as a potential source of threat to Slovak sovereignty and the Slavic community. [...] This applies to several organizations… including Matica slovenská, where the Slavophile discourse has strengthened, particularly after the election of Marián Gešper as its chairman in 2017. He defined the partners of Matica as national and Slavic-oriented associations, alongside churches and civic organizations. [...] Pan-Slavism is considered in the context of its intersection with other ideological discourses. Its characteristic features can be defined as anti-Westernism, neoliberalism, and conservatism. It is an instrumental part of a pro-Russian agenda even among part of the left spectrum…" (Marušiak, 2023).

[56] According to the English Wikipedia, *Anti-Slavic sentiment*, anti-Slavic racism, or Slavophobia refers to various forms of negative attitudes, prejudice, collective hatred or hostility, stereotypes, discrimination, and violence (economic, physical,

stood each other well for centuries and have depended on one another, as their historical destinies have been very similar. Just as in the Habsburg Monarchy, contemporary Europe also exerts pressure toward the assimilation of Slavs or the questioning of Slavic identity. He therefore adds that even in the 21st century, Serbs and Slovaks must support one another, if only because of the risk of assimilation. Creative culture, science, and art must serve as the starting point for cooperation between national communities. [57] The aim of this proto-study has been to contribute to an understanding of at least the basic intersections of the two cultures across different regimes, states, and historical situations; if this has been achieved even partially, the time spent writing this text will have been worthwhile. However, I would like to warn the reader that the text will be expanded, and that the present section is only an introduction to further research.

political, psychological, verbal, etc.) directed against one or more ethnic groups of Slavic peoples. Compare with the entry: Anti-Slavic sentiment, Wikipedia.

[57] The results of research and the creative work of cultural workers in the fields of literature and science are no longer just theoretical but represent the beginning of the practical application of the Pan-Slavic idea, i.e., the idea of Kollár, Šafárik, Kopitar, Zmaj, and Miletić. Much work on active literary and cultural contacts on the Serbian side has been carried out by Nebojša Kuzmanović, PhD (and his colleagues Dunja Andrić, Miroslav Dobroňovský, Dragana Katić, Boris Bulatović, Kristián Obšust, Tatjana Jonaš), Prof. Dragan Stanić (Milena Kulík, Milan Micić and others) and their staff from the Archive of Vojvodina and Matica srpska, while on the Slovak side by Dr Marián Gešper (and colleagues Peter Švantner, Pavol Madura, Ján Seman, Milina Sklabinská, etc.) and Matica slovenská (Serbian-Slovak issue of Slovenské pohľady, cultural delegations, matica congresses), as well as the late Miroslav Bijelik (publishing Serbian literature in Slovakia and vice versa in the Society of Slovak Writers) and, on the Vojvodina scene, Martin Prebuďila (translations and event organisation), along with other cultural actors from Serbia and Slovakia (creators, critics, translators, writers), such as Miroslav Demák, Radomir Andrić, Nenad Šaponja, Zoran Derić, Zdenka Valent-Belić, Dalimir Hajko, Štefan Cifra, Katarína Mosnaková-Bagľášová, Michal Harpanj, Ján Babjak, Vladimír Valentík, Pavel Čanji, and even the well-known poet Ľubomír Feldek. Significant contributions to mutual cultural understanding have also been made by the Slovak photographer and designer from Kisač, Pavel Surový, and the Evangelist priest, former president of Matica slovenská, Branislav Kulík. For mutual familiarisation of both cultures, the translation of Dobšinski's fairy tales by Zdenka Valent-Belić (Dobšinski, 2024) is particularly stimulating, as is her book The Image of Serbs in the Slovak Language (Valent-Belić, 2022), and finally Harpanj's book Slovak Literature in Serbian Journals of the 19th Century (Harpanj, 2022). Within the framework of the presented study, it is not possible to include many other publishing achievements or a more detailed analysis of the books presented. In conclusion, it can be added that the journal *Slovenský horizont*, which is also published in Serbian and reports on almost all cultural exchanges between Serbia and Slovakia, including the aforementioned publications, can be considered among the most recent projects. As a Pan-Slavic journal, *Slovenský horizont* is also evidence of the practical application of the Kollár-Šafárik concept of Slavic cultural exchange. The Slovak Matica has also re-established the Slovak Department of Matica slovenská, led by Pavol Madura.

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UDC 323.15:314.117(497.11)
930.85(497.11:437.6)
316.72(=162.4)(497.113)
Original scientific article
Received: 9.3.2026.
Accepted: 9.4.2026.
doi:10.5937/napredak7-65587

Serbian-Slovak relations in the context of the life of the Slovak minority in the newly formed Yugoslav state after 1918

Abstract: The study deals with the development of Serbian-Slovak relations after 1918 in the context of the life of the Slovak minority in the newly established Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. The starting point of the study is the historical situation after the end of World War I, which brought about fundamental political and social changes in Central and Southeastern Europe and created new conditions for the development of international relations and for the position of national minorities. The focus is on the Slovak community living mainly in the territory of Vojvodina, which after 1918 found itself in a new state and political environment. The study offers an analysis of its social, cultural and institutional life, as well as forms of preserving national identity through education, community life, cultural activities and religious institutions. At the same time, it points to the role of the Slovak minority as a mediator of contacts between the Yugoslav environment and the Czechoslovak state, especially in relation to Czechoslovakia.

The aim of the study was to point out the importance of the Slovak minority in the formation and development of Serbian-Slovak relations in the interwar period. Based on the analysis of contemporary sources and professional literature, the author points out that the Slovak community played an important role not only in preserving its own cultural identity, but also as a bridge between the two political and cultural spaces. The results of the research contribute to a deeper understanding of the position of the Slovak minority in the Yugoslav state and at the same time expand knowledge about the broader context of Serbian-Slovak relations in the first half of the 20th century.

Keywords: Slovak minority, Vojvodina, Serbian-Slovak relations, interwar period, national minorities, Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, Yugoslavia

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Introduction

The emergence of new states in Central and Southeastern Europe after the end of World War I fundamentally changed the political map of the region and created new conditions for international relations and the position of national minorities. Among the newly established states was the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, inhabited by several nations and ethnic groups. Simultaneously, the foundation of the Czechoslovak Republic marked the beginning of a new chapter in relations between Slovaks and the Yugoslav milieu. In this context, the presence of the Slovak minority in the territory of today's Serbia, whose roots go back to the migration processes of the 18th and 19th centuries, especially to the region of Vojvodina, acquired special significance. The Slovak community in Yugoslavia represented an important bridge between the two new state entities after 1918. Its cultural and social activities were not only an expression of the effort to preserve its own identity but also a factor contributing to the development of political, cultural, and economic contacts between Slovaks and Serbs. Mutual relations were formed on several levels—from diplomatic contacts between the states to the everyday life of the Slovak minority, which played a significant role in the transfer of ideas, cultural values, and social initiatives.

The aim of this study is to analyse Serbian-Slovak relations in the period after 1918 through the perspective of the life of the Slovak minority in the newly formed Yugoslav state. The focus is primarily on the social and cultural activities of Slovak communities, their relations with state institutions, and the role they played in shaping contacts between Slovakia (or the Czechoslovak Republic) and Yugoslavia. The study of these processes allows for a better understanding not only of the position of the Slovak minority but also of the broader context of the formation of mutual relations between Serbs and Slovaks in the interwar period. The study is based on the analysis of contemporary press, published archival materials, and relevant historiographical literature. Through these sources, we aim to highlight the dynamics of Serbian-Slovak relations and the importance of the Slovak minority as a mediator of contacts between the two cultural and political spaces during the period of fundamental social transformations after 1918.

Since its establishment, the population of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes formed a complex conglomerate of several nations and nationalities, as well as confessions. The political situation in the state remained highly volatile in the initial months following its proclamation. The war disrupted economic structures, and problems arose with supplying the population. In addition to national problems and labour unrest, peasant movements demanding the parcelling of great landowners' land (which was partially resolved by land reform) emerged. On June 28, 1921, the so-called *Vidovdan Constitution* was adopted, defining the state as a parliamentary monarchy and applying the principles of centralism and unitarism. The parliamentary system was significantly limited by the powers of the monarch. In the 1920s, internal political relations were characterized by instability, frequent changes of government, and the emergence of militant nationalist organisations. In the field of foreign policy, the signing of the alliance treaty with Czechoslovakia on August 14, 1920 – which

Romania joined the following year to form the Little Entente – proved to be a pivotal moment. The government elite sought a way out of political crises by establishing the personal dictatorship of King Alexander I in January 1929. On October 3, 1929, the name of the state was changed by royal decree to the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. The administrative division of the state was also reorganised, dividing it into nine Banates headed by Bans appointed by the monarch. Most Slovak localities were located in the Danube Banate. "*The new division was much more advantageous for Slovaks*" (Gubová Červená, 2015, p. 231). The aimless political manoeuvring of Slovak officials between the Serbian democratic and radical parties ended, and naive trust in representatives of Serbian political parties resulted in disappointment. It is therefore not surprising that it was precisely in this period after 1929 that the *Matica slovenská* was successfully established in Yugoslavia and the cultural life of Slovaks developed more significantly.

The beginnings of coexistence in the newly constituted state

In 1919, Blanka Fábry, a witness of events, described the current position of Slovaks in the Yugoslav territories in comparison with members of other nations and national minorities. According to her, Slovaks enthusiastically welcomed Serbian soldiers and officials, while the new state was received coolly by the Croats, especially by the Bunjevci, among whom there were allegedly many supporters of the Hungarian state idea. However, she pointed out that the enthusiasm of the Slovaks began to fade after the Serbian victors began to hold the Slovak people responsible for the tragic events of 1914 and 1915. Real or imagined grievances against the Serbs led to threats and violence against the Slovaks, who defended themselves with lawsuits, but in the end, many preferred to sell their property, especially in the villages along the Sava River. As an explanation, Fábry stated that the discord – in fact a kind of silent but deep-rooted hostility of the Serbs towards the Slovaks – existed because the inhabitants of the Slovak settlements were increasingly buying up land that had previously belonged to the Serbs. According to the author: *"A Serb likes to live comfortably, he likes to have fun; many Serbian farmers squandered their entire fortune, which then came into the hands of the Slovaks, who had nothing but two hands and the ability and will to work."* It is said that only later did Serbs and Croats begin to recognize the good example of Slovak farmers, when, for example, they themselves enjoyed the benefits of growing hops, especially in the region of Bačka. She stated that Slovak settlers in Yugoslavia were already the third and often even the fourth generation of immigrants from Slovakia, people who had fully acclimatized and improved their properties (Fábry, 1919, p. 4). Two ethnic stereotypes are clear in this statement: Serbs are more frivolous compared to the more hardworking Slovaks, and Slovaks are also better economically or entrepreneurially minded farmers.

On the other hand, Fábry recalled that Serbs suffered greatly in 1914, and several Slovaks, together with Croats, took a hard line against the Orthodox population during World War I, e.g., in the ranks of the militia, gendarmerie, or police. After the war, there were cases when domestic Serbs alerted the Serbian authorities, who came from the

"Old Kingdom," to those who burned their flags, desecrated icons installed in households, actually or only supposedly reported Serbian neighbours for internment, or seized the property of the persecuted and refugees, etc. For example, at Christmas 1918, Slovak settlers from Ašana, Dobanovce, and other settlements near the Sava River had to flee from their indignant Serbian neighbours. Fábry also wrote about the departure of the intelligentsia, mostly from the Upper Hungary (i.e. present-day Slovakia), back to Slovakia, however: *"Every Lower Land peasant, dissatisfied that the Serbs often very emphatically express their desire to have the hegemony over Yugoslavia in their hands, does not think about resettlement.* (...) *The land is an irresistible magnet for the Lower Land peasant."* (Fábry, 1919, p. 4). The image of the strong bond between the Lower Land farmer and the land (soil) is characteristic and mentioned by many authors.

Národnie noviny, the press organ of the *Slovak National Party* in Slovakia, reported on the gradual reorganization of the *Slovak National Party* in the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. According to the author, the goal was not to be "*some kind of party*", but to help build a democratic state and to preserve "*own national character*", to cultivate national culture, to defend and promote the "*special national interests*" of Slovaks (Fábry, 1919, p. 4). In later years, Slovaks participated in political life through Serbian and Croatian parties (*Národnie noviny*, 1919, p. 3). In the church periodical *Stráž na Sione*, an anonymous author from the village of Boljevce (Slovak name: Boľovce) published reports from his church congregation. One report was written on the subject of the creation of a new organization and leadership of the Evangelical Church in Slovakia. In its introduction, the author created a characteristic image of being freed from the "yoke" of Magyarization, which remained a typical feature of the Slovak historical assessment of the past throughout the interwar period: *"Our church has finally been freed from the destructive influence of Hungarian chauvinism, and we, living in free Yugoslavia, enthusiastically welcome and greet with general trust the church leaders placed at your head."* (*Stráž na Sione*, 1919, p. 22). In contrast to this image stands the imaginary "sorting of spirits," when many members of the clergy, previously "faithful to the homeland," had to adapt to the new conditions. For some, the change took a longer time; others (opportunists) coped with the changes more easily, and a few preferred to emigrate to Hungary. Such was the case of Koloman Kiss, a native of the Slovak community in Malý Kereš (Kiskőrös), who was an Evangelical pastor in Slovenský Aradáč for 33 years (Szeberényi, 1934, pp. 17-18).

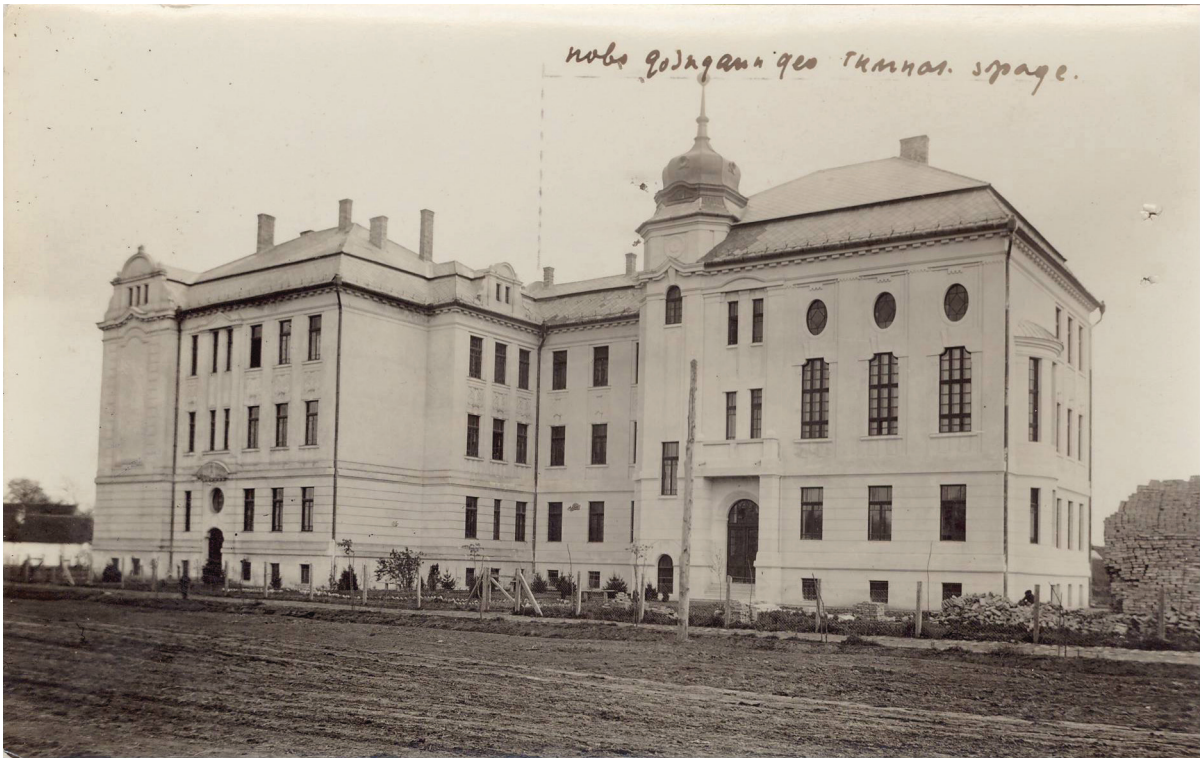
The day of October 28, 1919, anniversary of the Declaration of Czechoslovakia, was celebrated by Slovaks in Novi Sad as the "*liberation of the Czecho-Slovak nation*" (Národnie noviny, 1919, p. 3). Celebrations of Czechoslovak statehood were then held every year. The *Sokol* movement, popular also in Yugoslavia, played a major role in strengthening the Czechoslovak orientation. Jan Auerhan quoted words from the magazine *Svit*, published in Bački Petrovac by the *Association of Czechoslovak Academics*: "*One hundred and thirty thousand of us are still settled here, and we form the Czechoslovak south.*" (Auerhan, 1924, p. 148). From the beginning, Slovaks in Yugoslavia evidently accepted the idea of Czechoslovak unity, not only in terms of statehood but also in terms of national identity (which,

however, began to change in the 1930s). At the end of the interwar period, Yugoslav Slovaks expressed their opinion on the declaration of autonomy of the "Slovak Land" (in Slovak: Slovenská krajina) on October 6, 1938, in Žilina, which occurred because of extremely serious international intervention in Central Europe. The editorial staff of Národná jednota recalled the merits of the Czechs in the cultural flourishing of the territory of Slovakia within Czechoslovakia, and further stated: *"We can look at the autonomy of Slovakia within the Czechoslovak Republic sympathetically, objectively, and consider it a historical necessity. The Slovak nation, the Slovak language, the Slovak spiritual and cultural identity are real now, and Slovak autonomy follows quite logically from this. Slovakia is beginning to live its own life, it will control its own destiny, and this new state system will create a sincere, cordial, and truly fraternal relationship between Czechs and Slovaks."* (*Krajan*, 1938, p. 7).

The reality of the socio-cultural, economic and everyday life of the Slovak minority in the Yugoslav state

Despite certain problems in the critical period of 1918–1919, the Slovak minority generally had a relatively good position in the new circumstances, which resulted from historical experiences of cooperation with the majority Serb population and from interstate agreements. There was an unprecedented development of Slovak cultural activities: the publishing of newspapers, magazines and books, the building of an education system, the organization of community life, and the establishment of cultural institutions. Slovaks in the region of Vojvodina, as the only Lower Land Slovaks in the surrounding states, were able to establish their own Slovak secondary school in the interwar period. The Slovak grammar school in Bački Petrovac was established as a private school on October 1, 1919, and on August 27, 1920, it was nationalized. In the first years, this involved the construction of a special building (1922–1923), material and financial provision, the establishment of a teaching staff, the arrival of visiting teachers from Czechoslovakia, the delivery of textbooks and books from Slovakia, and the recognition of the school's public rights by the school authorities (Benková, 2009, p. 29). In the 1920s, remarkable activities of students and professors developed – e.g. celebrations, linden tree planting, and theatrical performances were organized. In 1925 the *Sládkovič Student Self-Education Club* was established, while libraries and cabinet collections continued to expand. However, at the turn of the 1920s and 1930s, the economic crisis and the establishment of a dictatorship interfered with the school's activities. The number of Serbian professors and students at the grammar school increased, and various interventions limited student activities. After 1932, however, the role of the grammar school as an institution of Vojvodina Slovaks was restored, as was positive cooperation with the Yugoslav administration (Boldocký, 2009, p. 29; Sirácky, 1980, pp. 172-173). In addition to the grammar school in Bački Petrovac, an attempt was made in 1918–1922 to establish a private "real grammar school" in Stará Pazova, but this project ended unsuccessfully due to financial and personnel problems.

Political tensions and disputes surrounding the elections in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and



Grammar School Building, Bački Petrovac, first half of the 20th century
Photo: Museum of Vojvodina Slovaks

Slovenes in 1920 led to many Slovak voters voting for the communists, which allegedly aroused resentment among representatives of the dominant Serbian parties. The reality of post-war life brought bitterness to interethnic relations. *"After the elections, Slovaks were considered an anti-state element. They were accused of communism, and their rights were no longer respected. The Serbian language was introduced into schools and offices; pleas to ministries were in vain; they did not even receive answers to their official documents. The lives of Slovak intelligentsia were made extremely difficult. Teachers were required to take nostrification exams and Slovak officials (notaries) were simply transferred."* (Siracky, 1923, p. 4). S. Leitmann wrote in this regard: *"In the pre-war period, Slovaks bravely fought for the Slavic idea alongside the Serbs, and in equal measure they endured various sufferings for their Slavic identity. They were persecuted, pursued, and imprisoned solely because they publicly stood alongside the Serbs. It is only natural that when the time of sweet liberation arrived, the Slovaks were the*

first among the inhabitants of Vojvodina to solemnly declare their joining the triune nation of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes within Yugoslavia. However, after the days of joyful resurrection, accursed chauvinism soon took over, and the Serbs began to act as the ruling class, disregarding both the sad yet glorious days of common suffering and the unwavering devotion of the Slovak people, with which they so adhered, and continue to adhere, to the present state formation" (Leitmann, 1923, p. 126). Even according to Andrej Sirácky, the relationship between Slovaks and Serbs was quite tense at that time (Sirácky, 1924, p. 6).

The political representative of the Slovaks in Vojvodina was the *Slovak National Party*. However, its activities within the political system of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes were ineffective. Therefore, in 1927, the local branches of the party in Bački Petrovac, Hložany, and Kulpín agreed to develop a new programme. On April 3, the Congress of the *Slovak National Party* was held in Petrovac, at which the party chairman Dr. Ľudovít Mičátek presented a proposal to transform the party into a non-political organization. Most of participants rejected this, after which Dr. Mičátek left the congress. The delegates then approved the reorganization of the party, a modified program, and its renaming to the *Slovak National Peasant Party* (Slovak name: Slovenská národná roľnícka strana). In addition to the national idea, the program emphasized the agrarian principle. The full text of the draft program was published by Gabriela Gubová Červená.

The *Slovak National Peasant Party* included among the individual points of its program: a) in the field of education: ensuring teaching in Slovak in at least the first four grades (except for the so-called "national subjects"); care for an eight-grade Slovak state grammar school in Bački Petrovac; Slovak-language instruction at teacher training school; personnel provision for Slovak schools (including visiting teachers from Czechoslovakia); b) in the economic field: the advancement of the peasant, artisan, and other "classes"; the demand for cheap credit; the provision of work for workers and the poor; the fair implementation of land reform; support for cooperative forms of economic activity; fair taxation, etc.; c) in the field of civil law: the demand for complete civil equality; civil self-government; free elections; simplification of state administration; a cheap and effective judiciary; care for socially disadvantaged citizens. (Gubová Červená, 2015, pp. 281-306).

At the congress in July 1927, Dr. Jozef Haško, a lawyer from Novi Sad, was elected party chairman. In the elections in September of that year, the *Slovak National Peasant Party* concluded an agreement with the Serbian *People's Radical Party*, which in the next elections brought it one deputy – Andrej Labáth from Petrovac. Dr Mičátek ran for the *Democratic Party* of Ljubomir Davidović, whose press body harshly attacked representatives of the Slovak party. Overall, however, Slovak political activities can be characterized as inconspicuous and fragmented due to disputes between leading figures of the community. Among many voters, there was rather a shift to the left of the political spectrum. The *Slovak National Peasant Party*'s activities ceased after the introduction of the king's dictatorship.

In November 1929, Slovak activists established the *Advisory Committee of Slovaks of the Danube Banate* with its headquarters in Novi Sad, whose

chairman was Dr. Ján Bulík. The committee sought to promote the national and cultural demands of Slovaks in Vojvodina and to develop cooperation with state or Serbian cultural institutions. It was responsible, for example, for the establishment of the *Matica slovenská in Yugoslavia* (1932). Ján V. Ormis briefly and fairly assessed the position of the Slovak minority in interwar Yugoslavia with the words: "*they* (Slovaks) *are living in a friendly foreign country*". Teaching is not only carried out in the Slovak language, no one is accommodating them politically, but they can freely develop culturally "*which means a lot.*" (Ormis, 1935, p. 72).

Andrej Sirácky, a native of Bački Petrovac and then a 23-year-old student at *Charles University* in Prague, purposefully provided essential information about the Yugoslav Slovaks. In a critical-analytical article published in 1923, he presented several remarkable findings. In terms of culture and education, he noted a sense of uncertainty among Slovak officials, which resulted from the conditions of the time: *"Small-scale national work is progressing, but the centre is somehow getting lost, and the minds of our representatives are being taken over by nervousness. On the one hand, there are promising future developments: the Sokol movement, the establishment of a grammar school, the publishing of magazines, educational associations, theatres; on the other hand, however: the expulsion of the mother tongue from schools, the removal of Slovak teachers and notaries, the difference between Slovaks and Serbs (in the implementation of land reform). The elimination of these injustices – actually, a matter of party tactlessness – can only be expected from the new parliament."* (Siracky, 1923, p. 1). After the fall of Hungarian supremacy, many Slovaks idealistically expected that cooperation with their "brothers," the Serbs, would be excellent, but disappointment inevitably followed, as the Slovaks remained a minority and the Serbs became the majority.

Most Slovaks in the Lower Land traditionally made their living in the agricultural sector; artisans, tradesmen, businessmen, officials, and members of other professions formed only a small part of the Slovak communities. This naturally followed from the fact that Slovaks in the Lower Land mostly settled *"...in the lowlands (...) where there is more arable land, uncultivated by ploughs or hoes."* (*Z hospodárského* života, 1922, p. 11). Andrej Sirácky also provided a picture of the fertile lowland plain: "*You can walk for hours and hours through our territory and you will not find a single hill anywhere – only in the distance, 10-15 km from us, the low slopes of Fruška Gora turn blue.*" (Siracky, 1927, p. 49). He also assessed "*the perhaps too special and strong ties of our people to the soil, to the land*". And he apparently considered this a negative, because supposedly this dependence on land, on property, makes the Lower Land peasant not very idealistic, almost without higher spiritual ambitions.

A characteristic feature of the Lower Landers mentioned in the press and literature was their hard work. The Germans appreciated the Slovaks' efficiency in agriculture, as well as in crafts, and their efforts to get an education. Another author pointed out a certain unfavourable association within the community regarding the hard work of the Slovaks: *"With the well-known Slovak hard work, they spread throughout the Srem region, founded independent settlements (Boljevce, Binguľa), bought up properties or farmsteads, and soon there will be no settlement in Srem where we will not find a Slovak.*

However, for the Slovak national cause it is a loss; the Slovaks are – slowly but inevitably – assimilating" (Sirácky, 1923, p. 3). Many Slovak families became convinced that their own physical labour was no longer enough to cultivate the land. As the author of the text wrote: *"The Yugoslav Slovak invested his net profit in land, that is, he bought land from neighbouring Germans and Serbs, and he became materially stronger. This also had political and cultural consequences. He became wealthier and thus more politically independent. Individuals, having a larger number of hops, subscribe to newspapers to be informed about the market price of hops, and at the same time they also pay attention to their own political position.* Some visit larger markets, gain a broader perspective, and become familiar with more advanced economic life." (*Naše zahraničí*, 1922, pp. 13-14). However, the problem of economic management was represented by the plots scattered across municipal boundaries, so there were great expectations regarding land consolidation and land reform. Compared to other nationalities, the author stated that the state of social stratification was not favourable for the Slovaks: as many as 45% of Slovaks owned land with an area of only up to 3 cadastral yokes (Note: one cadastral yoke equals 0.575 hectares), 35% owned land with an area of 3–10 yokes, 15% with an area of 10–50 yokes, and the remaining 5% owned more than 50 yokes. The Slovaks did not have landowners with holdings of over 500 yokes. Therefore, great hopes were pinned on the announced land reform, but preference was given by the government to Serbian settlers (often from Bosnia, Kosovo, or Montenegro), especially at the expense of "non-Slavic nationalities" (*Naše zahraničí*, 1927, p. 6).

The situation of Slovak communities was complicated by Serbian political practice, namely that everything in the region was then subject to the dominant Radical Party (despite its name, it held conservative positions with a distinctly national character), which promoted its representatives to official positions (Pelikán, 2019, p. 309). For example, in Bački Petrovac, there was a notary named Lamoš, a former Czechoslovak legionnaire (and member of the *Slovak National Party*), who was suddenly transferred to a Hungarian-populated village near the border, and another notary, previously of Hungarian orientation, came in his place – but in the new times a "first-class" Serb and a member of the *Radical Party*, who refused to resolve problems in any language other than Serbian ("*here is one injustice that has offended Slovaks to the core*") (Leitmann, 1923, p. 127). Or other example of the difficult position of Slovak communities: In Binguľa, the Slovak school, founded 60 years earlier, was merged with the Serbian school, which the school board justified by claiming that mutual love and harmony would be better cultivated between Serbian and Slovak youth (*Nový útok*, 1922, p. 131). On the other hand, Prime Minister Nikola Pašić kindly received the Slovak deputation presenting the memorandum with their demands, and emphasized that he considered Slovaks a fraternal nation, which in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes was entitled to the same rights as all other Slavs in Yugoslavia (*Naše zahraničí*, 1922, p. 138). The official line of the government and the specific political practice in the regions obviously differed.

According to Czech lawyer Jan Auerhan, an employee and later chairman of the *Czechoslovak Institute for Foreign Affairs*, immediately after the

Graduates of the State Grammar School in Petrovac, Bački Petrovac, 1929.
Photo: Museum of Vojvodina Slovaks

coup, the Slovaks believed that the good, friendly relations that had existed between Serbs and Slovaks in Bačka during Hungarian rule would continue. They relied mainly on friendly personal contacts with the leaders of the Serbian people. However, some of them had died in the meantime, while others had left or moved to other regions and cities – and all the more important positions in Bačka were filled by people who either did not know the Slovaks or who, during Hungarian rule, had supported the Hungarian state idea and, as a result, did not feel friendship towards the Slovaks, but rather distrust. Therefore, these people troubled the Slovaks with various forms of administrative harassment. For example, they dismissed or transferred Slovak officials without cause, sent teachers into retirement, removed Slovak teachers from leading positions and replaced them with Serbian ones, and ordered that all public signs and decrees had to be in Serbian only, while private signs and boards also had to include Serbian text (in the first place), etc. The most sensitive issue, especially for the socially weaker part of the Slovak population, was its postponement in the implementation of the land reform, which concerned the vital interests of Slovak peasants (Auerhan, 1924, p. 148). He char-

Members of the Sokol Society Stara Pazova after a public session, 1930s
Photo: Private archive of Steva Lepčević

acterized the background of this situation in the context of Serbian political reality: "*If we want to understand this hostility of today's leading Serbian local officials in Bačka towards the Slovaks there, we must realize the great, truly unhealthy importance of political partisanship in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, where everything is judged from the point of view of party affiliation*" (Auerhan, 1924, p. 148). At that time, Slovaks themselves became active in their own party, but without any success – unlike Romanians, Germans, or Turks, who elected their own parliamentary deputies. The Serbs allegedly preferred members of minorities to organize politically through "Yugoslav" parties. The insecurity of Slovaks in the first years of the Yugoslav state (in several cases also involving violence from Serbian neighbours) led to the idea of resettling in Czechoslovakia, but in the end, only a few dozen people were involved.

Ladislav Zgúth stated that, despite assurances of brotherhood between Serbs and Slovaks, Slovak citizens encountered hardships. For e Sokol Society xample, he gave an example of a Serbian teacher preventing Slovak children from speaking Slovak at school, or a Serbian major's protest during the oath-taking of conscripts in Bački Petrovac against

a Slovak speech by an Evangelical priest. He also stated that a Slovak was often called by Serbs the pejorative Hungarian term "Tót". If a Slovak complained about some injustice, he was said to receive the following response: "Go to the land of the Tóts." Zgúth firmly claimed that Czechoslovak legionnaires also fought for Serbian freedom, that Masaryk, Beneš and Štefánik also helped to build the foundations of a united Yugoslavia, that the 44 Slovaks executed in Kragujevac on the orders of the Austrian-Hungarian military command were among the common victims of both nations during World War I (Zgúth, 1924, p. 153). Otherwise, the memorial site in Kragujevac (in the Šumadija region), where a monument was ceremonially unveiled in 1925, became an important symbol of Czechoslovak-Yugoslav relations.

On the other hand, it is said that Serbian neighbours, for example in Bajša, had a positive influence on Slovaks, so that they did not succumb to Hungarian assimilation, which often happened in mixed marriages (Hříbek, 1931, p. 72). Another author wrote that Macedonian Slavs occupied fertile estates in Vojvodina at the time of the land reform and that, subsequently, poor Slovaks from Vojvodina were instructed by the Serbian government to settle on infertile land and in unhealthy regions of southern Serbia. In his opinion, by this act the Serbian government killed two birds with one stone: it tore several members away from the large family of Slovaks and at the same time at least superficially met the demands of its citizens, who were also Slavs, but not Serbs (Leitmann, 1925, p. 14). The short-lived and small Slovak settlement in Kosovo disappeared due to unfavourable soil, climate, and transport conditions, but also because of the hostility of the surrounding Albanian population, among whom the Serbian authorities had placed it.

In 1922, the *Czechoslovak Union* in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes prepared a memorandum in which it demanded, among other things, that the "Czechoslovak language" be taught in the first three grades of elementary school and that the state language be taught only from the 4th grade, that additional minority schools be established, and that departments of "Czechoslovak" language and literature, history, church singing, and music be established at teacher training institutes in Sombor, Novi Sad, and Osijek (*Naše zahraničí*, 1922, p. 132). However, the memorandum and these demands alluded to the political practice of promoting the Serbian idea in the Yugoslav state. In some places, the press brought positive news for minority education – such as in connection with the visit of Minister Dragutin Pečić to Bački Petrovac, who promised to solve the problems of the Slovak population on the spot: *"The Minister thanked [them] for the warm welcome, stated that the Slovak nation can rightfully demand from the state everything that belongs to it, including the Slovak school, and promised that he would present the request of the residents of Petrovac for the reopening of the 7th grade of the grammar school at the next Crown Council." He assured that the request would be handled favourably*" (*Naše zahraničí*, 1925, p. 201).

Representatives of the *Slovak Evangelical Church* also felt considerable grievance, especially in connection with the nationalization of church schools, the confiscation of church buildings and land, the dismissal of Slovak teachers, and the loss of control over the religious education of children (Zgúth, 1927, p. 2). In 1924, schools for Slovak pu-

pils suffered from a significant shortage of Slovak teachers, who were replaced by Serbian teachers in many places. The schools had a Serbo-Slovak character, reinforced by a regulation that stipulated that in the 1st grade 4 out of 22 teaching hours per week should be devoted to Serbian, in the 2nd grade 6 out of 24 hours, in the 3rd grade 6 out of 28 hours, in the 4th–6th grades out of 28 hours 10 hours in each grade (2 hours of reading, 2 of writing, 2 of conversation, 2 of geography, 2 of history). In addition, Serbian songs were to be practiced in singing lessons. It should also be mentioned that children at that time had to learn up to 3–4 writing systems, including the traditional Older German black letter script in religious education. While Serbian teachers practiced their profession without obstacles, "minority" teachers had to take exams in the state language and prove that they could teach in Serbian if necessary. Moreover, the positions of inspectors were held exclusively by Serbs, who strictly controlled the implementation of regulations (Auerhan, 1924, p. 150). Even among Slovak teachers, there were "*such great demands on mastering the state language and national subjects that there is no time left for teaching the mother tongue; the supervisory authorities do not care about knowledge of the mother tongue...*" (Klátik, 1925, p. 10).

The textbooks used in minority schools were practically literal translations of Serbian ones. For example, the reading book for the 3rd and 4th grades of Slovak schools contained only articles on Serbian history and geography of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, but nothing about Slovakia or its history. *"Only the Slovak language in which the reading book is written, the title of the book, and the anthem Hey, Slovaks reveal that the reading book is intended for Slovak schools.* However, textbooks for minority schools should not look like this one" (Auerhan, 1924, p. 151). Another specific problem was that only pupils who were clearly members of the minority, primarily by their name, could attend minority schools. For example, children of Slovak parents with German surnames were forcibly enrolled in Serbian schools (cases documented also from Bački Petrovac).

According to Karol Lilge, the state of elementary schools had deteriorated and depended on momentary political decisions. For that reason, on December 18, 1927, a congress of Czech and Slovak teachers, cultural workers, delegates of cultural associations, and priests of the *Slovak Evangelical Church* was organized in Kysáč with the main goal of finding ways to improve conditions in schools. Thanks to this effort, the *Ministry of Education* issued a regulation (No. 7271-98), according to which in the 1st and 2nd grades teaching was to be exclusively in Czech or Slovak, in the higher grades (from 3rd to 6th) "national subjects" (Serbo-Croatian language, geography, history) were to be taught in the state language, other subjects in the mother tongue (out of 26 hours, it was 19 hours). In the higher grades, Czechoslovak history was also to be taught in the mother tongue. Previously, only the state language was taught in schools for children repeating grades, but now the following subjects were taught in the mother tongue: Slovak/Czech language, mathematics, and basics of economics. Other subjects were to be taught in the state language (Lilge, 1928, pp. 8-9).

Slovak representatives tried to establish cooperation in the interest of promoting the national demands of their community. Therefore, the *Slovak*

National Party concluded a pre-election agreement with the *People's Radical Party*. The agreement was approved at the party assembly on December 29, 1924. In the agreement, the Serbian party accepted the following conditions: 1. The *People's Radical Party* will support Slovaks in church affairs. 2. In localities where Slovaks live together with Serbs, or with Croats and Slovenes, they will receive representation in the municipal, district, and county councils. In Novi Sad, Slovaks will receive two representatives in the city council. 3. Slovaks will put forward two substitute candidates in the elections. 4. Where Slovaks have a high number of pupils, teaching in the Slovak language will be introduced. Teaching of the Serbian language will begin only in the 3rd grade of municipal schools. Slovak teachers will teach in Slovak schools. 5. In Slovak municipalities, qualified Slovaks will have priority in filling official positions. 6. In the allocation of land, Slovaks will be equal to Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (*Slovenský týždenník*, 1925, p. 1). The *Slovak National Party* chose Andrej Labáth as its candidate-substitute in the city of Novi Sad and the Novi Sad district, and Samuel Širka as its candidate-substitute in the Banat. The two candidates were ultimately not elected, but the party hoped that the *Radical party* would be "*morally forced to at least partially comply with its obligations*" (*Naše zahraničí*, 1925, p. 57). It is clear from the given formulation that there was no question of equal status between Slovak and Serbian political representation.

The orientation towards the *Radical Party* can be assessed as a pragmatic (but also opportunistic) stance, as it had a dominant influence in the Serbian political environment. During this period, there was also significant political tension between Serbs and Croats (and within their camps), which often manifested in excesses in the form of physical violence (Pelikán, 2019, p. 322). The political situation was further complicated by the resistance of the majority Serbian society to the radical left—the communists. The pragmatic focus on cooperation with the dominant party was also appreciated by the well-known Slovak official and financier Ivan Grúnik, according to whom *"a practical, realistic policy has begun, the only one that is appropriate and beneficial to the Slovaks there in today's conditions" and supposedly "the majority of the Serbian public is starting to look at Slovaks differently and no longer sees them as an anti-state or subversive element, but as a loyal and state-building one."* According to Grúnik, Slovaks *"must always adhere to the direction of the majority of their Serbian brothers who surround them."* He also added that *"although Slovaks did not win their own representative to parliament even in the last elections, great friends of Slovaks were elected in both Bačka and Banat, who are also a guarantee that Slovak causes will not be forgotten."* After several years, the Slovak intelligentsia, mainly due to problems in education, decided on a rational policy of cooperation with the ruling party and the pursuit of mutual concessions and compromises.

The *Slovak National Party i*n 1927 was evidently in a stage of slow decline, as voters tended towards Serbian parties, from which they expected solutions to social and other problems. Chairman Ľudovít Mičátek proposed transforming the political party into a national-cultural representative of all Slovaks, regardless of political affiliation, but this proposal was not accepted. Ferdo Klátik

reacted as follows: *"Is a special Slovak political organization necessary at all? It is indeed difficult to answer, especially for those who were its enthusiastic supporters. It is impossible to artificially maintain any organization. Each organization must be a living organism. Our people have not yet shown any great interest in the Party, which means that the people do not find in it a sufficient guarantee for the fulfilment of not only their Slovak needs, but also their needs as citizens and human beings"* (Klátik, 1927, p. 163).

Probably the most significant event in the cultural history of Yugoslav Slovaks was the founding of *Matica slovenská in Yugoslavia* during the national celebrations of August 14-15, 1932. Andrej Vrbacký wrote that the founding of Matica slovenská in Yugoslavia was based on the will of Samuel Baláž, who donated over 50,000 dinars for this purpose. The founding of *Matica* received a huge response among the Slovak minority in Yugoslavia. Even before the founding of *Matica*, over 500 members had applied, of which 130 were founders contributing 1,000 dinars each. Delegates from *Matica srbská*, *Matica slovenská* from Slovakia, the Ministry of Education from Belgrade, etc. were present at the founding general assembly. Ján Kvačala, a professor from Bratislava and a native of Petrovac, was elected honorary chairman of the *Matica slovenská in Yugoslavia*, and Ján Bulík, a lawyer in Novi Sad, was elected executive chairman. Michal Topoľský became the general secretary. The cultural and national activities of the *Matica slovenská in Yugoslavia* were to be carried out in seven branches (Vrbacký, 1932, p. 215). The following year, the *Matica* already had over 20 local branches, with teachers in individual Slovak localities playing a significant role (Čechoslovák, 1933, p. 53). To be more active, the *Matica* began organizing *Days of Matica* in 1932 (for the first time in Hložany). This was primarily aimed at arousing the interest of the wider Slovak public (*Krajan*, 1934, p. 7).

Although Vojvodina Slovaks entered the Yugoslav state with their own political party, it turned out that its operation was not effective in the established political system and finally, after several years of passive development, it ended its activities. On the contrary, the organization of a national cultural institution, fulfilling several functions in the life of Slovak communities, was of particular importance.

The collapse of the Czechoslovak Republic in the context of the *Munich Agreement* and pressure from Nazi Germany significantly strengthened the cooperation between Yugoslav Slovaks and Czechs. Many Slovaks (as O. Druga pointed out) even began to emphasize their Czechoslovak orientation more. At the meeting of the *Executive Committee of the Czechoslovak Union* on April 22, 1939, the Slovaks manifested Czecho-Slovak unity and the fact that the union remained their common organizational platform (Druga, 2021, pp. 94-95). Milan Hodža's faction of the Czechoslovak foreign resistance also operated in Belgrade through the person of the lawyer Ján Bulík (transportation of soldiers and other persons to the West, intelligence activities). Evangelical priest Pavel Šuľan organized fundraisers to support the resistance movement. Slovaks from Vojvodina, Pavel Šuľan (as a military chaplain) and Dušan Čaplovič, after fleeing Yugoslavia, became soldiers of the Czechoslovak Foreign Army in the Middle East. Both survived the battle for the Libyan city of Tobruk in 1941, surrounded by the Afrika Korps (Druga, 2021, p. 215, 246).

Conclusion

The analysis of Serbian-Slovak relations in the context of the Slovak minority in the Yugoslav state during the interwar period highlights the complexity and multi-layered nature of this historical process. The emergence of a common Yugoslav state after World War I created new political, social, and cultural frameworks in which the Slovak minority had to redefine itself—not only in relation to the majority population but also in relation to the mother nation and the newly formed Czechoslovakia. The Slovak community in Vojvodina and other parts of the kingdom managed to maintain a significant degree of cultural and linguistic identity, primarily through education, church institutions, community life, and the press. These institutional supports played a fundamental role in preserving national consciousness and contributed to the stabilization of the minority community amid political changes and the centralizing tendencies of the state. At the same time, however, it cannot be overlooked that the degree of autonomy and support was conditioned by broader political circumstances, particularly the internal political development of the Yugoslav state and its national policy.

Relations between the Yugoslav state and Czechoslovakia had a significant impact on the position of the Slovak minority. Diplomatic contacts, cultural exchange, and support for educational and cultural activities created a bridge between the mother country and the community abroad. These ties strengthened the national consciousness of Slovaks in Yugoslavia, while at the same time placing them in a specific position between loyalty to the state of which they were citizens and cultural and emotional ties to their historical homeland.

The interwar period can therefore be characterised, after overcoming a certain crisis in Serbian-Slovak relations in the first half of the 1920s, as a stage of relative consolidation and institutionalisation of Slovak minority life, albeit under conditions of a changing political reality. The Slovak minority in this period profiled itself as an active and organised element of society, able to articulate its interests and adapt to shifting state and legal conditions. Research into Serbian-Slovak relations in the chosen period thus confirms that minority communities were not passive objects of history, but active agents shaping the cultural and social space of Central and Southeastern Europe. Exploring their position contributes to a deeper understanding of interwar nationalist policies, as well as to reflection on contemporary issues of identity, plurality, and intercultural dialogue.

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UDC 323.1(=16)
327::911.3(4=16)"18"
Review scientific article
Received: 13.3.2026.
Accepted: 19.4.2026.
doi: 10.5937/napredak7-6566

The generation of Pan-Slavism and Russian Slavophiles

Abstract: The issue of cooperation between Slavic peoples remains relevant to this day. Its beginnings reach way into the past, at the very least to the period of the Great Moravian state. A certain peak happened in the 19th century, particularly in connection with the revolutionary years of 1848-1849, when a wave of revolution swept across European nations, especially the Slavic peoples who endured oppression within Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy. In this process, it is noteworthy that the impulse for mutuality and cooperation among the Slavic peoples originated in Slovakia and subsequently spread to all Slavic nations. It served as a stimulus for Slavophilia in Russia as well, from where individuals came to Slovak and Czech representatives not only to gain experience, but also to admire them for their Slavic enthusiasm.

Keywords: reciprocity, Slavic, Slavophiles, Russian Slavophiles, Slovak Štúrovci, generations, Pan-Slavism, Czechoslovak society, Slavic Congress, national revival, Russia, messianism, Pan-Germanism

The publication of Kollár's *The Daughter of Sláva* in 1824 was not a publication of just any poem collection. It was an emotional and powerful warning to the Slavic peoples of the deadly danger Ján Kollár himself became aware of during his studies at the University of Jena from 1817 to 1819. Two facts were primarily intended to serve as an impetus for the awakening of awareness of Slavic unity.

In the first place, there was the wave of German nationalist fervour—Pan-Germanism—which emerged in Germany after the Napoleonic Wars, directed not so much against the instigators of wartime catastrophes as, traditionally, had been the case for thousands of years, against the Slavs. At the festivities held at Wartburg Castle, which he personally attended, he recognized the danger posed to the Slavs by German expansiveness, arrogance, and aggressiveness. It was an experience that profoundly shook him and led him to the realization that the Slavic peoples, with the exception

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of the Russians, did not possess their own states and that they would have to rouse themselves and unite against this threat.

Another factor that influenced Kollár was the remnants left after the settlement of Slavic peoples in German territories. He travelled through north-eastern Germany, tracing the vestiges of the Baltic Slavs, who, divided and lacking unity, succumbed to German aggression and expansionism. It was under these circumstances that the idea of pan-Slavism and Slavic reciprocity was formed.

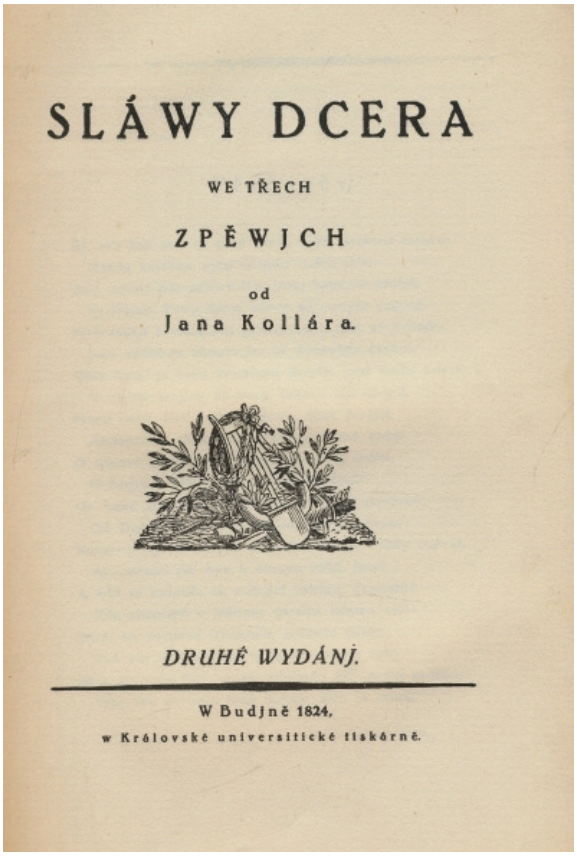
Among the motivating influences, one must also not omit J. Kollár's love for Frederika Schmidt.

He elaborated the idea of Slavic reciprocity in a programmatic form in his 1836 treatise *On Slavic Reciprocity among the Tribes and Dialects of the Slavs*. He defined Slavic reciprocity as "literary" in nature, without advocating political unification, but rather cultural rapprochement and mutual exchange: he proposed the study of Slavic languages, the establishment of chairs for Slavic languages, Slavic bookshops, literary journals, the exchange of books, the maintenance of contacts, and mutual assistance. Kollár also advocated for a common Slavic language.

Ján Kollár was an apostle of Slavic reciprocity. He held a vision of the Slavs as a Slavic super-ethnos, yet he still lacked a concrete understanding of the individual Slavic peoples and essentially oscillated between four and eight Slavic tribes and languages.

Among the principal representatives of the pan-Slavic generation are P. J. Šafárik, Ján Kollár, Karol Kuzmány, and František Palacký, who completed his secondary education in Trenčín (living with relatives of Ľ. Štúr) and the Evangelical Lyceum in Bratislava. This generation also included Samuel Roznaj, Ján Benedikt Blahoslav, Samuel Tomášik, and the so-called defenders S. Hojč, Ľ. Šuhajda, M. Kunis, and possibly K. J. Rumi. F. Palacký and K. Kuzmány later shifted toward national positions.

Kollár's *Prelude to The Daughter of Sláva* shows affinities in certain passages with *Lament of the Distressed Mother, the Dying Polish Crown* by Starowolski and *The Testament of the Son of the Crown* by K. P. Grabowski. There are also some elements connected with Jan Paweł Woronicz. This is not merely a matter of influence. By the very nature of his work, Ján Kollár inclines toward a Polish trend characterized by a lofty, visionary conception of the nation and messianism, but without radical Catholicism or Greater Polish nationalism. For this reason, he was much more devoted to the idea of Pan-Slavism. When discussing Kollár's messianism, one should emphasize its Pan-Slavic character, rather than the elevation of any single Slavic tribe, as in the case of the Poles. This constitutes the essential difference. His work has a spontaneous character, imbued with emotional fervour, and represents a geyser of inspiration and conviction in the righteousness and justice of the Slavic cause. As for the future of the Slavs, his primary orientation was toward Russia (his hopes placed in Russia are expressed in *Prelude to The Daughter of Sláva* as well as in some forty sonnets of *The Daughter of Sláva*). He opposed Pan-Germanism with Pan-Slavism, and proposed the unification of all Slavs and the establishment of a common language as early as 1821. However, Kollár's proposal to unite the Slavs into a single nation and a single language was not realistic. He drew his hopes for the Slavic future from the philosophy of J. G. Herder, who, as the


SLÁWY DCERA

WE TŘECH

ZPĚWJCH

od

Jana Kollára.

DRUHÉ WYDÁNJ.

W Budjně 1824,

w Královské universitické tiskárně.

Front page of the 1824 edition of *The Daughter of Sláva* by Ján Kollár
Photo: Wikipedia

only German thinker of the 19th century, believed that the Slavs, their way of life and culture, were developing in a healthy manner and predicted a bright future for them.

Followers of Slavic reciprocity in Poland included L. Ondrejkovič, and especially A. Maciejowski, who learned Czech in order to read Czech works in the original. Among them were also the Warsaw Slavists Kucharski and Rosciszewski, proponents of Czech-Polish ties and reciprocity, among others (Kollár, 1954, p. 58). However, the Poles found themselves in difficulties with Russia and imperial interests. For that reason, other representatives of the Polish intelligentsia adopted a more reserved attitude toward Slavdom, which also stemmed from the interests of the Polish nobility, influenced by Polish messianism and Greater Polish nationalism (Šafárik, 1963, pp. 82 ff.).

Pan-Slavic "literary" reciprocity was a theoretical expression of the possibilities of the time, in a situation in which the Slavs in the Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy found it to be the most acceptable form of Slavdom under the existing socio-political conditions. He deliberately emphasized the "literary" form of reciprocity. In §3 of the treatise *On Literary Reciprocity…*, he wrote that reciprocity "does not rest on the political unification of the Slavs." He was aware that any attempt at political unification in those circumstances would lead to complications, even jeopardizing the achievement of what little he considered realistically attainable.

It should be noted, however, that "literary reciprocity" was only superficial, since in the given social circumstances any demand for political unification would have amounted to pronouncing one's own death sentence. In his work *Sermons and Speeches II* (1844), it becomes clear what is meant by the formulation of Slavic literary reciprocity, as he states that the foundation of reciprocity must be "mutual trust, a noble, collective national feeling, moral generosity… it should make us united even when other nations or other sides happen to inflict injustice or insult upon us… Through the unity of all, a nation becomes strong within itself, free, cheerful, serious toward foreigners, dear to friends, and in times of danger formidable and invincible to its opponents… No nation has perished thanks to unity; it has made many small and weak nations great and glorious… The enemy dares to attack only what it knows to be internally divided, feeble, and decaying… National disunity is national suicide" (Kollár, 1844, pp. 441–446). Here, there is no trace left of mere literary reciprocity; rather, what is at stake is a serious political program of the ideology of Slavic reciprocity.

Ján Kollár did not elevate any single Slavic tribe above the others, in contrast to certain Polish thinkers who, in some instances, sought – through various lines of argumentation – to attribute to their own tribe the status of being "chosen" and "predestined" for a leading role in history, at times extending even beyond the framework of Slavdom. In Kollár's thought, such tendencies were associated solely with the Slavic people as a whole, which to a great extent reflected the tradition of indigenous intellectual currents. Kollár held that the Russian tribe represented a force, a power capable of realising the Slavic idea, since at that time it was the only Slavic state.

Pavel Jozef Šafárik held a markedly different view of the Slavs from that of Ján Kollár. In *History of the Slavic Language and Literature by All Dialects* (1826, only two years after Kollár's *The Daughter of Sláva*), published in German, he precisely delineated the territorial and linguistic boundaries of all Slavic languages (he did not mention Ukrainians, but he does refer to Ruthenians, albeit without the more specific designation he provided for other Slavic peoples). He distinguished ten Slavic languages and peoples (including the language of the Obodrites—the Baltic Wends), among them the Slovak language, for which he identified ten specific features that set it apart from other Slavic languages. He disagreed with Kollár regarding the establishment of a common Slavic language and the unification of Slavic languages, as well as with his division of the Slavs into tribes; nevertheless, they remained close friends and maintained correspondence. For its time, this represented the first relatively precise analysis of the Slavic whole—as a super-ethnos divided into distinct peoples. In *Slavic*

Antiquities (Prague, 1837), Šafárik presented the history of the Slavs in a manner entirely different from that of Pan-Germanic historians, while in *Slavic Ethnography* (1842) he offered a comprehensive account of Slavic ethnology, including data on Slavic peoples, their settlements, languages, ethnic boundaries, culture, and character. All of this was of considerable importance for understanding the significance of the Slavs in Europe. The work is critical in nature, devoid of any indications of nationalism, and marked instead by a clear effort to present the Slavs faithfully and accurately, as well as to define their place and importance within Europe.

P. J. Šafárik was a central figure of that generation in many respects, a fact that, for reasons unknown, is all too often overlooked in our historiography, particularly among historians. This is likely because the origins of the Slavs, including their arrival in our regions, were dated to a period much earlier than the 5th or 6th century AD – an interpretation that our historians, even today, for incomprehensible reasons, tend to neglect, relying instead on Pan-Germanic historical sources that designate the 5th–6th centuries AD as the period of our arrival in these areas.

(Note: In Germany, ideologically motivated views on the origin of the Slavs were revived during the period of the Third Reich, in accordance with the fascist theory of a pure Germanic race and the effort to expand Germanic territory eastward at the expense of the Slavs. The Slavic race was declared inferior. According to this theory, the Avars drove the Slavs into Europe. On this basis, it was concluded that the Slavs could not have arrived in Europe prior to the 5th–6th centuries AD. This theory served as a significant instrument for excluding the Slavs from European history, alongside efforts to consign their rich past to oblivion. Regrettably, these tendencies have not entirely disappeared. Our historians continue to adhere to such dating of the Slavs' arrival in our regions.)

Šafárik, already during his studies in Jena, devoted considerable attention to linguistics. He was particularly interested in the linguistic works of Wilhelm von Humboldt and became acquainted with the foundations of philological comparativism through Franz Bopp. Language and its character thus became an important instrument in the struggle for national ideals and liberation, in accordance with the idea that one's true homeland resides in language. According to the prevailing views of the time, the character and spirit of a people were preserved within its language. For this very reason, language and its character became, in the works of the Pan-Slavic generation, an organic component of Slovak–Slavic humanism and national ideology. A significant contribution in this regard was made by P. J. Šafárik in his work *History of the Slavic Language and Literature in All Its Dialects* (Slovak edition, 1992). In this work, he established the fundamental framework for understanding the Slavic languages and their classification – thereby also delineating the division of the Slavs themselves, including recognition of the Slovak language – which was accepted not only by Slavic peoples but also across the cultural sphere of Europe. This represented a comprehensible response to the efforts of German linguists and historians, as well as to those of certain Evangelical thinkers in our own milieu, who promoted the Czech language as the literary language in Slovakia. Not even Šafárik's theory of an independent Slovak language succeeded in altering their views.

The separation of the Slovak language from Czech as an independent language greatly angered the Czech intelligentsia. He precisely identified ten specific features by which the Slovak language differs from Czech and from other Slavic languages (Šafárik, 1963, pp. 318–382, §§ 46–66). He explicitly expressed the need to establish in Slovakia a "Slovak literary language that would satisfy all the just demands of the enlightened members of the nation, (because) national life must arise from the mother tongue." This was a response to Herkel's concept of a single Slavic language and to J. Kollár's idea of four Slavic tribes, in which the Czech tribe also included the Slovak one. According to P. J. Šafárik, it should be taken into account that the Slovaks are "distant from the Czechs and Moravians, as well as from the Poles and Ruthenians… It is useful to examine what is common to almost all Slovaks in pronunciation." Three years later, in a letter to Kollár, he wrote: "This half-measure, this muddling and turning about, etc, will lead us nowhere…" When he was reproached from Prague for separating the Slovak language from Czech in his *History* (*Geschichte der slawischen Sprache und Literatur*, 1826), he stated that in a new edition of his book he would go even further: "The lamenting about the separation of the Slovak dialect from Czech in my work is truly unfounded! I cannot abandon it. I will go even further in the next edition." He therefore urged J. Kollár not to deviate from the theses on which they had agreed three years earlier, namely the rule of writing more in Slovak. Deeply engaged in his historical and linguistic studies, P. J. Šafárik continued to reflect on Slavic matters. In Novi Sad in 1826, the Matica Srpska—the first of all Slavic Matica institutions—was founded; in July 1827 he wrote to Kollár that he was also considering the idea of a Slovak Matica.

Šafárik's separation of the Slovak language served as an impetus and starting point for Ľ. Štúr and his followers (the Štúrovci). He had already begun working on *History of the Slavic People and Literature in All Dialects* during his time in Jena (as well as on *Slavic Antiquities*). He completed these works only during his stay in Novi Sad. In this work, he demonstrated an encyclopaedic knowledge of facts (linguistic and historical) concerning all Slavic peoples, and with remarkable precision classified the languages according to distinct Slavic ethnic groups and their inhabited territories. He also identified the language of the Polabian Slavs, claiming that he had found remnants of the Slavic Obodrites in the vicinity of Hanover, who still spoke their language, although it had already been significantly influenced by German. He mentioned the Ruthenians, although he did not define them as a separate language or nation. Likewise, he did not distinguish or mention Ukrainians and their language.

By establishing a precise delineation of the languages of Slavic people, he provided the theoretical foundations for their respective national movements, directing their focus toward the development of a distinct ethnicity; a national subject defined by its own history. This represented a fundamental shift in the efforts of the Protestant intelligence to codify a literary language of Slovakia, ultimately paving the way for the unification of the Slovak national movement with its Catholic counterparts regarding the question of linguistic codification. Building upon this foundation fol-

lowing his return from studies at the University of Halle, and influenced by the Bernolák-school poet Ján Hollý as well as Martin Hamuljak, Ľudovít Štúr further developed these ideas. Given that P. J. Šafárik's seminal work was published in 1826, there is little doubt that Štúr was familiar with it during his studies. Indeed, by 1829, he drew upon it for his "Historical Lectures" at the Evangelical Lyceum in Bratislava, even though at that stage he remained an advocate for the Czech language rather than a distinct Slovak one.

When identifying the three primary dialects in Slovakia, P. J. Šafárik first cited a 'distinct Slovak language in the comitatus of Turiec, Orava, Liptov, Zvolen, Tekov, Novohrad, Pest, Borsod, Gemer... in which the specified (fundamental, V. T.) characteristics' of the Slovak language reside. In this manner, he paved the way for Ľ. Štúr, who adopted these very dialects as the foundation for the standardization of the Slovak language. In his work *The Science of the Slovak Language* (*Nauka reči slovenskej*), Ľ. Štúr noted: 'Slovak is spoken in its purest and most beautiful form in the Tatras themselves, within their most secluded environment: in Liptov, Orava, Turiec, Upper Trenčín, Upper Nitra, Zvolen, Tekov, Hont, as well as in a large part of Gemer...' (ibid., p. 168). Undoubtedly, the inspiration stemmed from P. J. Šafárik, though Ján Hollý and Martin Hamuljak were also instrumental in this achievement.

The work of P. J. Šafárik, specifically his *Slavic Antiquities* (1837), may be considered the pinnacle of the national-revivalist theoretical lineage of the Pan-Slavic generation. During his time in Jena, he was captivated by the lectures of the historian H. Luden—notwithstanding his disagreement with Luden's classification of the Slavs among the Germanic peoples—as well as those of H. C. A. Eichstädt, from whom he also received private instruction. He adopted their methodological approach to historical facts and maintained meticulous scholarly notes. The significance of Šafárik's *Slavic Antiquities* is further underscored by the fact that, shortly after its release, it was translated and published across numerous Slavic and non-Slavic European nations. P. J. Šafárik's scholarship secured for the Slavic peoples an equal standing among other nations in a manner that eluded serious refutation within the realm of empirical academic discourse. This was achieved despite the fact that historians in Germany and the West largely ignored Šafárik's perspectives when drafting European history—a superior or overtly hostile disposition toward Slavs that persists to this day.

Small Slovakia, historically marginalized for centuries, weakened and subjugated, emerged in the nineteenth century—owing to the efforts of the Slovak intelligentsia—as a significant force within the Slavic movement and its national-enlightenment aspirations. It became the very epicentre for the formation of the ideology of Slavic reciprocity (*slovanská vzájomnosť*), developed with the active participation of other Slavic nations. In 1823, F. Palacký relocated to Prague, followed by P. J. Šafárik in 1833. Their move partially shifted the centre of Slovak intellectual activity to Prague; concurrently, however, a vibrant centre of the Slovak movement was established in Bratislava. In 1829, the Czecho-Slovak Society was founded at the Evangelical Lyceum in Bratislava, serving as the breeding ground for the followers of Ľudovít Štúr—the *Štúrovci*; from 1835 onward, Štúr himself presided over the society. These developments culminated

in the Slavic Congress of 1848 in Prague and the revolutionary period of 1848–1849.

The importance of Slovakia and its intelligentsia to the development of the liberation movements of the Slavic peoples is further corroborated by Albert Pražák, who observed that the Czech national tradition 'is sometimes even surprising in its Slovak, and often decisive and fundamental, contribution' (Pražák, 1948, p. 262).

A number of prominent figures within the Czech national movement—including J. Dobrovský, Jan Kollár, P. J. Šafárik, and F. Palacký—hailed from Slovakia, either by descent or through their course of study, as noted by Czech authors such as T. G. Masaryk, A. Pražák, and Z. Nejedlý. In his *Dissertations in the Field of Slovak Philology* (Prague, 1937), M. Murko extensively examined the significance and contributions of P. J. Šafárik and J. Kollár to the development of national movements and Pan-Slavic reciprocity among the South Slavs, Poles, and Russians. According to Murko, "the seeds of Pan-Slavic reciprocity... were sown by Jan Kollár as the author of *The Daughter of Slava* and his treatise on the subject, and by Šafárik through his *Ethnography* and *Antiquities*" (ibid., pp. 163 and 411).

Kollár's *The Daughter of Slava*, Murko continues, 'and particularly his tract on Slavic reciprocity—which, as early as its first Czech edition, was translated by the Serbs and Croats—became a veritable gospel for the South Slavs.' A similar impact was exerted by Šafárik's *Geschichte der slawischen Sprache und Literatur* (1826) [*History of the Slavic Language and Literature*], *Slavic Antiquities*, and *Slavic Ethnography*, as well as his various articles on South Slavic literature. These works were conditioned by his long-term residency in Novi Sad (1819–1833) and his continuous study of modern South Slavic literature, which ultimately led to the posthumous publication of his work *Geschichte der südslavischen Literatur* [*History of South Slavic Literature*].

Between 1823 and 1824, and subsequently in 1829 and 1832, P. J. Šafárik repeatedly dissuaded J. Kollár from his intended move to Prague, citing the city's poor living conditions. In his correspondence, Šafárik expressed a strong aversion to Kollár's departure, writing: "I cannot reconcile myself to the idea that you might leave your homeland; I can neither grow accustomed to it nor accept it." As late as May 1832, Šafárik continued to reproach Kollár and discourage him from relocating. However, following various difficulties in Novi Sad, Šafárik himself moved to Prague in May 1833, relying on his friendship with F. Palacký—a relationship that would later become strained. Although he received offers to join the Evangelical Lyceums in both Kežmarok and Bratislava, he declined them as they required him to teach theology, a field that held no interest for him. He also received an offer from Germany, where a Chair of Slavic Studies was being established. Most notably, he was extended a prestigious invitation from the Chair of Slavic Studies in St. Petersburg, which included significant financial compensation. Nevertheless, Šafárik rejected the St. Petersburg offer; if he considered conditions in Prague to be poor, he viewed the situation in Tsarist Russia as "catastrophic." He was even less inclined to consider the German university. Ultimately, his primary objective was to remain in close proximity to the Slavic peoples within the Austrian-Hungarian Empire to support their efforts toward national liberation.

During the 1930s, Russian universities started to establish departments of Slavic studies; hungry for science and driven by the love for the Slavic people, the youth that prepared themselves for these departments scattered across Slavic countries to finish the preparations, thanks in part to state subsidies. All of them were incited by Prague, where P. J. Šafárik and other leading personalities of the Czech revival lived (from where they also went to Bratislava, where the Štúrists were active). Šafárik's *Slavic Antiquities* were already published by 1837. Bođanski, V. Grigorovich, Preys, Sreznevsky, and Pogodin—pillars of Slavic studies at Russian universities—had P. J. Šafárik as their academy.

Slavic Antiquities had not yet even been published, and already Mikhail P. Pogodin, a professor at Moscow University, was drawing the attention of the younger generation of Russian scholars to P. J. Šafárik and his work. He sought him out in Prague as early as August 1835, and in a letter from Prague he wrote home: "Šafárik moved here two years ago and is finishing his Ancient History of the Slavs (*Slavic Antiquities*), on which he has been working for several years. This work has been lacking in European literature. German writers, who study all the languages of the world, living and dead — Hebrew and Sanskrit, Chinese and Coptic — still harbour an inexplicable resistance toward the Slavic language and publish things about this language that are shameful to read. Somehow, they cannot grasp that general history cannot exist without the Slavic one and that, consequently, all their works in this field have only relative value. Šafárik's work will bring about a decisive reform in historiography and will lay firm foundations for all specialized histories of the Slavic peoples… Šafárik is, without any doubt, the foremost among Slavic philologists."

Pogodin wrote about his conversations with P. J. Šafárik: "To save the language in the mouths of the people – that is our goal… We need not worry about anything else. That is not our concern. Let it be according to God's will." Šafárik began before me to unfold the history of the destinies of the Slavs, past and present; his exposition flowed calmly, in a sublime manner. The recognition of the value of one's own people, a passionate love for them, faith in their great destiny, a kind of sacred patience that allows neither complaints nor grumbling, trust in Providence – this permeated every word he spoke. I clearly saw the difference between a fiery, energetic young man, who thinks only of tomorrow, and an experienced man who calculates in centuries; I clearly saw the difference between a firmly held belief, the mature fruit of long reflection, and a momentary impulse; I understood what it means to be subject to the moment and to master time. What a sublime speech! Šafárik did not mention a single name, a single individual; only tribes and peoples interested him. He hardly noticed everyday events and spoke of consequences spanning centuries. What noble serenity! Conviction in the nobility of things, in the significance of his calling, was reflected on his face and heard in the tones of his voice. I listened to a great man, not daring to breathe, afraid to utter a single word, watching him with reverence. It seemed to me that I was hearing a voice from beyond, that before me stood a man from apostolic times." "How is it possible for such a man to exist?" Pogodin asked himself, and he explained it as follows: "It is difficult to imagine such love for one's people and an equal engagement in the fate of all the different tribes. Special circumstances were needed for such a phenomenon to develop. One had

first to live alongside the Turks, then under Austrian rule, become acquainted with the Poles, clash with the Hungarians, in order ultimately to understand in his soul all the Slavic elements, to become, as it were, a representative of the entire Slavic people, to feel the wounds of that people, to rejoice in its joys, and to safeguard its hopes."

Russian Slavophiles admired P. J. Šafárik, unable to comprehend how he could have written such works under such difficult material conditions in Prague. Granovsky, also a professor at Moscow University, who visited Šafárik in Prague in 1838, wrote: "I do not know what is more astonishing about Šafárik, his great erudition or his great character. He is not merely an ordinary poor man, but in the literal sense does not know today what he will eat tomorrow. We admire the self-denial with which Germans dedicate themselves to scholarship, but in Šafárik this is even more remarkable, for in addition to poverty he is burdened by thousands of other circumstances that do not exist in Germany. And yet he is calm and steadfast."

Pogodin and Granovsky had already visited Šafárik as university professors. Bođanski came to Prague in 1838, together with Sreznevsky, from where he went to Bratislava; Sreznevsky had visited Bratislava after Ľudovít Štúr returned from Germany and stayed there for three months, during which he visited J. Holog. While preparing for the Slavic chair, he wrote to Pogodin: "Šafárik is for me an entire academy… an entire library, a living encyclopaedia of all knowledge about the Slavs. Every day I have the opportunity to observe this, and when I think of what all this cost under such harsh circumstances, shortages, and obstacles, I am amazed" (quotes from Russian Slavophiles according to Škultéty, 1928).

In this context, one cannot overlook the echoes of the ideology of Slavic mutuality (Pan-Slavism) in Russia in the second half of the 19th century (after the revolutionary years 1848–1849). This primarily refers to the work of N. Y. Danilevsky, *Russia and Europe*. In the second half of the 19th century, Russia was in a situation where much of the Russian intelligentsia had fallen into nihilism, doubting the meaning of Russia's historical existence. Even worse, a significant portion of the intelligentsia succumbed to these views, although it was supposed to be an example of conscious historical life of the people and to safeguard it wholeheartedly. This trend also influenced the well-known Russian philosopher V. S. Solovyov. At first, he recognised three world powers: the Muslim East, Western civilisation – which, in his view, had fallen into "dead" unity, selfishness, and anarchy. Life was to be renewed by a "kingdom of the third power," whose bearer, according to Solovyov, could only be "the Slavs and the Russian people." However, in later years, he moved to a completely different position, according to which "Russia's role rests on the capacity for national self-sacrifice." He abandoned the Slavophiles and joined the other "Westernisers," as attested by his work *Russia and the Universal Church*.

After the publication of Danilevsky's *Russia and Europe*, V. S. Solovyov declared it a "frightening theory," a view similar to that held by the part of the Russian intelligentsia that was captivated by admiration for Western culture and education, which had labelled Danilevsky's work a "spectre of Pan-Slavism" borrowed from the national movements of the Slavic peoples of Austria-Hungary and the West. This was a very dangerous trend in Russia. These tendencies among a large part of the

Russian intelligentsia did not change even after the victorious Russo-Turkish War (April 1877 – March 1878), which led to the liberation of the Slavic peoples from Turkish rule (Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia, Montenegro).

Danilevsky responded to Solovyov. He disagreed with his view "that, in the interest of achieving a 'universal' role – the creation of a world society – the Slavic (Russian) cultural and historical type should be sacrificed." Danilevsky assumed "that in the future hostility toward the Slavs would disappear, but not before the West was convinced of the invincibility of the world power in the East, which would be represented by the Pan-Slavic Union. According to Danilevsky, the Pan-Slavic union is necessary as a guarantee for maintaining the world balance," without endangering the surrounding world (Danilevsky, 2022, pp. 8–9). The work contains a series of ideas that are interesting even for today, though they will not be interpreted further here. Danilevsky was not alone in his understanding of Slavism in Russia. Alongside him, one could list numerous other 19th-century figures. Among those closest to his views were L. N. Tolstoy (they corresponded, and Tolstoy also visited Danilevsky), S. Pushkin (the poem *To the Slanderers of Russia*), N. N. Strakhov – who wrote Danilevsky's biography, F. M. Dostoevsky and his prophetic ideas about the Slavs and the West's attitude toward them, and also Y. N. Bestuzhev-Ryumin.

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UDC 821.162.4.09-141 Кузмањи К.
Original scientific article
Received: 13.3.2026.
Accepted: 15.4.2026.
doi:10.5937/napredak7-65663

Kuzmány's hymn "Glory to the Noble"

(Sketches for interpretation)

Abstract: The aim of this article is to use interpretative sketches to discover the humanistic semantics of Kuzmány's hymn "Glory to the Noble" which is, from the philosophical perspective, a classic example of Hegel's dialectic triad. The conclusion points to the still valid ideological message of this hymn (today known under the title "Who Burns for Truth") in the promotion of truth, freedom and equality.

Keywords: literature, Karol Kuzmány, hymn, interpretation, dialectic

The basic principles of the poetic of romantic lyrics are founded primarily on strong feelings and emotions which can be, apart from other genre forms, be expressed by hymns in an artistically effective manner. A hymn uses sublime words to exalt general human values manifested as goodness, nobility and beauty, as an expression of the spiritual life of an individual, a nation and even entire humanity. This form of hymn lyrics is shaped by the nature of the poet's soul which reacts emotionally to the surrounding reality. The best-known hymns and/or lyrics in Slovak literature of romanticism were written by Samuel Tomášik Hey, Slavs" (1838, in the Slovak version "Hey, Slovaks"), Janko Matúška "Lightning O'er the Tatras" (1844) and Karol Kuzmány "Glory to the Noble" (1848).

In several interpretation sketches we will try to explain the poetics of the hymn on the example of the lyrics of Kuzmány's hymn. The roots of this genre date back to ancient times, while in Christianity the hymn also became part of religious rituals such as worshipping God and saints. Kuzmány's hymn is also based on it, although its content is secular. The hymnic pathos did not appear in the works of this poet until the second period of his oeuvre – in the spiritual hymns in which he proclaimed virtue

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founded on faith, love and hope. In religion he saw the cognition of moral goodness, truth and beauty (Kuzmány, 1836, pp. 64–66), which, in broader terms, is identical to the determination of man and humanity. In his study, i.e., the theoretical debate entitled *About Beauty*, Kuzmány sketched romantic aesthetics by assigning art the function of awakening deep feelings of humanity (Hronka, 1836, pp. 61–71). In it, he started from the aesthetics of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831): "For the beauty of art originated and is reborn in the spirit, and the more the spirit and its works are located above nature and its phenomena, the more artistic beauty is above the beauty of nature. From a formal aspect, even an evil thought, which can at any time pass through a person's head, is more worthy than any part of nature; for in such a thought spirituality and freedom are always present... However, the higher moment of the spirit and its artistic beauty in relation to nature is not relative; namely, only the spirit is truly, internally all-encompassing, so that everything beautiful is truly beautiful only to the extent that it participates in this higher and insofar as it is further shaped by it. In that respect, beautiful appears in the nature only as a reflection of the beauty pertaining to the spirit, as an imperfect, incomplete form, as a way which is encompassed with its essence in the spirit itself" (Hegel, 1968, p. 10). Kuzmány adopted the concept of the human spirit from one of the philosophical creators of romanticism, but expanded this understanding to include the ethical dimension of man as a social being who is realized in the national collective. In the service of God, he first pays attention to God in order to become stronger in that segment and at the same time to be convinced about the meaning of the work that will become the fulfilment of God's will. It was from such faith that the hymn "Glory to the Noble" originated, adding a new trait to Kuzmány personality – the ability to react emotionally to events concerning the constitution of the nation. By doing so, he determined a clear direction for poetry – to help people in education, tangible and spiritual culture – which he confirms y saying "to serve one's people is my entire ability".

Although the hymn "Glory to the Noble" was published[2] before the 1848/1849 Revolution, it is not the propaganda in verse as a response to the March Revolution, but a humanistic reflection with possibly Hussite roots – "to burn for truth". According to Pavol Vongrej, Kuzmány found this key leitmotif of the hymn "during his student days in Germany, when he encountered the letter written by teacher Jan Huss from Kostnica, who had

[2] The hymn was not published separately, but within the article in which Kuzmány presented the activities of the Association, including the names of Bystrica officials. The article was aimed at awakening a broader interest in social activities, and that is why in the conclusion it invites the readers: "Let us help one another in a manly, sharp and courageous way – and God will help us. Let the scum be angry. It used to be like that, it is now and it will be like that in the world. No doubt, it had to be exactly like that. Only sacrifice can bring glory, and even the thorn crown is still a crown. Glory to the noble". The text was published on 4th April, less than three weeks after the Revolution in Pest and about two weeks after the news about the revolution reached Banská Bystrica (Kuzmány, 1848, p. 734). In the asterisk-marked reference after the text, the author adds: "It can be sung like the German 'Freiheit, die ich meine'. If we wanted someone from our country to compose the original melody and send it to us, the German song by Max von Schenkendorf "Freiheit, die ich meine" is a students' song from the Wartburg Festival in 1817, on the occasion of the 300th anniversary of Luther's Reformation.

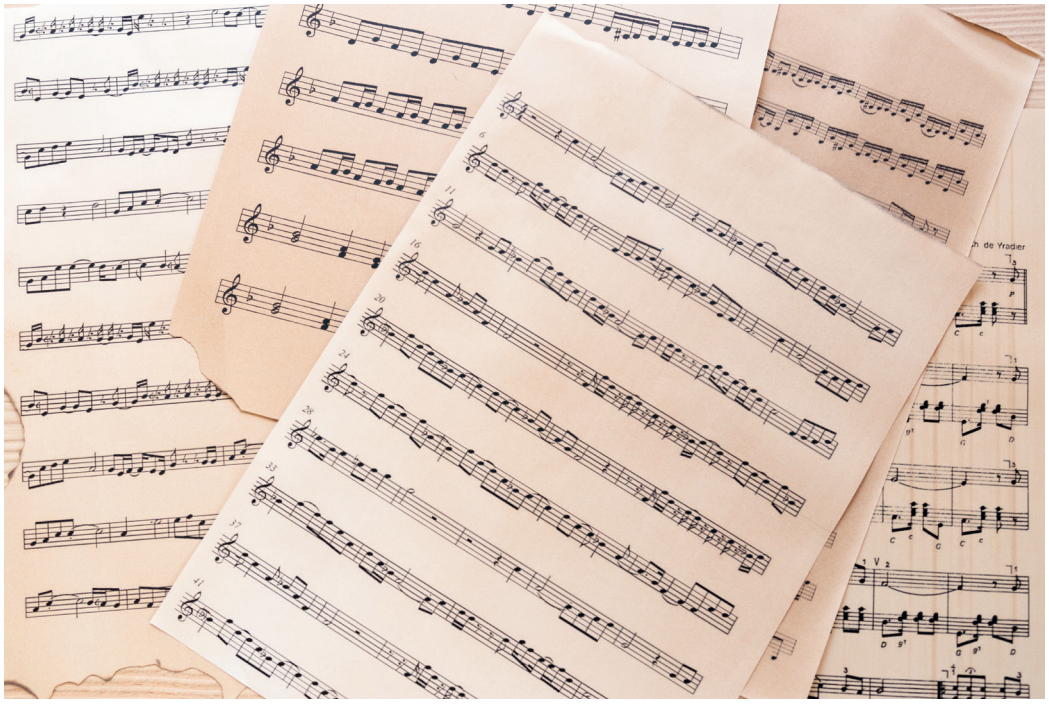

Photo: Freepik

already served him as an inspiration for the novel *Ladislav* (Vongrej, 2002, p. 32). According to his first manuscript, the hymn was written back in 1846 and entitled "Glory to Courage" (Hučkova, Hmel, 2014, pp. 12–13). The hymn was supposed to be the peak of the author's appeal and invitation to entire Slovak society that truth and nobility should remain the highest values despite numerous unfavourable historical circumstances and huge sacrifice. The hymn is an expression of universal human ideas of democracy which were so specially and precisely expressed by the motto of the French Bourgeois Revolution (1789) „Liberté, egalité, fraternité" (Liberty, equality, fraternity). Shortly afterwards, the hymn entitled "Who Burns for Truth" was written.

The hymns is a profound humanistic reflection and its roots perhaps originate from the Hussite slogan "to burn for truth". That is perhaps why, owing to this, the first verse "He who burns for truth in holy sacrifice" is still present, because of different political changes, not only in Slovak poetry but also in the entire Slovak national life – as a slogan, as a signal, as well as a hymn of its own. Its other verses have also become the alpha and omega of positive life activities.

Sixteen verses in four stanzas of Kuzmány's poem entered Slovak cultural consciousness in the spirit of the era which brought "a fresh spring

note" to poetry, based on the new codified Slovak language of Ľudovít Štúr. Joining the standardized Slovak language, Kuzmány's poem got a natural expression, thus becoming comprehensible. With a unique poetic appeal, its author invites everyone to live their lives glorifying truth, justice and fairness. For expressing this timeless poetic message, Kuzmány was inspired by German classical philosophy from Kant to Hegel, which he had adopted during his studies in Germany. He was influenced most by Professor *Jakob Friedrich* Fries (1773–1843), who emphasized the importance of direct spiritual virtues related to inner aesthetic-emotional disposition. On that basis, Karol Kuzmány strengthened his own philosophical attitudes in which, not only under the aforementioned influence, but also from his inner motivation and intrinsic personal needs, he inclined towards ethical and aesthetic values both I the life of an individual and the entire nation. He translated those values into the poem "Glory to the Noble" in the form of love for close people, for humanity in general, as well as the search for truth while singing emotionally about its beauty. Kuzmány believed that the emotional and moral side of human life was an important precondition for the unity of spiritual life and a warranty of complex understanding, as he had been taught by Professor Fries, in contrast to Kant and Hegel, and as emphasized by romantic literature too. It was from this belief that Kuzmány's orientation originated towards the exploration of the essence of feelings as a cognitive ability and art as a means of understanding those aspects of reality performing the aesthetic function. Kuzmány's hymnic verses primarily emphasize the human universal struggle for values such as equality, liberty and fraternity.

In the 1840s, in the territory under the Tatras, a revolutionary movement began for the realization of these values in social life. This revolutionary movement actually inspired Karol Kuzmány to write the verses by which he primarily wanted to encourage the young generation of Štúr's followers into a fair struggle for the establishment of general human values. That is why the expression "who burns for truth" (subsequently entering the people's consciousness as the title of the poem) was not understood as self-sacrifice in struggle, but primarily as "burning" for noble ideals. It meant a call for a democratic polemic and a dispute about reaching the truth even at the cost of sacrifice. The concept of "holy sacrifice" is here actually a synonym for love that has a chance to win the forces of evil and hatred. These motifs strengthen Kuzmány's position of romanticism. It is a lyrical expression of aspirations, will and decisiveness to put the values of truth, liberty and justice on the agenda – in the Slovak context as well.

The poem-hymn with sublime ideas of beauty, goodness and nobility, in the midst of revolutionary events of society at the time, instilled enthusiasm and courage into all brave rebels. At the same time, in the name of revolutionary ideals, the poem rejected the mundaneness and indifference that are reflected in baseness, weakness, and humiliation. Kuzmány's poetry echoed not only as a hymnic ode to humanity, but also grew into an exclamation of bitterness and warning.

In contrast to other poems from the era of romanticism, this one by Kuzmány does not have a specific lyric hero. By repeating the question "who", the author does not address anyone in particular – the addressee of his appeal is anonymous. In fact,

Karol Kuzmány, lithograph from 1866
Photo: Wikipedia

he refers to all those who act so as to raise humanity from slavery, all those who are careful not to take a wrong road but want to be the creators of their own destiny. In poetic images, typical characteristics of the romantic hero are coded and they can be "read" in the whole lyrical context of the poem. The author decided to glorify the ideal hero I his poem, which is emphasized by repeating the introductory phrase "To him my poem will ring with glory" in the final verse of each stanza.

Kuzmány's hymn is not a mere play on words or a search for unusual phrases and images, but a lyrical reflection using more sophisticated vocabulary in order to move the recipient, to win him over and influence him. Using emotional poetic imagery with a strong ethical emphasis, the author spoke to his contemporaries and influenced their opinions as well as actions. He built the strength of his idea on the classic triad structure based on Hegel's dialectic scheme – thesis, antithesis and

synthesis. Hegel derived this pattern from history itself, when he discovered the course of the "world spirit" throughout history. However, Hegel's dialectic does not need to be applied only to history. In every debate or explication we actually think dialectically.

The influence of Hegelian dialectic is visible in the very first stanza of Kuzmány's poem "Glory to the Noble". It is a classic example of the dialectic triad which has its rational logic: the first verse "Who burns for truth in holy sacrifice" denotes sacrifice – death (thesis). However, the second verse "Who dedicates his life to the rights of humanity" is a contrast – life (antithesis). The third verse "Who sheds tears over the injustice of the poor" is a poetic (emotional) supplement to antithesis, while the fourth verse is both poetic and philosophical, and it destroys the previous tension (synthesis), while simultaneously constituting an introduction for a new three-part train of thought. The stanza is a logical ending of the following verses and practically it is completely wrapped in abstract clothing – it is a general human level. It sounds like the glorification of all brave fighters who rose against evil in their defence of human rights.

The second stanza represents a dialectical alternation of the abstract and the concrete. The first verse, "When the cannons thunder, the eagle soars", indicates a specific direction. The image of the eagle here does not represent a symbol of freedom and unfetteredness, as is typical of Štúr's poetry, but rather a symbol of the Habsburg Monarchy. The syntagm "the eagle soars" hints at the specific circumstances of the time prior to the revolution. In the following verse with a general meaning "Who gives blood for dear freedom" – in addition to truth as the key work in the first stanza – Kuzmány emphasizes freedom as another ideal (worthy of sacrifice). The third verse is directly connected to the struggle for freedom, with a specific meaning encoded in the phrase "fire dragon". Kuzmány captured the motifs of Slovak folk tales, where one of the representatives of evil was a fire dragon. The second part of the verse "who covers the homeland" sounds like an appeal for salvation from the advancing evil. Once again he does not address the "fairylike" hero whose heroic act would break the spell of the "cursed land". In its former historical position, the Slovak nation was not independent and it did not have its own territory, which was a typical romantic motif of salvation and liberation of the people from centuries-long slavery. To all the saviours, as a sign of victory, the poet sings a "song" that "rings with glory". Kuzmány's desire for freedom is a romantic attitude of the poet singing in honour of the imaginary hero who will take the man from the claws of the "fire dragon".

In the third stanza, the author's focus in on the concepts of reciprocity and togetherness in a just battle for universal human values. Together with truth and freedom, there is also fraternity as an important ethical dimension of the noble struggle for truth, goodness and justice.

In the last stanza, the poet translates all these motifs into a contrasting image of heaven and hell: "[...] discovered heaven", "[...] burnt hell". According to this contrast of heaven and hell, the biblical motif becomes fertile soil for the argumentation in terms of the semantic antonyms: justice-injustice, truth-lie, good-evil etc. The poet associates noble human virtues with heaven, while everything inhuman is associated with hell. In the contradictory valuation

of the heavenly world and the world of hell, Kuzmány shows an inclination towards Ján Kollár's last two poems from *The Daughter of Sláva* (1824) – "Léthé" and "Acheron". Guided by the firm faith in God in defence of truth, freedom, and brotherhood, he calls for absolute respect for God's laws. Thus he adds the fourth value – equality of all before God. The way Kuzmány understood it, God will reward man's righteousness and nobility with heaven. Man can confidently rely on this eternal security.

Behind the romantic exaltation founded on rational logic, the hymn fully conceals the slogans of revolutionary changes in the first half of the 19th century – truth, liberty, fraternity and equality. In Europe's modern history it marked the beginning of the long struggle for the implementation of the ideals of humanity and democracy. The poet's imagery hides the reality of the past times, but with a typically romantic attitude. It reflects "the monument to the past and the foundation for the future" and, at the same time, "the romantic spark" of his poetry. Finally, Kuzmány's hymn become one of the first Slovak poetic expressions of romanticism. This is also supported by the deliberate abandonment of the metrics since, in the author's opinion, such hymns are simply not intended for the entire people but only to a certain group that has grown up in foreign schools. In its strictness, the metrics was opposed to the perceived social function of the hymn, which could be achieved solely through a natural and generally comprehensive poetic expression. Kuzmány accomplished his goal not only by rich picturesqueness, but also by efficient stylistic means and a clear composition. He used the means similar to the diction of the Old Testament prophets, who draw on the deepest corners of the emotional and often turbulent heart. To awaken the interest of those he addresses, in almost every verse he poses a rhetoric question which at the same time implies the anticipated answer. Apart from senses, it also entices the mind and the spirit. The content of the statement is strengthened in the refrain verse by the use of the anaphora, while one of the shaping means is also the suggestive sound picture. By preferring dark phonemes, he conjures up the impression of words always flowing from the depth, as if the reader from can hear the dull sound of thunder from faraway black clouds. That is why the hymn "Who Burns for Truth" is even today still sable to exalt the festive atmosphere and to act not only on senses but also on the mind, thus deeply penetrating into life, regardless of time and space.

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UDC 78(=162.4)(497.113)
Review scientific article
Received: 6.3.2026.
Accepted: 8.4.2026.
doi: 10.5937/napredak7-65516

Serbian-Slovak ties in the field of musicology through the prism of musicological conferences "Slovak Music in Vojvodina"

Abstract: The paper is dedicated to the presentation of the scientific and research conferences entitled "Slovak Music in Vojvodina" which have been held in Novi Sad since 2005, i.e., to the Serbian-Slovak ties in the field of musicology as documented in the proceedings of the eponymous conference. The paper maps two main directions. The first refers to the cultural interpenetrations and influences on the conservation and improvement of original folk sons of Slovaks in Vojvodina. The second part presents interesting facts about the activities of Slovak music composers in Serbia. The most important results include the contribution of the musicological conferences during their twenty-year existence and the need to continue these activities in the future period. Namely, this study also shows that Slovak-Serbian ties in the field of musicology have not been sufficiently explored so far.

Keywords: Slovak Music in Vojvodina, Slovak folk songs, Mikuláš Schneider-Trnavský, Viliam Figuš-Bystrý, Martin Kmeć

Introduction

Music fulfils a number of functions in the life of an individual, community, or nation within its perception, apperception, and reception. Together with the aesthetic understanding based on experience and personal attitude towards aesthetic value of a piece of music, our paper will also find significant those functions of music referring to collective identities and cultural interpenetrations. Although

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its forms have changed through time and geographic latitudes, which in itself brings an infinite number of music narratives and interpretations, the author strives to include those facts and forms that connect Serbian and Slovak musical tradition and culture. Namely, the paper presents the results of some musicological research ion the community of Vojvodina Slovaks, while the backbone of the paper is the expert analysis of a total of twenty musicological conferences held in Novi Sad in the period 2005–2024.

Musicological conferences entitled "Slovak Music in Vojvodina" were initiated with the aim of researching insufficiently explored or totally unexplored and documented topics, and of contributing to the creation of new qualities in the cultural life of Slovaks in Serbia. Musicological conferences have been held every year and their actual and tangible results include the following: in the course of 20 years, these conferences have gathered a total of 104 authors who wrote 164 scientific, expert, research, documentation and essayist papers. Along with the authors from Serbia, the authors from Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and Croatia have also published their studies. The proceedings from the conferences have been published in Slovak (as well as in Serbian, when their authors made presentations in Serbian), with the abstracts in Slovak and in Serbian. Today, these proceedings, as direct results of these conferences, constitute frequently cited sources of scientific and research papers with various cultural topics. The conferences and proceedings became thematical in 2006m and their active participants addressed the following topics: "Questions of documenting folk art of Slovaks in Vojvodina" (2006), "Research into traditional music of Vojvodina Slovaks" (2007), "Slovak music-folklore festivals – the present and the future" (2008), „Sixty years of Slovak music art on Novi Sad Radio" (2009), "Innovative methods in music pedagogy" (2010), "Choir singing of Vojvodina Slovaks " (2011), "Church music of Vojvodina Slovaks " (2012), "Slovak Vojvodina music and its visibility in Slovakia" (2013), "Musical art in human life" (2014), "Dramaturgy and management of music events" (2015), "Life and work of Martin Kmeć" (2016), "Slovak music composers acting in Vojvodina" (2017), "The contribution of Juraj Ferik Sr. and Juraj Ferik Jr. to the music life of Vojvodina Slovaks" (2018), "Research, documentation and presentation of the music of Vojvodina Slovaks" (2019), "Jubilees in the field of music and current matters in the music life of Vojvodina Slovaks" (2020), "Life and Work of Kvetoslava Čániová Benková" (2021), "Collections of Slovak folk songs from the so-called Lower Land" (2022), "To Petrovac music pedagogues and conductors Ana Medveď Sr. and Mariena Stanković-Krivak on the occasion of their life jubilees" (2023) and "Performers of vocal and instrumental classical music from the community of Vojvodina Slovaks" (2024). In addition to a large number of people from the sphere of musicology, this enterprise has also been supported by different institutions such as the Institute of Musicology of the Slovak Academy of Sciences (Ústav hudobnej vedy SAV), the Literary-Music Museum of the Slovak National Library, the People's Educational Centre from Bratislava, the Department of Aesthetics of Comenius University from Bratislava, as well as many institutions and the academic community.

As the initiator of the conferences and the author of many contributions about the music life

Collected proceedings from the musicology conferences
Photo: Vojvodina Slovak Cultural Institute

of Vojvodina Slovaks, I will allow myself to express the belief that these conferences have quite positively influenced not only the social reflection at the given moment, but also a large number of cultural-artistic societies and organizations cherishing the Slovak music tradition in Serbia. The Vojvodina Slovak Cultural Institute, which assumed the role of the organizer in the year of its foundation (2008), and previously the Cultural Committee of the National Council of the Slovak National Minority in Serbia, have contributed to the construction of a good-quality platform for the reflection of musicological topics. Owing to the institutional support, the documentation and research work of the older generation of music experts who are no longer among us was also encouraged – exactly the ones who left a deep mark and conserved many topics from falling into oblivion. However, there is a certain deficiency in the fact that we have not succeeded in creating a broader picture of the interpenetrations of cultures and actual music influences of the environment on the culture of Vojvodina Slovaks. The exception is the monograph about Stara Pazova, in which musicologist Kristina Lomen also includes Serbian songs from the repertoire of the Slovaks in Stara Pazova (Lomen, 2021, p. 192). This work can be the very first step towards researching Slovak-Serbian ties in the field of music through the prism of musicological conferences.

Studying the impact of the environment on the preservation and conservation of Slovak folk songs in Vojvodina

Within the first conference, the research text was published by the outstanding ethnomusicologist and professor at the Music Academy in Novi Sad, Nice Fracile, PhD, dealing with the topic of interpenetrations of music folklore of Vojvodina inhabitants (Fracile, 2005, p. 147). The author uses concrete examples to illustrate the musical tradition of multicultural Vojvodina and draws parallels between music elements of various minority communities and ethnic groups, as well as the majority Serbian population, in line with the diverse and specific musical tradition of Vojvodina. He states, *inter alia*, that "the musical tradition of Vojvodina is quite an inspiration al and interesting folklore area for comparative research"; however, he also emphasizes that Vojvodina has never had and does not have a special institute for folklore research, and that is why "ethnomusicological research has been left to enthusiasts whose number is decreasing nowadays". He finds parallels and interpenetrations of musical tradition primarily between Serbian tradition and the tradition of Romanians in Vojvodina (Fracile, 2005, p. 153), while he does not find any parallels with the Serbian song in Slovak musical tradition. This view can also be supported by the research results of the founder of Slovak ethnomusicology in Serbia, Martin Kmeć, MA (1925–2011), whose life work involved the preparation of the Register of Slovak folk songs sung by Slovaks in Vojvodina at the turn of the millennium. Analyzing this corpus, he classified the songs sung by Vojvodina Slovaks into the following groups: the ones brought in migration and further imported from the territory of today's Slovakia; the songs created in Vojvodina, and those taken from other nations and nationalities (Kmeť, 1974, p. 550). The fourth group is almost negligible and refers to Serbian or other melodies being accompanied by the text in Slovak.

Similar analyses were also performed by Slovak ethnomusicologists from the early 1960s, or the time of the systematic research of the musical tradition (songs, music and dances) by then-Yugoslav Slovaks of the Slovak Academy of Sciences (its Musicological and Ethnological Institute), as well as the Institute for Slovaks Living Abroad of Matica slovenská. In her study of the tradition of folk singing of Slovaks in Vojvodina, Hana Urbancova, an eminent Slovak musicologist and ethnomusicologist, provided a comprehensive review and thus defined the scientific frameworks for this topic from the perspective of Slovak musicology. In her work, she states that recent research (the second half of the 20th century) began looking at the Slovak enclaves from yet another important aspect, i.e., understanding them as integral part of the Slovak cultural tradition of the specific type, containing several cultural levels. „ In traditional singing, we can observe three basic categories: a) repertoire originating from the homeland, b) influences from other surrounding ethnicities, and c) new creations that arise directly in the enclave" (Urbancová, 2014, p. 18). However, the folk son is primarily a living organism prone to changes. It is an indisputable fact that the lyrics of the songs changed and adapted to the new environment (the names of the original Slovak places were replaced by the current places of residence) and new true or fictional stories and experiences

and events describing the new environment quite soon appeared in songs. These changes are highlighted by Kristina Lomen in her research of folk songs (Lomen, 2023, p. 197).[2] The changes did not occur solely in the domain of the language; on the contrary, oral tradition led to the melodical parts of the songs as well (in comparison to their original form). The feature of the corpus, i.e., the spirit of the songs has been preserved, but even Martin Kmeć himself, when comparing the songs sung (recorded) in Slovakia with those sung by Slovaks in Vojvodina, divides the aforementioned Slovak Vojvodina corpus into nine subgroups. One group, for example, contains the same melodies and different lyrics, while another group contains the same lyrics and different melodies, various closer or less similar melodical or textual versions, while in some cases only the summary was identical.

This is exactly the reflection of the influence of the new environment on the authentic Slovak music culture that, according to ethnologist and professor Jan Boćik, PhD, has not been sufficiently explored, while the "level of interpretation and theoretical elaboration of the existing ethnological knowledge is still at an unsatisfactory level" (Botík, 2013, p. 10). Boćik emphasizes the syncretism and necessity of perceiving Slovak traditional culture as a cultural system in which facts of three-fold origin have been accumulated: 1. those acquired in the homeland, 2. those taken from the multiethnic and multicultural population of Vojvodina, particularly from the majority Serbian people, and 3. those created by the members of the Slovak community in the conditions of the newly-settled population of Vojvodina. In that context, he refers us to the capital works from the field of ethnology, for example the book by ethnologist Mila Bosić, who described the traditional national costume of Slovaks in Vojvodina, and by linguist Jozef Štolc, who described the Slovak dialects in Vojvodina, thus "showing that in the Slovak environments in Vojvodina, a magnificent convergent process appeared in which the variety of dialects and national costumes brought by the settlers from their birthplaces in the so-called "Upper Land", first merged and then developed into new local linguistic and costume variants with specific elements of the so-called "Lower Land" (Botík, 2013, p. 15). In this context it is also possible to observe the corpus of folk songs of Vojvodina Slovaks. From the cultural aspect of today's Slovakia, this corpus may be seen as a separate Slovak region of the so-called "Lower Land". From the perspective of Serbian musical tradition, this phenomenon should be observed as rich, unique and unrepeatable cultural heritage that is, thanks to the continued care for its preservation, deeply rooted, preserved and promoted in its original form.

Slovak individuals from the world of music who lived and worked in the territory of Serbia

The conference "Slovak Music in Vojvodina" has brought a number of findings about the life and work of composers and music workers who enriched their environment with their work in the field of music. The most significant topics in that

[2] The publication is available on: https://www.sav.sk/journals/uploads/11270818Musicologica2_2023_03_Lomen.pdf

context include the texts related to Slovak composers Viliam Figuš-Bystrý (1875-1937) and Mikuláš Schneider-Trnavský (1881-1958) and their work in the territory of today's Vojvodina. These two members of the so-called older generation of Slovak composers, who deserve the credit for the creation of Slovak national artistic music, actually met in Veliki Bečkerek. The cultural public in Serbia first learnt about it owing to Assistant Professor Mihail Babjak, whose text "From a Padina organist to a famous composer" was published in the journal for culture and literature *Novi život* (Babiak, 2005, p. 119). Afterwards, our conferences presented a series of texts about both of these composers, with a special emphasis on the notes in which they described their life in the new environment (Sklabinski, 2020, p. 94). Namely, Viliam Figuš-Bystrý, the composer of the first Slovak folk opera *Detvan*, lived and worked in Slovak-inhabited Lájosfalva (today's Padina) in Banat (in the period 1903-1907). On the other hand, Mikuláš Schneider-Trnavský, the holder of the title of the national artist and the author of numerous compositions, primarily solo songs for voice and piano, got his first job in Veliki Bečkerek in 1906-1907. He arrived in Banat at the invitation by later well-known Serbian composer Petar Konjović (1883–1970), with whom he had studied at the Prague Conservatory.[3] For six months he was the leader of the Serbian Church Singing Society "Beseda" in Veliki Bečkerek and with this short but intensive activity he raised the cultural and artistic scene in this town to an enviable level. Although this does not refer to the long period of their activities in Banat, it was in Bečkerek that Mikuláš Schneider-Trnavský performed Figuš-Bystrý-s *Ballad for voice, choir and orchestra, Mrs. Rakoczy's Op. 31* (Rákociné op. 31), the success of which is described by both composers in their memoirs. This topic was dealt with by many authors from Serbia and Slovakia, primarily by the first conductor of Vojvodina Slovaks, Juraj Ferik Jr. (1935–2018). For the purpose of the conference held in honour of composer M Mikuláš Schneider-Trnavský, the author of this text extended the research onto the institutions in Zrenjanin and, owing to the Archive of the Town of Zrenjanin, she provided the excerpts of the daily *Torontal*, translated into Serbian, which bear witness to the successful concert season of Mikuláš Schneider-Trnavský in Veliki Bečkerek (Sklabinski, 2020, p. 91).

Composer Tibor Andrašovan (1917–2001) also lived briefly in Novi Sad, where he arranged Slovak folk songs, practised them with the Radio Novi Sad Orchestra and, in that respect, gave a great contribution to the Slovak production of this important media house. The solo performer of Slovak folk songs Lyudmila Bereďiova-Stupavska also cooperated with Tibor Andrašovan and recorded an extensive interview with the composer which was published exclusively at the conference and then in the proceedings of the conference (Beredіová-Stupavská, 2017, p. 45). From the interview, we learn about the composer's rich international career, as well as about his feelings on the first visit to Petrovac in 1937, and then to Novi Sad, at the end of the 1980s.

[3] Also available at: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1nJyexvdVRIMJhJ-m-ZhMzZ7qsEa2RPcI/view, p. 91

Participants of the 13th Slovak Music in Vojvodina Conference, 27.11.2017. Novi Sad
Photo: Vojvodina Slovak Cultural Institute

Within the conferences, we have also spoken about the composers from the ranks of Vojvodina Slovaks, such as Ján Podhradský (1891–1955), the author of the operetta *A beautiful, newly painted cradle*, one of the first works in this music genre of Slovak music literature. Podhradský was an important promoter of the Slovak music life in Vojvodina and, guided mainly by the model of the Serbian tradition of the time and the performance of plays with singing, he personally introduced musical numbers into theatre plays in a large number of Slovak communities (Stankovićová – Kriváková, 2017, p. 67).

With great pleasure we invited Mirko Šouc, an eminent composer from Zemun, who attended the conference at the age of 85. Mirko Šouc carefully listened to the lecture of his daughter and conductor Vesna Šouc, who explained the Slovak origin of this family and presented his broad creative and interpretative opus. The participants of the conference did not hide their delight after the reproduction and live performance of Mirko Šouc's compositions and thanks to this event he gained huge recognition by the members of the community from which he originated. As a reminder, Mirko Šouc is an academically educated composer and

performer who ranks among the founders of jazz music in the territory of ex-Yugoslavia. The first jazz theme "Contrasts" was composed by Mirko Šouc in 1948 and ever since his compositions can be found on the repertoires of the Radio-Television Belgrade Jazz Orchestra, the jazz orchestras of Ljubljana and Zagreb, as well as many other orchestras from whole Yugoslavia. With Mirko Šouc Orchestra he had several thousand concerts in the country and abroad. He dedicated significant part of his work to children, as a composer, arranger, conductor and performer (Šouc, 2017, p. 15). He was granted numerous awards and prizes, while his song "The Bumblebee Swore an Oath" is known by all generations from the territory of ex-Yugoslavia.

At the conference dedicated to the life and work of Kvetoslava Čániová Benková, our guest was Miroslav Dudik, an exceptional violin player, long-standing conductor of the Orchestra of Folk Art instruments of Slovak Radion in Bratislava. Among other things he recalled the fact that the music editor Kvetoslava Benková had invited him to perform with his newly-founded orchestra at the Yugoslav festival "Hey, Blue Danube" in Novi Sad in 1978. He remembered how this orchestra, founded only two years earlier, gained its first international experience and on that occasion also visited the Slovak communities in Kisač, Petrovac and Stara Pazova.

The already mentioned first conductor from the ranks of Vojvodina Slovaks Juraj Ferik Jr., gave a significant contribution to the development of the music life in Niš with his ten-year engagement as the conductor of the Niš Symphony Orchestra. At the conference, this was spoken about by Nebojša Todorović, Serbian musicologist and full professor at the Faculty of Arts in Niš. Todorović analyzes in detail the rich concert activity of Juraj Ferik Jr. who was the chief conductor of the Niš Symphony Orchestra, the teacher in the Music School "Doctor Vojislav Vučković", organizer and social worker (Todorović, 2023, p. 152). Juraj Ferik Jr. worked in Niš for ten years (1970-1980), performing the last concert with this orchestra on 9th January 1980, and then transferred to the Novi Sad Opera where he continued his conductor career. In 1975, Juraj Ferik Jr. was also one of the founders of the Niš Music Festival of classical music, which has been held to date.

A great connoisseur of Slovak folk songs in Vojvodina, as well as a teacher, composer and the founder of the musicology of Slovaks in this territory, Martin Kmeć, MA, also worked at the Pedagogical Academy in Negotin, and then at the Pedagogical Academy in Novi Sad. Martin Kmeć will be remembered primarily for his extensive opus of the works with the topic of Slovak folk songs in Vojvodina. His extraordinary activity is also visible in the work of professional organizations such as the Folklorists' Association of Yugoslavia, which he joined in 1960 and performed the function of its president in the period 1989-1991. As of 1987, scientific conferences were also organized by the Folklorists' Association of Vojvodina, which publishes the proceedings entitled *Folklore in Vojvodina*, in which Martin Kmeć also publishes his expert papers on a regular basis. Martin Kmeć has shown his immense knowledge of Slovak folk songs in the texts published by the association "Spring on the Čenej Farmsteads", which organizes symposiums with the participation of experts with different scientific specializations.

The above-listed fragments about Slovak music figures confirm that numerous places in Serbia were not merely temporary places of residence for Slovak authors, but the space for mutual cultivation. Their presence has left a unique mark in Serbian institutions and cities, and that mark constitutes the basis of rich music heritage that still defines the identity of Vojvodina Slovaks today. On the one hand, it is a contribution to the Serbian cultural environment while, on the other hand, it is the enrichment of the artistic sensibility of the people creating in this area.

Conclusion

This short and succinct excursion into the issue of Slovak-Serbian cultural ties in the field of music may be an inspiration for more intensive research and the creation of new cooperations. In the future, further systematic research should also be dedicated to the in-depth musicological analysis, but also to the processing of archive sources, particularly the press and personal correspondence that may reveal so far unknown details about the reception of Slovak music in the Serbian environment. Finally, it seems necessary to use more intensively the method of oral history, i.e., recording the testimonies of live witnesses and selfless music workers, whose personal experience forms an irreplaceable bridge between the past and the present of our music culture. Exactly this research method has proved quite efficient with the passage of time.

It would not have been possible to cover all the aforementioned fragments if it had not been for the organized approach and twenty gatherings of enthusiasts and professionals who with their selfless work contributed to the research, documentation and promotion of one of the widest-spread fields of culture and art – the field of music. It will entail new ideas, needs and enthusiasm to make a brave step into a new twenty-year chapter of the conference "Slovak Music in Vojvodina".

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UDC 821.162.4.09
821.163.41.09
930.85(497.11:437.6)
Review scientific article
Received: 19.1.2026.
Accepted: 31.3.2026.
doi: 10.5937/napredak7-64196

The Contemporary Serbian-Slovak Literary Dialogue

Abstract: The Serbian-Slovak relations form a longstanding bridge between the two Slavic nations. The roots of these relations go as far back as the 19th century and were originally inspired by national revival and collective effort to gain national independence. Literary translations stand for a significant aspect of cultural ties, while extensive translation activities make sure that there is both deep understanding and cultural dialogue. The role of translators is important for the purpose of preserving this form of familiarity. There has recently been an increase in the number of translated works, which has been confirmed by meticulously reviewing the Combined Catalogue of the National Bank of Serbia, the Matica Srpska Library, and the Slovak National Library. Thanks to a large number of translators and publishers, the Serbian-Slovak literary dialogue in recent decades has been on the substantial increase.

Keywords: Serbian-Slovak ties, literary translation, translators, Slovak literature, Serbian literature

Serbian-Slovak literary relations are one of the most long-standing and fruitful bridges between the two Slavic nations, with deep roots going as far back as the 19th century and continuity that has persisted to date. Not only are these relations cultural but they are also social-political, arising from national revival, Pan-Slavic ideals, and following this, a bilateral (cultural, economic, and political) cooperation.

A particular significance in nurturing relationships among nations is that of literary translations, which over centuries have enabled the exchanges of cultural values – Romanticism to contemporary neo-Modernist and post-Modernist fiction, translated from one language to the other and vice versa, ensures that there is a dialogue between these two nations. "Translating is a complex of process of creating texts. What happens in the process,

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is a confrontation between two cultural systems, both on a communication level as well as a text-creating one [...]. A blending of cultural elements is also the consequence of confrontation generated in this manner" (Popovič, 1975, pp. 186-187).

Although over a period two centuries (next year we will celebrate 200th anniversary of a translation of the first Slovak literary text into the Serbian language) – since the mid-19th century to date – the intensity was volatile since it depended on social-political circumstances, but also on some prominent figures emerging – such as translators, who represent the most reliable form of bilateral collaboration – in this segment, there has been a continuous cultural exchange. This is, *inter alia*, confirmed by a special publication entitled *Translators' Dictionary with a bibliography of translations from Macedonian, Serbian, Croatian and Slovenian*, whose main aim is to identify and locate all translators who did any work in this relation. the *Translators' Dictionary* was compiled by Ján Jankovič, and therefore there is a need for it to be updated because two decades have passed since its original release (Jankovič, 2005).

The history of translations form Serbian to Slovak and vice versa first started in the first half of the 19th century, at the time of Classicism and Romanticism. Multiple authors wrote about this: Andrej Vrbacký (Vrbacký, 1968), Ján Kmeť (Kmeť, 1987), Jozef Valihora (Valihora, 2001), Michal Babiak (Babiak, 2017), Michal Harpáň (Harpáň, 2022), Adam Svetlík (Svetlík, 2023), etc. Codification of the languages, but also the strengthening of political ties of the two nations are connected with national revival and the ideas of Slavic mutuality, whose originators were Ján Kollár (1793–1852) and Pavel Jozef Šafárik (1795–1861). The first literary translation between these two languages was from Slovak into the Serbian language. The translation in question were four sonnets from *The Daughter of Sláva* by Ján Kollár, which was published in *The Chronicle of Matica Srpska*. These were translated by Georgije Magarašević (1793–1830), the first editor of the *Chronicle*. The first Serbian into Slovak translation was the poem *Ode* by Lukijan Mušicki (1777–1837), published in 1837 in the journal *Chronicle* [publisher Karol Kuzmány (1806–1866), poem translated by Michal Miloslav Hodža (1811–1870)].

What was predominantly translated at the time was poetry of various authors and Serbian epic poetry – which were mainly published in the most prominent journals, such as *The Chronicle of Matica Srpska*, *The Danica*, and other magazines. What was a characteristic of translations at the time was that the translators kept forms which were as close to the originals as possible, inspiring in this manner Pan-Slavism, which additionally contributed to depicting the colours of local settings. Thanks to this, the Slovak language adopted the words such as *gusle* (a bowed single-string musical instrument), *guslar* (person playing the gusle), *hajduk* (freedom fighter), *pasha*, *aga*, etc. The first translations of a piece of prose into the Serbian language was *Serbianka* by Ján Kalinčiak, (1822–1871), published in 1848 in the *Chronicle*, and translated by Simeon Filipović. In the late 19th century, with Realism coming on the scene, prose was prevalent in literature, which necessarily reflected on translations. The stories of Svetozár Hurban-Vajanský, Martin Kukučín, Jozef Gregor Tajovský, etc. were translated, with translators being mainly Slovaks from the East Slovak Lowland, such as Albert Martiš (1855–1918), Jozef

Holúbek (1883–1956), but also Serbs who lived in largely Slovak populated regions, such as was Jovan Vučerić (1874–1935) from Kisač, who translated the novels *Flying Shadows* and *The Dry Branch* authored by Svetozár Hurban-Vajanský. There were many more translations from Serbian into Slovak, primarily thanks to the prolific translator Vladimír Mičátek (1871–1922), who translated the works of more than seventy South Slavic authors. He mainly translated the works of Serbian (not so much Croatian) Realism writers (Ljubomir Nenadović, Stevan Sremac, Janko Veselinović, Milan Milićević, Josip Eugen Tomić etc.).

After 1918 and the dissolution of Austria-Hungary, the tendency for a higher number of translations in favour of Serbian works of literature into the Slovak language became even more striking. Andrej Vrbacký, Juraj Mučaji, Ján Čajak mladší (Junior), and many other translators from Vojvodina translated during this period hundreds of literary works of contemporary Serbian and Yugoslav authors. Their translations were at the time published in the then Slovak press in Czechoslovakia (*Národní noviny* /People's Newspaper/, *Slovenské pohľady* / Slovak Views/, Živena /ancient Slavic goddess of life and fertility/, etc.) but also in Slovak newspapers and magazines in Vojvodina (*Národná jednota* / National Unity/, *Národný kalendár* /National Calendar/, and *Náš život* /Our Life/).

Serbian translations of Slovak prose were somewhat less frequent but what did eventually was compiled were two books, such as *Contemporary Slovak Stories* (1937) and *The Anthology of Western Slavs' Contemporary Storytellers* by Jaroslav Mali (1938), in which some of the translators were Đorđe Živanović and Lenard Leopold.

During the Second World War and some years after, but especially during the Informbiro Resolution period, in which the relations between Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia were severed, and consequently any contact between Slovak and Serbian literatures, translations of Slovak-Serbian literary works came to a halt (Svetlik, 2023, p. 33).

In the late 1950s and 1960s, Serbian-Slovak literary relations saw a revival. The capital works of writers such as Branko Ćopić (translators: Daniel Dudok, Milina Bartoková, Branislav Choma) and Meša Selimović (František Lipka) were translated. In turn, Slovak authors were being translated into Serbian, e.g., Alfonz Bednár (Olga Binenfeld), Jaroslava Blažková (Biserka Rajčić), Dominik Tatarka (Petar Vujičić), Ladislav Mňačko (Milan Čolić), Rudo Moric (Mirjana Cijan, Oljga Šafarik), Hana Zelinová (Petar Andrić), Klára Jarunková (Jasna Novak), but there were also some anthologies of selected poetry *Contemporary Slovak Poetry* (collected, translated, and adapted by Biserka Rajačić), *Bratislava Spring: Ten Bratislava Poets Talking About Love* (Ján Beran) and *A Compilation of Czech and Slovak Literature* (Krešimir Georgijević).

In the 1970s and 1980s, bilingual works of Vojvodina Slovaks were thriving (Paľo Bohuš, Viera Benková, Vićazoslav Hronjec, Miroslav Demák, etc.), which additionally deepened these cultural and literary relations. In those years, plenty of translation work was also done: Ľudo Ondrejov (translated by Juraj Tušiak), Mária Jančová (Biserka Rajčić), Rudo Móric (Ján Beran), Klára Jarunková (Jasna Novak), Vladimír Reisel (Biserka Rajčić), Vincent Šikula (Geno Senačić) but the same was the case with Serbian into Slovak translations, and so Ivo Andrić's, Nobel Prize winner's, works were trans-

lated (Tomáš Štrba, Ivan Minárik, Branislav Choma, Jarmila Samcová, Andrej Vrbacki, Mihal Filip, František Lipka), Milorad Pavić (Jarmila Samcová), who was later translated much more, and Miloš Crnjanski (Michal Nadubinský, Ludmila Chytilková, Peter Cibula, František Lipka). In this period, an interesting comparative study, authored by Živan Milisav, *The Roots of Serbian and Slovak Comedy Writing* was published, in which he compared the dramas of Sterija and Chalupka.

In the past twenty years, translations from and into these two languages has peaked. No matter how frowned upon it is to write about one's own work, in this paper, for the sake of objectivity and a comprehensive view of the subject matter, I have to mention my own translations (Zdenka Valent Belić). So far, the translations of more than seventy books have been released, these mainly consisting of literary classics' fiction: Vladimír Balla (*Big Love*), Etela Farkašová (*The Screenplay*, *It Has Happened*, *Saving the World According to G.*, *Flying Lessons*), Monika Kompaníková (*White Spots*), Pavol Rankov (*It Happened on the First of September*), Rudolf Sloboda (*Reason*), Dušan Mitana (*End of the Game*, *Patagonia*), Dušan Dušek (*Cold Hands*), Vincent Šikula (*Ornament*), Anton Baláž (*The Camp of Fallen Women*, *Just One Spring*), Dušan Šimko (*Gubbio*, *The Japanese Divan*, *Marble and Granite*, *Juan Zabala Marathon*), Pavol Dobšinský (*Gold Book of Slovak Fairy Tales*, *The Magic Mill*), Beata Balogová (*Cornelius*), Ivana Dobrakovová (*Mothers and Truckers*), Barbora Hrínová (*Unicorns*), Nicol Hochholczerová (*This Room is Impossible to Eat*), Miroslava Kuľková (*Balkan Hotel*), Uršuľa Kovalyk (*Pure Animal*), Katarína Kucbelová (*The Missing Colour Blue*), Stanislav Rakús (*The Unwritten Novel*), Alena Sabuchová (*The Whisperers*), Arpád Soltész (*The Swine*), Jozef Štefánik (*One Man, Two Languages*), Svetlana Žuchová (*Scenes from the Life of M.*), Michal Hvorecký (*The Danube in America*), Gustáv Murín (*Return to the Future*), Ján Hrušovský (*The Case of Lieutenant Seeborn*), Juraj Šebesta (*Getting Sober*), etc. More significant translations also include the anthology of contemporary female prose *Minerva's Feather*, which includes: Viera Benková, Etela Farkašová, Helena Dvořáková, Zlata Matláková, Irena Brežná, Mária Bátorová, Jana Bodnárová, Rút Lichnerová, Tamara Archlebová, Eva Maliti Fraňová, Zuzana

What scaled up translations from Slovak into Serbian was a very important event that took place in 1996, i.e., the establishment of the SLOLIA Committee (Slovak Literature Abroad). It is a system of grants that operates within the Slovak Literary Centre in Bratislava and funds the translations of Slovak literary works into foreign languages. Since the establishment of SLOLIA, grants extended by this organisation ensured the publication of nearly one thousand pieces in thirty-three languages, of which some one hundred were translations into Serbian (fiction, poetry, drama, and children's literature). The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Serbia has also supported translations from Serbian into Slovak, mainly in the second decade of the 21st century.

Kuglerová, Daniela Kapitáňová, Jana Juráňová, Jana Judinyová, Katarína Gillerová, Zuzana Mojžišová, Ľubica Suballyová, Veronika Šikulová, Uršuľa Kovalyk, Beata Balogová, Eva Borušovičová, (Maxim E. Matkin), Vanda Rozenbergová, Jana Beňová, Renáta Bojničanová, Svetlana Žuchová, Mária Modrovich, Mariana Čengel Solčanská, Monika Kompaníková, Adriana Bojsová, Jana Micenková, Alexandra Salmela, Ivana Dobrakovová, Barbora Hrínová, Michaela Rosová, Tamara Šimončíková Heribanová, Alena Sabuchová, Dominika Moravčíková, and *Nicol Hocholzerová*.

Michal Harpáň is among the most prolific translators of Slovak fiction into the Serbian language. He translated: [Pavel Vilikovský (*The Cruel Engine Driver*, *A Horse Upstairs, A Blind Man in Vráble*, *Fleeting Snow*, *Vanished passion*, *The First and Last Love*, *The Magic Parrot and Other Kitsch*, *The Last Horse of Pompeii*), Dušan Kužel (*The Lamp*), Marek Vadas (*A Bad Neighborhood*, *The Healer*), Balla (*In the Name of the Father*), Ivana Gibová (*Grandma*), Stanislav Rakús (*Regretfulness*), Soňa Uriková (*A Reason to Be Happy*), Dušan Mitana (*Late-night News*, *My Native Cemetery*), Dušan Šimko (*Esterházy's Lackey*), Ivan Huđec (*Tales from Slavic Myths*), etc.], but what deserves to be especially noted is the anthology *The Black Colour of Happiness*, which he included twenty-two prose writers (Jaroslava Blažková, Dušan Mitana, Pavel Vilikovský, Vincent Šikula, Rudolf Sloboda, Stanislav Rakús, Dušan Dušek, Peter Pišťanek, Peter Jaroš, Dušan Taragel, Ján Johanides,Alta Vášová, Ladislav Ballek, Jana Juráňová, Pavel Hrúz, Milan Zelinka, Ivan Habaj, Martin Bútora, Jozef Puškáš, Milka Zimková, Andrej Ferko, and Igor Otčenáš).

As regards the translations of Michal Harpáň, it is also important to mention translations of theoretical works in the field of literary studies by Peter Zajac (*Pulsing of Literature*), *František Miko* (*Work, Communication, Culture.*), Peter Mihalovič (*Rozprava o westerne*) but first and utmost is the anthology *Models and Discourses of Literary Studies: A Selection of Recent Slovak Literary Studies* published by Službeni glasnik.

Prose is also translated by Martin Prebujila, who has so far published translations of fiction by Ivana Dobrakovová (*Toxo*), Rút Lichnerová (*The Feast*), Katarína Mikolášová (*Legends from Unerneath Vitorog*), Ľuboš *Jurík* (*Dubček, A Year Longer Than a Century*), Jozef Banáš (*I'll Break Through – A Man of Iron Will*), and Veselin Dželetović (*The Serbian Heart of Johan*).

Among a younger generation of translators of Slovak prose into Serbian are Ivona Dimitrijević [Vanda Rozenbergová (*I Ate Lautrec*), *Uršula Kovalyk* (*The Equestrienne*), Dominika Moravčíková (*The Deer House*)], Teodora Belić [Jana Micenková (*Blood Is Only Water*), Jana Bodnárová (*Patchwork in White*), *Edita Povolni Kmečko* (*Boat Number Five* by Monika Kompaníková)], while the occasional translators are also Vjerka Hrubik (*Rivers of Babylon by Peter Pišťanek*), Ana Žikić (*Seeing People Off* by Jana Beňová) and others.

As regards Slovak dramatists, there are translations of dramas by Milan Richter (*Kafka and Kafka*, *The Short and Unhappy Life of Marilyn Monroe*), as well as the anthology *New Slovak Drama*, edited by Vladislava Fekete and translated by Zdenka Valent Belić, which included ten Slovak dramatists (Jana Juráňová, Valéria Šulcová, Roman Olekšák, Samuel Chovanec, Viliam Klimáček, Peter Lomnický,

Photo: Freepik

Dodo Gombár, Peter Pavlac, Peter Scherhaufer, and Vladislava Fekete).

Slovak poetry is somewhat more rarely translated than prose but, in any case, more frequently than drama. Translations of poetry collections by single authors were published by Ján Ondruš (*Two-headed dummy*), Ivan Štrpka (*News from the Apple*), Paľo Bohuš (*Expulsion*), Milan Rúfus (*Deposition from the Cross*) – all translated by Vićazoslava Hronjeca, as well as a selection of Seven Slovak Surrealists, which included the poetry of the following poets: Rudolf Fabry, Štefan Žáry, Ján Rak, Pavel Bunčák, Vladimír Reisel, Július Lenko and Ján Brezina.

Slovak poetry has been translated into Serbian by Miroslav Demak and Martin Prebudila and Miroslav Demák together, as follows: Milan Richter (*What You Have Written, Secrets Wide Open*), Štefan Cifra (*What with Such a Man?*) and Miroslav Bielik (*Time Is the Silent Messenger of the Mind*), while Prebudila and Ladislav Čáni jointly translated a collection of poems by Jozef Urban (*Life's a Champ But I'm a Bigger One*), with whom he also compiled an *Anthology of Slovak Poetry in Serbia: Second Half of the 20th and Early 21st Centuries*.

Miroslav Demák was the sole translator of poetry by Ján Zámbor *(Love Me, the Bee Wings Are*

Thinner), Erik Ondrejička *(On the Inner Side of Eyelids*) and *Juraj Kuniak (Amonit)*, while Prebudila was the sole translator of Ľubomír Feldek *(A Tale About Andersen and the Danube Fairy, Smiling Father, The Rehearsal)*, Miroslav Bielik *(Even If I Weren't, Bridges Into the Unknown),* Jozef Leikert *(From the Depths of the Grass of the Sky)*, Peter Mišák *(We Are Only water),* Jaroslav Rezník *(Wisdom of Autumn Leaves)*, Katarína Džunková *(Prediction of the Past)*, Dana Podracká *(Self-portrait with the Bed of Procrustes)*, Daniel Hevier *(Electronic Clown)*, while Ladislav Čáni translated a collection of poems by Mária Ferenčuhová (*Immunity*) and two collections of poems by Martin Prebudila *(If You Know What I'm Talking About, Everything Is Light).* Katarína Mosnáková Bagľašová translated a collection of poems by Ján Tazberík (*Lower Point of Light*).

Zdenka Valent Belić translated poetry by Olga Gluštíková (*Atlas of Biological Women*) and jointly with Miroslav Demák made a compilation of selected works *A New Spiritual Bridge 20 + 20*, which apart from Serbian authors, also included the national minority writers from Novi Sad, such as: Miroslav Aleksić, Joan Baba, Blagoje Baković, Alen Bešić, Đeze Bordaš, Nataša Bundalo Mikić, Ladislav Čanji, Đorđe Despić, Zoran Đerić, Gordana Đilas, Simon Grabovac, Vladimir Kopicl, Ivan Negrišorac, Franja Petrinović, Olena Plančak Sakač, Dušan Radak, Selimir Radulović, Nenad Šaponja, Stevan Tontić, and Zdenka Valent Belić. Probably the most significant recent publication is anthology of Serbian and Slovak poetry is *Slavic Tenderness*, co-published in 2024 by Matica Srpska and the Slovak Literary Centre.

What has contributed to a steep increase in the number of translations, in addition to financial support provided by the SLOLIA Commission, which is active within the Slovak Literary Centre, is a substantially growing interest in Slovak literature, which has been shown by various publishers. Among the reputable publishers which on a regular basis publish translations into the Slovak language are the following: Agora (Zrenjanin), Prometej (Novi Sad), Arhipelag (Belgrade), Kreativni centar (Belgrade), Akademska knjiga (Novi Sad), Arhiv Vojvodine (Novi Sad) and CompuTech (Belgrade), and occasionally the publishers such as Službeni glasnik (Belgrade), Arete izdavaštvo (Belgrade), Zmajeve dečje igre (Novi Sad), Laguna (Belgrade), Sezam buka (Zrenjanin), Smederevske pesničke jeseni (Smederevo), Ključa izdavaštvo (Belgrade), Matica srpska (Novi Sad), Pčelica (Čačak), Književna radionica Rašić, etc.

The opposite direction of this literary route also shows vibrant activity. Apart from a short period after the Second World War, Serbian literature was frequently translated into the Slovak language, primarily the works of Serbian classics, such as: Ivo Andrić (*The Bridge on the Drina*, *Bosnian Chronicle*, *The House on the Isolated Hill*, *Omer Pasha Latas*, *The Damned Yard, Anika's Times, Signs by the Roadside)*, Meša Selimović (*The Island, She Insists*, *The Fortress, Death and the Dervish*, *Children's Whistles*, *Wild Horses*, *Grandfather*), Miloš Crnjanski (*A Novel o London*, *The Journal of* Čarnojević, *Through the Paths of Life and Death*, *A Drop of Spanish Blood*), Stevan Sremac (*Illumination in the Village,* translated by Vladimír Mičatek), Borislav Pekić (*Rabies*, *Danilo, Or the Pain of Living*, translated by Karol Chmel), Danilo Kiš (*The Encyclopaedia of the Dead*, *A Tomb for Boris Davidovich*, *The Lute and the Scars*, *The Legend of the Sleepers* [jointly with Tomáš Čelovský], *Garden, Ashes*, translated by Miloš Herko), Milorad

Pavić (*Dictionary of the Khazars*, *The Second Body*, *Landscape Painted with Tea*, *The Sign of Beauty*, *Inner Side of the Wind*, *Last Love in Constantinople*), Aleksandar Tišma (*The Capo*, translated by Karol Chmel), Grozdana Olujić (*I Vote for Love, Rose of Mother of Pearl, Heavenly River*), translated by Mirjana Šišolakova-Vrbacka) etc.

A vast majority of translations of contemporary Serbian prose were markedly done by Karol Chmel. In addition to the mentioned authors, there are also: David Albahari (*Zinc and other prose*, *Snow Man*), Dragan Velikić (*The North Wall*, *The Bremen Affair*, *The Russian Window*, *The Investigator*, *Bonavia*), Laslo Blašković (*Madonna's Jewellery*, *Tournament of the Hunchbacks*, *Death Mask*), Svetislav Basara (*Phenomena*), Bora Ćosić (*An Apatride's Diary*), *Musil Notes, a Trieste Novel*), Radomir Konstatinović (*The Death of Descartes*), Mihailo Pantić (*A Meeting on Chestnut Street*), Radoslav Petković (*Shadows on the Wall*), Vladimir Pištalo (*Tesla, A Portrait with Masks*), Nebojša Vasović (*Blood Under a Fig Tree*), Bojan Ljubenović (*When You're Love struck – A Book for Girls In love, When You're Love struck – A Book for Boys In love*), Zoran Živković (*The Five Wonders of the Danube*), Svetolik P. Ranković (*The Mountain King, The Village Teacher*).

Lana Bastašić (*Catch the Rabbit*) and Jelena Bačić Alimpić (*The Merry-Go-Round*) were translated by Milina Svitková, while Petar Arbutina (*A Diary of Disquiet*) was translated by Zdenka Valent Belić, Miodrag Kajtez (*The Exhibition*) by Milina Sklabinski and Bogdan Bogdanović (*The City and the Demons*, *A Guide to the Labyrinth of the City*) was translated jointly by Karol Chmel and Tomáš Čelowský. The novel *Vara* by Radovan Vlahović was translated by Ana Žikić. Miroslav Demák translated the works of Dejan Stoiljković (*Constantine's Crossroads*) and Janko Vujinović (*Panic on the Intercity-Express*), Nedeljko Terzić (*The Cheerful Olympics*). Katarína Petríková translated Vladimir Tasić (*Farewell Gift*).

Translations of Serbian poetry into Slovak are slightly less extensive. There have been translations of Vojislav Despotov (*Ten Measures of Soul*, translated by Karol Chmel), Miroslav Antić (*Vojvodina*, *The Singing Flatlands*, translated by Ján Labát). Zdenka Valent Belić also translated Selimir Radulović (*A Light from the Father's Cabin*), Zoran Đerić (*The New Duino Elegies*, *Trains and Camps*), Nenad Šaponja (*I Look Like I'm Not*), and Miroslav Aleksić jointly with Ana Vrška (*One Hour*). Martin Prebudila translated the poetry of Ivan Negrišorac (*An Exhibition of Clouds*). Karol Chmel translated Ana Ristović (*Before Thirty*), Jovan Zivlak (*A Bad Guest*) translated by Víťazoslav Hronec, Gojko Božović (*With the Head and Water*), and Jelena Ćirić (*Poems for Men*), Jeremija Lazarević (*A Key to the House Under Construction*), Radomir Uljarević (*The Black Box*), Ljiljana Crnić (*Which Side of the Danube Do I Sleep On?)*, Mirko Božić (*Stains on Her Hands*), Goran Đorđević (*Scattered Soil*), Zvonimir Kostić Palanski (*The Lord Loves His Children*), Radomir Andrić (*Apart From One Thing*) and Adam Puslojić (*The Somnambulia Balcanica*), translated by Miroslav Demák. As regards the translations of Serbian poetry into the Slovak language, perhaps the most important translation of this translator is a selection of *100 Serbian Poets* (2019).

The translations of contemporary Serbian drama do not lag behind either. Among dramatists, the most frequently translated one is Duško

Kovačević, whose works have been translated by Ján Jankovič and Naďa Rebenspergerová (*Balkan Spy and Other Dramas*, *The Gathering Place*, *The Dress Rehearsal for a Suicide*, *A Life in Tight Shoes*, etc.), but also Jovan Sterija Popović, who was translated by Mirjana Šišolaková (*The Haunted House*), Kosta Trifković was also published in Slovak, translated by Vladimír Michatek (*Half Wine, Half Water*), Branislav Nušić was translated by Andrej Vrbacký (*A Suspicious Character*) *and other plays*, *A Member of the Parliament*, *The Deceased*, *Dr. Doctor of Philosophy, The Cabinet Minister's Wife*), Ljubomir Simović, translated by Andrej Vrbacký (*The Travelling Troupe Šopalović*), Biljana Srbljanović (*Grasshoppers*, *Family Stories*), Tanja Šljivar (*We Are Those Our Parents Warned Us About*), Nebojša Romčević (*Caroline Neuber*), Milena Marković (*Rails – God Had Mercy on Us*), Milja Bogavac (*Dear Dad: Greetings from Belgrade*) Maja Pelević (*Orange Peel*), translated by Vladislava Fekete, and Dragutin Dobričanin (*Shared Apartment*) translated by Andrej Vrbacký.

As the *Our Life* journal in the past was a platform for a dynamic Serbian-Slovak dialogue, the same is in modern times the case with *The New Life*. Its pages included the published works of a multitude of Serbian authors, all of whom can hardly be mentioned here, but some of them are the following: David Albahari, Filip David, Vladimir Pištalo, Dragan Velikić, Vladimir Arsenijević, Nebojša Kuzmanović, Zoran Đerić, Selimir Radulović, Nenad Šaponja, Vesna Goldsvordi, Miljenko Jergović, Dana Todorović, Uglješa Šajtinac, Petar Arbutina, Laura Barna, Matija Bećković, Miloš Crnjanski, Gojko Božović, Muharem Bazdulj, Slobodan Vladušić, Đorđe Despić, Jelena Maricević Balać, Nenad Grujičić, and many other authors, whose works have been translated by the already mentioned prominent Slovak translators from Vojvodina.

Serbian-Slovak literary relations have in recent past also been actively reviewed in multiple scientific papers by many authors. These include Michal Harpáň (*Slovak Literature in the Chronicle of Matica Srpska, Slovak Literature in the Serbian Ninetieth-Century Magazines, Chapters from Slovak Literature and Literary Studies, Slovak Literature in the Brankovo Kolo magazine (1895–1914), Slovak Literature in the Serbian Magazines of the Second Half of the 19th Century, etc.), Nebojša Kuzmanović (Romanticism in Serbian-Slovak Literary Relations, Serbian-Slovak Literary Relations of Risto Kovijanić (in Slovak: Srbi a Slováci: srbsko-slovenské kultúrne styky), The Cultures Meet: Serbian-Slovak Literary Relations of Risto Kovijanić,* Zdenka Valent Belić (*The Image of Serbs in Slovak Literature,* in Slovak: *Obraz Srbov v slovenskej literatúre*, *Of Poetry and Other Virtues: Essays, Studies, and Critique*, in Slovak: *Zvuk Eurydikiných krokov: eseje a kritika*, *Immigrants in the Tower of Babylon: Discussions on Identity*), etc.

Contemporary Serbian-Slovak literary relations represent a vital link of cultural exchange between the two Slavic nations, this link reaching as far back as the 19th century and continuing to date, including the periods of national revival, interwar period, the time of socialism and present day. The analysis of the most prominent literary figures, their works, and institutions are indicative of mutual inspiration, translation activities, and interconnected topics. In today's digital era, these ties make room for new translations, international festivals and interdisciplinary projects, which can additionally strengthen the bridge between Serbia and Slovakia, as parts of a broader Slavic cultural space.

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UDC 329.12:929 Милетић С.
Original scientific article
Received: 23.2.2026.
Accepted: 1.4.2026.
doi: 10.5937/napredak7-65121

Svetozar Miletić's Slovak Enthusiasms

Abstract: The author points to the ties between Svetozar Miletić, throughout the years of his intense political activities, and other non-Hungarian nations from the Hungarian state area, with a special emphasis on Slovaks. Trying to show the permanence of these ties, the author points both to the significant biographical data from Miletić's life and to important political moments when the historical scene witnessed the appearance of nationally conscious Slovaks, Miletić's friends, associates, as well as those who personally chose death to prove their loyalty to common Slavic struggle for national emancipation.
The most eminent figure of the Slovak national revival, *Ľudovít Štúr*, is in the research focus since he had a crucial influence on the political formation of the future pivotal figure of Serbia/Vojvodina.

Keywords: Svetozar Miletić, *Ľudovít Štúr*, Serbs, Slovaks, Hungary, Slavs, unity, freedom

Svetozar Miletić entered political history as a great fighter for national rights and freedom of Serbs, Slovaks and Romanians in former Hungary. He became quite popular and beloved among the Slovak people, just as *Štúr* was among the Serbs. His name was spoken with great respect throughout Slovakia. In 1866, Svetozar Miletić and Đorđe Stratimirović, the leader of Serbian rebellions in Vojvodina, became honorary citizens of Martin, the seat of Matica slovenska (Slovak Matica) to date. When Matica slovenska was forcefully closed in 1875, Miletić, as a Serbian member of the Hungarian Parliament, fiercely protected against that act. His protest was also heard in the European public, and in a gesture of respect and gratitude, medals with Miletić's image were awarded all over Slovakia (Krajčovič, 1970, p. 437).

Due to his advocation for the rights of the oppressed nations, the Hungarian authorities accused and charged Miletić, while Jozef Škultéty mentions the sacrifice of one Slovak as an important contribution to Serbian-Slovak brotherhood. Namely,

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Svetozar Miletić, lithograph from 1867
Photo: Wikipedia

Bohuslav Tomašik, the nephew of Samuel Tomašik, committed suicide so that he would not be the prosecutor at Miletić's trial (Škultéty, 1927).

Svetozar, the most prominent Vojvodina/Serbian politician, spent three school years in Bratislava. He studied philosophy at the Evangelical Lyceum (1844–1846) and the second year of law at the Catholic Academy (1847–1848). Miletić's schooling in Bratislava coincided with the time when the Serbian youth in Slovakia was most active and when

Ľudovít Štúr, the spiritual leader of the Slovak people, was ideologically and politically most agile.

Miletić formed his views under the direct influence of *Ľudovít Štúr*, as stated by Kovijanić (Kovijanić, 1976): "He was his brightest model. With his natural talent, strong energy and enthusiasm, fighting revolutionary spirit, sacrifice in the struggle for people's rights and freedom, for the unification of Yugoslav peoples, with his views of the world and goals of human life, with his work and preaching Pan-Slavic reciprocity, Svetozar, or Sveslav in Bratislava, irresistibly resembles his great Bratislava teacher *Ľudovít Štúr*, an enthusiastic follower and advocate of Pan-Slavic ideas of Kollár, Khomyakov and Mickiewicz. In the 1860s and 1870s he became "the national idol" just as *Štúr* was in the 1840s and 1850s" (Kovijanić, 1976, p. 63).

Miletić began writing poems in the final grade of his grammar school. The journal *Peštansko-Budimska skoroteča* of 18th May 1844 published his poem "Obituary on the occasion of Konstantin Marinković's death", in which he mourns his professor of religious instruction and ethics, the "wise mentor" who "placed the root of humanity" in his students. At the end of his grammar school, Miletić wrote a decasyllable poem entitled "Eclogue or shepherd's play".

In Bratislava, Miletić continued writing poetry which was published in different journals. In 1844, the *Serbian Folk Journal* (No. 15) published his poem "Miloš's farewell". In this poem, Miletić depicts Miloš Obilić's parting from his darling in the eve of the Battle of Kosovo. As the editor of the magazine *Serbian Falcon*, Miletić published a number of his poems in it. Only one of them is well known – "To the Serbian Falcon", the introductory poem in the first issue of this magazine (January 1846), which was published by Miša Dimitrijević in *Defender (Branik)* for the year of 1885 (No. 5) (Kovijanić, 1976, pp. 41–42).

Miletić became well-known as a poet for youth in the *Slavs (Slavjanci)* (1847). In this journal he published six patriotic and pan-Slavic poems: "To Slavjanka", "Stefan Dušan the Mighty, Emperor of Serbia", "Fairy Choir", "To Serbia", "Boatmen" and "Salvation Night". With great enthusiasm he wrote about Slavdom in "From the Urals to the Tatra Mountains, from Ladoga to Shkodra":

I am a Slav of Serbian descent,
With a fire burning in my chest,
For a new Slavic life.
O, Slavs, dear brothers,
Our hour has struck...

Risto Kovijanić reveals the fact that Subotić censored Miletić's poetry and omitted the following verses:

Don't go to the Labe, oh Vltava,
Flow, flow to the Danube...
We shall destroy our devil (Kovijanić, 1976, p. 51).

There, from all over the Slav region
The boatmen's' shout is heard
From the Neva, the Vistula and the Danube
And the Vltava, where the junction is
To Mutuality towards the Mountain
Where the Slavic choir echoes
Giving shape to the future...

The east blazes like dawn,
The flame of the glorious star.

The poem "Salvation Night" has 1,100 verses and is composed in a dramatic form. It is symbolically divided into three cantos: *Evening, Dead Hour* and *Dawn*. The third canto predicts the future of the Slavs, in the spirit of *Štúr*'s thoughts and aspirations. Genius came from Greeks and Romans to Germans, and from Germans it will go to Slavs:

Genius will soon come to Glory (Slavia)
Now it is still in infancy,
The future is at its very beginning...
.....
And the last letters are still rare
And ring like a riddle,
The genius of Glory is carrying the keys,
So that all peoples worldwide can learn it.

Miletić began dealing with politics early, back in Bratislava, where he became the leader of the Serbian youth circles as a staunch advocate of Pan-Slavic ideas. As a Pressburg student and editor of Slavjanka, according to Skerlić, he was the soul of the Serbian youth movement at the time; in Buna, he rang the alarm bells in Šajkaška... Back in 1864, in his speech in the Parliament, one Hungarian minister said the following about Miletić's Novi Sad: "the rebellious Serbian town gave him a headache more than 24 Slovak counties" (Skerlić, 1987, p. 93). At the time of Miletić's studies, Bratislava was the political centre of Hungary, where Miletić attracted the attention of the Austrian police by his *Proclamation* of 8th February 1847, inviting the Serbian youth to gather around *Slavjanka.*

In his letter of the 17th... 1848 from Pressburg, *Štúr* wrote in Serbian to Atanas Jovanović: "Dear friend, these are the circumstances into which our dear brother Svetozar, the most honest Slav, arrives in Vienna, to get insight into everything, particularly into your present intentions and aspirations. Please tell him everything and trust him with everything. It is of great importance for us to know it..." (Popović, 1925, p. 268)

Štúr's influence on young Miletić was enormous; to him, *Štúr* was a great model. It can be seen from the letter of 21st February 1856, written by Miletić to Hadžić on the occasion of *Štúr*'s tragic death: "For nurturing the idealistic enthusiasm, both in me and many chosen young Serbian men, I have to be grateful to *Štúr*... with his unfortunate fate after the uprising, was a living role model for me, who contributed most to my thoughts shifting from the world of ideals to the field of practical life." (Savić, 2015, p. 97). *Štúr* had "an immeasurable influence" on Miletić, according to Mihailo Polit-Desančić (Savić, p. 94).

Immediately after his arrival in Bratislava, young Miletić joined with great enthusiasm the Pan-Slavic ideas promoted by Štúr. His Slavic ideals were inspired by the tradition founded in Novi Sad Grammar School run by Šafárik. Miletić's activities in Bratislava were permeated by *Štúr*'s ideas and Pan-Slavic thoughts, which can be seen from his letters, writings and poems. In them, he constantly uses the following terms: "son of Serbian descent" and of great "Slav people". Miletić always dreams and writes poetry about the great homeland – "Mother Slavia", "Glory/Slavia", "Saint Sava's Slavdom", from the Urals to Shkodra. "It is Jan Kollár's *Pan-Slavism, our homeland*, the homeland "from the Adriatic to the Urals" of *Štúr*'s and all his followers, Hodža's "Slav Mother, the bright star" from the youth almanac *Plody* (1836), as well as Miletić's mother

„Glory/Slavia", "the bright star" and "white dawn" from the youth *Slavjanka*, thus named by Miletić, in which he added "Sveslav" to his name as a symbol of ideological aspirations, just as *Štúr* had taken the name of "Velislav", or Hurban and Hodža took the name of "Miloslav", while many of his staunch supporters also took similar names (Pravoslav, Bojislav, Horislav, Dobroslav, Jelislav, Duboslav etc.), according to Kovijanić (Kovijanić, 1976, p. 153)

Štúr also influenced the political orientation of young Miletić. "*Štúr* schooled, among others, national fighter Svetozar and famous scientist Đura Daničić", according to Jozef Škultéty (Škultéty, 1927, p. 93). "The fact that Serbian people in its critical moments of the 19th century had such a decisive and infinitely selfless leader, who was guided by high awareness of the determination and commitment of the Serbdom and Slavdom, is the merit of great *Ľudovít Štúr*", according to Mita Klicin (Mráz, 2015, p. 70).

Štúr was extremely popular and beloved in scientific, literary and political circles of Serbian Vojvodina and the former Principality of Serbia, and that is why he was appointed a member of the Serbian Learned Society in Belgrade (present-day Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts). Mráz claims that *Štúr* was planned to take the "position of professor of political science at the University of Belgrade" (Mráz, 2015, p. 70).

Štúr was a personal friend of Jovan Hadžić's, another Miletić's patron, and was in contact with Belgrade, Novi Sad and Karlovci, with the Serbs in Vienna and Pest, with Vuk, Prince Mihailo, Nikanor Grujić, Teodor Pavlović and other outstanding Slavs (Jerković, 1991, p. 95).

Following his teacher *Štúr*, between 1866 and 1882, Miletić delivered several significant speeches in the Hungarian Parliament, defending the rights of the Slovaks. The most important speech is from 1868, entitled "The Question of Nationality", in which he explicitly defended the Slovaks' right to speak their native language. Because of his pro-Slovak aspirations, Miletić was charged by the Hungarian authorities and he was sentenced to three-year imprisonment. In this manner, he built not only his thought, poems and ideas, but also his own self, in the Serbian-Slovak cooperation and brotherhood.

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UDC 339.92(497.1:437)"19"
Original scientific article
Received: 23.3.2026.
Accepted: 16.4.2026.
doi: 10.5937/napredak7-65968

A contribution to Czechoslovak-Yugoslav economic relations in the 1920s[2]

Abstract: The study focuses on Czechoslovak-Yugoslav economic relations during the 1920s. Its aim is to analyze the reasons for their problematic development, which never fulfilled their potential enabled by the differing nature of the economies, close political ties, and membership in the Little Entente. The results, based on a review of secondary literature and archival research in Prague and Belgrade, identify the main causes of this failure as the character of Czechoslovak economic policy, its expansionist nature, and the rejection of Yugoslav imports. Furthermore, bilateral complications in negotiations on trade agreements, the introduction of import duties, and numerous disputes typical of Czechoslovak-Yugoslav trade cannot be overlooked. Economic relations that could have strengthened bilateral ties ultimately became their weakness.

Keywords: Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, economic relations, Little Entente, interwar period

Introduction

Relations between the Czechoslovak Republic (hereinafter "Czechoslovakia") and Yugoslavia[3] constituted one of the principal pillars of the foreign policy of both states during the interwar period. This partnership was primarily military and political in character, formalized through a series of bilateral treaties that formed the foundation of the Little Entente alliance. The Czechoslovak-Yugoslav alliance was regarded by both sides as particularly close. Their representatives even invoked a narrative of fraternal nations, often encapsulated in the slogan "Věrnost za věrnost, ljubav za ljubav."[4]

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[2] Funded by the European Union's NextGenerationEU through the Recovery and Resilience Plan of the Slovak Republic under project no. 09I03-03-V02-00011.

[3] A simplified term referring to the state entity of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (1918-1929), which in 1929 changed its name to the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (1929-1941).

[4] The English translation would be: "Loyalty for loyalty, love for love."

Romanian Minister for Foreign Affairs Nicolae Titulescu, Yugoslav Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs Milan Stojadinović, and Czechoslovak Minister for Foreign Affairs Edvard Beneš at the Little Entente Conference in Bled, Yugoslavia, 30 August 1935.
Photo: Guliver image

From the very first postwar years, there was an assumption that these relations would develop in other spheres of public life as well. At the same time, the structure of the Czechoslovak economy generated pressure for deeper cooperation in the economic sphere. However, such cooperation evolved only gradually and was accompanied by numerous disputes, as well as by the nature of the treaties concluded, which failed to reflect the actual needs of international trade. The character of these factors thus hindered a further and more profound development of economic relations. Consequently, their potential framed and facilitated by both states' membership in the Little Entente remained unfulfilled.

The aim of the study is to analyze the nature of Czechoslovak-Yugoslav cooperation from the end of the war until 1929, when the Great Depression broke out. It proceeds from the premise of the differing levels of economic development of the two states, which presupposed a marked asymmetry in their mutual trade. In this respect, the article places greater emphasis on the political interactions of the governmental elites of both

countries than on the concrete implementation of economic cooperation. It thus seeks to shed light on the background of commercial interactions and to uncover the real determinants of the presented economic and trade relations. This is reflected in the principal research question: "Why did Czechoslovak-Yugoslav economic cooperation, despite the political alliance, fail to reach its full potential?" This is complemented by two subsidiary questions: "Did economic cooperation achieve the desired results?" and "Did its character correspond to the thesis of the closest allies?" For the purposes of the analysis and in order to answer the research questions, archival research was conducted in Czech repositories: the Archives of Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Archives of T. G. Masaryk Institute, as well as in the Serbian repository of the Archives of Yugoslavia. The findings obtained therein were supplemented by the study of both domestic and foreign scholarly literature. In this context, it should be noted that the study deals exclusively with economic and commercial relations within the civilian sector. The issue of the distribution of military equipment and weapons represents a topic that, due to its scope and importance, deserves separate treatment.

Economic conditions in the postwar years as a prerequisite for mutual cooperation

The end of the First World War brought, alongside the emergence of new states, a series of new challenges. The collapse of the old empires generated economic uncertainty stemming from altered geopolitical realities, the loss of established trade networks, and war-ravaged industry across Europe (Balaban, 2016, pp. 22, 32). The dissolution of Austria-Hungary after the war led to the disintegration of a unified economic area, the disruption of commercial relations, and compelled the successor states to seek new solutions. Similar consequences followed the collapse of the German Empire and the Russian Empire, to which the economies of surrounding countries had been closely tied (Balaban, 2016, p. 32). An economic "vacuum" thus emerged. With the advent of the "new" states, pre-existing trade links were severed, new customs barriers were introduced, and national currencies were established. Focusing on the economic relations between the Czechoslovakia and the Yugoslavia, cooperation in this sphere built upon the prewar tradition of commercial and banking contacts (Lacina, 1990, p. 161). This cooperation can be illustrated, for example, by the order placed by the Serbian government for the minting of coins at the Kremnica Mint (AMZV, IVS, 351).

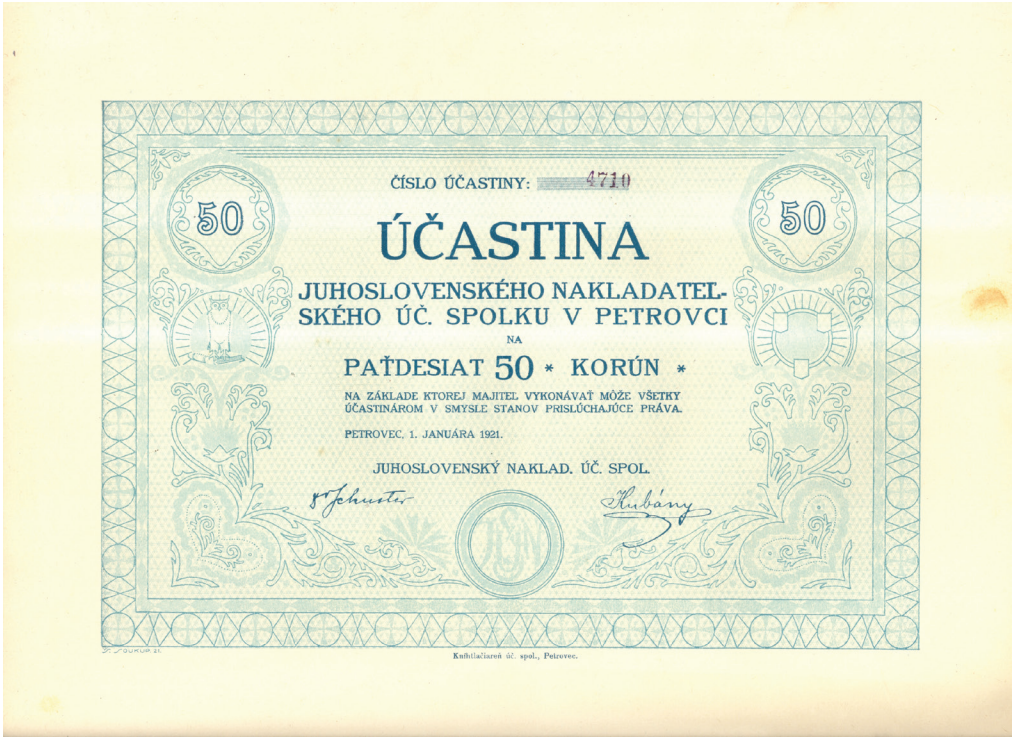
The economic situation in Czechoslovakia and in Yugoslavia after the war was, however, diametrically different. Comparing the economies of the two states, Yugoslavia was predominantly agrarian, whereas in Czechoslovakia, which had inherited 60-70% of the industrial enterprises of Austria-Hungary industry prevailed (Balaban, 2016, pp. 23, 32). Belgrade faced serious financial difficulties from the very first days of its existence, including a low level of economic development, a weak industrial base, and general backwardness (Kršev, 2007, p. 76; Šesták et al., 1998, p. 409). One of the major obstacles to the economic recovery

of the war-devastated country was the lack of infrastructure, which hindered the transport of raw materials and foreign trade (Dimitrijević & Sretenović, 2008, p. 48; Průcha, 2004, p. 362). Another was the instability of the Yugoslav dinar and the strained state budget (Kršev, 2007, p. 78). At the same time, the economic damage suffered by the Kingdom of Serbia during the First World War was considerably greater than that sustained by Austria-Hungary in the territory of Czechoslovakia (Balaban, 2016, p. 22; Lacina, 1995, p. 232). Parallels between the economic situations of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia can nevertheless be found in their geographical structure. Both countries consisted of less developed regions (e.g. Slovakia, Subcarpathian Ruthenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the former Kingdoms of Serbia and Montenegro) as well as more developed ones (e.g. Bohemia, Moravia, Slovenia, and Vojvodina) (Pirjevec, 2000, p. 35). This contrast can be illustrated by comparing Bosnia and Herzegovina with Slovenia, where the level of industrial employment was 3.5 times higher in the latter (Hadžirović, 1983, p. 462).

The aforementioned condition of the Yugoslav economy proved difficult for Belgrade to stabilize and elevate throughout the entire 1920s (Šesták et al., 1998, p. 409). In contrast, when compared to the level of the Czechoslovak economy, its "take-off" occurred already in the first postwar years (Balaban, 2016, p. 22; Lacina, 1995, p. 228; Lacina, 1996, pp. 291-292). During the 1920s, the Czechoslovakia experienced gradual economic growth, increased engagement in global markets, and currency consolidation (Lacina, 1995, p. 228; Lacina, 1996, pp. 291-292; Pavel, 2004, p. 11). At the same time, the Czechoslovak government actively supported the export of domestic products abroad. Through pro-export measures such as currency stabilization, export credits, and state guarantees it sought to facilitate the penetration of Czechoslovak enterprises into international markets (Kosta, 1999, p. 336; Lacina, 1996, p. 300). However, in comparison with other states, these interventions were not always sufficient, a shortcoming that became particularly evident during the economic crisis (Sládek, 1976, p. 158).

In contrast, as an agrarian country, Yugoslavia was in many respects dependent on the import of industrial products (Dimitrijević, 1958, p. 256). The low level of development of the Yugoslav economy simultaneously compelled Belgrade to export raw materials while importing finished goods (AJ, MTI, 230, 698; Đurović, 1986, p. 31). The differing nature of the two economies suggested the potential for relatively straightforward trade and commodity exchange. However, in reality, the situation was diametrically different (Balaban, 2016, p. 23). Czechoslovakia, for its part, was largely self-sufficient in agriculture, with certain agricultural products representing significant export commodities. For example, sugar, of which Czechoslovakia was the third-largest exporter in the world until the mid-1920s, and which was exported in large quantities to Yugoslavia (AJ, MTI, 230, 698; Lacina, 1997, p. 123; Průcha, 1974, p. 156; Sládek, 1976, p. 141). Conversely, Czechoslovakia imported from Yugoslavia wheat, maize, livestock, and meat products (Průcha, 1974, p. 159).

The differing economic character of the two countries represented a potential basis for deepening cooperation. From the principle of exchanging



Share Certificate of the Yugoslav Publishing Joint-Stock Company, Bački Petrovac, 1921
Photo: Museum of Vojvodina Slovaks

industrial and agricultural goods, both sides could "benefit." For Czechoslovakia, the opportunity to export its products was particularly important, as the domestic market was unable to absorb the full volume of production. Economic cooperation also offered Prague a chance to strengthen the Little Entente alliance and to bind its allies more closely. However, the political interests of certain segments of the Czechoslovak elite, the ambitions of the private sector, and, not least, the interventions of Yugoslav politics, all hindered the full realization of these plans.

The nature of Czechoslovak exports and the political support of Prague

Successful international trade was a matter of national significance for the Czechoslovak economy. Prague's strategic task was to create a favourable environment for maximizing Czechoslovak exports, ensuring that domestic industrial production could be absorbed and thus protected from collapse (Balaban, 2016, pp. 32, 35). After the collapse of the Austrian-Hungarian market, which had absorbed up to 75% of the Monarchy's domestic produc-

tion, under the new circumstances approximately one-third of Czechoslovak products depended on export (AJ, MIP-KPO, 313, 945; Lacina, 1996, p. 282). These figures remained largely unchanged throughout the 1920s. For comparison, during the same period, exports accounted for "only" 24% of France's production and 20% of Germany's (Kubů & Pátek, 2000, p. 204). Foreign trade and access to international markets thus became a vital issue for the survival of the Czechoslovak economy (Průcha, 1974, p. 155). The economic strategy outlined resembles a concept of alternative markets designed to compensate for the severely limited domestic market. Yugoslavia was intended to become one of these alternative markets.

Building on the presented need of Czechoslovak industry to export its products, and on the existence of prewar contacts in the Balkans, Yugoslavia became one of the first countries where Czechoslovakia established a representative office. The mandate of this institution encompassed not only political and military matters but also economic affairs and the facilitation of commercial contacts (Holásek, 1983, pp. 692, 707). A similar institution was established by Yugoslavia in 1920 (AJ, MTI, 231, 701). The Commercial Delegation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes,[5] based in Prague and later also in Brno, functioned as a semi-official body mediating and concluding trade between Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. Its operations were financed from the proceeds of the agreements it facilitated. At the same time, it regularly informed Belgrade about political and economic developments in the country. Czechoslovakia, however, was one of the last European countries where Belgrade established such an institution (AJ, MTI, 231, 701). This fact may support the view that Yugoslavia represented a strategically more important trade partner for Czechoslovakia than vice versa.

Czechoslovakia's foreign policy plans in this regard were also reflected in the statement of the Czechoslovak Minister of Finance, Alois Rašín, who, as early as 1918, outlined what from today's perspective was an unrealistic plan to "commercially dominate the entire Balkans" (Rašín, 1919, p. 31). At that time, Prague already anticipated establishing close ties with Belgrade and Bucharest (Kubů & Pátek, 2000, p. 19). Discussing Czechoslovakia's orientation toward Yugoslavia, this region was already in 1919 identified as crucial for the country's economic interests (Holásek, 1983, p. 692). This narrative was reinforced a year later by Beneš, who declared that for Czechoslovakia, "our main access to the sea must be through (Yugoslav - author's note) Rijeka" (AJ, MIT, 229, 696). Based on these statements, it can be concluded that Yugoslavia represented for Czechoslovak plans not merely the aforementioned export market, but also a higher geopolitical structure, providing access to the sea and maritime connection to other markets. Prague, however, was not the only actor with self-interested designs regarding Yugoslavia. For example, allied Paris had similar ambitions in this respect (Cvetković, 2006, p. 74).

Czechoslovakia's interest in the Balkans was also evident to the Yugoslavs, who assessed Prague's

[5] The designation "Trade Agency of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes" is also used. The original name was "Privilegovana trgovinska agencija Kraljevine SHS" (AJ, MTI, 231, 701).

Share Certificate of the Printing House, Bački Petrovac, 1920
Photo: Museum of Vojvodina Slovaks

actions as follows: "Czech industrial and commercial circles are doing everything they can in an effort to strengthen ties and consolidate relations" (AJ, MTI, 231, 703). This perception was further confirmed a year later during the organization of the Prague Sample Fair, after which Belgrade concluded that the Balkans should form the foundation of Czechoslovak foreign trade (AJ, MIP-KPO, 313, 945). The establishment of economic relations was to be preceded by the creation of a favourable political environment, achieved through treaties concluded in 1920 and 1922.[6] (Holásek, 1983, p. 692). At the same time, Beneš considered a stable regional situation necessary for the implementation of this plan, an objective actively pursued by his ministry (Hradečný, 1988, p. 40). Thus in 1920,

[6] In 1920, a political alliance convention was concluded between Belgrade and Prague, which simultaneously represented the fundamental pillar of the Little Entente. This cooperation was confirmed and expanded two years later with the signing of the so-called alliance treaty.

prior to the conclusion of the first political treaty with Yugoslavia, he discussed the signing of a trade agreement with the Yugoslav envoy in Prague (AJ, MIT, 229, 696).

The Czechoslovak industrial circles thus identified Yugoslavia as a target market for the export of their products. However, the implementation of this plan faced several complications. A major obstacle was the poor financial situation in Yugoslavia, which shaped the nature of all trade. Due to financial constraints, Belgrade was often obliged to pay for imported goods with agricultural products, a practice opposed by Czechoslovak agrarian circles seeking to protect domestic production (Lacina, 1997, p. 134). Another complication was the absence of a shared border, which persisted despite attempts to establish a Czechoslovak-Yugoslav corridor (AJ, MTI, 231, 703). The high cost of transportation and the very structure of commodity distribution also posed challenges, often involving foreign intermediaries. Most Czechoslovak producers sold their goods to large commercial centres and middlemen, who then re-exported them (AJ, MTI, 227, 692). For trade directed toward Yugoslavia, these roles were often filled by suppliers from Vienna or Budapest (Sládek, 1976, p. 157).

Since Czechoslovakia suffered from a shortage of raw materials (except for coal, which was abundant thanks to coal mines), imports were dominated by industrial raw materials and semi-finished products (e.g., iron ore from Yugoslavia) (Jančík & Kubů, 1999, p. 310; Sládek, 1976, pp. 156, 159). This situation created Czechoslovakia's dependence on foreign markets (Holásek, 1983, p. 707). In the early postwar years, coal played a significant role in trade with Yugoslavia, serving as an export commodity that compensated for deliveries of Yugoslav agricultural products (e.g., food, which was in severe shortage in Czechoslovakia after the war and caused famine in some regions) (AJ, MTI, 230, 698; Průcha, 2004, pp. 88-89). Another important commodity exported to Yugoslavia was sugar, which, together with coal, represented a scarce good of major economic significance (AJ, CUT, 5, 7). Economic disparities between the countries were also reflected in the share of industry in national wealth, which was three times larger in favour of Czechoslovakia (Lacina, 1996, p. 295).

Czechoslovakia's engagement in the region consisted not only of an interest in finding markets for goods but also of a focus on financial investments. Here, prewar activities were expanded, which during the interwar period in Yugoslavia accounted for nearly 10% of the total foreign share (Balaban, 2024, p. 177; Lacina, 1990, p. 162). The export of Czechoslovak capital to the Balkans was partially made possible by surpluses from foreign trade (Lacina, 1997, p. 113). In this respect, stark differences between Prague and Belgrade were again evident. During the interwar period, the share of investments in the national income was 12-13% in Czechoslovakia, but in Yugoslavia "only" 6% (Lacina, 1996, p. 295).

The development and expansion of the Czechoslovak economy were also supported by the tertiary sector, i.e., trade and banking, which rapidly penetrated Yugoslavia, where they restored and expanded their prewar positions (Balaban, 2024, p. 181; Lacina, 1995, p. 232). Czechoslovak capital in Yugoslavia held a significant position, with a large share of foreign investments (Průcha, 2004, p. 336). It was active in banking, tourism, and var-

ious industrial sectors, such as metallurgy, textiles, and food production (Balaban, 2024, pp. 177-179). These sectors simultaneously represented some of the most important manufacturing industries in Czechoslovakia (Lacina, 1976, p. 830; Lacina, 1996, p. 285). Czechoslovak capital was also the only one in the world during the interwar period to be involved in all branches of the Yugoslav economy (Dimitrijević, 1958, p. 163). By the mid-1930s, its value reached approximately three hundred million dinars, representing nearly 10% of total foreign investments (Đurović, 1986, pp. 144-145). On the other hand, Yugoslav finances were absent from direct capital participation in Czechoslovak enterprises (Průcha, 2004, p. 332). This situation represented another imbalance in bilateral relations and shifted the focus of economic relations toward Yugoslavia. Czechoslovak capital can thus be considered a significant form of economic expansion into this region (Sládek, 1976, p. 175).

At the beginning of the 1920s, Czechoslovak banks gained a strong position in this regard, exerting significant influence on local financial markets and industrial enterprises. Their positions provided an important foundation for Czechoslovak interests in the country (Balaban, 2024, pp. 187, 198). One of the most influential institutions in this context was the Živnostenská Banka. It not only participated in financial activities in Yugoslavia and controlled several local financial institutions, but also exercised considerable influence over Czechoslovak government bodies, including the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Industry, Trade, and Crafts (Balaban, 2024, p. 178; Lacina, 1994, p. 52; Tejchman & Škerlová, 2019, p. 71). During the interwar period, it also expanded into industrial sectors such as Yugoslav textiles, agriculture, and engineering (Dimitrijević, 1958, p. 216). The economic intervention of Czechoslovak capital was furthermore supported by the Czechoslovak embassy in Belgrade and the Czechoslovak government (Balaban, 2024, p. 187).

The situation presented demonstrated Czechoslovakia's effort to pursue extensive economic expansion into the Yugoslav markets, backed by political support at the highest levels. The focus of this expansion had a combined material and capital character, aiming to cover as many economic sectors as possible. Czechoslovak exports closely mirrored the structure of the Czechoslovak economy, dominated by industrial products, with consumer goods holding a leading position (Balaban, 2016, p. 35; Sládek, 1976, pp. 156, 159). Such "economic intervention" was facilitated, among other factors, by the political proximity of the two countries, formalized through political treaties. In the economic sphere, the two parties occupied different positions, creating a pronounced economic asymmetry. While Prague viewed Yugoslavia as an important market for industrial goods, a source of certain raw materials, and a space for capital expansion, Belgrade acted more as an economically weaker partner with limited financial means. This situation influenced the further shaping of bilateral relations and tended to generate disputes and conflicts between the two sides.

Trade disputes as a result of Czechoslovak economic policy

Czechoslovakia's economic penetration into the Balkans faced several complications. Efforts to resolve them were not aided even by Beneš's advocacy

for the development of economic relations with other allied states (Lacina, 1990, p. 162). He relied on the Little Entente, which represented potential for a deeper development of trade relations among its members (Lacina, 1990, p. 164). It should be noted, however, that the Little Entente primarily had a military-political function rather than an economic one (Průcha, 2004, p. 362). This fact was negatively affected by Yugoslavia's differing political and economic orientation, as its only significant trade partner among the allies was Czechoslovakia (Avramovski, 1983, p. 323). This also explains why the economic potential of the alliance was not fully realized, despite the appeal for its development incorporated in the 1922 Czechoslovak-Yugoslav alliance treaty (Sládek, 1976, p. 144). As a result, prewar economic ties between the Austrian-Hungarian monarchy and the Kingdom of Serbia were richer than those between postwar Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, even though Czechoslovakia inherited a significant portion of Austrian-Hungarian industry (AJ, MTI, 231, 703). Without closer economic cooperation, adequate collaboration in other areas of public life (political, diplomatic, or military) was not possible (Kárník, 2002, p. 453). Prague repeatedly confirmed the truth of this assertion during the 1930s, when the gradual decline of the Little Entente occurred under the pressure of German economic expansion into the Balkans.

Czechoslovakia's foreign policy plans faced conflicting economic and political conditions within the country. In its early years, Czechoslovakia did not have a coherent concept of economic policy within the alliance, and its agrarian (protectionist) policies often complicated the development of these relations (Pátek, 1992, p. 120). Political circles and private individuals with conflicting economic interests were present in Czechoslovakia, and these differences were also reflected in Prague's foreign trade policy (Lacina, 1994, p. 50). As a result, Czechoslovak economic interests initially developed independently of the republic's foreign policy and security objectives (Jančík & Kubů, 1999, p. 317). Until 1929, Germany was the most important trading partner, with a total turnover eight times higher than that with Yugoslavia and Romania (Sládek, 1976, p. 161). Another significant factor was the reluctance of Czechoslovak economic circles to import goods from allied countries, which undermined the strength of the entire alliance (Průcha, 2004, p. 225).

At the same time, both countries pursued a protectionist trade policy with high tariffs, aimed at safeguarding their developing domestic industry and agriculture (Dimitrijević, 1958, p. 240). In this regard, a major obstacle to economic relations between Belgrade and Prague was posed by the Czechoslovak Republican Party Farmers and Peasants (hereinafter the "Agrarian Party"). Throughout the interwar period, the party maintained a strictly negative stance toward the import of agricultural products from abroad. Through these measures, it sought to protect Czechoslovak producers, i.e., farmers and its own voters, thereby securing its political position. During the 1920s, the party attempted to establish contacts with Yugoslav agrarians, but their political fragmentation significantly complicated the deepening of such cooperation (Škerlová, 2015, p. 212). Czechoslovak diplomacy also attempted to influence the party's stance on Yugoslav exports, aware that economic relations could not be one-sided and that creating favour-

able conditions for the expansion of Czechoslovak industry into Yugoslavia required concessions (Hradečný, 1988, p. 49). However, implementing such concessions proved very difficult. The firm positions of agrarian circles and the prevailing protectionism thus negatively affected export-oriented Czechoslovakia (Balaban, 2016, p. 42).

Favourable conditions for Czechoslovak exports were also complicated by Czechoslovak producers and traders themselves. Already at the beginning of the 1920s, opinions emerged in Yugoslavia accusing Czechoslovak entrepreneurs of exploiting the country solely for their own enrichment (Đurović, 1986, pp. 44-45). Cooperation with Czech traders was described by Yugoslavs as "very difficult" (AJ, MIP-KPO, 313, 945). In this regard, as early as 1921, the Director General of the Consular-Trade Department of the Yugoslav Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Vučković (first name unknown), commented as follows: „Only now can it be noticed that they [the Czechoslovaks - author's note] are not merchants with great knowledge of trade or strong dedication, but ordinary petty-trader spirits who worry over every penny [...] their offers are one thing, their deliveries another. They promise much but disappoint terribly. Anyone who comes into contact with them must be very cautious..." (AJ, MTI, 227, 692). The behaviour of Czechoslovak entrepreneurs must indeed have been unfriendly in many cases, given that this assessment was made only three years after the establishment of the republic (Vučković noted that prior to the creation of Czechoslovakia, Czechs and Slovaks had not operated as traders) (AJ, MTI, 227, 692).

This assertion can be illustrated by the failure to fulfil the agreement on the distribution of Czechoslovak coal and coke in 1919. Czechoslovakia was supposed to send a predetermined monthly quantity of these raw materials to Yugoslavia, but in practice, the delivered amounts were repeatedly several times smaller than agreed (AJ, MTI, 229, 694). Belgrade assessed the resulting situation as follows: "Despite our friendship, I must note (Rajko Vintrović, employee of the Yugoslav Ministry of Foreign Affairs - author's note) that they create all possible difficulties for our necessary orders, and all our complaints remain without result" (AJ, MTI, 229, 694). Prague offered these commodities at a much higher price than Austria, a country with which it did not maintain as close relations as with Yugoslavia (AJ, MTI, 229, 694). The behaviour and attitudes of Czechoslovak traders can be considered paradoxical, as their conduct did not reflect their reliance on Yugoslav markets. Even the Czechoslovak press criticized the conduct of Czechoslovak traders and economists as arrogant and dismissive of their trade partner (AJ, MIP-KPO, 402, 1309). On the other hand, it should be noted that Belgrade did not always act "exemplarily" either. In the postwar years, several disputes arose regarding the fulfilment of agreed orders, which Yugoslavia refused to pay, and these disputes extended into the 1930s (AMZV, IVS, 376). Given these facts, a certain reciprocity between Czechoslovak and Yugoslav traders is evident, introducing a degree of unreliability into economic relations. This also created a form of stigmatization of the partner country, which was sometimes invoked when needed.

The combination of conflicting Czechoslovak political interests and protectionism only complicated the prospects for successful exports to Yugoslavia. Added to these factors were practical

problems in trade practice, accompanied by mutual distrust and repeated disputes between traders from both countries. As a result, economic relations were unable to realize the potential stemming from the political alliance and gradually became one of the weaker links in the broader cooperation within the Little Entente. Economic ties were further disrupted by a pronounced trade asymmetry in favour of Czechoslovakia. While this provided Prague with economic advantages in exports, it simultaneously undermined the concept of reciprocity necessary for successful trade cooperation. This situation affected the conclusion of trade agreements, with negotiations proceeding more in a "hostile spirit" than in the atmosphere expected between close allies.

The character of Czechoslovak--Yugoslav trade as a result of adopted trade treaties

In the early postwar years, trade between Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia operated on the principle of compensation and re-compensation (AJ, MTI, 230, 698; Balaban, 2016, p. 42). Under this system, Prague primarily supplied Yugoslavia with coal, as well as steel, glass, ceramics, machinery, and textile products. The nature of these commodities reflected the industrial structure of the Czechoslovak economy and its necessity to export its products abroad. In return, Yugoslavia provided plant and animal products or unprocessed natural resources such as manganese ore, tannin, and timber (AJ, MTI, 230, 698). This form of barter trade was legally formalized in 1919 with the signing of the Trade and Customs Agreement with the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, which had a provisional character (Balaban, 2016, p. 42; Sládek, 1976, p. 142; Kolářík, 1931, p. 566). This document can also be considered the first "truly state-level treaty" between Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia (Kolářík, 1931, p. 566). Its adoption temporarily restored the trade and customs relations that had existed before the war between Austria-Hungary and the Kingdom of Serbia, supplemented with the benefits of the Czechoslovak customs tariff (Kolářík, 1931, p. 566; Government Regulation of the Czechoslovak Republic of May 18, 1920, pp. 993-994). For Czechoslovakia, this document represented the very first regulation of foreign trade relations (Kolářík, 1931, p. 565). By contrast, Yugoslavia had already concluded a similar agreement with Austria (Đorđević, 1960, p. 3). Prague's goal in this agreement was to secure sufficient food supplies for the country, which, as previously mentioned, faced severe shortages in the postwar years (AJ, MTI, 230, 698).

The main problem with this type of trade was the constant shortage of raw materials needed for its execution (Balaban, 2016, p. 42). As a result, the agreed-upon arrangements were often not fulfilled (Kolářík, 1931, p. 565). In the early postwar years, it even happened that goods passing through Hungarian territory failed to reach their final destination (Balaban, 2016, p. 43). There is also evidence of an agreement whose terms were highly disadvantageous for Yugoslavia (AJ, MTI, 230, 698). In this regard, Belgrade's actions were assessed by Vintrović as "extremely accommodating" (AJ, MTI, 230, 698). The unfavourable nature of the agreement for Belgrade raises the question of the extent to which Yugoslav decision-making circles were exposed to pressure or influence from Czechoslovak econom-

ic interests. Considering practices in the military sector, where commissions were granted for the conclusion of contracts, it cannot be ruled out that similar mechanisms were used in other areas of economic contacts. Interference in the implementation of this form of trade also included Belgrade's ban on exporting certain products, which complicated the position of Yugoslav producers, preventing them from both exporting and importing goods from Czechoslovakia (AJ, MTI, 230, 698).

In 1920, the Treaty on the Temporary Regulation of Trade Relations between the Czechoslovak Republic and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes was adopted. This document did not invalidate the previous trade and customs agreement. On the contrary, it represented a step toward a policy of free trade (Balaban, 2016, p. 46; Kolářík, 1931, p. 566). The treaty guaranteed both parties the highest customs advantages, the removal of export bans on certain commodities, and equal rights for traders operating in the territory of the other state (Balaban, 2016, p. 46). Through the principle of most-favoured-nation treatment, it granted the signatories the rights and advantages enjoyed in trade with any third country (Balaban, 2016, p. 73; Sládek, 1976, p. 142). The Czechoslovak side took advantage of this, demanding low tariffs on its goods (Vinaver, 1985, p. 39). This document played a significant role in developing trade relations between Prague and Belgrade (Balaban, 2016, p. 46). For the entire interwar period, these relations were characterized by the export of Yugoslav agricultural raw materials and, conversely, the export of Czechoslovak industrial products (Sládek, 1976, p. 143). Complications with deliveries gradually led to a transition from barter trade through contingents to monetary trade in 1921 (Balaban, 2016, p. 45; Lacina, 1990, p. 162).

In the postwar years, trade relations faced an unstable economic situation in both Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia (Lacina, 1990, p. 162). Combined with Belgrade's increasingly protectionist policies and strong foreign competition, this resulted in a temporary decline in trade in the following years (Balaban, 2016, pp. 57, 65; Lacina, 1990, p. 162). Paradoxically, improvements in Czechoslovakia's economic conditions only worsened the situation. The culprit was the Yugoslav dinar, which experienced a continuous decline, complicating price regulation. As a result, many orders for Czechoslovak goods were cancelled by Yugoslav buyers due to high prices. These difficulties were also reflected in the Czechoslovak press, which advised Czechoslovak producers to exercise caution when concluding agreements with Yugoslav partners, further escalating the situation. Tensions were not alleviated even after the Prague government reduced visa requirements for Yugoslav traders operating in Czechoslovakia (AJ, MTI, 231, 703). This situation, together with restrictions on the export of foreign currencies from Yugoslavia and a high negative trade balance, reinforced the trend and eventually led to attacks against Czechoslovakia in the Yugoslav press (Balaban, 2016, pp. 63-64). Overall, these factors negatively affected trade ties (AJ, MTI, 231, 703).

In 1920, the signing of an agreement between the Shipping Union of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes and the Czechoslovak Danube Transport Office marked an attempt to improve waterway transport (Balaban, 2016, p. 47; SAN_1129). In this context, Prague decided to expand the Bratislava port, whose annual capacity was planned to increase

twenty-fivefold as a result of this modification (AJ, MTI, 227, 692; AJ, MTI, 229, 694). Thanks to its location and the presence of the Danube connecting it to Belgrade, Bratislava gained a strategic position in trade with Yugoslavia, allowing it to bypass intermediaries in Vienna and Budapest (AJ, MIP-KPO, 236, 619; AJ, MIP-PO, 93, 297). The importance of Bratislava for Czechoslovak-Yugoslav trade was confirmed in 1924, when a Yugoslav consulate was established there to support commercial relations between the two countries (AJ, MIP-PO, 93, 297). Transport via the Tisa River also occurred, but its significance for trade between Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia was negligible, and at the turn of the decade it was practically non-existent (*Foreign Trade of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1928*, 1930, p. 59). The effectiveness of this mode of transport was further reduced by high tariffs (Balaban, 2016, p. 48). For this reason, and due to fears of a customs war, the 1929 proposal to establish a joint Little Entente Danube Navigation Organization was not implemented (Sládek, 1985, p. 62). Further negotiations took place in the mid-1930s but likewise failed to achieve significant results (Sládek, 1988, p. 879).

Between 1924 and 1929, Czechoslovakia experienced an economic boom, with growth in industrial and agricultural production, as well as increases in GDP and the tertiary sector (Lacina, 1995, pp. 233-234). About 30% of industrial production was intended for export (Dudek, 1983, p. 423). At the same time, Yugoslavia made attempts to stabilize its economic conditions (Kršev, 2007, p. 141). During this period, the value of foreign trade also rose, with exports reaching approximately 30% of national income in 1929 (Lacina, 1995, p. 234). The favourable economic situation allowed Czechoslovak firms to focus on exports to Yugoslavia. However, Belgrade was unable to absorb the full volume of Czechoslovak exports, and bilateral cooperation did not reach the expected scale (Lacina, 1990, p. 162). This situation was not improved by the Czechoslovak-Yugoslav National-Economic Society, established in 1922 to enhance economic relations and support the conclusion of trade contacts (AJ, MTI, 231, 703). A major problem also stemmed from the nature of Yugoslav exports, which could not supply enough raw materials to meet the needs of Czechoslovak industry. Consequently, necessary materials had to be sourced elsewhere (Kosta, 1999, p. 336). Among Yugoslavia's most important export commodities were grain, livestock, eggs, and tobacco (AJ, MTI, 230, 698; Đurović, 1986, p. 108).

The validity of the so-called temporary agreement was extended for nearly an entire decade. This fact alone indicates that economic relations between Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia cannot be considered exceptional. This situation was clearly illustrated by events in the mid-1920s. In 1925, Belgrade, in order to protect its domestic industry, introduced new or significantly increased existing customs tariffs on industrial products (Kolářík, 1931, p. 567; Kovačević, 2015, p. 38). These blanket measures also affected Czechoslovak exports, which consequently declined (Cvetković, 2006, p. 60). As a result, Czechoslovak assets in the country decreased, and the prices of imported goods rose, negatively impacting the development of domestic industry (AÚTGM, EB I, 84, 397, R1851; Kovačević, 2015, p. 38). At the same time, Yugoslav exports to Czechoslovakia also fell (Balaban, 2016, p. 74).

Prague's retaliatory response, attempting to lift these tariffs, was identical (Balaban, 2016, p. 73; Sládek, 1976, p. 149). In 1926, following a poor grain

harvest, Czechoslovakia was "flooded" with foreign crops. In order to protect the future competitiveness of Czechoslovak farmers, the Agrarian Party pushed through an increase in tariffs on imported agricultural products, including those from Yugoslavia (Balaban, 2016, p. 73; Mićić, 2017, p. 425). The imposition of taxes on Yugoslav agricultural products, a major export commodity of the agrarian country represented a significant complication for the Yugoslav economy (Sládek, 1976, p. 149). Prague's action responded not only to the domestic economic situation but also to previous steps taken by Belgrade. Another motive for introducing these tariffs was the creation of an economic bargaining tool. By potentially lowering them, pressure could be applied to conclude a new trade agreement with Yugoslavia, in which Yugoslav industrial tariffs would be reciprocally reduced. This mechanism could, if necessary, have been applied to other states as well (Kolářík, 1931, p. 569). However, the final form of the adopted tariffs made such a possibility impossible because the highest customs reliefs on agricultural products were fixed. Yugoslavia automatically benefited from these reliefs under existing trade mechanisms, precluding further negotiations (Kolářík, 1931, p. 569). As a result, the measures only escalated bilateral tensions, negatively impacting the Yugoslav economy (Balaban, 2016, p. 74).

Given the negative trajectory of trade relations, calls for a revision of the trade agreement began to emerge, reinforced by the fact that both countries had concluded similar agreements with almost all other states in the region, but not with their closest ally (Balaban, 2016, p. 74). A practical example of this inconsistency was Yugoslavia's 1927 requirement for an import permit to export certain types of meat to Czechoslovakia, while Austrian producers did not need such documentation (AJ, MTI, 229, 694). It is important to note that during this period, both states maintained adequate trade agreements with nearly all regional countries and major European powers, except with each other (Balaban, 2016, p. 74). This situation contradicted the narrative of "brotherly nations" and more closely resembled relations between politically distant or even hostile countries. There were even concerns that the deterioration of economic relations could weaken the political ties between Belgrade and Prague (Hradečný, 1988, p. 65).

From the outset of the 1920s, Prague was open to formalizing economic relations. Already in October 1920, the Czechoslovak side sought to begin negotiations for a definitive trade agreement. However, due to Belgrade's resistant stance, trade between the two countries remained "provisional" until 1929 (Balaban, 2016, p. 50-51). In 1922, the Czechoslovak and Yugoslav chambers of commerce committed to addressing Czechoslovak-Yugoslav economic relations at least once a year during their sessions, with representatives from the counterpart chamber invited to participate (AJ, MIP-KPO, 313, 945). Available archival evidence, however, does not indicate that this commitment was meaningfully implemented. The overall state of economic relations thus limited the potential impact that any such meetings could have had on the final decisions of either country.

The long-awaited and much-needed trade agreement was finally concluded at the end of 1928 after prolonged negotiations (Balaban, 2016, p. 75). However, its final form failed to meet the expectations and real needs of economic relations. Compared to the provisional trade agreement, the main differences lay only in the inclusion of the

most-favoured-nation clause and the principle of equal treatment (Sládek, 2000, p. 90). The agreement did not resolve the most pressing problems in the mutual exchange of goods, which therefore remained relevant (Balaban, 2016, p. 91). Additionally, it lacked provisions on tariff concessions, a critical issue in bilateral relations. This limitation was largely due to the Czechoslovak tariffs introduced in 1926, which prevented further concessions for Yugoslavia (Kolářík, 1931, p. 570). Consequently, the agreement did not provide the anticipated support for Yugoslav exports and resulted only in a partial deepening of trade relations (Balaban, 2016, p. 76).

Conclusion

After the war, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia faced different economic challenges. While Belgrade needed to consolidate a war-damaged economy, Prague sought to ensure the operation of its domestic industry through expansion into foreign markets. For this reason, the primary cause for establishing Czechoslovak-Yugoslav economic relations can be seen in the collapse of Austria-Hungary and the loss of its markets, which Czechoslovakia had to compensate for by securing new outlets. In this regard, it also attempted to penetrate the industrially underdeveloped Yugoslavia. However, Prague was unable to fully exploit the opportunity to gain a new market. The nature of Czechoslovakia's expansion significantly complicated the development of closer ties with Yugoslavia. Prague's vision of a one-sidedly advantageous trade, based on maximizing exports and minimizing imports, could not function in the long term. The outcome of this approach is evident in the 1930s, when Czechoslovakia was pushed out of the Yugoslav economic sphere by Germany.

The development of economic relations between Prague and Belgrade in the 1920s faced several factors that negatively influenced its outcome. Although the differing nature of the two states' economies suggested the potential for successful cooperation, the actions of political and economic elites prevented its full development. Key factors included the conflicting positions of Czechoslovak political circles, Prague's reluctance to import Yugoslav commodities, the conduct of Czechoslovak economic representatives in Yugoslavia, often likened to exploitation and the protectionist policies of both states. These circumstances not only limited the development of economic cooperation but also hindered the full utilization of the economic potential offered by their membership in the Little Entente alliance.

Economic interventions on both sides thus contradicted the promoted narrative of close allies. The nature of Czechoslovakia's economic expansion, the imposition of tariffs, and, not least, the character of negotiations over trade concessions demonstrated quite the opposite. Likewise, the legal foundation of economic relations, confirmed through the conclusion of treaties, ran counter to the rhetoric of "brotherly nations." Based on the presented facts, it can be asserted that interactions in the economic sphere did not correspond with this thesis and simultaneously represented a weak link not only in bilateral but also in Little Entente cooperation. Czechoslovak-Yugoslav economic collaboration thus exemplified a politically declared alliance that struggled to function effectively in other spheres of public life. The asymmetrical nature of trade relations and the absence of a concept of economic reciprocity weakened its strength and stability.

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UDC 339.92(497.1:437)"19"
061.237:797(497.113)(091)
323.1(=163.41:=162.4)(497.113)
Original scientific article
Received: 19.1.2026.
Accepted: 8.4.2026.
doi: 10.5937/napredak7-64193

The role of Slovaks in the development of Sokolism in Stara Pazova: unity under the Slavic banner

Abstract: The author underlines the role which members of the *Slovak Sokol* from Stara Pazova had in the development of Sokolism, and accordingly in strengthening Serbian-Slovak ties in Srem and Vojvodina. *The Slovak Sokol* was the first organisation of this kind established on the territory of Austria-Hungary.
To this end, the author presents an overview of activities both of the *Slovak Sokol* organisation as well as Slovaks, members of the *Stara Pazova Sokol Society*, thereby particularly focusing mainly on joint Serbian-Slovak work on establishing this society and then on what soon followed, i.e., them joining the Yugoslav Sokol organisation and ultimately their building and development efforts which eventually resulted in constructing the Sokol House, a magnificent monument to the Serbs and Slovaks, volunteer soldiers in the Great War, and mounting a memorial plaque in honour of Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk and King Alexander Karađorđević.
In this connection, the author also notes some potentially prospective directions for developing Serbian-Slovak cooperation through renewing if not the Sokol movement on its former foundation, then through reviving the spirit of mutual unity and personal endeavours for the greater good of community.

Keywords: Serbs, Slovaks, Srem, Sokols, Masaryk, freedom, unity

1. Introduction: cultural and social struggle for political rights

A national awakening during the 19th century which, combined with an increasingly stronger national awareness, started fundamentally changing the life view of broader social classes within the Slavic part of Austria-Hungary, which resulted in the establishment of multiple societies, cultural (such as reading rooms), choral (such as church, agricultural, and

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craftsmen's groups), charity organisations (such as women's charity cooperatives, which evolved into other such societies), and finally sports societies, among which the leading ones were the Sokol societies that were established on an "individual" basis, which is to say personal willingness and endeavour (Popov, 2010, p. 493).

Their almost sudden emergence and relatively swift spreading were the main feature of social life in Srem, especially during the last two decades of the 19th century. Since this situation was not limited solely to Srem, or solely Serbs either, it is necessary to identify the main factors that had an impact on it. In our view, there are three main reasons for this: 1) industrialisation and coming onto the political stage of lower social classes due to a general rise of liberalism and nationalism,[2] which, unlike conservatism, was in a wider European area more open for lower classes participating in various political bodies and social life in general, and also stronger interest of the higher classes, tradesmen, craftsmen, and the intelligentsia in this form of activism either due to personal/group interest, or out of one's own altruism; 2) the fact that the Slavs, and consequently Serbs and Slovaks, lived in Austria-Hungary, a country which they did not perceive as their own, nor did they perceive it as free, required a form of self-organisation, which was first reflected in the political sphere through the establishment of different parties and movements whose goals gradually shifted from the struggle for preserving identity to a full national emancipation, which then spread to a whole range of different societies, which through the concept of "private" engagement, seen as an expression of one's personal willingness, personal effort, eagerness and commitment, were organised vis-à-vis the state and its institutions, with entirely specific, parallel methods of operation, not only in social-cultural terms, but also in political terms, which was reflected in the need to accomplish a full political emancipation for those who needed it vitally. With this, it was, on the one hand, possible to be of assistance to one's "Slav fellowmen", and on the other, it ensured the preservation of independence vis-à-vis "alien" authorities, and thus the expression of national self-importance and ability to self-sustain; 3) as a Srem-specific reason, which gave rise to the emergence of these societies, the abolishment of the Military Frontier (1873) and the development of civilian authorities, which fundamentally changed not only the urban appearance of cities along the Frontier but also their inhabitants' habits, which in the last decades of the 19th century also involved competing with those communal communities in Srem (and the monarchy alike) that had already existed as the free royal cities.

In the second half of the 19th century, it is precisely these three factors that combined in Stara

[2] More accurately, "mass" nationalism, which Milorad Ekmečić acknowledges as the fundamental value that emerged at the turn of the century. This nationalism does not represent only the expansion of the idea of a shared history and strivings, but it also had people enter the social political stage, people, with their language, their literature (be it written or verbal), and ultimately with customs and traditions, which became an integral part of various ideologies, that is, social-cultural striving. For more details see: Ekmečić, 2021.

Pazova, where Serbs and Slovaks invested tremendous effort towards awakening national awareness by becoming increasingly active primarily in the field of culture. The first cultural institution which the Serbs and Slovaks from Stara Pazova jointly created was the *Citizens' Reading Rooms*. When they were established (12th July 1878), their head became Vladimír Hurban, a Slovak, who was to be succeeded two years later by a Serb, Nikola Petrović (Janko, 1991, p. 45).

Not long thereafter, owing to joint Serb-Slovak efforts, in 1891 another joint society was established in Stara Pazova – a *Volunteer Fire Department* (Janko, 1991, p. 47). Ten years later, in January 1902, Slovaks organised their first party in the Slovak language, and it was only a year later that they staged the first play in the Slovak language. In 1905, as a result of pressures from authorities, Slovaks established their own separate reading rooms, which closed three years later, only for them to resume activities once the Great War ended (Janko, 1991, p. 46).

The *Serbian Women's Charity Cooperative* was established in 1904. (Janko, 1991, p. 47), and two years later, a branch of *The Serbian Sokol* was opened in Stara Pazova, which laid foundation for subsequent establishment of a Slovak counterpart. The fact that the most prominent figures of Slovak social, national and cultural life in Stara Pazova took part in its establishment, as well as the fact that these figures delineated the direction of operation and defined its goals, resulted in Sokolism becoming the most significant expression of Slovak striving both for national emancipation within Austria-Hungary and for all-Slavic unity, Pan-Slavism.

2. Sokolism: In pursuit of a "complete man"

The Sokols stand for a Slavic cultural and national-liberation liberal organisation with anticlerical orientation. The movement was first established in Czechia in 1862, and at its helm was its ideological leader Miroslav Tyrš (Žutić, 2005, p. 155).

> "In an effort to rally around all Slavic peoples, the Sokols, with their membership comprising various religions and social classes, invoked the French Revolution liberal mottos. Due to the impossibility to assemble Slavic military formations (national guards) in Austria-Hungary, the Sokol leaders set themselves the goal of connecting Slavic peoples (the Sokol idea of Pan-Slavism), in order to prepare them to fight for the accomplishment of 'territorial and spiritual freedom'. From Czechia, the Sokol movement spread fast throughout Slavic regions in Austria-Hungary (Žutić, 2005, p. 155).

Because of its clear chivalrous commitment and readiness to work actively in the cultural and social fields, Sokolism soon became a major "revolutionary driving force of national energy", and a sort of a "birthplace of freedom and independence", from which originated many generations who were aware that there was no future for Slavic peoples unless they freed themselves of the Austrian-Hungarian rule (which was perceived as a starting point, rather than the ultimate goal) and unless this freedom was built into Pan-Slavic unity (Brozović, 1935, p. 9).

By naming itself *Soko(l)* (Serbian for falcon), this organisation, inspired by Serbian epic poetry,

made it clear what direction they were moving in was. An additional indication of this essentially revolutionary direction was also the Garibaldian red shirts worn by society members, which illustrated a straightforward national orientation. The rest of the uniform, which consisted of a red-black cap similar to that worn in the South Slavs' mountainous regions (decorated by a falcon feather) and a jacket, which contained the elements of national motifs, explicitly demonstrated the Slavic idea of this movement, which at the turn of the century was to play one of the leading roles in Slavic national revival (Brozović, 1935, pp. 155–158).

In political terms, Sokolism was guided by two fundamental principles: nationalism and democracy, while in social and cultural matters, it demanded that its members be fully committed to the community and deplore personal gain and glory. In spiritual terms, the Sokols strived for creating a "complete man", as sort of a new, ethical man, that arose from a combination of spiritual and physical beauty, of which the former is built through moral improvement, and the latter is built through gymnastics, thereby becoming it to the Sokols much more than just physical exercise:

> "Tyrš's Sokolism is a harmonious balance and concord of our endeavour to improve morally and physically: improving morally brings riches to our inner universe, whose visual manifestations are the shape, motion, and movement of a healthy body, whereby physical improvement gives to our soul boldness, self-awareness, determination, mirth, and purpose to enjoy all the fruits of science and art, instils it with indelible traits of significance and primarily clothes it in a shiny and impenetrable shield of national and fatherland's freedom (Brozović, 1935, p. 10).

Among Slavs in Austria-Hungary, Sokol societies first emerged in 1863, first with Slovenes. Not long after them, with Croats, in 1874, and only four years thereafter, as an expression of joint efforts to preserve Slavic identity, *The Croatian-Slovene Sokol Association* was established. The Sokol movement first emerged among the Serbs in the Kingdom of Serbia, in the late 19th century, but as an organised movement, with a clear Sokol identifier, it was established in 1904–1905 in Srem, i.e., in Sremski Karlovci,[3] where doctor Laza Popović quite soon also established the Fruška Gora Branch, from which not long after stemmed the Krajina Branch, which was intended for those movement members that gathered in various societies from the regions of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serb ethnic regions in the West (Slavonija, Banija, Kordun, Lika, Dalmacija) (Dimić, 2016, p. 14).

As a Pan-Slavic movement, Sokolism had its general principles, which were then for practical use purposes adjusted to individual national societies, in accordance with circumstances in which they operated and cultural patterns that shaped it. To all of them, the general goal was not national and social liberation but the creation of a "complete

[3] *The Serbian Falcon* was established in 1904 in Sremski Karlovci, at the joint initiative of doctor Laza Popović and Milan Teodorović presented a year earlier at the assembly meeting of the Serbian Academic Youth.

The leadership of the Stara Pazova Sokol Society in front of the monument to the volunteers and heroes of the Great War, late 1920s
Photo: Private archive of the author

man". This mission, as noted in the document *Instructions to new members and generations*, issued by *The Belgrade 1 Sokol Society*, was superior to all other tasks and endeavours, which were deemed a necessary prerequisite for the accomplishment of this, much higher goal:

> "Sokolism turns a person into a Sokol, which means a real man. Being truly a Soko means being better than a good person that is not a Soko, always being a role model and leader to people, being healthy, strong, honest, handsome, virtuous, industrious, selfless, disciplined, friendly, kind to his kins, in short, handsome and clean everywhere and in all places...
>
> ...Sokolism gives you the opportunity to grow in all directions, as required by a young body. Strive to develop the Sokol time in you as well and as safely as possible because the better the individuals are, the better the social community is.

An individual is nothing, the whole is everything, the Sokol flag reads. It is only the complex and organised environment that is capable of delivering the deeds of valour. A harmony of the wholes stands for the harmony of a person, building one's own stable character that will develop (*Instructions to new members and generations*, 1932, pp. 4–5).

To accomplish these objectives, to build one's own character and a sense of unity, fist in the circumstances of living in the "alien" state, then in one's own state, during the first half of the 20th century, Slovaks also worked hard, first as the members of Slovak, then Serbian-Slovak, and eventually the Yugoslav Sokol Organisation in Stara Pazova.

3. Serbian-Slovak Sokol ties in Stara Pazova

3.1. From establishing to uniting with the Serbian society

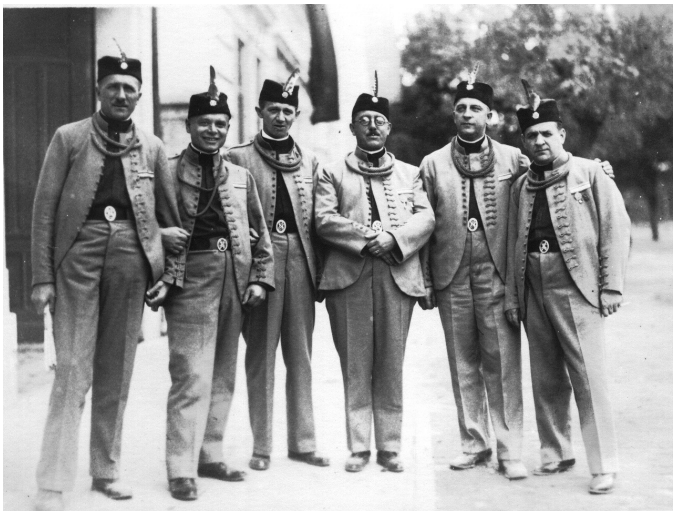
The Serbian Soko was established in Stara Pazova on 15th August 1906, thanks to the efforts of doctor Jovan Barać, county GP, and Jovan Vučković, accountant at the Stara Pazova Savings Bank. The first administration of the Stara Pazova society was appointed on 3rd December 1906 when doctor Barać was appointed head of the Society (*Stara Pazova Sokol Society Memorial 1906–1931*, 1931, p. 9).

Six years later, following suit of Serbs who in the meantime had established their Fruška Gora and Krajina Branches, the process of establishing their own society was initiated by Slovaks from a wider Vojvodina area. And so, apart from Slovaks in Stara Pazova, there was substantial effort on the part of Slovaks from Bački Petrovac to establish a Sokol organisation. They, as noted by Ján Babiak, submitted a request for the approval of rules immediately after Stara Pazova Slovaks (1912) but, due to restrictive Hungarian policies applied to the Slovaks, competent authorities dismissed the request as being unacceptable and as posing a danger to Hungarian interests (Babiak, 2021, pp. 23–24).

The situation in which Kisač and Bački Petrovac Slovaks were put in was just a reflection of Hungarian policies vis-à-vis Slovak striving for national emancipation. These policies were in place in the entire Hungarian part of the Dual Monarchy. Namely, the first attempt at setting up the Sokols in the "upper regions", which is today's Slovakia, occurred in 1863, only a year after the Czech Sokol Society had been established in Prague, when the first Slovak Sokol community was established in Turčiansky Svätý Martin (today's Martin). Still, what Czechs were allowed to do (possibly due to a different perception the German element had of them) did not apply to Slovaks as well, and so upon Hungarians' wishes, the society was disbanded.

> "Due to tyrannical persecution, its leaders were forced to move to the United States of America and so in Chicago, in the free country, having found their fellow compatriots, they re-established the Slovak Sokol Society, from which many Slovak Sokol societies, with military branches, stemmed throughout America (*Stara Pazova Sokol Society Memorial 1906–1931*, 1931, p. 12).

Slovaks made a second attempt at finding their place in the Sokol community on the Austrian-Hungarian territory in 1896, after the Czech Moravia and Silesia society had been established, when what had until then been called the *Czech Sokol Municipality* was renamed to *Czechoslovak*. Unfortunately, this attempt was not long-lived either since the



The leadership of the Sokol Society Stara Pazova during the consecration of the society's flag
Photo: Private archive of the author

proposal, after it having been deliberated upon for several years, was eventually rejected, and so with the start of the 20th century, the original name was used, despite a substantial number of Slovaks, in addition to Czechs, being active and working out as well. (Brozović, 1935, p. 165–166).

What Slovaks had not succeeded in doing in Hungary, they fellow compatriots in Slovakia did because the Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia had less restrictive policies in this relation, especially when it came to the possibility of setting up Slavs' cultural, social, and sporting associations.[4] The first meetings of Stara Pazova Slovaks, the purpose of these meetings being to establish *The Slovak Sokol*, were held in early 1910 and were chaired by the teacher "headmaster of the Boljevci State school taught in Slovak" Pavel Zloch. On this occasion, Stara Pazova Slovaks drafted a letter and sent it to Chicago in order to notify the society there that the first Slovak Sokol society in Austria-Hungary was soon going to be established, which, eventually took place two years later in May:

[4] There are multiple reasons for this. First of all, Croats themselves were targeted by Hungarians, so resistance against hungarisation also called for a "looser" policies to their "fellows" – Slavs. On the other hand, in some parts of Srem, as was the case with Ruma, Slavs, but mainly Croats (thanks to the fact that they were both Roman Catholics), were exposed to strong pressures from Germans, which required collaboration (as a result of which, for example, a magnificent *Croatian House* was erected in the first decade of the 20th century. This was a home to *The Ruma Croatian Sokol*, and it was deliberately built in a predominantly German part of the town. Finally, in the years leading to the Great War, such policies were significantly influenced both by the activities of Josip Juraj Štrosmajer and overall activities of the Croatian-Serbian coalition alike.

> "In May of 1912, a founding meeting was convened at the inn owned by Žarko Ilić's brother. The meeting was attended by approximately fifty Slovaks from Stara Pazova, and so, through mediation of Jaroslav Galanta's brother, a committee was elected, which consisted of: brother Jaroslav Galanta, head; Vladimír K. Hurban, secretary, Evangelical chaplain, treasurer; schoolteacher Miloslav Kamenar, brother Pavel Zloch, chief, and committee members: municipal treasurer Janko Čmelík, sales clerk Samko Mengyan, farmer Martin Vereš, tailor Jozef Forgáč, machinist Pavel Mengyan, and industrialist Jozef Spišský-Šaghy" (*Stara Pazova Sokol Society Memorial 1906–1931*, 1931, p. 12).

After administration had been elected and operating rules confirmed at the assembly meeting, Slovak Sokols from Stara Pazova again sent a letter to Chicago, and top administration accepted it and included this Sokol society in the Chicago Branch. As a token of respect and good faith, the management of this branch sent to Stara Pazova Slovaks aid in the form of a donation of 1,000 dollars, which was a very substantial amount at the time (*Stara Pazova Sokol Society Memorial 1906–1931*, 1931, p. 13).

However, in addition to this financial aid, close relations with the Serbian Sokol society were equally important to the Stara Pazova Slovak society. Joint sessions of physical exercise and cultural cooperation ensured that the organisation grew rapidly and thus, with assistance from Chicago, not long before the Great War, the Sokol organisation even considered purchasing "a special building as the Sokol House", which would have been carried through had history not taken an entirely different course (*Stara Pazova Sokol Society Memorial 1906–1931*, 1931, p. 13).

Shots fired by Gavrilo Princip marked the beginning of WW1, at whose very outset the Stara Pazova Sokol societies, both the Serbian and the Slovak one, were first disbanded and eventually banned. Initially, authorities confiscated horses, cattle, and feed but soon after that, in the summer of 1914, they started conscription (Janko, 1991, p. 59).

Serbs and Slovaks, Sokols, were at first sent to the Eastern Front, then to the Serbian front and eventually to the Italian front, where, whenever circumstances allowed it, they surrendered and joined the Allies, mainly the Russian and the Serbian armies, only for them eventually also to establish a Czech volunteer legion, in whose establishment Ferdinand Klačík, a citizen of Stara Pazova, took part. This legion was later to become the foundation of establishment of a liberated and united Czechoslovakia's army (Janko, 1991, p. 59).

> "Pre-war activities of both Sokol societies bore fruit since young men active in the Sokol societies, brought up to have Sokol values, fought during the world war as volunteers and legionaries, and died in the military forces of their Slavic brothers in Dobruja, Thessaloniki, and on the French front (*Stara Pazova Sokol Society Memorial 1906–1931*, 1931, p. 13).

Unlike their fellow compatriots on the front, Serbs and Slovaks in Stara Pazova, who spent war days in the flatlands of Srem, lived through those days with trepidation. They were slightly embold-

ened and had more faith in Serbian victory in September 1914 when the army of the Kingdom of Serbia penetrated into the Stara Pazova territory during the Srem offensive:

> "The battle between Austrian-Hungarian and Serbian armies in the fields of Stara Pazova started on 10th September. The stronger Austrian-Hungarian army managed to push back the Serbian army, only for it to retreat towards the Sava River on the morning of 13th..." (Janko, 1991, p. 59).

The people of Stara Pazova had to wait as long as until November 1918 for the Serbian army to set foot in the territory of Srem again. It was then that, in parallel with this process, they resumed the activities of the Sokol societies, both the Serbian and the Slovak one, which early this month got its first post-war administration:

> "Head of the Slovak Sokol society became Konštantín Hurban, director of Slovak Bank, Vladimír K. Hurban, Evangelical priest, secretary; Miloslav Kamenar, treasurer; school teacher Karlo Dolinaj, chief, and Committee members: schoolteacher Pavel Zloch, industrialist Jozef Spišský-Šaghy, tradesman Samko Mengyan, tailor Jozef Forgáč, tradesman Jozef Ďurica, municipal notary Janko Čmelík, cashier Patko Brtka, and solicitor Samko Bábik" *(Stara Pazova Sokol Society Memorial 1906–1931*, 1931, p. 14).

Stara Pazova Serbs and Slovaks also confirmed their unanimity by establishing joint committees, the People's Council, whose goal was to organise a welcome gathering for the Serbian army, in which the members of both Sokol societies participated. So, on 7th November 1918, after the Serbian soldiers had entered Stara Pazova, among other speakers on the street of the town, Vladimír Hurban, priest and secretary of the *Slovak Sokol*, also delivered a speech referring to Pan-Slavic unity as the greatest of all bequests of the victory of Serbian weapons (*Stara Pazova Sokol Society Memorial 1906–1931*, 1931, p. 15).

Slovak Sokols played an active role in all national events and together with Serbian Sokols, they had commemorative prayers on the occasions of birthdays of King Peter, Prince Regent and King Alexander, as well as the Crown Prince, and then the birthday of King Peter II, as well as other important dates from Slavic history (it was particularly important to mark Saint Sava's Day, Saint Vitus' Day, and Saints Cyril and Methodius Day) in the Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant churches.

However, the strongest Slavic awareness and sentiment was demonstrated by Stara Pazova Serbs and Slovaks, members of the two Sokol societies, in 1919, when the idea of merging the societies of "fellow Slavs" in a single, Yugoslav Sokol organisation was already extensively discussed. Unlike Croat Sokol societies, which did not care much for joining with Serbian societies,[5] the Stara Pazova Slovak Sokol society carried out this process with wide open arms and without any difficulty.

[5] For more details see: Lapčević, 2023b; Lapčević, 2023a, Lapčević, 2025 (ed.).

Members of the Sokol Society Stara Pazova with female members dressed in Slovak folk costume
Photo: Private archive of the author

Namely, after a decision had been rendered at the Saint Vitus Sokol Assembly, held in Novi Sad in 1919, that the Sokol organisations would merge (Lapčević, 2025, p. 97, 104), discussions on how this idea should be implemented (so, not whether it was necessary or possible, but the manner in which this could be done as soon as possible) were held in Stara Pazova between head of the Slovak Sokol society Karlo Dolinay and Slavko Ivković, chief of *The Serbian Sokol*.

The entire process of joining the two societies was practically completed within two weeks[6] since it was as early as Saint Peter's Day, on 12th July 1919, that Serbs and Slovaks paraded the streets of Stara Pazova as one and the same organisation (*Stara Pazova Sokol Society Memorial 1906–1931*, 1931, p. 16), which was for a while called the *Serbian-Slovak*, and then the *Yugoslav Sokol*, i.e., *The Stara Pazova Sokol Society*, which once territorial rearrangement of social branches had been completed, became a part of the Belgrade Branch.

[6] Unlike "joining" of the Croat and Serbian Sokol societies in Ruma and Sremska Mitrovica, where this process was never fully implemented, since the Croat Sokol societies in these towns, instead of declaring the merging of societies, as was the case with the Serbian Sokol societies, the Croat societies declared "liquidation", based on which only a part of these organisations joined the newly-established Yugoslav Sokol organisation, while a part of their membership participated in renewal of Croat Sokolism in the mid-1920s.

3.2. Years of Yugoslav Sokolism

Following the end of the Great War, not long after Slovaks from Bački Petrovac and Kisač finally succeeded in establishing theirs Sokol societies, the Stara Pazova society established relations with them, and maintained close ties even after their fellow compatriots, as was done by themselves, became a part of the single Yugoslav Sokol organisation that belonged to the Svetozar Miletić Branch. Furthermore, Slovaks from Stara Pazova were duly appointed as members of administration of the single Sokol society, and so in 1921, head of the society was Slavko Ivković, while Karlo Dolinay was his deputy, who remained in this position in 1922 as well (*Stara Pazova Sokol Society Memorial 1906–1931*, 1931, p. 17–18). This trend continued in the years that followed, and so after Živojin Mihajlović was elected head of the society, his deputy became Samko Bábik, and chief was Šimko Kiš (*Stara Pazova Sokol Society Memorial 1906–1931*, 1931, p. 26).

A major success for Sokol athletes-gymnasts from Stara Pazova was in 1928 when as head of the society was elected the ambitious and very fit athlete from the former *Slovak Sokol* Jozef Šerkézi, whose special focus was setting up the events of public physical exercise when Stara Pazova Sokols demonstrated how fit they were on the one hand, and on the other, this was a good opportunity to grow membership:

> "In the month of July, our society will organise a public session of physical exercise in the towns of Vojka, Stari Banovci, Krčedin, Stari Slankamen, Belegiš, Novi Karlovci and will be present at public sessions of physical exercise of the Sokol Society in Kisač, Petrovac, and Batajnica. Success was notable in all the towns, especially in Novi Karlovci, where our event had the biggest turnout of all the mentioned towns..." (*Stara Pazova Sokol Society Memorial 1906–1931*, 1931, p. 31).

To celebrate the tenth anniversary of liberation and unification, and also to mark Serbian-Slovak Sokol unity, the people of Stara Pazova launched an initiative whose ultimate objective was to build a Sokol house, as a permanent community building. At an extraordinary assembly meeting of the Society, which was held on 11th November 1928, a decision was rendered that the Sokols of Stara Pazova should borrow 200,000 dinars and a special "development committee" was set up, with an equal number of Serbian and Slovak committee members.

Stara Pazova political authorities provided financial assistance for this major endeavour by contributing 30,000 dinars, and this same amount was contributed by Petrovaradin Assets Office (Sremska Mitrovica Branch), while special credit for obtaining development permit on a location situated in the heart of town goes to Viktor Rup, lawyer and member of the Society. Substantial amounts of funds were provided by the Belgrade Branch, Public Health Institute in Novi Sad and many other organisations, institutions, private individuals, public servants that wanted to take part in this endeavour which was to show not only how developed the Society was, how strong it was but also the value of Serbian-Slovak unity (*Stara Pazova Sokol Society Memorial 1906–1931*, 1931, p. 33, 335).

Architectural design for the building was the work of Momir Korunović, a renowned architect and a Sokol himself. His design was a gift to the society, while the ceremony of consecration of the foundation took place in 1930. Construction works were finally completed the following year, in 1931, and the Sokol house was named after King Peter the First (*Stara Pazova Sokol Society Memorial 1906–1931*, 1931, p. 36, 41, 48).

In parallel with this activity, the Stara Pazova Serbian and Slovak Sokols initiated constructing a monument to honour Slovak and Serbian volunteer soldiers who fought in the Great War, both those soldiers who fought in the army of the Kingdom of Serbia and members of the *Czechoslovak Legion*.

The monument which, in addition to the monument to soldiers of the Timok Division who fought in the battle on the Leget field near Sremska Mitrovica (erected in 1923), is the only monument in Srem that commemorates the heritage of Sokols. It has the shape of an obelisk, with four urns around a decorative wall. Plaques are attached to the monument and have an inscription on them that is both in the Serbian and Slovak languages, which reads: "To the heroes fallen for national liberation and unity: 1914–1918. The Stara Pazova Sokol Society". The monument is additionally decorated with chains, the coat of arms of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, with a stone falcon atop, as a symbol of the movement that erected the monument.

The monument, a lasting pledge of unity and remembrance of the fallen for South Slavic and Pan-Slavic unity, built of stone that was especially delivered from Kaymakchalan, was consecrated on the occasion of the first assembly meeting of the Belgrade Branch, in mid-February of 1929:

> "The ceremony of consecrating the monument was very dignified, and was served by priests belonging two all three religions, and a speech appropriate for the occasion was delivered on behalf of heads of the society. The ceremony was attended by envoys of the Presidency of Ministers, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of the Army and Navy, Ministry of Education, then delegates of all local authorities and corporations, as well as many citizens.
> After the monument was consecrated and branch meetings were held, they all had a formal lunch at noon, and in the evening, there was a gala event with a big turnout, so it was a major success in every way. This day was a day of genuine Sokol festivities in our town" (*Stara Pazova Sokol Society Memorial 1906–1931*, 1931, p. 37).

It was as early as the following year, with a joint effort of Serbs and Slovaks gathered in the *Stara Pazova Sokol Society*, that on 8th March 1930 they celebrated the eightieth birthday of Tomáš Masaryk:

> "This celebration consisted of a gala event that fully demonstrated the love and unity between our and Czechoslovak people, as well as a huge thank you to our brother president for his work in the best interests of both our peoples.
> During the event, a very successful lecture was given by brother Vladimir Vereš, MD, followed by inspired speeches in the spirit of Slavic mutuality, brotherhood, and love, which were delivered by delegates from all local societies, Serbian-Orthodox Church Municipality, the Circle of Serbian Sisters, Serbian craftsmen's

reading room, Serbian husbandmen's reading room, Serbian farmers' reading room, *The Gusle* Serbian choral society, Red Cross, Volunteer Soldiers' Association and the reading club. At the end of the gala event, both Yugoslav and Czechoslovak national anthems were sung by the local *Gusle* Serbian choral society (*Stara Pazova Sokol Society Memorial 1906–1931*, 1931, p. 39–40).

"Just a year following this, more precisely on 3rd May 1931, as a present of the Ministry of Education of Czechoslovakia, and as the final decoration in the marking of the tenth anniversary of liberation and unification, a memorial plaque in honour King Alexander Karađorđević and the President of Czechoslovakia Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk was mounted. This plaque, made of white marble, showed the faces of these two statesmen and had the following inscription: 'In memory of liberation of the Yugoslav and Czechoslovak peoples 1918–1928'" (*Memorial plaque for Alexander the First and Masaryk*, 9th May 2013).

Between 1935 and 1939, Stara Pazova Sokolism continued to fulfil its Slavic mission with equal commitment. Close ties between the two nations were not compromised during the occupation either, when many members of *The Stara Pazova Sokol Society* took up arms and joined the resistance movement.

Conclusion

The occupation of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in April 1941, and Ustasha authorities taking control of Srem, resulted in a new ban of the activities of the *Sokol Society* in Stara Pazova. Only this time the ban was to last for good since after 1945 new authorities did not show any willingness to renew its activities.[7]

Immediately after they entered Stara Pazova, the German occupation forces damaged the memorial plaque that was on the theatre building, only for the plaque to be entirely removed later. Until 1990, it was kept in the basement of the *Slovak House*[8] but after the restoration and conservation of this building was completed, it was mounted again in May 2013, only this time in the *Slovak House*.

The Sokol House King Peter the First was first claimed for the needs of the German occupation forces, and then for the needs of new, Bolshevik authorities. The monument erected in honour of Serbian-Slovak volunteer soldiers, for the occasion of commemorating the tenth anniversary of liberation and unification, suffered substantial wear and tear of time, and is still awaiting restauration and conservation.

[7] Instead of the Sokol Society, with similar objectives a PE society called Society for Physical Education *Partizan* was established, which ceased to exist towards the end of the 20th century. A particularly interesting fact is that it was not possible to renew the activities of other societies either, such as The Circle of Serbian Sisters and similar organisations. During the occupation, various prohibitions were introduced, followed by the confiscation of property, which continued after "liberation" as well, in which, in a rather diabolical manner, one can see a continuity of Ustasha-Nazi and Bolshevik authorities.

[8] At this point, it is imperative that we once again contemplate the continuity of Ustasha-Nazi and Bolshevik authorities, and the similarities between their ideas, at least regarding the need for history revisionism and an overall social awareness.

The fact that in slightly over two years it will be this monument's centenary is perhaps the best motivation to initiate its reconstruction, which would give both Serbs and Slovaks the possibility to reaffirm, after one century, their close ties in Stara Pazova, the ties which have never been compromised.

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Book Review

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UDC 930.85(497.11:437.6)(082)(049.32)
316.722(=163.41)(082)(049.32)
316.722(=162.4)(082)(049.32)
Review
Received: 20.4.2026.
Accepted: 25.4.2026.
doi: 10.5937/napredak7-66655

Serbian-Slovak relations through centuries: social, cultural and spiritual dimension

Vanja Glišin, Kristijan Obšust, Miroslav Kmeć (eds.): *Serbian-Slovak Cultural Ties and National Identities*. Institute for Political Studies / Archives of Vojvodina / Faculty of Philosophy, University Matej Bel, Belgrade – Novi Sad – Banská Bystrica, 2024, 314 pages

The thematic collection of papers *Serbian-Slovak Cultural Ties and National Identities* is the result of the scientific conference held in the conference room of the Institute for Political Studies in Belgrade on 29th November 2024. The organization of the scientific gathering and the preparation of the thematic collection of papers are the first step in the joint scientific cooperation of three eminent institutions from the Republic of Serbia and the Slovak Republic: the Institute for Political Studies

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from Belgrade, the Archives of Vojvodina from Novi Sad, and the Faculty of Philosophy of the University Matej Bel from Banská Bystrica, which give it special institutional and scientific weight.

The collection contains sixteen papers in Serbian, Slovak and English, which contributes further to its international visibility and scientific relevance. The publication of this collection is a pioneering enterprise having in mind that it gives a thorough overview of the ties between the two nations and that it establishes stable foundations for further comprehensive cooperation. Namely, the main value is reflected in the interdisciplinary character as a condition for understanding Serbian-Slovak relations which have long and rich history, intertwined by a multidimensional political, diplomatic, economic, trade, cultural-artistic and scientific-educational cooperation. The editorial concept consistently follows the idea that cultural ties and national identities are perceived in a long historical period, primarily since the 19th century to date, taking into account a broader Central European and Balkan context. Although the thematic framework may seem too broad, it is conceptually clear because the focus is on cultural interactions, political relations, religious ties and the formation of national identities in complex historical circumstances.

A special place in the collection is taken by the papers dealing with the 19th-century events. The text by Nebojša Kuzmanović, PhD, about Serbian romantic writers and Slovaks offers a detailed analysis of intellectual and educational ties of Serbian and Slovak national tribunes in the romanticism period who studied at the Evangelical Lyceum in Bratislava. Similarly, the paper by Professor Miroslav Kmeć highlights Slovak-Serbian cultural and political relations in the election processes in the territory of today's Vojvodina at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries. Professor Mihal Babjank analyzes Jozef Podhradsky, one of the most important Slovak romantic figures, who contributed to the strengthening of social and cultural ties between Serbs and Slovaks in the 19th century. Zdenka Valent Belić, PhD, also writes about Jozef Podhradsky as a person who belonged equally to Slovak and Serbian culture. Podhradsky spent larger part of his life in Serbia, wrote about the rulers from the Obrenović dynasty, about Svetozar Miletić, and built close ties with Serbs until his death. Therefore, the overview of the events and processes during the 19th century is a scientifically and socially significant segment of the collection because it familiarizes readers with numerous not so well-known facts that shaped Serbian-Slovak ties.

The papers in the collection are mainly focused on the events and processes in the 20th century. The paper by Peter Mičko, PhD, and Anton Hruboň, PhD, is dedicated to the position of Slovaks in the territory of Yugoslavia from 1918 to 1941. The authors focus on the cultural interactions of Yugoslav Slovaks with the "other homeland", i.e., with the Slovak state. Professor Marek Sirni focuses on the period 1939-1941, striving to show the relations between Slovakia and Yugoslavia, i.e., between the Slovak state and the community of Slovak emigrees in Yugoslavia. The emphasis on the Slovak-Serbian cultural relations in the period from 1931 to 1934 is placed by Frantisek Jakab in an attempt to show the activities of cultural societies and artists and to analyze the importance of the relations between

the First Czechoslovak Republic and the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.

The original contribution to the thematic collection has been provided by historian Nemanja Dević, PhD, who, based on the analysis of the press and propaganda of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia in the journal *Proletarian (Proleter)*, shows the manner in which the picture about Yugoslavia, Poland and Czechoslovakia was created in the press and propaganda between 1919 and 1939. The period after the Second World War was addressed by Professor Nebojša Petrović, who analyzes the position of Slovaks in Vojvodina from 1945 to 1952. This is the period of extraordinary social changes which were also reflected among the Slovak population in these territories. Kristijan Obšust provides a general overview of the matters of collective identities of the members of the Slovak national minority in the Republic of Serbia, which is indispensable in further understanding of phenomena and processes. This gives a substantial and argument-based overview of the cooperation between the two countries in complex political and social circumstances of the 20th century.

The spiritual and religious dimension of Serbian-Slovak relations is analyzed in several papers. Saša Antonijević gives a centuries-long historical overview of the operations of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Slovakia and emphasizes spiritual ties between the two nations. A temporally narrower overview of spiritual ties is presented in the paper by Radovan Pilipović and Ivana Luknar, pointing to the religious ties between Serbs and Transcarpathia, i.e., the importance of the Serbian Orthodox Church in interwar Czechoslovakia, from 1918 to 1940. Professor Vladimir Kocvar analyzes the activities of venerable Justin Popović in East Slovakia and Subcarpathian Russia with the aim of presenting the accomplishments and problems during the revival of Orthodox Christianity. The current context of religious relations between the Republic of Serbia, Republic Srpska and the Slovak Republic is presented in the work by Slobodan Prodić, emphasizing the spiritual aspect as a manner of strengthening cooperation. The above-listed papers indicate that spiritual and religious dimensions constitute an important factor of cooperation and closer relations of the two nations both throughout history and today.

The events and processes at the beginning of the 21st century are analyzed in the papers by Ana Jevtić, PhD, and Vanja Glišin, PhD. Our colleague Jevtović wrote the paper about political communication and media unitarianism in crisis situations, with a focus on the media picture created after the attempted assassination of Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico. In an analytical, argument-based and scientifically founded manner, our colleague Jevtović analyzes a rather complex and current topic, which is a contribution to the collection of papers in the context of modern Serbian-Slovak relations. The last paper in the collection is written by Glišin, PhD, who analyzes the geopolitical position of Serbia and Slovakia in the context of German Central-European continentalism, which opens a broader perspective and places Serbian-Slovak ties into the frameworks of modern international relations and geopolitics. This paper confirms that cultural and identity ties are not isolated from geopolitical processes.

The collection of works *Serbian-Slovak Cultural Ties and National Identities* unifies the content of the papers that in a scientifically founded

and argument-based manner analyze the events and processes in the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries. The value of the collection is not solely in collecting the existing knowledge, but also in laying the foundations for further research and deepening the cooperation between Serbian and Slovak scientific and social communities. We witness the continuity of good relations between Serbs and Slovaks over two centuries, which is a specific social and political-science phenomenon that, it can be said, is rare in the territory of Southeast Europe. Hence the need to prepare this collection and to continue the strengthening of Serbian-Slovak cultural, educational, scientific, spiritual and international ties.

References

Glišin, V., Obšust, K., and Kmeć, M. (eds.) (2024). *Serbian-Slovak Cultural Ties and National Identities*. Beograd – Novi Sad – Banská Bystrica: Institut za političke studije / Arhiv Vojvodine / Filozofski fakultet. [In Serbian]

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The editorial board of the journal *Progress* will only consider articles which are in accordance with these Instructions. The journal publishes only new and original articles. The editors will accept papers *in extenso* which have previously partially been published at a scientific gathering, under the condition that this is duly indicated by the author. Any attempt at plagiarism or self-plagiarism will be sanctioned (banning the author from publishing his/her work in this journal for a length of time which corresponds to the severity of the plagiarism; the institution with which the author is affiliated, and the appropriate professional organizations will also be informed of the wrongdoing).

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The papers are categorized in accordance with the 2009 *Act on the editing process of scientific journals* adopted by the Minister of Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia.

Papers can be:

Scientific articles:

1. **Original scientific papers**. These papers expose previously unpublished results of the author's personal research, conducted according to scientific standards. The length of the body of these papers must not exceed 28,800 characters with spaces. This number does not include the name, middle initial, surname and affiliation of the author, the title of the article, the summary (up to 800 characters with spaces), key words (up to 5 words or phrases), the list of references, footnotes;

2. **Review**. Contains an original, detailed critique of a scientific problem or area, in which the author has established his/her credentials, confirmed also by the presence of self-citations. The body text of a review must not exceed 28,800 characters with spaces. The total number of characters does not include the elements stated above (cf. Original scientific papers);

3. **Brief or previous statement.** This is an original full format scientific paper up to 18,000 characters with spaces in length, or a preliminary paper. The total number of characters does not include the elements stated above (cf. Original scientific papers);

4. Scientific critique, or polemic. (discussion on a given scientific sub-

ject, exclusively on the basis of scientific arguments) and reviews. The length of these papers is up to 10,000 characters with spaces. This type of paper must include the name, middle initial, surname and affiliation of the author, as well as a summary up to 400 characters with spaces in length, key words (up to 5 words or phrases), a list of references. These elements are not included in the total number of characters allowed.

Expert papers:

1. **Expert paper** is an article which presents information that contributes to the study of social phenomena but not necessarily based on the scientific method. These papers must not exceed 18,000 characters with spaces. The total number of characters does not include the elements stated above (cf. Original scientific papers);

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3. **Review** (book, research, scientific event, etc.). The length is up to 7000 characters with spaces. The use of photographs is encouraged (images of book covers, photographs of events, etc.). Images count as 500 characters with spaces. A review does not contain a summary or key words but must include references.

The journal *Progress* will not publish papers that contain less than 5 references. The Editorial Board encourages authors to use journal references of a more recent date, if possible.

All types of papers can contain photographs, graphs, tables, and other illustrations. Every illustration counts as 500 characters with spaces. The Editorial Board encourages the use of illustrations, especially graphs and tables, to present data which do not have to be repeated in the body, but just referred to. Every table must have a number (1 – n) and title, while every image (graph, photograph…) must have a number (1 – n) and caption.

The authors and co-authors suggest the category of the manuscript. This is also done by the reviewers, but the final decision on the categorization is made by the Chief Editor and Executive Editor of the journal.

The manuscripts must contain standardized abbreviations, but not in the title or abstract. The full name with its abbreviation in parenthesis is given when first mentioned. Abbreviations are permitted further on in the text, both in the abstract and in the paper itself. Abbreviations must not be used in the conclusion of the paper (not abstract).

In the case of a paper written in the Serbian language, foreign names are transcribed, and the original name given in parentheses the first time they are mentioned in the text. In the case of papers written in the English language, names are given in the original format or transcribed (eg. Chinese or Arab names). Foreign phrases are written in the original format, in italics, and if necessary, their translation and meaning are given in a footnote.

Manuscripts must be submitted as a Word Document, line spacing 1.5, A4 paper size single sided, margins 2.5 cm, justified alignment, font size 12pt, Times New Roman. Bold and italics should be avoided and can be used in subheadings. The Summary, Key words, and footnotes are single spaced, 1.0.

Submitted manuscripts are sent (without author's name) to at least two reviewers/editors. Comments and suggestions of the editors and reviewers (not giving the reviewer's name) are sent back to the author.

After undergoing a peer and editorial review, the paper is sent back to the author. All changes must be made within the space of three days. During this phase it is not possible to make significant changes but only correct minor typing and similar mistakes. If the corrected text is not returned to the Editorial Board within three days, the Editorial Board will assume that the author has no further comments. The manuscripts of papers approved for publication are not returned to the author.

Preparing a manuscript

Manuscripts are prepared in accordance to APA citation format. Parts of the paper are: title page, abstract and key words, body, acknowledgements (optional), references, appendices (tables, images). Pages must be numbered (upper or lower right corner), starting with the first page.

1. Title Page

a) The title of the paper should be brief, clear and informative, in the Serbian or English language, without abbreviations and it should correspond to the contents of the paper. Headings and subheadings should be avoided. If the paper is the result of research conducted during a project or if the authors feel the need to express their gratitude to a supporting institution or individual, this can be done in a footnote at the end of the title.

b) Above the title, in the upper left corner, in large letters, the author suggests the category. Below this is the name, middle initial and surname of the author and co-authors. Scientific papers can have up to two co-authors. The Editorial Board encourages authors to publish papers written by one author. Papers with more than two authors/co-authors will not be considered. After the surname of the author/co-author it is necessary to place a numbered footnote (starting from 1), which gives the professional title of the author/co-author and his/her electronic address (email). The author/co-author responsible for corresponding with the Editorial Board is required to provide telephone numbers (mobile, landline) and postal address (with the words "for correspondence purposes"), besides his/her electronic address. The footnote(s) for each of the author(s)/co-author(s) states the year of birth of the author(s) (e.g. born in 1968.)

c) Below the name of each author/co-author it is necessary to give their affiliation. In the case of institutions with complex organizations, all levels of organization must be stated, from the highest to the lowest (e.g. name of university, name of faculty, name of department), the location of the institution and the country in parentheses.

2. Summary and key words

On the second page of the paper, it is necessary to provide a structured summary in Serbian and English, written concisely and including the Introduction/Aim, Basic Premise, Methods (research methods, basic procedures, sampling), Results (most important), and Conclusion. It is necessary to underline new and important aspects of the research. A structured summary must not exceed 800 characters with spaces. In the case of scientific critiques, polemics and reviews, a summary must not exceed 400 characters with spaces.

The summary must be followed by Key words, not exceeding 5 concepts or phrases.

Papers categorized as reviews do not require an abstract but it is necessary to provide the following information on the book (event) being reviewed, in the following order: Name and Surname of author (in the case of an Event, the name of the event organizer); title of the book in italics (or title of the Event in italics); place of publication; publisher; year of publication (place of event, time of event), total number of pages (not applicable to Events). A photograph of the book/event reviewed must be submitted in JPEG or TIFF format as an attached file, minimum resolution 300x300 pixels.

Example of review:

Stjuart Prajs: Izučavanje medija. Klio, Beograd, 2011, 749 p.

Example of event:

European Sociological Associatio: 13th ESA Conference(Un)Making Europe: Capitalism, Solidarities, Subjectivities. Athens (Greece), 29.08 - 01.09.2017

3. Body of text

The body of the paper starts at the third page. It is suggested but not required that original scientific papers and reviews, especially if they are based on empirical research, be structured thus: Introduction/Aims of research; overview of methodology; results; discussion; conclusion. For scientific papers categorized as "Brief Statements" and "Scientific critique, polemics, reviews", structuring is not required.

Tables, graphs and images are incorporated into the body, except in the case of a book or event review where the photographs are submitted as a separate file.

Illustrations, maps, photographs, graphs and other images are submitted in JPG or TIFF format, minimum resolution 300x300 pixels.

Every illustration (table, graph, drawing…) must be numbered and captioned (center alignment) in the following way:

- The title of the table is given above.

Example:

Table 1: Average values of ethnic distance

- Graphs, photographs and other illustrations are captioned below.

Example:

Graph 1: Average values of ethnic distance scores

Tables should be simple, in black and white, no shading. Indentations and alignment in tables must be produced via automatic formatting, not by manually adding spaces.

All types of graphs must be black and white, and with the use of different types of lines.

3.1 Citing and referencing other authors in the body

In accordance with the APA Citation standard, citations are given EXCLUSIVELY in the body, in bibliographical parentheses.

The use of footnotes is allowed only for the purposes of comments, in order to avoid loading the text. It is on the author's discretion to decide to provide in a footnote additional information (e.g. email of author, acknowledgements, etc.), brief explanations regarding certain terms and concepts (e.g. the meaning of a lesser-known Latin proverb), biographical data of importance for the understanding of the text (e.g. providing biographical information on a theorist in order to better understand the context). Footnotes can be used to comment or critique the position of other authors (e.g. regarding their inconsistent views on a subject), to provide an illustrative example or interesting comment regarding another author or for the purpose of directing the reader towards another author's work.

Bibliographical references are always given in the Latin alphabet. In the Literature section, only one place of publication is given, even if the publication itself names several.

AUTHOR(S) BIBLIOGRAPHICAL PARENTESES – FIRST MENTION IN TEXT

Work by one author (Lukić, 1995a, p. 209) (Lukić, 1995a, p. 30)

Work of one author published in the same year as previously cited work (Lukić, 1995b, p. 30) (Lukić, 1995b, p. 20)

Work by two authors (Haralambos & Heald, 1989) (Haralambos & Heald,1989)

Work by three to five authors FIRST MENTION: (Marković, Golenkova, Šuvaković, 2009); SECOND AND OTHER MENTION OF SAME WORK: (Marković et al, 2009)

Work by more than seven authors (Mihailović et al, 2012) (Mihailović et al, 2012)

GROUP (INSTITUTION, ORGANIZATION) WITH A RECOGNIZABLE ABBREVIATION

(Republički zavod za statistiku [RZS], 2020) (RZS, 2020)

GROUP WITHOUT RECOGNIZABLE ABBREVIATION (Centar za profesionalni razvoj zaposlenih u obrazovanju, 2020) (Centar za profesionalni razvoj zaposlenih u obrazovanju, 2010)

Included within bibliographical parentheses should be the surname of the author, the year of publication and, if necessary, the number of the page. If there is more than one author with the same surname, especially if they are cited or referenced in the paper, the APA standard clarifies that the initial of each author be provided before the surname.

If a page number is provided in bibliographical parentheses (in the case of a direct quote), it is separated with a comma, preceded by the abbreviation "p.". In some cases, it is not necessary to provide page numbers (if the entire work is referenced, or the idea contained within; that is, if there is no direct quote).

Example:

In his text Petrovic enters into a polemic with several methodologists and researchers of social phenomena, pointing out their schematism in the interpretation of statistical data, as well as their lack of knowledge of the concept of "civil society" (Petrovic, 2020).

For sources and literature in foreign languages it is possible to use "et al" instead of the Serbian "i dr.".

It is also possible to use "&" instead of "and" in Anglo-Saxon literature.

In the case of citing several authors at the same time, according to the APA standard, the author's names are given within one set of parentheses, in alphabetical order.

Example:

Not an insignificant number of authors believe that globalization is a historical process that started centuries ago (Bžežinski, 2015, p. 14; Chumakov, 2010, p. 49; Mandelbaum, 2004, p. 257; Robertson, 1992, pp. 58-59; Hatibović, 2002; Šuvaković, 2004, str. 53)

Quotations are given within a sentence. However, if the quotation contains more than 40 words it is necessary to separate the quotation in a new paragraph (automatic), with speech marks. The bibliographical parentheses is given after the last punctuation mark. The rest of the text that follows is in a new paragraph.

Example:

"The basic elements of the gay movement correspond to the chief aspirations of (post)modern capitalism. The emphasis in personal or collective identity is transferred from its locus in the system of production on "lifestyle" (consumer behavior model). Hence, the popular (hypnocratic) culture contains so little information on class identity, while sexual identity is given the central position of social and personal attention. The more people's needs for freedom can be satisfied in the area of work or politics, the more "freedom" in consumer behavior and lifestyle is advocated in the public (cultural) sphere. This includes "sexual freedoms". (Antonić, 2014, p. 210)

Continuing with our research, we reached the clear and unambiguous conclusion…

3.2 References in the Literature section – an overview of common cases

3.2.1 General remarks

The Literature section is the same for both versions of the paper. The titles of the references are always in the English language, even if the source was not originally written in the English language but, for example, in Serbian. In this case, it is necessary to give the original language in brackets (e.g. [In Serbian]). References are given in alphabetical order (Serbian Latin). If only foreign authors are cited, references are given in British alphabetical order. If works from different languages are referenced, they are arranged in Serbian Latin alphabetical order. Letters which do not exist in Serbian Latin (W, Q, Y, X) are given last.

Serbian surnames should be written in Latin and Serbian diacritic signs should be used.

If more than one work by an author is cited, then the works are listed by date of publication (from oldest to most recent).

If the author published one work individually, the second work as a co-author, the third with two other authors, it is necessary to first list the work written individually, then the work written with one other author, then the work written with two other co-authors. Alphabetical order should be followed when giving authors' surnames.

If works of one author published in the same year are referenced, they should be listed with letters added to the years (2019a) (2019b), etc.

3.2.2 Monographies

Surname, Initial. (year of publication). *Title of monography in italics.* Place of publication: Name of Publisher.

If there is more than one city with the same name (in the case of cities in different states of the USA), it is necessary to provide the state name after the city.

If the monography is available online it is encouraged to provide a link, with the comment "Available at".

Example:

Antonić, S. (2014). *Power and sexuality: the sociology of the gay movement*. Istočno Sarajevo: Sociološko društvo Republike Srpske. Available at sahttps://fedorabg.bg.ac.rs/fedora/get/o:7605/bdef:Content/download [In Serbian]

Lukić, R. (1995a). *Basics of sociology*. Beograd: Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva, BIGZ [In Serbian]

Lukić, R. (1995b). *Political parties*. Beograd: Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva, BIGZ [In Serbian]

3.2.3 Articles in serial publications

Surname, Initial. (year of publication). Title of article. *Name of journal* vol. (issue no. in year): pages from – to.

If the paper has a DOI, this is given at the end; if the paper is available online it is encouraged to provide a link, with the comment "available at".

Example:

Antonić, S. (2013). Social mobility in socialist Serbia: a revisionist approach. *Sociološki pregled*, XLVII (2), 145–170 Available at http://scindeks-clanci.ceon.rs/data/pdf/0085-6320/2013/0085-63201302145A.pdf#search="Antonić Slobodan" [In Serbian]

Vuletić, V, Stanojević, D. (2013). Social Networks - Networks of Old School Ties. Kultura, (141), 37-52. doi:10.5937/kultura1341037V [In Serbian]

The Editorial Board strongly encourages authors to give the DOI of papers published in journals instead of the URL or http:// address.

3.2.4 Articles published in thematic collections, chapters in monographs, statements in proceedings

Surname, Initial. (year of publication). Title of article. In: Name initial and surname of editor with (ed. or eds. in parentheses). *Name of publication in italics.* (pages from – to). Place of publication: Name of Publisher.

Example:

Petrović, J. (2014). Note on the so-called. the new French sociology and its methodological consequences - a review of the most important issues. In: J. Petrović, D. Đorđević (eds) *Research of social phenomena: methodological considerations* (213-222). Niš: Filozofski fakultet Univerziteta u Nišu; Mašinski fakultet Univerziteta u Nišu [In Serbian]

3.2.5 Daily newspaper articles

Surname, Initial. (year, month, day of publication). Title of article. *Title of Newspaper in italics,* p. X

Example:

Vuletić, V. (2017, July 13). Region and barriers. *Politika*, p. 28 [In Serbian]

3.2.6 Texts in periodicals (weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, annual publications)

Surname, Initial. (year, month, day of publication). Title of article. *Title of publication,* issue no., pages from – to. (NO ABBREVIATION to "p.")

Example:

 Čomski, N. (2009, September, 4). Victims of the Imperial Mentality of the West (interview). НИН 3041, 19-21. [In Serbian]

3.2.7 Citing unpublished doctoral dissertation or master thesis

Surname, Initial. (year of defense). *Title of dissertation in italics.* (doctoral dissertation / master's thesis). Name of institution where the thesis was defended, place [In Serbian].

3.2.8 Citing a doctoral dissertation available in database

Surname, Initial. (year of defense). *Title of dissertation in italics* (doctoral thesis / master's thesis). Name of institution where the thesis was defended, place. Available at [In Serbian].

Fill in this form, scan it and forward to the electronic address of Editorial Office. This form is signed by the author or all co-authors, depending if the paper is individual or co-auctorial

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   e) Writing article,
   f) Critical correction (revision) of article,
   g) other (specify) .....
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