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OF CENTRAL EUROPEAN
INTEGRATION

Edited by
Magdolna GEDEON



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Introduction

Magdolna GEDEON

Efforts to integrate Central and Eastern Europe have precedents as early as the 14th and 15th centuries. One such precedent is the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, which was established in 1385 and dominated the north-eastern half of the region for more than four centuries. In the middle of the 15th century, the Czech king George of Poděbrady (1420–1471) outlined a plan for a pan-European confederation, with the western half ‘coordinated’ by the French and the eastern half by the Czech ruling house. *‘The sometimes peaceful, sometimes very combative need to organize the whole of Central and Eastern Europe or a part of it into a larger unit or units crossing linguistic and ethnic boundaries was constantly present in the political thinking of the region from then on’.*¹

The Napoleonic Wars brought about fundamental economic, political, and social changes throughout Europe. The main ideological drivers of such changes from the beginning of the 19th century onward were the ideas of liberalism and nationalism. These were soon joined by conservatism and socialism, which sought to deal with the social consequences of economic processes. Although Europe was often at war, there was also always a strong desire for peace. The ideas of European or regional integration that emerged during the period under discussion intended to serve the cause of peace. Their importance was heightened by the two World Wars that occurred in the 19th century. Although ideas to unite the peoples of Europe were born long before, integration plans began to emerge in the first half of the 19th century not only in theory but also in practice.

This book is a continuation of the volume entitled *The Development of European and Regional Integration Theories in Central European Countries*,² which presents theories about European and regional integration formulated in ten Central European countries: Austria, Hungary, Romania, Croatia, Serbia, Slovenia, Czechia, Slovakia, Poland, and Ukraine.

The integration concepts described therein can be separated into four larger time intervals: (1) from the Napoleonic Wars to the end of the First World War, (2)

1 Romsics, 1997, p. 7.

2 Gedeon and Halász, 2022.

Gedeon, M. (2023) ‘Introduction’ in Gedeon, M. (ed.) *Great Theorists of Central European Integration*. Miskolc-Budapest: Central European Academic Publishing. pp. 11–19. https://doi.org/10.54171/2023.mg.gtocei_1

from the end of the First World War to the end of the Second World War, (3) the communist regimes between 1948 and 1989, and finally (4) from the collapse of communist dictatorships until the enlargement of the European Union.

In addition to the plans developed in the countries included in the previous volume, German and French plans that were applied to the Central European states will be presented in this book. German designs had already appeared in the 19th century. The basis of these ideas was the idea of ‘Mitteleuropa’, which referred to the creation of an economic area under German leadership. The French plans were born after the First World War and intended to boost the economy of the states within the region.

The previous volume clarified the ways in which various ideas can be linked to specific persons. This volume presents the lives and work of the thinkers who developed plans for European integration in order to give the ideas a ‘face’, as they were often influenced by the life paths of their developers. Among the theoreticians, we find politicians, economists, priests, officials, and writers who approached the question of integration from the perspectives of their professions. In addition, the thinkers’ ideas were influenced by their nationalities and the historical and political situations of their countries.

Defining the borders of Central and Eastern Europe is not an easy task. The various ideas draw the outline of Central Europe not only considering the geographical location of each country, but also their cultural and historical characteristics. Throughout the course of history, contemporary politics have also played a role in the definition of the area, and theories about the area have often served political purposes.³

As we will see, the individual integration concepts assigned larger and smaller areas to the region depending on historical traditions, geopolitical and economic interests, as well as on the location of ethnic groups. However, it was undisputed that the Habsburg Empire was located at the centre of Central Europe, which united several small nations.

As smaller groups of people living in the grip of the great powers realised that they could not survive in isolation, ideas emerged for two main courses of cooperation. One aimed at reforming the Habsburg Empire while remaining within it, and the other saw the solution as cooperation among small states that would become independent after the disintegration of the Empire.⁴ National movements also occurred during this era.

In this first period, thinkers rose to the fore who tried to define their nation’s development by embedding it in integration plans. Here, we can primarily think of Poland, which was divided several times by the great powers, and whose territorial unification such powers aimed to achieve through various federal ideas. Their best-known representative was Prince Adam Cartorisky (1770–1861). Another theorist of

3 Mező, 2001, p. 81.

4 Segesváry, 2004, p. 4.

the period was Walerian Krasiński (1795–1855), who conveyed the political suggestions of Prince Adam Czartoryski’s Hotel Lambert to the Berlin court regarding the Prussian policy towards Poles in the Prussian partition.

Ukraine was also a participant in some of the plans for a Polish federation. However, the goal in Ukraine in this period was uniting the nation by removing Ukrainians from the humiliating condition of living on the Russian outskirts and in the Polish *kresy* and creating their own state. Here, Mykhailo Drahomanov (1841–1895) was a prominent ideologist of Ukrainian autonomy who worked on the development of a state system based on federalist principles.

Ideas formulated on an ethnic basis played a major role in national movements during this period. The 19th century saw the strengthening of the Pan-Slavic movement, the aim of which was to create cultural, political, and social unity among Slavic peoples. One of the movement’s most prominent representatives, the Czech František Palacký (1798–1876), spoke at the First Pan-Slavic Conference held in Prague in 1848. Palacký aimed to implement the federal transformation of the Austrian monarchy, which would also have ensured the independence of the peoples of the Danube.

The main representative of Pan-Slavism in Poland was Walerian Krasiński, who gave the ‘Pan-Slavic’ idea a political character. He understood ‘Pan-Slavism’ as the unification of the Slavic nations into a supranational federation under the aegis of Russia.

During these years, the special relationship between Slovaks and Czechs was called into question regarding whether Slovaks should be a separate nation or part of the united Czechoslovak nation. The pan-Slavic poet Ján Kollár (1793–1852) was still advocating the latter alternative, but the younger Romantic generation, including Ján Palárik (1822–1870), was already thinking in terms of an independent Slovak nation.

The idea of Pan-Slavism remained alive in the intellectual life of many Slavic nations in Europe and generated several political concepts including Illyrianism, Yugoslavism, and Austro-Slavism. Illyrianism was the first to formulate the linguistic and ancestral kinship of the Southern Sava peoples using the concept of the Illyrian people, which can be considered synonymous with the Southern Sava peoples. Ljudevit Gaj (1809–1872), a Croatian linguist, politician, journalist, and writer, understood Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes as Illyrian. Although there were several versions of Yugoslavism, it is essentially the idea of the unification of the South Slavic peoples.⁵ Ideas proposing to reform the state structure of the Habsburg Empire, advocating the equality of Slavs, and intending to bring the empire under Slavic control, are collectively called Austro-Slavism.⁶

In the southern part of Central Europe, the formation of the framework of the Serbian, Croatian, and Slovenian nations came together with the possibilities of

5 A. Sajti, 1987, p. 3.

6 Romsics, 1998, p. 3. See more in Chapter 4.

uniting with other nations. In Croatia, Josip Juraj Strossmayer (1815–1905), as a supporter of Austro-Slavism, advocated for the federal transformation of the Monarchy. Milan Šufflay (1879–1931), as a supporter of Croatian-Hungarian unionism, wanted to ensure that the two states remained together even after the collapse of the Monarchy.

The Serbian Ilija Garašanin (1812–1874) was part of the generation that fought to increase the autonomy of the vasa Serbian principality. He was the creator of the first national programme, which was centred on the unification of all Serbs. However, Garašanin did not accept the argument that Serbia should lead a Yugoslav policy in its own interest. Instead, he was more focused on reinstalling the Serbian medieval state, an idea that was popular among the Serbian elite at the time. In Slovenia, Valentin Vodnik (1758–1819) was one of the founders of the Slovenian national movement.

On the part of Romania, one of the most decisive figures of the entire European integration, Aurel C. Popovici (1863–1919), can be singled out in this era for having proposed the reorganisation of the Austro-Hungarian Empire based on the principle of nationality. In his opinion, nationality seemed to be the only criterion capable of organising state formations at the time, unlike other desired goals such as ensuring peace and the freedom of economic exchange. In this way, he mainly hoped to strengthen the Romanian nation.

The situation of Hungary, which was organically connected to the Habsburg Empire, was also called into question during this period. The number of people belonging to other nationalities within the Empire already exceeded that of Hungarians. The political thinking of the era was therefore determined by the fear of territorial fragmentation. Most politicians proposed preserving unity by implementing some kind of integration plan. Miklós Wesselényi's (1796–1850) federal plan and Lajos Kossuth's (1802–1894) plan for the Danube Union can be highlighted in this period.

In Germany in the 19th century, Friedrich List (1789–1846) can be considered the developer of the first 'Mitteleuropa' plan. He expressed his doubts about the Keynesian economic policy and wanted to implement the union of Central European states primarily for economic reasons.

In the second period, the victorious Entente powers formed new state units based on various interests and considerations. In some places, the national principle came to the fore, while in others, it historical or even economic and transport aspects. After World War I, the first global international organisation – the League of Nations – was formed, and almost all European states were members for some time. Later, Germany's annexation of Austria, followed by its break-up of Czechoslovakia and finally its invasion of Poland, prompted Central and Eastern European elites to seriously reassess their policy of seeking alliances.

In this uncertain era, ideas about the unification of nation-states continued to grow. Among these, the pan-European movement started to implement the most comprehensive plan.

The movement's leader was Richard Nikolas Coudenhove-Kalergi (1894–1972), who is regarded as the most prominent European visionary of the interwar period. To preserve peace on the continent, he aspired to unite all states on the European continent west of the U.S.S.R. in a confederation called 'Paneurope' with the aim of safeguarding peace, equality, and a customary union.⁷

In some states, members of the movement formed separate pan-European groups. In Austria, Ignaz Seipel (1876–1932) held the presidency for the Austrian branch of the Pan-European movement. In countries with multilingual populations, the group was divided into subgroups. Czechoslovakia, for example, comprised Czech, Hungarian, and German groups. On the Czech side, Foreign Minister Edvard Beneš (1884–1948) was an enthusiastic supporter of the movement.⁸

The Slovak Milan Hodža (1878–1944) maintained good relations with Richard Nicolas Coudenhove-Kalergie, who became Czechoslovakia's representative on the Pan-European Commission, which organised the Fifth Pan-European Congress in New York. He argued for the federal transformation of Central Europe to counter German and Soviet influence.

A pan-European group also operated in Poland. However, a disagreement arose between the group and Coudenhove-Kalergi in 1927 when the Earl advised the Poles to resign Danzig to the Germans; as compensation, they would receive some parts of Lithuania. After this incident, the Polish section's activity decreased.⁹

Alongside the pan-European movement was the regional idea of Jagiellonianism. The Jagiellonian concept formed the basis of federal plans that relied on the tradition of Jagiellonian power in Poland, Lithuania, the Czech Republic, and Hungary in the 15th and 16th centuries. These ideas idealised the leadership and power of the old Rzeczpospolita. Witold Kamieniecki (1883–1964) understood Jagellonism as an integration system that would have connected the area between the Baltic Sea and the Carpathians to Poland. Based on this idea, Stefan Gużkowski (1884–1959) envisioned a federation that joined Austria, Bulgaria, and Estonia in addition to Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Yugoslavia, and Hungary. According to him, the federation would have been based on the principle of '*coperare sine violentia*' in opposition to the slogan of '*divide et impera*'.¹⁰

In addition to Jagellonism, the Intermarium concept was raised in Poland. 'Intermarium' ('Międzymorze') is a doctrine of the Polish foreign policy of the interwar period that refers to the tradition of the multicultural and multinational Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The 'Intermarium' doctrine assumed the creation of a voluntary and equal political, economic, and military alliance among Central and Eastern European countries located in the area between the Adriatic, Baltic,

7 See more: Ziegerhofer, 2022, p. 33.

8 Ligeti, 1926, p. 14.

9 Borodziej, Brzostek and Górny, 2005, pp. 95–96.

10 Ibid. pp. 96–97.

and Black Seas (the so-called 'ABC Seas'). Stefan Gużkowski linked the 'Jagiellonian idea' with the concept of 'Intermarium'.

The young Ukrainian Lysiak-Rudnytsky's (1919–1984) goal was a free Ukraine and to make Ukraine a full-fledged member of the European community. Another advocate of the independence of the Ukrainian people was the Czech Jaromír Nečas (1888–1945). He was a supporter of the League of Nations and criticised Coudenhove-Kalergi's pan-European plan because it aimed to exclude Great Britain and the Soviet Union from Europe.

After the First World War, the leading powers of the Entente believed that in the event of the collapse of the Monarchy, successor states should be created with the largest sizes possible in order to more easily resist the pressure of Germany, which was growing stronger over time. Therefore, they convinced the Serbs of the need to create Yugoslavia, which would have united them with Croats and Slovenes. Thus, on 1 December 1918, in Belgrade, Serbian Prince Regent Sándor Karađorđević (1888–1934) announced the establishment of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.¹¹ However, due to the internal political crisis caused by the Serbian predominance, on 6 January 1929, the king, Alexander I, introduced a royal dictatorship, changing the country's name to the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, which survived even after his death in 1934, along with the national strife that had existed until then. During the Second World War in Yugoslavia, in addition to their struggle against the occupiers, the nations that made up the state fought with each other.¹²

According to Croatian Vinko Krišković (1862–1951), the destruction of the Monarchy was a political failure for Europe, as was the way in which Central Europe had become a victim of neighbouring superpowers. As a supporter of Croatian-Hungarian Unionism, Milan Šufflay (1879–1931) criticised Yugoslavism. During this period, Dimitrije Mitrinović (1887–1953) was the propagator of Yugoslavism in Serbia. He was nevertheless deeply disappointed with the mode of unification and the national narrow-mindedness that was manifested during the creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. Slobodan Jovanović was also dissatisfied with the unification, considering that Serbian national strengthening was important.

In Romania, Constantin Isopescu-Grecul's (1871–1938) political activism during the First World War sought to achieve a federal transformation of and alliance with the Habsburg Empire. After the war in the summer and autumn of 1919, Isopescu-Grecul firmly advocated for the establishment of good Romanian-Hungarian relations, proposing that 'the peoples of the Lower and Middle Danube form an economic whole' to establish a Romanian-Hungarian Federation. Isopescu-Grecul advocated for 'a customs union that could be achieved' between the two countries, after which an alliance of the closest nature possible could be established.

11 Sokcsevits, 2018, p. 82.

12 See more: Major, 2005.

The issue of nationality remained a central problem in Hungary during this period as well. Taking this into account, Oszkár Jászi (1875–1957) developed a plan for the United States of the Danube.

In the period between the two World Wars, ideas about economic cooperation were given greater emphasis. In Germany, Friedrich Naumann (1860–1919) further developed the *Mitteuropa* plan at the beginning of the First World War, the central element of which would have been an alliance between Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Due to the formulation of Germany's leading role, this plan caused a great response at the political level throughout Europe.

France gained leading influence in the Central European region in the period between the two wars. France's goal was to permanently weaken the continental German hegemony and to suppress German influence in the region.¹³ The Briand Plan of 1930 and the Plan Constructif of 1931 followed by the Tardieu-Plan in 1932 were established to solve the economic difficulties that arose in the 1930s, which included the ideas of the Hungarian Elemér Hantos (1881–1942). Further, Gusztáv Gratz (1875–1946) connected the economic plan with Hungary's political rapprochement with its neighbours.

Otto Habsburg (1912–2011), who emigrated to the US after the Anschluss, proposed in 1942 that the states of the Danube region form a federation under the name United States of the Danube Region.

After World War II, the idea of uniting states to preserve peace began to be realised. At the first congresses for integrating Europe, very little was said about the participation of the states under the influence of the Soviet Union. In these states, the idea of a Central European common identity and regional solidarity was strongly present in the intellectual opposition groups of rights defenders that had been forming since the 1970s. This was particularly true of the Czechoslovak, Polish, and Hungarian democratic opposition circles.

Thus, for example, the Czech Vaclav Havel (1936–2011) demanded that communist states respect human rights and freedoms. In Serbia, according to Borislav Pekić, who also served a prison sentence, democracy reconciles the interests of citizens within the nation, and would integrate those of the European peoples. In the 1970s, the Croatian Bonifacije Perović (1900–1979) was convinced that the national idea would win against Soviet communism, and that the location of this struggle would be Central Europe.

According to the Slovenian Edvard Kocbek (1904–1981), due to its ethnic and cultural diversity, Central Europe became the sphere of various imperialisms and a constant focus of international tensions and conflicts. The Slovenian France Bučar (1923–2015) qualified the emergence of European integration from an economic point of view, proposing that the long-term survival of Europe depends on whether it can maintain its nations as separate entities. According to the Croatian Ivo Lendić (1900–1982), the reconstruction of Yugoslavia after the Second World War

| 13 Domonkos, 2015, p. 2. |

was purely due to British interest without considering the historical and cultural context.

According to the Austrian Cardinal Franz König (1905–2004), the realisation of a united Europe would have been a guarantee of peace. According to him, Austria – due to its central location – was responsible for its eastern neighbours.

After the collapse of the communist regimes, democratic elites took the lead in many states in the region, either alone or in partnership with transforming post-communist elites. Even before the final collapse of the Soviet Union (1991), the region began to reposition itself in foreign and geopolitical terms. The idea of a ‘return to Europe’ played an important role in this process.

On 24 August 1991, Ukraine declared its independence from the Soviet Union. At the beginning of the 1990s, the Yugoslav member republics also declared their independence one after the other, which led to a civil war and could not prevent the disintegration of Yugoslavia.

Presently, the countries under discussion are member states of the European Union, with the exception of Serbia and Ukraine. However, there are also closer groups of regional cooperation within the Union, such as the Visegrad Group and the Three Seas Initiative.

In April 1990, Vaclav Havel – who became the first president of Czechoslovakia and then the president of the Czech Republic in 1993 – initiated a meeting of representatives of Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland in Bratislava, which became the nucleus of the Visegrád Troika (after the division of Czechoslovakia, the Visegrád Four). The Austrians Erhard Busek (1941–2022) and Emil Brix (1956–) stated in 2018 that they firmly believe that regardless of all of its problems, the future of Europe will be determined within the area designated as Central Europe and politically organised within the framework of the Visegrád Group (V 4). Central Europe is and should continue to be a project of peace. The Visegrád Group is an important means of ensuring regional collaboration and the enforcement of common interests within the European Union.

The current volume, like the previous volume, maintains divisions by country, within which the thinkers addressing European integration and their plans for the given state are presented in chronological order. So many life paths and plans – which often intersected – were dedicated to the sake of the peace and prosperity of Europe. Many of these great theorists can still be looked to as role models today.

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Austrian Theorists of Central European Integration

Nadja EL BEHEIRI – Annemarie FENZL – Anita ZIEGERHOFER

ABSTRACT

The figures discussed in this chapter were forward-looking thinkers who were able to adapt to the needs of their times. All of them in one way or another were steeped in the Christian tradition and can be characterised as the forefathers of a United Europe. They were able to set aside their own preferences when a broader ideal required it. Ignaz Seipel was able to negotiate with representatives of the socialist party; although he personally preferred the state form of Monarchy, he played a decisive role in the enactment of the constitution of the Republic of Austria. In the context of his time, he can be considered extraordinarily open minded, not only concerning his political agreements but also, for instance, his friendship with Hildegard Burjan. Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi was an early visionary of European unification in the face of non-European world powers. He saw Pan-America, East Asia, the Russian Empire, the British Empire, and Europe as the five planetary force fields that made up the world. The pathway to strike a balance in this system would have been the founding of the United States of Europe. In 1925, he founded the 'Paneuropa Union' with its headquarters in the Vienna Hofburg and with the support of the Ignaz Seipel. The situation in Europe changed significantly after World War II, and Coudenhove-Kalergi adapted his programme to the new geopolitical situation. Until the end of his life, he struggled for the unification of Europe as a guarantee for peace. Otto von Habsburg, son of the last emperor of the Monarchy, can be considered one of the most outstanding supporters of a United Europe. He realised his political activity as successor of Coudenhove-Kalergi as President of the Paneuropean movement and from 1979 as a deputy to the European Parliament. He based his idea of European unification on the principles of democracy, federalism, subsidiarity, and solidarity. Cardinal Franz König advocated for the development of understanding between diverse people and religions. He believed that a United Europe must include both the Eastern and western halves of the continent and should be implemented to uphold peace. He was convinced that promoting Christian unity played a significant role in the progress of this unification and played a significant role in bridging the gap between Eastern and Western Europeans during the Iron Curtain era. Erhard Busek commendably combined his engagement as a local and federal politician with his commitment to the countries of Eastern Europe. In Busek's view, the Danube should serve as a second river of unification after the Rhine. He further believed that economic cooperation, education, and intensive collaboration should play a preeminent role in the unification process. Busek served as a representative of Austria in the process of the enlargement of the European Union. He also held the position of chairman of the Institute for the 'Danube Region and Central Europe'.

KEYWORDS

European federation, social, state, Pan-European movement, collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, nations beyond the Iron Curtain, European federation, enlargement of the European

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Union, Danube federation, Central Europe, Ignaz Seipel, Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi, Kardinal Franz König, Otto von Habsburg, Erhard Busek.

Introduction

After World War I and the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, numerous proposals for European unification emerged, all of which were directed at fostering mutual understanding and peace as well as economic cooperation. The concept of European Unification opposed Pan-German ideas, as Friedrich Naumann expressed on an academic level in 1915. European Unification also intended to protect the nations in question against potential threats arising from Russia. A cornerstone of unification within Europe was the reconciliation of Germany and France. Although Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi had already vocalized support for this process, it was not completed until after World War II. With the rapprochement between Germany and France, the gaze turned to the countries beyond the Iron Curtain. From the immediate post-World War I period (Ignaz Seipel) until the era of the European Union's enlargement (Erhard Busek), Austria was meant to serve as a mediator within the unification process. Austria, with its experience as a multi-ethnic and multicultural state, offered the conditions necessary for cultivating mutual understanding and building a framework for peaceful coexistence. The personalities presented in this chapter share several traits despite the disparities brought about by their various circumstances. They were all open minded and capable of adjusting to the demands of their times. All of them in one way or another were rooted within the Christian tradition and can be characterised as the forefathers of a United Europe. They were able to set aside their own preferences when a broader ideal required it. Ignaz Seipel was able to negotiate with representatives of the socialist party; although he personally preferred the state form of Monarchy, he played a decisive role in the enactment of the constitution of the Republic of Austria. Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi adapted the programme he developed after World War I to the needs of the post-World War II era. Otto von Habsburg, the son of the last emperor of the Monarchy, transformed himself into a politician within a republic order. Cardinal Franz König advocated for the development of understanding between diverse people and religions. Erhard Busek commendably combined his engagement as a local and federal politician with his commitment to the countries of Eastern Europe. These figures can provide inspiration for all those facing new challenges related to the great ideal of European integration.

1. Ignaz Seipel (1876–1932)¹

Nadja EL BEHEIRI

1.1. Life Data and Political Career

Ignaz Seipel was born on 19 July 1876. His father, a trained gilder, came from the artisan milieu but began his career as a cab driver (Fiaker), a highly honourable occupation that would eventually become synonymous with Vienna. He started working at the 'Fürstentheater' in the Vienna Prater in 1887 as a porter. The future chancellor's mother passed away when he was just three years old. Seipel attended the 'Staatsgymnasium Wien Meidling' and graduated from high school in 1895. Little is known about his childhood and adolescence. He enrolled in the seminary and began studying theology at the



University of Vienna the same year. On 23 July 1899, he was ordained as a priest. He served in several pastoral roles from 1903 to 1909 while working on a doctoral thesis on the Holy Trinity, which he successfully completed in 1903. His mentor was Franz Martin Schindler, one of the key thinkers within the Christian Social Movement. Schindler also had an impact on Pope Leo XIII's first encyclical on social issues, *Rerum Novarum*, which was published in 1891. Thus, Schindler's encouragement of the young researcher to write a 'Habilitationsschrift' on the Church's social philosophy was not unexpected.² Seipel was awarded the *venia legendi* for moral theology with his thesis 'Die wirtschaftsethischen Lehren der Kirchenväter'.³ From 1909 until 1917, he worked as a professor of moral theology at the University of Salzburg. During his time in the city that was often called the 'German Rome', he led an extraordinarily intense academic life. It was also in Salzburg that he published his study 'Nation und Staat'.⁴ Written amid the commotion of the First World War,

1 Ignaz Seipel, Austrian Roman Catholic priest, theologian and politician of the Christian Social Party, Wenzl Weis – Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Bildarchiv Austria, Inventarnr. 167.982 – D, public domain, source of the picture: https://hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ignaz_Seipel#/media/F%C3%A1jl:Wenzl_Weis_-_Ignaz_Seipel.jpg.

2 Concerning Seipel's work and life, two works remain fundamental today: one was written by Friedrich Rennhofer and the other by Klemens von Klemperer. While Rennhofer's book presents a rich documentation of his life, Klemperer attempts an interpretation against the background of world-historical events.

3 Seipel, 1907. A review to the volume was written in 1910 by Anton Koch. Cf. Koch, 1910. The author notes that Seipel did not approach the task chronologically but rather systematically.

4 Seipel, 1916. Cf. the review by Heinrich Otto Meisner. Meisner, 1917, pp. 448–451.

the book can be considered a manifestation of his convictions regarding the new organisation of Europe. In 1917, Seipel succeeded his mentor Schindler as chair of moral theology at the University of Vienna. However, his life was soon to take a turn. A year later, Heinrich Lammasch was appointed prime minister and invited his friend Seipel to take the job of Minister of Social Welfare. Although his time as minister was cut short by the fall of the Monarchy (the state of German-Austria was established on 30 October), this appointment marked the beginning of his transition from academia to politics.⁵ Seipel contributed to the formulation of the emperor's abdication declaration, which stated that he renounced any involvement in public affairs.⁶ This formulation was difficult to interpret and avoided expressing a formal abdication of the throne.⁷ With the end of the Monarchy, members of the emperor's government also had to resign. Seipel was given the honorific title of a Privy Councillor and was granted a more than sufficient pension.⁸

He intended to return to academic life but was once more persuaded to become involved in political matters. In 1919, he was elected as a member of the Constituent National Assembly. Within the National Assembly, he served as a reporter for the constitutional subcommittee, the head of which was the socialist politician Otto Bauer. According to Hans Kelsen, who is considered the 'architect' of the Austrian Constitution from a political perspective, it was mainly due to Bauer and Seipel that the Constitution was able to come into existence.⁹

Simultaneously, as he collaborated on the construction of the new order within the Republic of Austria, he delivered a number of lectures about the social teachings of the Church. He rose to authority within the Christian Social Party and was elected as Austria's federal chancellor, serving in office from 1922 to 1924. His most significant achievement during this time was the League of Nations loan Austria obtained, which prevented the country's economy from collapsing. In order to receive the loan, he had to persuade the international board representatives as well as prominent Austrian politicians.¹⁰ In 1924, Seipel was the victim of an assassination attempt in which he was seriously injured. A few months later, he renounced his position as Federal Chancellor and planned again to return to the university. In 1926, a Constitutional amendment was passed that strengthened the rights of the president of the Republic and the principle of the separation of powers.¹¹ Seipel was persuaded to again assume the position of Chancellor.¹² In 1929, he resigned again as Federal Chancellor and planned to return to the academic sphere. However, he

5 Klemperer, 2015, pp. 82–85.

6 Ibid. p. 90.

7 A similar wording was also used in the declaration of Eckartsau regarding the abdication of the Emperor from participation in the affairs of state in the Hungarian part of the monarchy.

8 Klemperer, 2015, p. 93.

9 Ibid. p. 139. In relation to Seipel's involvement with the Constitutional Committee cf. Olechowski, 2012, pp. 317–335.

10 Höbelt, 2022.

11 On the amendment cf. Brauner, 1989, p. 215.

12 Cf. Von Klemperer, 2015, p. 251.

was unable to due to his poor health. He was awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of Vienna in 1931. He was able to travel to Greece, Egypt, and the Holy Land in the beginning of 1932. His state of health then deteriorated and he passed away in August 1932 at the age of 56.

1.2. An intellectual and political portrait: Priest and politician

Seipel saw himself, first, as a priest of the Catholic Church. The two-time chancellor experienced his political activity as a divine calling. His faith in God gave rise to his faith in Austria's ability to survive after the collapse of the Monarchy. Austria's mission was to be understood as a Catholic, humanitarian, occidental, and German nation. The union of Catholic faith and political activity characterised Seipel. He did not only want to be seen as a politician who helped restore Austria's finances, he wanted to renovate the country's soul. The future Chancellor saw his turn from priesthood to active political life as an exception. When the state is in good condition, it can be governed by politicians and officials; in times of crisis, however, everyone must be ready to take responsibility. When he assumed office as a minister in the last Imperial Cabinet, Seipel wrote to his colleagues that his decision was motivated, above all, by his belief in Austria.¹³ It is remarkable that the priest-politician also remained completely identified with his priesthood during his time as Chancellor of Austria. He always wore simple clergyman's clothing and tried to maintain his life of piety by celebrating Holy Mass, receiving and performing the sacraments, and praying the liturgy of the hours. Until his death, he held office as spiritual director in two charity organisations, one of which was Caritas Socialis, founded by Hildegard Burjan. Burjan converted from Judaism to Catholicism and became the first female member of the Austrian Parliament in 1919. She was married and had one daughter. Seipel supported her social activities and the founding of the religious community 'Caritas Socialis'. Of the many similarities between Seipel and Burjan, the most remarkable of which is that both combined religious dedication with engagement in politics. At a time when male and female friendship was still uncommon, their friendship is likewise extraordinary.

Scholars generally draw a direct line from Seipel to Engelbert Dollfuss and the self-elimination of the Austrian Parliament in 1933. Both politicians are seen as representative of political Catholicism and corporatism. They are sometimes accused of harbouring anti-democratic views and are somehow held accountable for the fratricide conflict that broke out in Austria in 1934. To understand Seipel's position, it is necessary to keep in mind that the Austrian chancellor had no experience with democratic tradition as politicians coming from the Anglo-Saxon area might have had, where parliamentarians enjoy a history that goes back centuries. His point of reference was and remained first and foremost the Habsburg Monarchy. From a historical perspective, he focused on the experience of the ancient Roman Republic. He believed that one of the most important reasons for the end of the Roman

| 13 Rennhofer, 1978, p. 147. |

Republic was the fact that Rome's democratic system was not prepared to be used in the government of a world empire. In this situation, it was the emperor who was supposed to provide protection for the common people. From Charlemagne onwards, the emperor – as Seipel emphasised – was also the protector of the Church.¹⁴ Seipel conceived the Roman emperor as a magistrate of emergency and believed that the emperor was responsible for establishing peace in society. It is also noteworthy that – according to Seipel – in Rome, the ever-increasing expansion of the empire led to the suspension of the supposedly democratic system. In Austria, on the contrary, it was the fact that Austria was limited to a minimal territory after the collapse of the Monarchy that led to the creation of emergency solutions. The heart of the future chancellor of the Republic of Austria continued beating for the Monarchy, but he recognised the signs of the time and asserted that reason proposed '*democracy as being desirable and the only possible solution in the future*'.¹⁵ As a scholar, he based his political view on his dissertation on the Church's social thought and clearly favoured private property but denounced the wrong use of property, which had been an experience of the old regime.¹⁶ The priest-politician supported universal suffrage but asserted that democratic institutions should ideally be rooted in the family and estates (Berufsstände).¹⁷ For a system with an absolutisation of the individual within the democratic order, Seipel coined the term 'atomistic' state. In contrast, he termed a democratic society based on family and estates an 'organic system'.¹⁸ For Seipel, the democratic element was mainly directed to nations that, through free democratic choice, should join the bigger unity of the state. Regarding the electoral system, he preferred electoral groups like that of the family or professional associations (Berufsstand) to a universal and individual system.¹⁹

Seipel also rejected both materialistic socialism and liberal ideology. With this perspective, the politician-priest could be seen as a precursor to the 1931 encyclical *Quadregesimo anno*. Klemens von Klemperer summarises Seipel's attitude towards the end of the Monarchy and states:

While the conservatives in Germany with their narrow, dynastic view of legitimacy of the kind which Seipel dismissed as 'useless', became disaffected with the Republic and weakened its foundation, Seipel opened up the possibility of a constructive conservative function within the new Austrian Republic.²⁰

14 Cf. Olechowski, 2012, p. 321.

15 Klemperer, 2015, p. 107.

16 Ibid. p. 106.

17 Cf. the notion of 'Berufsstand' also in connection with Ignaz Seipel. Kustatscher, 2016, p. 157.

18 Klemperer, 2015, p. 107.

19 Seipel, 1918, no. 535.

20 Ibid. p. 109.

It is important to discuss anti-Semitism when examining Ignaz Seipel, as he was frequently charged with holding anti-Semitic views. He was frank about the anti-Semitic tendencies of the Christian Socialist Party. There was mention of a *'predominance of the decomposing Jewish influence'* in the Christian Socialist programme. Seipel clarified the phrase's meaning by pointing out that it was not meant to disparage Jews or the influence that they wielded in the intellectual and business worlds. Jews were expected to have a significant role in socialism, communism, and secularism, which the Austrian politician fought against.²¹ In this regard, Seipel's attitude corresponded to the view of the majority of the members of the Church's hierarchy. Although every form of racism was rejected as incompatible with the Christian message, Jews were seen as the originators and representatives of harmful materialistic and liberal ideologies. The generally accepted opinion within Catholic theology seems to have been an ethical and defensive form of Christian antisemitism. Like many of the leading Catholics of his time, Seipel's views were still far from that defended from the Second Vatican Council onwards.²² At the same time, it is remarkable that Seipel wanted to grant Jews a minority status.²³

1.3. Thinking and feeling European

At the same time that Seipel was convinced that despite all its economic and political difficulties, Austria had an important role to play within Europe, he was persuaded that the future of the country had to be conceived within a unified European Community. Seipel formed his ideas around the research he carried out in the academic sphere. As a scholar, he was fully aware of the fact that times were changing. In the book *'Nation und Staat'*, he wrote that *'the old empire is dead and will not rise again, but its idea lives. The modern form in which it must be realised [...] can probably only consist in a system of a federation [...] of national, economic or other nature'*.²⁴ This statement, written in 1916, shows clearly that Seipel's concept of Europe was closely linked to the nations of the Monarchy. Within this federation, he believed that Austria had an outstanding role to fulfil. His conviction that the future lied in a federation, combined with his strong sense of duty regarding Austria, made him a committed opponent of the Pan-German movement. Seipel asserted that if

21 Ibid. p. 256.

22 Johannes Oesterreicher (1904–1993) can be cited as an impressive example of a figure who condemned all forms of anti-Semitism as early as the 1930s. As a priest, he held numerous sermons against hostility towards Jews. Oesterreicher also took part in the wording of the Declaration of the Second Vatican Council regarding Jews in the Document *Nostra aetate* no. 4. The Council states solemnly that *'in her rejection of every persecution against any man, the Church, mindful of the patrimony she shares with the Jews and moved not by political reasons but by the Gospel's spiritual love, decries hatred, persecutions, displays of anti-Semitism, directed against Jews at any time and by anyone'*. On the approach of the Catholic Church towards Jews in the inter-war period cf. Rhonheimer, 2004, p. 18.

23 Klemperer, 2015, p. 256.

24 Seipel, 1916, p. 140.

the German part of Austria joined the German Empire, Germany would gain a few million more citizens, but the loss for Europe would be immense.²⁵

In ‘Nation und Staat’, Seipel argues for the maintenance of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. From Seipel’s perspective, the adherence of the different nations to Austria was a guarantor for their freedom. Without the empire, only individual small states would remain, which – if they wanted to prevail – would have to adhere themselves in one way or another to other more powerful states. For Seipel, therefore, the change should not have affected their belonging to the Austrian state but only the way that this affiliation was carried out. Seipel was not restricting these ideas to some form of Danubian Federation, but he wanted to apply them to a unified Europe. This project brought him closer to the Pan-European movement linked to Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi. In fact, Seipel unconditionally supported the movement in Austria. He delivered the opening address at the movement’s first congress in Vienna and held the presidency for the Austrian branch of the Pan-European movement.²⁶ Additionally, Seipel gave Coudenhove-Kalergi an office in one of the Hofburg’s buildings.

A key element of his vision of federation was the distinction between nation and state. The scholar understood ‘nation’ as a group of similar people – or at least those able to reach a certain level of similarity – bound together from destiny to a cultural and linguistic unity.²⁷ A nation in this sense could be divided into smaller unities: Seipel mentions tribes and people (Volk). At the end of this chain stands the family. A specific characteristic of the family is authority. As the authority of the family is not sufficient to meet all of its members’ needs, a bigger entity is required to cover them. This, according to Seipel, is the reason why different, smaller unities group themselves into states.²⁸ He defines the state as a community of interest, in which singular members surrender themselves to an authority that unifies their forces on behalf of the common good of all members and that has at its disposal the means necessary for achieving its aim.²⁹ Seipel states that the members of a state – the people – are like a wheel on a machine: they participate in its movement but do not determine it. Seipel makes this statement in connection with the re-establishment of communication between warring parties. If the leaders of a state are no longer in a position to maintain friendly relations, they can be substituted by others. As the members of a nation act individually and not through their leaders, a mutual understanding must also be constructed through the single members of the nation.³⁰ Post-war projects should thus concentrate on rebuilding the understanding between nations. A state that comprises different nations should provide the framework for such efforts. In 1926, exactly ten years

25 Cf. Bulloch, 2002, p. 47.

26 Seipel, 1926, p. 3.

27 Seipel, 1916, p. 6.

28 Ibid. p. 50.

29 Ibid. p. 78.

30 Ibid. p. 145.

after the collapse of the Monarchy and his first term as Chancellor, Seipel held the opening speech of the first congress of the Pan-Europe movement in Vienna. On this occasion, he quoted the French politician Aristide Briand, who had recently been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Briand had stated that in order to understand each other despite the different languages they speak, people in Europe first had to think and feel in a European way. Thinking in a European way meant, for the president of the Austrian branch of the movement, that people should overcome all kinds of narrowness and focus on the broader context. In his speech, Seipel focused on the nations and the kinds of cultural and economic organisations that could foster peace and overcome the crises that were afflicting Europe. He also mentioned the League of Nations and the Catholic Church as guarantees for peace. At the end of his remarks, he formulated the aim of the movement as finding and putting into practice a form of organisation between the European states that would go beyond individual states.³¹ Although the Congress did not achieve its aim of being a milestone on the path towards European unification, the lives and thoughts of its participants may still serve as guidelines for the challenges Europe faces nearly a century later.

Conclusions

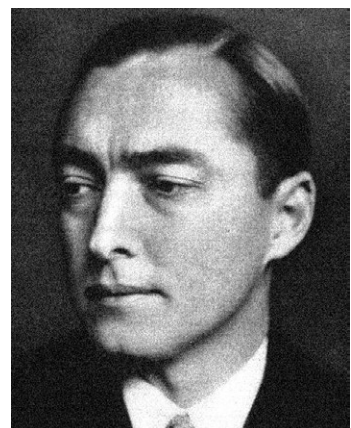
Ignaz Seipel was one of the most significant politicians of the interwar years in Austria. He initially studied to become a theologian and later entered politics. Throughout his life, he remained in touch with the academic community and strove to base his political actions on the conclusions of his academic studies. He saw his work as a priest in the Catholic Church as an integral element of his vocation. He participated actively in the design of the Austrian Constitution and was present at key occasions when Austria transitioned from a monarchy to a republic. Despite his devotion to the Monarchy, he saw that democracy was the only viable form of government. Seipel used the concepts of 'state' and 'nation' to convey his views about the development of a federation within Europe. According to him, the state is the only institution with an authoritarian component derived from the natural family. Within the nation, people are free and autonomous, and the understanding of these people is the best foundation for a unified Europe.

| 31 Seipel, 1926, p. 3. |

2. Richard Nikolaus Coudenhove-Kalergi, Paneuropa (1894–1972)³²

Anita ZIEGERHOFER

Richard Nikolas Coudenhove-Kalergi is regarded as the most prominent European visionary of the interwar period. To preserve peace on the continent, he aspired to unite European states in a confederation called ‘Paneuropa’. He believed that only the Franco-German reconciliation could achieve this goal. Having failed to accomplish this, RCK turned his attention to the unification of Central, Eastern, and South-eastern Europe. He saw the Little Entente and the subsequent alliances of states in this region, which were formed in the 1930s, as a possible nucleus of Pan-Europe. However, all of his efforts failed due to the policies pursued by the European states, which resulted in the outbreak of the Second World War.



Richard Nikolaus Coudenhove-Kalergi (RCK) was born in Tokyo on 17 November 1894.³³ He was the second son of the Austrian ambassador to Japan, Imperial Count Heinrich Coudenhove-Kalergi, and his wife Mitsuko Aoyama, who was the daughter of a Japanese merchant.³⁴ In 1896, the family returned to his father’s estate in Ronsperg [Poběžovice], Bohemia. RCK grew up in an international, cosmopolitan household. This family environment and his time spent as a pupil at the Theresianum in Vienna served as inspiration for RCK’s Paneuropean ideas. In 1917, he graduated with a degree in philosophy from the University of Vienna. Soon after, the Peace Treaty of St. Germain made him a citizen of Czechoslovakia.

RCK published his ideas concerning Paneuropa for the first time in an article written for the *Neue Freie Presse* (Vienna) entitled ‘Paneuropa: Ein Vorschlag’ (‘Paneuropa: A Proposal’).³⁵ This newspaper article is regarded as the initial spark for the creation of the Paneuropean movement. In 1923, his 168-page book *Paneuropa*

32 Richard von Coudenhove Kalergi, Writer, philosopher, politician and founder of the Pan-Europa Union, unknown photographer, in: ÖNB, Bildarchiv Austria, Inventarnummer Pf 3944:B(2), public domain, source of the picture: [https://hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Coudenhove-Kalergi#/media/F%C3%A1jl:Graf_Richard_Nikolaus_von_Coudenhove-Kalergi_\(1894%E2%80%931972\)_~1930.jpg](https://hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Coudenhove-Kalergi#/media/F%C3%A1jl:Graf_Richard_Nikolaus_von_Coudenhove-Kalergi_(1894%E2%80%931972)_~1930.jpg).

33 Detailed Ziegerhofer-Prettenthaler, 2004; Ziegerhofer, 2022, pp. 32–35.

34 Detailed Schmidt-Muraki, 2017.

35 Coudenhove-Kalergi, 1922, pp. 3–4 and Ziegerhofer-Prettenthaler, 2004, pp. 82–83.

was published and translated into many of the major European languages except Russian and Italian. The central question of the book was, *'Can Europe, in its political and economic fragmentation, preserve its peace and independence in the face of the growing non-European world powers – or is it forced to organise itself into a confederation of states to save its existence?'*³⁶

RCK saw the world as being divided into five planetary force fields: Pan-America, East Asia, the Russian Empire, the British Empire, and Europe, which was divided into nation-states. Building on this theory, RCK developed his plan for Pan-Europe. Europe, fragmented into nation states, should be united in several steps. First, a Paneuropean Conference (with a Paneuropean Office in Geneva, Vienna, or Paris) needed to be established. Second, a Paneuropean Customs Union should be created, with all member states entering into arbitration and guarantee treaties with each other. The crowning highlight would be the creation of the 'United States of Europe' along the lines of the United States of America or Switzerland. Paneurope saw itself as a non-partisan organisation dedicated to unifying Europe. Paneurope as an association was founded on 9 July 1925 as the association 'Paneuropa Union, Centrale' with headquarters in the Leopoldinischer Trakt of the Vienna Hofburg.³⁷ There were soon Paneurope offices in almost all European capitals, and in 1926, an office was opened in New York.³⁸

In addition to the creation of a European confederation of states with a mutual guarantee of equal rights, security, and independence, the Paneuropean movement called for a Federal European Court to settle all conflicts between European states. Further, a European alliance with a common air police would have ensured peace and disarmament. The gradual creation of a European Zollverein, the joint development of European colonies, the introduction of a European currency, and the protection of all national and religious minorities in Europe against oppression were also to be achieved by a united Europe.³⁹

Paneurope was to consist of twenty-six states, seven small territories, and the European colonies. From today's perspective, the demand for the inclusion of colonies must be considered as extremely problematic.⁴⁰ RCK assumed that Britain would be its own 'non-European empire'.⁴¹ Therefore, instead of membership, he proposed the creation of a British-European Entente as the basis for Britain's future relations with Paneurope.⁴²

In RCK's view, a Paneuropean Federal Union would offer European states the following advantages: Protection against war within Europe, neutralisation of Europe in world conflicts, protection against an invasion by Russia, the possibility

36 Coudenhove-Kalergi, 1923, p. IX.

37 Ziegerhofer-Prettenthaler, 2004, pp. 100–102.

38 Ziegerhofer-Prettenthaler, 2003, p. 8.

39 Coudenhove-Kalergi, 1934, p. 164.

40 See f.e. Coudenhove-Kalergi, 1929, pp. 1–19.

41 See Ziegerhofer-Prettenthaler, 2004, p. 76.

42 Ibid. pp. 76–78.

of disarmament, and the ability to compete with the American and British as well as the East Asian and Russian industry.⁴³ In order to be able to create a Paneuro-pean community, a Paneuropean patriotism was needed.⁴⁴ Therefore, RCK called upon the youth and women of Europe, the leaders of the European spirit, and all Europeans of good will to create a Paneuropean Union.⁴⁵

In the promotion of his idea, RCK was truly a professional. He gave Paneurope its own motto – *in necessariis unitas, in dubiis libertas, in omnibus caritas* – and symbol, the narrow red cross on a golden background representing Christian ethics and the enlightenment. This logo was intended to serve as a corporate identity and appeared on badges, scarves, ties, and cigar loops.⁴⁶ The Paneuropean Congresses, which began in 1926, also served this purpose. In 1933, the Paneuropean Economic Centre was founded in Vienna, followed by economic and agricultural congresses. RCK promoted his idea through radio broadcasts, the Paneurope Journal, and books about Paneurope. He went on lecture tours throughout Europe and overseas. He was the ambassador of a united Europe. As a result, he came into contact with many of the leading politicians of his time, including Edouard Herriot, Aristide Briand, Gustav Stresemann, Tomáš G. Masaryk, Edvard Beneš, and Winston Churchill. He also persuaded the German industrial magnate Robert Bosch to set up a paneuro-pean foundation, and many German industrialists supported him financially. Alongside his political and business contacts, RCK cultivated a paneuropean exchange of ideas with intellectuals and artists including the brothers Thomas and Heinrich Mann, Franz Werfel, Stefan Zweig, and Gerhart Hauptmann.⁴⁷

2.1. Central Europe

As early as 1920, even before he made his ideas public, RCK was considering which country could take the initiative to create Paneurope. He focused on the ‘Little Entente’, which had been formed in the early 1920s based on bilateral treaties. The political leadership of this alliance between Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Romania was exercised by Tomáš G. Masaryk in Prague.⁴⁸ If Masaryk were to give official support to Paneurope, RCK argued, it would have the strongest resonance throughout Europe: ‘*the Little Entente would follow him and attract the best elements of France, Germany, Italy and Poland*’.⁴⁹ However, Masaryk refused to officially endorse Paneurope because he felt he was too ‘*old to be the George Washington of Europe*’.⁵⁰ The president, however, remained a supporter of the movement throughout his life,

43 Coudenhove-Kalergi, 1923, pp. 154–155.

44 Ibid. p. 166.

45 Ibid. pp. 166–167.

46 Ziegerhofer-Prettenthaler, 2004, pp. 358–360.

47 See the short description Ziegerhofer, 2023, pp. 9–14; detailed Ziegerhofer-Prettenthaler, 2004.

48 Langer, 2014, pp. 431–438.

49 Coudenhove-Kalergi, 1966, pp. 117–118.

50 Ibid.

introducing RCK to foreign minister Edvard Beneš, who in return put him in touch with other important politicians (e.g., Aristide Briand).⁵¹

In March 1930, RCK wrote an article about the political idea of Central Europe, introducing it with reflections on Friedrich Naumann's book *Mitteleuropa* (published in 1915).⁵² However, RCK rejected *Mitteleuropa* because it contained a plan to extend and secure the '*German sphere of life and power through the closest possible union with the Danube Monarchy and the Balkan states*'⁵³. In his opinion, which was correct in terms of realpolitik, France would perceive Central Europe as a power-political instrument of Germany and would therefore be forced to ally with Italy against Germany at all costs.⁵⁴ Moreover, according to RCK, '*the political contrast between Hungary, mutilated [by the Treaty of Trianon], and its neighbours was too stark*'.⁵⁵ Therefore, Central Europe was not the way to Paneurope – he even considered it to be the wrong path. The right one led, in his perception, undoubtedly from Berlin to Paris.⁵⁶ This assessment was deliberately directed against Germany, which had already established trade relations with the agrarian states of South-eastern Europe before the Great Depression. The idea of a protected Central and South-eastern European economic area under German rule became increasingly relevant with the start of the Great Depression in 1929.⁵⁷

2.2. Eastern Europe

RCK probably also rejected Central Europe because of the political and ideological connotations of the term. However, he saw the climate in Eastern Europe as an opportunity to realise his Paneuropean vision: '*I have usually found more European patriotism among the statesmen of Eastern Europe and the Balkans than among the leaders of the crystallised nations of Western Europe*', he observed.⁵⁸ Because of its geographical and political position, he assigned Austria the role of mediator between the antagonisms of Eastern and Central Europe. In the economic talks between Austria and Hungary that took place in 1931, RCK saw an opportunity '*to create a new economic powerhouse on the Danube, capable of accelerating the unification of Europe*'.⁵⁹ As the Schober-Curtius plan for a customs union between Germany and Austria had been condemned and struck down by the Hague Court of Arbitration in the same year, RCK proposed that the unification of Europe should take place on the Rhine and the Danube. For him, the Rhine was a synonym for Franco-German rapprochement. The same applied for the Danube and the successor states of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. He concluded

51 Detailed about the relation between Paneuropa and Czechoslovakia, Ziegerhofer, 2022, pp. 195–209.

52 Coudenhove-Kalergi, 1930, p. 85.

53 Ibid.

54 Ibid. p. 89.

55 Ibid. p. 86.

56 Ibid. p. 91.

57 Sundhaussen and Clewing, 2016, pp. 260–261.

58 Osteuropa, 1931, p. 52.

59 Ibid. p. 53.

that the connection of the Rhine and the Danube thus signified the cooperation of Germany and France with the successor states.⁶⁰ He apparently still believed in the development of Franco-German friendship as the foundation of a peaceful Europe, considering that if these two states were to come to an understanding, their political race for power in Central and South-eastern Europe would come to an end. It could instead lead to an alliance with the successor states.

RCK's focus on the Little Entente and other possible alliances can not only be explained by German expansionist intentions in Central and South-eastern Europe. It should also be seen in light of the failure of the idea of a 'European Union' put forward by the French Foreign Minister Aristide Briand at the tenth meeting of the League of Nations in September 1929.⁶¹ He was subsequently asked to draft a memorandum for the establishment of the United States of Europe by the foreign ministers of the European members of the League of Nations. This so-called Briand Memorandum was sent to the governments of various European states between 17–19 May 1930. Some of the reactions of the Eastern European countries should be mentioned here briefly. The Czechoslovak government, for example, saw this 'European Union' as an opportunity for Germany to regain power and therefore had reservations. Poland was enthusiastic, since the impulse came from France, but feared that it might diminish its relations with the Soviet Union. Hungary and Bulgaria mainly demanded a revision of the peace treaties. Their governments did not believe that the plan could be implemented.⁶² Ultimately, the Memorandum was rejected by Germany, Italy, and England. Germany rejected the memorandum for various reasons but particularly because it was perceived as too political. Moreover, the non-participation of Turkey and the Soviet Union could have jeopardised Germany's relations with these countries.⁶³ Italy put forth a similar argument,⁶⁴ and Great Britain rejected the memorandum with reference to its 'non-European networks'.⁶⁵ Austria replied in very general terms with was a *'diplomatic masterpiece of obfuscation'*.⁶⁶ These rejections marked the beginning of the end of the Paneuropean movement. RCK must have realised that the rapprochement of Germany and France had become a distant prospect.

2.3. Danube Union

In his attempts to realise Paneurope at any cost, RCK focused on Eastern Europe. French Prime Minister André Tardieu's plans for a customs union among the successor states of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire seemed promising to RCK.⁶⁷ It should be noted that the Austrian Federal Chancellor Ignaz Seipel was

60 Rhein und Donau, 1931, p. 290.

61 See Ziegerhofer, 1999, pp. 377–397.

62 Ibid. pp. 257–258.

63 Ibid. p. 390.

64 Ibid. pp. 386–387.

65 Ibid. p. 388.

66 Ibid. p. 391.

67 Koch, 2009, p. 32.

the first Honorary President of the Paneuropean Union.⁶⁸ He supported RCK and his movement until his death in 1932.⁶⁹ Seipel advocated the creation of a ‘Danube federation’,⁷⁰ but RCK was not particularly in favour of his approach. When Tardieu’s attempts were unsuccessful, RCK took the initiative with the following justification: André Tardieu’s initiative had reopened the Danubian question, continued Briand’s European work in terms of *realpolitik*, and thus ‘*the revision of one of the greatest economic follies of the peace treaties*’ was called into question.⁷¹ RCK described ‘*Eastern Europe, which was born out of the Paris Peace Treaty, [as] an economic miscarriage*’.⁷² In order to make these states economically viable, he suggested expanding their markets, reducing tariffs, and promoting closer economic cooperation. The Danube Union would have to be formed by all countries except the Scandinavian, Baltic, and Iberian states. According to RCK’s credo, the Danube question would lead to the solution of the economic problems of Paneurope.⁷³ Did the Paneuropeans realise that the French policy of alliances in Eastern and Central Europe was inefficient? Those countries suffering from the agricultural crisis had no choice but to foster economic ties with Germany. This also applied to Yugoslavia, Romania, and Hungary.⁷⁴

Independently of Andre Tardieu’s advance, the Hungarian Paneuropean Union had organised a conference in Budapest under the auspices of its executive president, Paul von Auer. It took place on 12 and 13 February 1932 and was attended by representatives of the Paneuropean Unions of Austria, Poland, Romania, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia. They discussed whether it would be desirable for the ‘*successor states of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy to enter into an economic alliance in the very near future*’ in order to promote Paneurope. Furthermore, they discussed which states might be interested in such an alliance.⁷⁵ Those present advocated for the creation of a unified Paneuropean economic entity formed by the countries mentioned above, together with Hungary. In addition to the regulation of trade relations, there would also be a need for certain harmonisations in transport, monetary, industrial, and agricultural policies. Finally, the ‘*Comité permanent pour le rapprochement des pays danubiens et la Pologne*’ was established in Budapest, the chairmanship of which was entrusted to Paul von Auer.⁷⁶ All those present agreed that the Paneuropean Union had now placed its international framework at the disposal of the peoples of the Danube countries, and that ‘*the Danube [would] become a symbol of the union of peoples, a symbol of Danube patriotism*’.⁷⁷

68 See article Seipel.

69 Ziegerhofer-Prettenthaler, 2004, pp. 170–171.

70 See El Beheiri in this chapter, 1.3.

71 Donau-Union, 1932, p. 135.

72 *Ibid.* p. 127.

73 *Ibid.* p. 131.

74 Sundhaussen and Clewing, 2016, p. 261.

75 Paneuropakonferenz der Nachfolgestaaten, 1932, p. 61.

76 *Ibid.* p. 64.

77 *Ibid.*

2.4. *United States of South-Eastern Europe – United States of Europe*

One year later, the conclusion of an ‘organisational pact’ between Czechoslovakia, Romania, and Yugoslavia was initiated by the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister Edvard Beneš. The treaty, signed on 16 February 1933, was purely economic. The Little Entente had evolved from an alliance into a confederation of states – with 50 million people on 700,000 km², RCK exulted.⁷⁸ In complete ignorance of the real political facts, he thought that the “*United States of South-Eastern Europe*’ would be created. These three states could therefore proudly claim to be the “*primeval cantons of the European Confederation*”.”⁷⁹ His plan was born in the context of the decisive changes in the political environment in Germany: Adolf Hitler had become Chancellor on 30 January 1933. In addition, two pacts inspired RCK to develop another unification concept. The first was the Mussolini Pact (as RCK called it), a four-power pact initiated by Italy on 15 July 1933 with France, Germany, and Great Britain. The second was the Litvinov Pact, as RCK called the non-aggression pacts with the Baltic states initiated by Soviet Foreign Minister Maxim M. Litvinov.⁸⁰ RCK feared the division of Europe into British and Russian zones of influence, proposing that small- and medium-sized European states should unite to form their own confederation rather than leaving the question of unification and organisation to the great powers.⁸¹ This bloc of more than twenty states could be called the ‘United States of Europe’. It would always be defensive, never offensive, and therefore open to the accession of the great powers.⁸² This European confederation would have to grant itself mutual economic preference, guarantee political protection against aggression, would have a federal court, and ensure the protection of minorities. Recognising that a bloc of twenty European states could not be created in one fell swoop, RCK proposed a gradual expansion. In the first place, the earlier ‘attempts at organisation’ of the Little Entente, the Baltic Union, and the Balkan Union would have to be extended. Attempts should be made to organise closer cooperation between Austria and Hungary, between Spain and Portugal, and between the Scandinavian States.⁸³ Finally, cooperation between the Oslo Convention States (Denmark, Norway, Sweden, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg) and Ouchy⁸⁴ (Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg) as well as the eight Central European States should be coordinated at the Geneva Conference on Disarmament, which lasted with interruptions from 1932 until 1934. The initiative should be taken by Spain, the largest country and a neutral power. This confederation of states would, however, have to be drawn up on a legal basis. Therefore, at the Basel Congress in 1932, leading European lawyers declared their willingness to draft such a European pact.

78 Die neue Großmacht, 1933, p. 48.

79 Ibid. p. 53.

80 Block der Kleinstaaten, 1933, p. 193.

81 Ibid. p. 194.

82 Ibid. p. 197.

83 Ibid.

84 Halkelma-Kohl, 1932, pp. 620–629.

The ‘Paneuropean’ Commission of Lawyers met in Geneva on 28 September 1933. Unfortunately, there is no record of the Commission’s work.⁸⁵

As early as August 1933, the journal ‘Paneuropa’ was banned in Germany, and soon after RCK’s books were also prohibited. Two months later, the Paneurope Union was dissolved by the Nazis, erasing one of the most important and, above all, financially strong sub-organisations. RCK had to look for new financial supporters.⁸⁶ By the end of 1933 at the latest, RCK was aware that the creation of Paneurope as a political union of states was utopian due to the political situation. He therefore began to concentrate on the economic unification of Europe, given the increasing economic dependence of various South-eastern European states on Germany. It was to this end that he organised the first Paneuropean Economic Conference, held in Vienna on 2 December 1933. The aim of the conference was to ‘*overcome the crisis in Europe and unite all European states into one economic area*’.⁸⁷ The conference was attended not only by economic theorists but also by entrepreneurs from Austria, France, Norway, Hungary, Romania, Greece, Czechoslovakia, and Switzerland.⁸⁸ A ‘Paneuropean Economic Manifesto’ was drafted, which called for the creation of a large economic area to secure Europe’s ‘economic future and equality’, particularly in the face of the US, the UK, the Soviet Union, and the East Asian region.⁸⁹ At the suggestion of the former Romanian Foreign Minister Mihail Manoilescu, an Economic Bureau was established and had already begun work on organising another conference,⁹⁰ which took place between 16–18 May 1934, again in Vienna. The intention was to move from words to action, establishing a Paneuropean Economic Council that was to be chaired by the French minister Joseph-Honoré Ricard and would serve to intensify the cooperation between European governments.⁹¹ Besides the Austrian delegation, representatives from France, Spain, Romania, and Czechoslovakia attended the conference.⁹²

2.5. *United States of Eastern Europe*

When Yugoslavia, Greece, Romania, and Turkey formed the so-called Balkan Pact on 9 February 1934 to secure their common borders against aggression from other Balkan countries,⁹³ RCK saw this as a further step on the road to European unification: ‘*the area that was once the most troubled in Europe is being transformed*

85 Ziegerhofer, 2022, p. 203.

86 Ziegerhofer, 2004, p. 117.

87 Paneuropäische Wirtschaftskonferenz, 1933, p. 253.

88 Detailed II. Paneuropa Wirtschaftskonferenz Wien, Mai 1934, pp. 1–28.

89 Paneuropäisches Wirtschaftsmanifest, 1934, p. 1.

90 Ziegerhofer, 2004, p. 294.

91 II. Paneuropa Wirtschaftskonferenz, 1934, p. 20.

92 Ibid. Subsequently, on 15 May 1935, a Pan-European Economic Centre was established in the House of Federal Legislation under the auspices of the Austrian Federal Government see: Ziegerhofer-Prettenthaler, 2004, p. 310.

93 Sundhaussen and Clewing, 2016, p. 124.

into a pillar of European peace'.⁹⁴ RCK saw this new Balkan Entente as a continuation of the Little Entente in the South, particularly since Yugoslavia and Romania had been members of the former. The 'reconstruction of Europe from the East' could only work if a '*modus vivendi [...] with Bulgaria and Hungary*'⁹⁵ was found. These two revisionist states would have to be accommodated in matters of national minorities and economic necessities, RCK suggested.⁹⁶ He attributed to Poland, '*the only great power in the Eastern European area*', a crucial role in the realisation of the United States of Eastern Europe. The latter could be a bridge between the Balkan Entente and the establishment of a Baltic pact between Estonia and Latvia, which was currently under negotiation. In this way, the United States of Eastern Europe could be formed on the basis of the Little Entente, the Balkan Entente, and the Baltic Union '*from the Arctic Sea to the border of Persia*'. The only precondition would be the reconciliation of Poland and Lithuania.⁹⁷ RCK dreamed that '*in this part of Europe [begins] the consolidation of peace and political construction, while the skies of Western Europe are increasingly darkening*'.⁹⁸

The Czechoslovak Prime Minister Milan Hodža undertook another measure to alleviate the problems in the agricultural sector by proposing the establishment of a grain centre in Vienna in January 1936.⁹⁹ In order to minimise dependence on Germany, the plan (which was not implemented) aimed to stimulate the exchange of goods between the agricultural East and the industrial West. The first meeting of the Paneuropean Economic Centre, held in Vienna from 27 to 28 January 1936, was also devoted to this idea.¹⁰⁰ In order to reduce potential inequalities, RCK immediately drew up his own plan for a Paneuropean Agricultural Commission. However, when the Austrian Chancellor Kurt Schuschnigg rejected this plan as well, the conference participants agreed on the organisation of an agricultural conference in autumn 1936.¹⁰¹ Following the meeting of the Economic Centre, RCK opened the first Paneuropean Danube Conference in Vienna,¹⁰² which the Hungarian economist Elemer Hantos had played a leading role in organising. This meeting resulted in the expression of the intention to convene a conference of the Danube states, in which Austria would act as a bridge to Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Romania, and Bulgaria. This proposal was favourably received by the '*Comité permanent pour le rapprochement des pays danubiens et la Pologne*', but was not implemented.¹⁰³

94 Balkanpakt, 1934, p. 34.

95 Ibid. p. 36.

96 Ibid.

97 Ibid. p. 37.

98 Ibid. p. 38.

99 Feierabend, 1936, pp. 77–81; Hodža in Wien, 1936, pp. 93–94.

100 Ziegerhofer-Prettenthaler, 2004, p. 315.

101 Ibid. p. 316 sowie Erste paneuropäische Agrar-Konferenz, 1936; Ergebnisse der ersten paneuropäischen Agrar-Konferenz, 1936.

102 Ziegerhofer-Prettenthaler, 2004, p. 316.

103 Ibid. p. 317.

When Hodža signed a trade treaty with Chancellor Schuschnigg in Vienna on 2 April 1936, RCK proposed that the reason for the meeting was to ‘renew and build on the spirit of Locarno, at the Danube’.¹⁰⁴ RCK saw the visit as a major event and ‘the first such treaty on a preferential basis between a power of the Little Entente and the Roman pact system: the first bridge between these two hitherto antagonistic systems of states in Central Europe’.¹⁰⁵ Previously, RCK had devoted the March issue of the Paneurope Economic Journal to the economy of the Danube region.¹⁰⁶ France, Austria, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Romania, and Czechoslovakia were invited to contribute.

2.6. Danube Europe – Europe of the Successor States

In 1935, RCK once again referred to the two ‘Völkerströme’:¹⁰⁷ the Rhine and the Danube. For him, the Rhine was Western Europe’s fateful river, the Danube that of Eastern Europe. Alluding to the Locarno Treaties of 1925, RCK stated that the attempt to synthesise the two ‘rivers’ had begun on the Rhine. Since the Franco-German policy of rapprochement had failed, he concluded that ‘*the Danube question is at the centre of European interest*’.¹⁰⁸ Once again, RCK mentioned the idea of a Danube Europe based on the Swiss model, hoping that ‘*the European nation-states of the East would become larger cantons of a greater Switzerland*’,¹⁰⁹ presumably to avoid any thoughts of restoration. The first and most important institution of ‘Danube Europe’ would be a federal court that would guarantee equal rights for minorities. Joint military, economic, and foreign policy cooperation would follow in later stages.¹¹⁰ Due to its geographical location, size, international culture, and tradition, only Vienna could be considered as the centre of ‘Danube Europe’. In 1937, RCK contemplated replacing the politically occupied term ‘Danube Europe’ and proposed the term ‘Successor States’, which was new in international law after the end of the First World War.¹¹¹ The term ‘Successor States’ was understood to mean Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Romania, Poland, and Italy. According to RCK, it would have been possible to unite these states in a political and economic community. This would have created a European metropolitan area twice the size of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire.

RCK considered the terms Danube States, Danube Bloc, and Danube Europe to be incorrect because the term Danube States implied ‘*exclud[ing] Italy from the system and [including] Germany and Bulgaria*’.¹¹² Because of its size, Germany would automatically

104 Hodža in Wien, 1936, p. 94.

105 Ibid. pp. 93–94.

106 Die Wirtschaft im Donaauraum, 1936, pp. 1–14.

107 Donau-Europa, 1935, p. 309.

108 Ibid.

109 Ibid. p. 310.

110 Ibid. p. 301.

111 Nachfolgestaaten statt Donaustaaten, 1937, p. 6.

112 Ibid. p. 8.

regain the lead in this system. Therefore, Germany could only be a neighbour but not a member of the future Central European group of states. For the sake of clarity, RCK advocated using the term ‘Successor States’ instead of ‘Danube States’.¹¹³ This would include Poland and could connect the Little Entente and the alliance Italy had formed with Austria and Hungary. He stated, ‘*the renewal of the system of Successor States would also be economically justified [...] and would be suitable [...] to form the core of a future unification of Europe*’.¹¹⁴ Central Europe expert Elemer Hantos was much more realistic. He disagreed with the RCK’s demand to rename ‘Danube Europe’ as ‘Successor States’: the term ‘Danube Europe’, according to the controversial expert, is an officially defined one. The six states that make up ‘Danube Europe’ form a group of countries with approximately equal economic and cultural development opportunities, and not so much a distinction from Italy and Germany.¹¹⁵ In 1971, in order to avoid misunderstandings, RCK referred to the belt of states between the Soviet Union and Central and South-eastern Europe as ‘Intermediate Europe’.¹¹⁶

In March 1938, events in Austria reached a climax that also affected the Coudenhove-Kalergi family. On the night of 12 March 1938, when Austria was ‘annexed’ by Nazi Germany, the family fled to Bratislava, then via Budapest, Zagreb [Agram], and Rome to Switzerland.¹¹⁷ On 29 September, Germany, Italy, France, and England signed the so-called Munich Agreement, which ordered the evacuation of the Sudeten German territories starting on 1 October 1938.¹¹⁸ RCK lost his Czechoslovak citizenship and soon after took French citizenship.¹¹⁹ The Little Entente ceased to exist after the Munich Agreement.¹²⁰ The same applied to other alliances, which had to give way to the alliances of belligerent states. The family spent the Second World War in exile in the US,¹²¹ returning to Europe in 1946. In 1947, RCK founded the European Parliamentary Union (EPU)¹²² and in 1954 he reactivated the Paneuropean Movement in Baden-Baden, Germany. At the eighth Pan-European Congress in Bad Ragaz (Switzerland) in 1958, Otto Habsburg was among the speakers. Coudenhove-Kalergi first met him in 1939 and finally proposed Otto Habsburg as his successor as President of the Pan-Europa Union in 1960.¹²³ In 1950, RCK was the first person to receive the Charlemagne Prize of Aachen, and in 1966 he was awarded the Charlemagne Prize (Karl IV) of the Sudeten German Landsmannschaft.¹²⁴ Until the end of his life, he worked for world peace and remained a strong advocate for the unification of Europe,

113 Ibid. p. 9.

114 Ibid.

115 Hantos, 1937, p. 106.

116 Coudenhove-Kalergi, 1971, p. 34.

117 Coudenhove-Kalergi, 1966, pp. 22–224.

118 Hürten, 1995, pp. 306–310.

119 Coudenhove-Kalergi, 1943, p. 208.

120 Sundhaussen and Clewing, 2016, p. 489.

121 Ziegerhofer-Prettenthaler, 2003, pp. 3–26.

122 Detailed Posselt, 1987.

123 Fundamental Baier, 2006. See in this chapter 4.3.

124 Europa-Gesellschaft Coudenhove-Kalergi, 2010, p. 251.

which he perceived as crucial for consolidating peace. This had become increasingly relevant since the Iron Curtain divided Europe into East and West. His main focus was on political developments in Eastern Europe.¹²⁵ The tireless fighter for a united Europe died on 25 July 1972 in Schruns, Vorarlberg. His grave is in Gstaad.

Summary

RCK had observed the political situation in Europe during the inter-war period very carefully but he had not always interpreted it correctly. RCK saw the reconciliation between Germany and France as a basic requirement for the creation of Paneurope. However, this was not foreseeable at the beginning of the movement, which is why RCK saw the nucleus of Paneurope in the Little Entente, a project heavily supported by France. Thus, RCK had to defend himself repeatedly against accusations that Paneurope was under French influence. The Locarno Treaties offered a glimmer of hope for the Franco-German rapprochement that Briand and Stresemann were striving for, but Stresemann's untimely death in 1929 shattered all hopes. With the rejection of Briand's memorandum in 1930 at the latest, this aim had become a distant dream. The Paneuropean movement was at its zenith, but at the same time, its decline was inevitable. RCK now relied on alliances between states in Central and Eastern Europe, primarily to contain French and German influence. The rise of National Socialism in Germany, an increasingly aggressive Italy, and the agrarian crisis resulting from the Great Depression may also have contributed to RCK's reorientation of Paneurope. The aim was then to create an economically rather than politically united Paneurope. In the end, RCK's efforts failed due to the spread of nationalistic and totalitarian ideologies across Europe that led the continent into another terrible world war. It was only after the end of the Second World War that the European states were ready to establish a European Community, a European Union – and RCK was one of its pioneers.

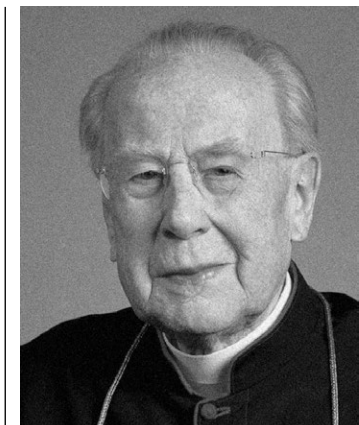
3. Cardinal Franz König (1905–2004)¹²⁶ and Europe

Annemarie FENZL

The coalescing and unification of the 'Continent of Europe' as a community of states, the reflection on its common roots and the preservation of its spiritual heritage as a liveable habitat for all people of the continent was a theme that accompanied Cardinal König throughout his long life (1905–2004), as it was deeply aligned with his nature.

125 See Coudenhove-Kalergi, 1971.

126 DAW/Fotosammlung/Kardinal König, Portrait Kardinal König (kathbild.at/Franz Josef Josef Rupprecht). The photograph is from the archive of kathbild.at / Franz Josef Rupprecht and used here with the permission of kathbild.at / Franz Josef Rupprecht.



3.1. Life

Cardinal König's life almost stretched across the entire 20th century.¹²⁷ Born on 3 August 1905 in Rabenstein, Lower Austria, into simple rural surroundings, the inquisitive boy's path led him from the confines of his homeland to the Benedictine grammar school in Melk, and after graduating from high school with distinction in 1927, he went to Rome to study philosophy and theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University. He became a consecrated priest in Rome in 1933, and from 1934 to 1937 was a chaplain in the diocese of St. Pölten, his hometown, and provided practical pastoral care in Altpölla,

Neuhofen an der Ybbs, St. Valentin, and Scheibbs to the common people. He also completed his theological studies during this time and was awarded a doctorate in theology in 1936. From 1936 to 1937, he studied law for two semesters on a scholarship at the University of Lille in northern France, where he also worked in pastoral care. From 1938, Dr. König, appointed by his bishop as cathedral curate in St. Pölten, was also the unofficial youth director of his home diocese. In 1945, he was transferred to Krems/Donau as a religion professor. Additionally, he habilitated in 1946 at the Faculty of Theology of the University of Vienna with his thesis *'Der Jenseitsglaube im Alten Testament und seine Parallelen in der Religion des Zarathustra (Belief in the afterlife in the Old Testament and its parallels in the religion of Zarathustra)'* as a private lecturer in religious studies in the subject of the Old Testament. He became an accomplished expert on the ancient Iranian religion of Zarathustra. In the following year, he was called to Salzburg as an associate professor of moral theology. On 31 May 1952, Pope Pius XII appointed him as titular bishop of Livias and coadjutor with the right of succession to Bishop Michael Memelauer of St. Pölten, who consecrated him bishop in the Cathedral of St. Pölten on 31 August 1952. In the fall of the same year, he was given the task of youth issues at the Austrian Bishops' Conference, and subsequently the duties of a press bishop.

3.1.1. Archbishop of Vienna

After just four years, on 10 May 1956, he was appointed as Archbishop of Vienna as successor of Cardinal Theodor Innitzer, who died in 1955. On 17 June, he was ceremoniously enthroned in St. Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna. As his motto, he chose a passage from Apostle Paul's letter to the Ephesians: *'Veritatem facientes in caritate – speak the truth in love'* (Eph 4:15). On 15 December 1958, he was received into the College of Cardinals by Pope John XXIII. On 21 February

127 See: Fenzl and Moser, 2014.

1959, Cardinal König was appointed as the first military vicar of the Austrian Armed Forces.

As Archbishop of Vienna, Franz König was a proponent and driving force of pastoral care that reached out to people. He personally made hundreds of visits to parishes, schools, and businesses to make personal contact with the youth and working people. The modest churchman played a significant role in the church in Austria breaking away from its traditional one-sided political ties to the bourgeois camp. Despite the difficult disputes in which he was engaged about ‘fristenlösung’ (*time-phase solution for the termination of pregnancy*), which he described as an ‘open wound’ until his death, Cardinal König’s legacy continues to embrace ideological peace in Austria today.

At the level of the universal church, Franz König made his first appearance at the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), which was chaired by Pope John XXIII on 25 January 1959, where he would eventually become a leading personality. It was – in his own words – the ‘high time’ of his life. In countless speeches, sermons, essays, and lectures he tried in the following years to bring the Council closer to the people, and he continued to do so even after his retirement as Archbishop of Vienna, perhaps then even more strongly than during his active times.

Cardinal König also made the pioneering impulses of the Council fruitful in his diocese by convening the Vienna Diocesan Synod (1969–1971). This, along with the Austrian Synodal Process (ÖSV) held in 1973/1974, set the course for an internal renewal of the Church in the spirit of the Council, including its archdiocese.

In 1985, he handed over his well-ordered archdiocese, which he had guided calmly and without extreme polarisation in a time of great social and ecclesiastical upheaval – always aware that a bishop’s first tasks are to integrate, to listen, to wait, and to connect. In June of the same year, he was elected president of the international Catholic peace movement Pax Christi for the next five years.

For almost twenty years, interrupted again and again by many pastoral tasks and journeys, he worked as a ‘Chaplain in the elderly people’s home of the Sisters of Merciful Jesus’ in Vienna-Gumpendorf. To everyone’s amazement, he recovered quickly from a fractured femur he suffered in Mariazell in the summer of 2003 and had already resumed his pastoral duties in the fall of the same year, almost as if nothing had happened. After escorting his friend Franz Zak, the former bishop of St. Pölten, to his final resting place on 11 February 2004, he accepted an honorary doctorate from the University of Cluj on 18 February 2004 as a sign of the coalescence of Europe. Eventually, his strength left him. The theme ‘Europe’ had become even more important in the last years of his life.

In the early hours of 13 March 2004, Cardinal König died in his apartment in the retirement home of the Sisters of Merciful Jesus – in the truest sense of the word, as it used to be said, ‘*sleeping blissfully in the Lord*’. His death caused sincere sadness and consternation in all camps, and his funeral in St. Stephen’s was an impressive

and above all consoling demonstration of his firm Christian conviction, expressed again and again, that death does not have the last word in the life of the believer. What remains of Cardinal Franz König is, among other things, a concern for the slow merging of Europe.

3.2. Europe

Cardinal König's thoughts always pointed to the future. The topic of 'Europe' had occupied him for a long time. In 1983, together with Karl Rahner, he had published an anthology entitled 'Europe – Horizons of Hope'¹²⁸, which brought together renowned authors from Cardinal Ratzinger to Leszek Kolakowski and Richard von Weizsäcker.

For Cardinal König, a future common Europe that would grow together was, above all, a guarantee for peace. In terms of the basic structure of his being, he has always had great understanding for a 'whole Europe' consisting of the East and West of the continent. Although he did not close his eyes to the number of difficulties involved, he supported the process of European unification to the end of his life to the best of his ability out of deep inner conviction in countless statements, but also through his actions.

On closer examination, three lifelines can be discerned here in particular, which repeatedly converged and connected with each other in the Cardinal's work.

- Personal prerequisites, such as openness and curiosity since childhood, no fear of contact with the unfamiliar, but rather a strong and positive interest in other countries, people, and languages, combined with a firm point of view, with the ability to listen to and seriously consider other opinions – in other words, the ability to engage in dialogue and a keen sense of commonality, came to fruition repeatedly in concrete life situations, which Cardinal König liked to describe as coincidences.
- As a Roman Curia Cardinal and head of one of the three Vatican Secretariats 'for the non-believers' established in the wake of Pope Paul VI's Council, numerous initiatives and contacts in talks between Christians and Marxists, in the West as well as in the East of Europe, were also, so to speak, part of the duties assigned to him by the highest authority.
- His deep conviction that only a unified Christianity can be capable of a fruitful and successful dialogue with the other major world religions in the service of peace was not least the driving force behind his ecumenical efforts, which resulted in the founding of the ecumenical foundation 'Pro Oriente' on November 21, 1964, still during the Council period.

Erhard Busek (+13 March 2022), with whom the Cardinal had a long friendship, had once assessed the success of his countless contacts with church institutions in the former Eastern Bloc thus: *'the collapse of 1989 would not have occurred as it did without*

| 128 König and Rahner, 1983. |

the reference point of Cardinal König, because he used and expanded the rust holes in the Iron Curtain in order not only to promote the freedom of faith'.¹²⁹

3.3. Decisive events and life situations

3.3.1. Varazdin 1960

Cardinal König was the first 'Western' Cardinal to travel to Eastern Europe. On one of the first of these trips – on the way to the funeral of his colleague from the Germanicum, the ostracised Zagreb Cardinal Stepinac, in which he was the only bishop from the West who participated – he suffered a serious car accident on 13 February 1960 before Varazdin, in which his chauffeur was killed. In the weeks that followed while in the infirmary of the small provincial hospital there, for the first time, the Cardinal clearly recognised Austria's responsibility for its eastern neighbours due to its position in the heart of Europe. This was a responsibility of which he, whose archdiocese at that time was still surrounded on almost three sides by the Iron Curtain, had not previously been aware, as he later often remarked in amazement.

He repeatedly spoke about those weeks in the hospital in Varazdin and their importance for him:

On 10 February 1960, the news reached me in Vienna, as a then young archbishop, of the death of Cardinal Stepinac, who had been released earlier from his imprisonment but was confined to his home district, and who was one of my study colleagues from the Germanicum. For this reason, but also to show the historical ties of Vienna with Croatia from the time of the Monarchy, I wanted to try to attend the funeral. To my surprise, my request to the Yugoslav Embassy in Vienna for a visa was granted relatively quickly. So I drove to Graz on the evening of 12 February spent the night there, and continued the journey to Zagreb in the morning of 13 February. On our way we passed the small town of Varazdin. Immediately afterwards, on a winding forest road, our car skidded and drove directly into the flank of an oncoming truck. My driver was dead and my secretary and I were unconscious. I woke up in the hospital in Varazdin. The injuries were severe and, for me, partly life-threatening. The medical care of the communist hospital was eager to help according to the standards customary at the time. It was a stroke of luck that spiritual sisters were still able to serve there. In the days of convalescence that followed, I found myself alone in a small hospital room with only one thing in front of me: *a picture of Tito, then head of state in communist Yugoslavia*. At that time – as far as I remember – the question of what this accident meant in my life emerged for the first time. In a way I cannot quite explain, it was the thought, the idea: the Archbishop of Vienna

| 129 Fenzl and Moser, 2014, p. 191. |

should see in this accident a sign that he should also take care of the Church behind the Iron Curtain. With my trip to see Cardinal Mindszenty at the American Embassy in Budapest the year after next, I began my contacts with the bishops and Catholics of the East. It was then that I realized that the Iron Curtain is not only a geographical border, but also a barrier in people's hearts and psyches. So, for me, the name 'Stepinac' became the prelude to a new understanding – not only of communist Europe, but of Eastern Europe in general.¹³⁰

3.3.2. 'Go to Budapest!' – Cardinal Mindszenty – 1963

From this time on, the Cardinal saw that his specific task as the Archbishop of Vienna was to overcome the isolation of the Church in the Communist sphere of power by establishing fraternal contacts of the Austrian Church with the neighbouring Churches in Eastern Europe. He thus began a consistent 'policy of visits' to countries behind the Iron Curtain. From the spring of 1963, on behalf of John XXIII, he regularly visited Cardinal Mindszenty, who was under house arrest in the American Embassy in Budapest, and from then on maintained contact with him, along with the task, which required a great deal of empathy, to, as Hansjakob Stehle put it, '*dampen Mindszenty's zeal, which had become rigid during the tragic years of suffering*' until he left his self-imposed exile in the autumn of 1971 and came to Rome and later to Austria and, according to his wish, found a resting place in Mariazell until the end of communism in 1989.¹³¹

3.3.3. The Second Vatican Council – 1962–65

An important station in Cardinal König's life was the Second Vatican Council (1962–65), solemnly announced by Pope John XXIII in 1959, with its opening to the world. It was here that he first made his presence felt on the global level.¹³²

With the Council, the Catholic Church fundamentally opened up to the world: in the pastoral constitution 'Gaudium et Spes' (Hope and Joy) with the programme title 'The Church in the Modern World', the Council professed the social responsibility of the Church and said: '*the Catholic Church, moreover, impartially cherishes all that other Christian Churches and ecclesial communities have contributed and continue to contribute in cooperation to fulfil the same task*'.¹³³ In doing so, the Council desired

that Catholics will contribute to the right fulfilment of their task in the international community, seek an active and positive cooperation with the

130 Rectified verbally and printed many times, among others in the *Osservatore Romano* according to a MS of 27 January 2003; further in: König, 1994, p. 257; commented in Feichtlbauer, 2003, p. 121 f.

131 Stehle, 1985, p. 110.

132 The Basic Message of Vatican Council II, in: König, 1994, pp. 43 ff.

133 Rahner and Vorgrimler, 1998a, p. 549 f.

separated brethren who, together with them, profess the love of the Gospel and with all people who long for true peace.¹³⁴

Express appreciation of other Christian churches and communities and a call for cooperation was the message the Council provided to all people of good intent.

In this context, the Council also dealt in depth with the phenomenon of atheism and the Church's attitude towards it, and came to the following conclusion:

The remedy for atheism can only be expected from a presentation of doctrine appropriate to the situation and from the life of integrity of the Church and its members. [...] And while the Church unequivocally rejects atheism, it sincerely confesses that all people, believers and non-believers, must work together for the right building of this world they live together in. That certainly can't happen without sincere and intelligent dialogue.¹³⁵

This adventure of dialogue found an accomplished and interested partner in Cardinal König.

3.3.4. *Ecumenical efforts for the unity of Europe in the service of a united Christianity – foundation of 'Pro Oriente' on 17 November 1964 in Rome*¹³⁶

As the Council opened the doors to other Christian denominations, especially the Orthodox Churches – with this foundation of his, the Cardinal seized the *kairos* (the opportune time) of this historic moment. In the decades up to the present day, the Foundation has been able to give platforms for theological dialogue and interpersonal relations with the countries of the East, above all through its international ecumenical symposia, which have always been underpinned by good human relations. Thus, Pro Oriente became a trademark for ecumenical dialogue with the churches of Orthodoxy and the Oriental Orthodox churches.

3.3.5. *Cardinal of the Curia and head of a secretariat for non-believers and the dialogue with them, as well as with followers of other world views – 'Usus docebit' (Just start and learn in the doing) – 1965*

In April 1965, Pope Paul VI, who faithfully completed the great work of his predecessor after the death of Pope John XXIII, entrusted Cardinal König with the direction of the Vatican 'Secretariat for Non-Believers',¹³⁷ which had been newly founded in the wake of the Council. The Cardinal held this position for fifteen years, until

134 Ibid.

135 Rahner and Vorgrimler, 1998b, 467 f.

136 Regarding Pro Oriente see, among others and above all: Veritati in Caritate – der Beitrag des Kardinals König zum Ökumenismus (Cardinal König's contribution to Ecumenism), ed. On behalf of the Pro Oriente Vienna Foundation Fund, by Theodor Piffl-Percevic and Alfred Stirnemann Tyrolia, 1981.

137 König, 1994c, p. 68.

1980. In this capacity, he intensified contacts with representatives of areligious humanism in the West as well as with those of state atheism in the East.

The first steps of the young secretariat were not easy. Several options were open; the task was to identify those that could best meet the Council's concern for dialogue,¹³⁸ which dealt with the most diverse manifestations of atheism in today's secularised world. An important instrument for Cardinal König had always been dialogue itself, conducted without prejudice. His culture of conversation, never condescending, never lecturing, above all listening, which was to a certain extent innate, was also the sustainable basis for good interpersonal contact, which the Cardinal recognised as an important prerequisite for necessary and fruitful conversations: *'if the Church wants to engage with the present – and this is one of the basic goals of the Council – then it must enter into conversation with this world'*.

Thus, the Cardinal, who had no fear of making contacts and on the contrary had a keen interest in people and their thinking and feeling, fulfilled the basic demand of the Council throughout his life. That demand is that the Church come to a dialogue with the world. Before one can convert the world, one must approach it and talk to it. This basic attitude has not lost its relevance even in the present time.

In this basic attitude, Cardinal König widened his contacts with representatives of areligious humanism in the West as well as state atheism in the East. However, he always resisted any form of political instrumentalisation of his work, stating that *'the church, even if you don't always want to believe it, is essentially concerned here with a religious problem, a pastoral problem'*.

It was at this time, in January 1965, that the Cardinal, in an article published in the *London Times*, also addressed the problem of religious freedom and the tolerance associated with it, in contrast to the atheistic intolerance in communist-occupied countries. He noted at the time, among other things:

Tolerance in spiritual matters is one of the fundamental convictions of contemporary humanity, even though we witness examples of intolerance on a daily basis. This tolerance is not based on indifference, but on respect for people's inner conscience. If communism does not want to eliminate itself from the spiritual development of the world, it will also take note of tolerance as an essential value in its own sphere, it will not be able to ignore man's personal choice of conscience in the long run.¹³⁹

In a festive lecture to the 'Circolo di Roma' in 1974, he described the conversation with the representatives of state atheism in the East: *'as difficult and up to now practically hardly possible'*¹⁴⁰, but here the same was true as for the often misunderstood Vatican policy towards the East: *'once a path has been identified as the right one, it*

138 See: Peter, 1985, p. 107.

139 *London Times*, January 1965.

140 Festive lecture to the 'Circolo di Roma' in 1974.

must be pursued, even if the successes do not materialize overnight'. Overall, he said, more trust in the church is needed, the future of which also represents the future of man: *'we believe in the church of the future because we believe in the human being who will never stop questioning himself'*.¹⁴¹

The development has undoubtedly proven the Cardinal right. The conversation between faith and non-belief is still ongoing – in new facets – and will probably remain so until the end of time. The year 1989 and above all the Pope from Poland have set new precedents in this regard.

3.3.6. *Travel to the East*

During these and the following years, Cardinal König made numerous visits to almost all of the Eastern States, with the main objective always being to meet with bishops, priests, and believers, to whom he made it clear that they had not been 'written off' by the West. These journeys earned him – unjustly, as he repeatedly asserted – the reputation of an expert on the East, even an 'Eastern diplomat' of the Vatican. He never saw himself that way. His visits were most likely made with the understanding, but never with an official order of the Vatican. However, his reports were carefully noted in Rome and now and then a diplomat from the Vatican followed in his footsteps.

In any case, the Archbishop's Palace in Vienna was a transit station for many bishops and cardinals from the East during those years. A regular guest at the time, besides the Primate of Poland, Cardinal Stephan Wyszyński of Warsaw, was a certain Cardinal Karol Wojtyła of Krakow.

Cardinal König saw his specific task as Archbishop of Vienna primarily in overcoming the isolation of the Church in the communist sphere of power by establishing sympathetic, fraternal contacts with the neighbouring Churches in Eastern Europe.¹⁴² With the succinct statement, *'the Archbishop of Vienna is the closest bishop of the West to the East, and in this I saw my first legitimation'*¹⁴³, he justified his trips and contacts, and in a realistic assessment of the situation, it was clear to him even then that:

Little Austria, by the way, not only owes its resurgence to the interaction of East and West, but can only exist if there is peace in Europe, and if the relations between East and West are peaceful relations. If my travels have helped to strengthen this idea a little as an Austrian bishop, then my efforts have not been in vain. And if they have helped to bring about certain changes – positive changes – in the atmospheric conditions in which the Catholics of these countries live, then these trips have also served the Church.¹⁴⁴

141 Ibid.

142 See: König, 1968, pp. 104 ff.

143 König, 1975, p. 21.

144 Ibid.

Further, this was very important to him from the beginning:

As recently as about 15 years ago (i.e., about 1961), it was thought that any trip to the East would only promote a communist government. A trip to the East would be considered a betrayal, a stab in the back, especially by the Catholics of these countries. Nothing is more incorrect. On each of my trips I have felt the grateful joy of the people. The Catholics of these countries have taken the visits as proof that they are not forgotten by us, that they are not written off by us.¹⁴⁵

Under the title ‘The task of the Archbishop of Vienna’,¹⁴⁶ Cardinal König laid his intentions openly on the table when he stated:

I have always emphasized that I have no special mission to fulfil on behalf of the universal Church, nor am I designated with conducting negotiations on behalf of the Vatican. For this purpose, the Vatican makes use of its diplomatic organisation. What I have done, I have always considered as the natural task of the Archbishop of Vienna. I certainly do not want to question the fact that recognizing and grasping this task was entirely in line with my personal views. Geography and history suggest that the Archbishop of Vienna should establish contact with his colleagues in the episcopate in the East [...] to listen to their wishes and to show by his presence and his presence in their homeland, that the Church has not written them off, has not forgotten them. [...] The difficult fate of the Catholics in the East could be eased in two ways: firstly, by a change in the political balance of power, and secondly, by adapting the Church to the existing balance of power. The first is called struggle in the extreme, the second is submission. The Church, as such, could not go one way or the other way, it could not call for political struggle, but neither for surrender. The Church had to try to reach a middle ground.¹⁴⁷

This meant first ensuring a proper hierarchy through negotiation with governments – ‘*strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered*’¹⁴⁸ – and second, achieving a minimum of impact beyond the cultic space, that is, religious education for the youth, religious press, and literature. Many concessions were made here and the outcome was mostly uncertain, but what other path would have been open? The Cardinal recalled the concept of ‘*coexistence necessary in terms of realpolitik*’ between the Church in the East and communism, which, denied by the communists, was simply a fact during the Cold War period. He drew the following consequences from this:

145 Ibid.

146 König and Barta, 1968, p. 106 f.

147 König, 1968, p. 106.

148 Ibid. p. 109.

We can only help Christians in these countries to be able to exist in such coexistence. That's what it's all about: existence, breathing spiritual air, relieving pressure. What we are waiting for is not the collapse of the system, not an official change of the communist doctrine. But we are waiting for the further development of an already existing discrepancy between theory and practice, between doctrine and life in these countries. This dichotomy, this divergence, can give that minimum of breathing space that is necessary, so that all spiritual and religious life is not suffocated. The Church must also try to place its foot in this gap, in order to guarantee the supply of a little fresh air through purely legal arrangements. [...] This fresh air can also come from Austria, it can come precisely from here. We are not only the closest, we are also the most related. [...] Vienna is the last stop for anyone going from the West to the East; and it is the first stop in the West for the visitor coming from the East. Austria is familiar to both. That's true for Christians, too, over here and over there.¹⁴⁹

3.3.7. *European Serenade in Heroes' Square on 10 September 1983, during Pope John Paul II's first visit to Austria*

An hour that was undoubtedly moving for Cardinal König was the impressive and festive 'Europavesper' (European Vespers) on Vienna's Heldenplatz in the presence of Pope John Paul II. This was the place where the Cardinal was able to publicly express his conviction when, addressing the Pope directly, he confessed before a large crowd:

In our small country, on the dividing line of two worlds, with the Danube river connecting the West and the East, one can, one must speak of Europe. The Christian, that is European, foundations were laid down in our country as well by Christian missionaries, by martyrs from the time of the fall of the Roman Empire.

I think of St. Severin, the martyr of Florian. The Church of Lauriacum on the Enns, between Lower and Upper Austria, rests on the Roman remains of an ancient Christian basilica. Our country also rests on such Christian foundation that unites peoples. Irish monks, Scottish missionaries, came here from the Christian West to the East. The Slavic apostles Cyril and Methodius reached the area around Vienna with their Christianisation.

The historical and geographical openness of our country between West and East wants to tell us once again in this hour: We are still a country where you can talk about Europe, and should talk about Europe.¹⁵⁰

149 König and Barta, 1968, p. 110.

150 See: König, 1994d, p. 301.

3.4. *Final years*

Even in the last years of his life, Cardinal König supported the process of European unification in many speeches and presentations, always referring to Europe's Christian roots and heritage and its responsibility for the future of mankind. In 1998, he wrote the following:

Today we have to ask ourselves: *'How far are we, as Europeans and as Christians, ready to be not only stewards of the past but also builders of the future?'* – The builders of a new Europe, of a new 'House of Europe', have also been knocking on our doors for some time. Many come and tell us: One should, one ought to [...]; there is a lot of interest, a lot of hope, a lot of good will, but only a few want to do something about themselves and not just make appeals to others. It is not enough to discuss the important problems of a common market in Europe; Perhaps Europe needs even more a common approach to recognise diversity in unity, and in unity not to suppress diversity, – in other words: Europe needs a spiritual face,¹⁵¹

Under the title 'Europe seeks its way' in a festive volume presented by the Federal Chancellor of the Republic for Austria's first EU Presidency in 1998, the Cardinal's contribution deliberately drew a wide arc once again. He looked back at the burden of history, the problems of the present, and provided an outlook into a future worth living for the coming generations.

The Cardinal was aware of the special opportunity Austria was being offered at the time. As had always been his way, he provided concrete solutions when he stated that the way to Europe leads through Central Europe:

From an Austrian point of view, new questions have arisen since the official accession to the EU. Austria is closely linked to Central or Mid Europe by its geography and history. In Austria, one is particularly aware of the difficulties of an eastern-western tension and is therefore on the lookout to find ways of connection. And that means:

First: As early as 1964, when Europe was still divided into two parts, the establishment of the Pro Oriente Foundation provided an opportunity to build bridges to the East from a Central European perspective. This Viennese foundation was made without a mandate from the Vatican, but was in a constant connection with it. The geographical and historical position of Vienna, a city whose name still has a purely good sound in the East of Europe, should be used for ecumenical conversation and for ecumenical encounters with Orthodoxy. Later, such opportunities also arose in connection with the ancient Orthodox Churches of the East (Copts, Syrians,

151 König, 1998, p. 38.

Armenians, Ethiopians, Syromalabars). The name Pro Oriente was therefore well chosen.

When recently Patriarch Bartholomew I of Constantinople pointed out that through Pro Oriente a 'service of reconciliation' was rendered, and when the Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia, Aleksij II, spoke of 'hundredfold fruit' through the activity of Pro Oriente, then the bridging function of Pro Oriente was highly appreciated by the Eastern side. When Huntington (op. cit., 251, 508) speaks of a 'historical divide' that '*for centuries has separated the Christian peoples of the West*' from the 'Muslim and Orthodox peoples,' the Pro Oriente Foundation was one of the first to build bridges for the larger Europe through its ecumenical work in Central Europe.

Second: Western Europe is not Europe, but only a part of it, and cannot determine the path of Europe through money and economic dominance alone. The desire and will of the Eastern European group of states to be included in the European Union is of great importance for the future of Europe. Therefore, if the finance ministers in Western Europe decide alone and determine the conditions for admission, this may promote a deep disappointment and turn away Eastern Europe from Europe.

Third: The history of Central Europe is still a force that connects states and nations in the middle of Europe in a special way. What was built in Central Europe during the time of the Habsburg Monarchy still exists as a sense of mutual connectedness, across all historical events. Austria has a major task here: to rebuild old European ties.

Fourth: For Austria, therefore, there is a need to awaken and promote interest in the Slavic languages in Central Europe; it is obvious that learning Slavic languages should be recommended to the young generation in Austria.

Fifth: For these reasons, Austria's path to Europe leads *via Central Europe*. For here, on the eastern and southern borders of Austria, Christians of different denominations and languages, Germanic, Slavic and Roman meet, which has been and still is of special significance in the history of Europe. This is a cultural wealth for the future of Europe that is not yet sufficiently recognised today in Western Europe.¹⁵²

Final chord

In a broader sense,¹⁵³ Europe was also the subject of the Cardinal's last public appearance when, less than a month before his death, he received an honorary doctorate from the Romanian University of Cluj/Klausenburg. In view of his already weakened overall condition, those around him considered whether this strenuous honour at the university – also in view of the twelve honorary doctorates he had already been awarded – was absolutely necessary. The Cardinal answered simply,

152 König, 1998, p. 35 f.

153 König, 2014, p. 192.

*'It is a university from the East and it is about Europe'*¹⁵⁴. He precisely and carefully composed his words of gratitude, as always, and gave his last address on 18 February 2004, barely a month before his death:

In this festive hour, I am particularly concerned to point out some things that are close to my heart: Europe is much more than the European Union. The countries of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe in their diversity, some of which are predominantly Orthodox, are an essential part of this [...] The common historical destiny, the cross-border appeal of common symbols, spiritual culture and religion makes it clear that religion and Christian faith have shaped the spiritual face of the whole of Europe from the beginning. [...] The year 1989 brought freedom and self-determination to the peoples and churches of Eastern Europe. This historic turning point and the ongoing enlargement of the European Union are a historic opportunity for the 'Europeanisation' of the entire continent, as John Paul II said.¹⁵⁵

With regard to the sometimes somewhat arrogant West, he continued:

[...] The countries of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe are not only in need of support, but they also bring a lot to the Europe that is growing together. Above all, they bring the experience of how to survive in dignity under the conditions of an inhuman regime. They bring rich cultural, spiritual and religious traditions, especially those of the predominantly Orthodox countries, and are thus a tremendous enrichment for the whole of Europe. In this sense, I would like to recognise today's honour by the oldest university in Romania, – a country that I have come to know and appreciate over the course of many years, – not only in terms of myself. Rather, I would like to place the academic deed in the wide context of the new building of our continent with its Christian heritage – to be answered jointly today by both East and West.¹⁵⁶

He bravely endured the strenuous ceremony in the Great Ceremonial Hall of the University of Vienna because he wanted to, but he never recovered from the ordeal. Still, alongside the funeral of his friend Bishop Zak of St. Pölten on 11 February – his last public liturgical appearance in the church where he had been ordained bishop – God could not have given him a more beautiful final chord on 13 March 2004.

154 The cardinal's oral statement to the secretariat.

155 Ibid. p. 192 f.

156 Ibid.

4. Otto von Habsburg, a European Giant (1912–2011)¹⁵⁷

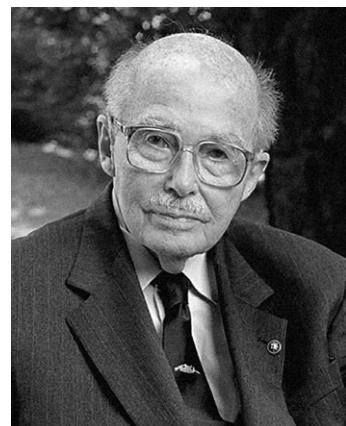
Nadja EL BEHEIRI

4.1. Childhood in the course of time

Shortly after the death of Otto von Habsburg, the son of the last emperor of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, Jerzy Buzek, the President of the European Parliament, called him a ‘European giant’ and a leading figure in process of European integration.¹⁵⁸ His life was deeply linked to Europe, albeit in a completely different manner than that which the House of Habsburg had initially planned. Many people saw him as a beacon of hope in Europe and several books had already been published about his ideas and destiny during his lifetime. The first portrait was written in 1932 by Karl von Werkmann, former personal secretary of the emperor Karl.¹⁵⁹

The focus of this book was on the young archduke’s position in the structure of the new European order. The most detailed biography was compiled by Stephan Baier and Eva Demmerle, who provided a highly interesting collection of letters and other testimonies related to the life and work of Otto von Habsburg.¹⁶⁰

Otto von Habsburg was born in 1912, two years before the assassination of heir-to-the-throne Franz Ferdinand and his wife Sophie. With the death of the designated successor of Franz Joseph, the son of one of Franz Ferdinand’s brothers, Karl, became the candidate for the Austrian and Hungarian throne. When Franz Joseph died in 1916 after the start of the first World War, Karl succeeded him as the emperor of Austria and king of Hungary. While the Austrian part of the Monarchy did not require a formal enthronement, a solemn coronation ceremony was held in Hungary. Little Otto also took part in this event, and he was to remember this



157 Otto Habsburg-Lothringen portrait by Oliver Mark, Pöcking 2006. Author: Oliver Mark, Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International, source of the picture: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Oliver_Mark_-_Otto_Habsburg-Lothringen,_P%C3%B6cking_2006.jpg.

158 Otto von Habsburg Foundation: Biography [Online]. Available at: <https://habsburgottoalapitvany.hu/en/biography/> (Accessed: 17 May 2023).

159 Werkmann, 1932.

160 Demmerle and Baier, 2007. Demmerle was a close collaborator of Otto von Habsburg over many years, and Stephan Baier was his assistant in the European Parliament and his press officer. The authors also offer a detailed list of books written by and dedicated to the life of Otto von Habsburg.

ceremony all his life.¹⁶¹ Karl's time as leader of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy was short. A few days after the Armistice of 11 November that led to the end of World War I, the emperor signed two declarations (one for Austria and another for Hungary) renouncing all participation in state affairs avoiding a formal abdication from the throne. Shortly after, the imperial family fled the country and found exile in Switzerland. After the fall of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, the situation concerning the preservation of the Monarchy was very different in Austria and Hungary. In Austria, a republic was installed and there was no continuity between the former empire and the new country. In Hungary after the collapse of the Socialist Republic of Councils, the National Assembly decided that Hungary would remain a kingdom. Still, in 1926, the second National Assembly passed a law that provided a seat in the Upper House for the Archdukes of the House of Habsburg. This law somehow had the effect of a neutralisation of that adopted in 1921.¹⁶² Regarding the question who should be the king two options were taken into consideration. One group considered that Karl and the Habsburg dynasty lost the right to the throne because they had left the country during wartime, and that Hungary should therefore elect a new king from among the Hungarian nobility. However, the representatives of the legitimist theory based on Pragmatic Sanction defended that the House of Habsburg had not lost the right to the throne. In view of this situation, Karl attempted to return to Hungary twice and regain the throne. His second attempt failed due to the determined resistance of the regent Miklos Horthy. In Hungary, the National Assembly declared that the sovereign rights of the King were extinguished. Switzerland no longer granted exile to the royal family and the Entente resolved to exile the family to the Portuguese island of Madeira. Only a few months after his arrival on the island, Karl died in the presence of his eldest son. Otto always looked to this moment and his father's life as a guideline for his own thoughts and actions. Karl's widow Zita emigrated with her children to Spain, where the children of the last active emperor of Austria and King of Hungary received a humanistic and academic preparation for an uncertain future.

4.2. Main life events

Otto von Habsburg completed his high school studies following the Austrian and Hungarian curriculum. Many of his Hungarian teachers came from the Benedictine Abbey of Pannonhalma. As one of the most important centres of spirituality, Pannonhalma played an important role in shaping the young Habsburg's intellectual profile, and he was eventually buried in Archabbey. Together with a profound knowledge of Hungarian history, the young archduke owed to his teachers his predilection for Hungarian literature, especially for that of Sándor Petőfi and János Arany. In his later years, Otto von Habsburg also expressed his admiration for Sándor Márai. He may have felt some spiritual kinship with Márai, as the post-World

161 Demmerle and Baier, 2007, p. 63.

162 Szabó, 2006, pp. 171–189.

War I era was a time in which both had to fight for their identities. Further, both figures strove throughout their lives to promote a better understanding of the fate of the Hungarian people.¹⁶³

The main interests of the young archduke were history, politics, and languages. He considered German and Hungarian to be his mother tongues and spoke fluent English, Spanish, French, and Croatian. He earned a degree from the University of Leuven, where he acquired a doctorate in political and social sciences in 1935. Otto von Habsburg's personal and political convictions were forged by the social teachings of the Catholic Church, in particular by the encyclical *Quadragesimo anno* issued in 1931 and especially since his eighteenth birthday by his sense of duty as head of the House of Habsburg.¹⁶⁴ From the mid-1930s onwards, the young Habsburg became a dedicated fighter for Austria's independence. He proved to be one of the staunchest enemies of the National Socialist regime, and his foresight regarding the Jewish population is remarkable. Even before Hitler seized power, a German politician stated that the danger posed by Hitler should not be overestimated, Otto responded powerfully that democracy is tested and weighed where it concerns the right of minorities, especially those of unpopular ones.¹⁶⁵ In 1933, he was warned that a warrant had been issued for his arrest.¹⁶⁶ In July 1935, the laws on the expulsion of the imperial family were abolished and Otto together with the head of the Austrian government Kurt Schuschnigg seriously considered the possibility of his return to the German part of Austria and the restoration of the Monarchy. However, things were to turn out differently: Chancellor Schuschnigg signed an agreement with Hitler in July 1936, which subsequently led to the Anschluss in 1938. Due to his relentless resistance against the National Socialist movement, Otto von Habsburg eventually had to seek shelter in the United States of America via Paris. In America, he established a close relationship with President Roosevelt and was in contact with the British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill. In exile, he also met the founder and president of the Pan-European Movement, Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi.¹⁶⁷ In the United States, the young Habsburg gave numerous lectures on European topics and thus began an activity that would accompany him throughout his life under various guises. Of particular significance is a speech he gave on 10 June 1942 in the library of the US Congress on the subject of 'Danubian Reconstruction'.¹⁶⁸ In this speech, which can be considered fundamental for his

163 Cf. the narration of Sándor Márai reproduced on the homepage of the Habsburg foundation. Márai recounts his experience when he opted for Hungarian citizenship by the end of the First World War. Otto von Habsburg Foundation: A Banal Event from 1922 [Online]. Available at: <https://habsburgottoalapitvany.hu/en/a-banal-event-from-1922/> (Accessed: 17 May 2023).

164 This provides a good picture of his social and political beliefs, as it is one of the first publications of the young Habsburg. The book is titled 'Soziale Ordnung von Morgen' and was translated into several languages. The English version was published in 1959. Cf. Habsburg, 1959.

165 Cf. the report of the Otto von Habsburg reproduced in Demmerle and Baier, 2007, p. 115.

166 Demmerle and Baier, 2007, p. 116.

167 On Coudenhove-Kalergi cf. Ziegerhofer-Prettenthaler, 2004.

168 Demmerle and Baier, 2007, p. 196.

later thinking, the twenty-eight-year-old once again spoke out against Hitler and also denounced Benes' plans to banish the Sudeten Germans. He also stated that the Danube region's culture was closer to that of Rome or Paris than it was to that of Berlin or the Balkans. To liberate the area from Hitler's dominion, he proposed the formation of an association of small states, which should subsequently give up part of their sovereignty to unite into a federation under the name the 'United States of the Danube Region'.¹⁶⁹ On this occasion, the young politician also advocated for the drafting of a 'Danubian bill of rights', which, among other issues, should address the rights of different ethnic groups.

After World War II, Otto von Habsburg moved back to Austria. Due to the pressure of the Allies and the reinstatement of the Habsburg Laws of 1920, he was then forced to leave the country again. He chose Germany as his new place of residence and married the German Princess Regina of Saxony-Meiningen in 1951. The couple had seven children. During the revolution of 1956, Otto intervened with the scope that the United Nations should recognise Hungary as a neutral state. In 1961, after the birth of his first son Karl, he issued a declaration resigning his membership from the House of Habsburg Lothringen and professed himself a loyal citizen of the Republic Austria.¹⁷⁰ Otto instilled an interest in political issues in his children and did not differentiate between male and female children. In time, Karl von Habsburg became a member of the European Parliament, his youngest son Georg worked as an ambassador in Hungary, and his daughter Walburga became a politician and played an active role in the process of the rapprochement between Eastern and Western Europe during the political transition in 1989. The Council of Ministers deemed this declaration insufficient and Otto – although he was considered to be an Austrian citizen – was denied the entrance to Austria in accordance with the laws of 1920. Otto von Habsburg applied to the Supreme Courts of the country and after a long, difficult legal and political discussion, the son of the last empire received an Austrian passport and was allowed to enter the country.¹⁷¹ Otto von Habsburg's political activities from the end of the seventies onwards are linked to two entities: the Paneuropean movement and the European Parliament, where he served as a deputy from 1979 until 1999. In the course of his work in the European Parliament, he gave special attention to preserving and promoting minoritarian languages. He also gained a reputation for his Latin speech, which he delivered on the spot during the Plenary session of the European Parliament on 14th November 1979.¹⁷²

169 Ibid. pp. 196–198.

170 Ibid. p. 273.

171 On the question of the legal status of the son of the last emperor of the Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy cf. Andics, 1965.

172 Otto von Habsburg Foundation: Was ist die wahre lingua franca? Otto von Habsburgs rede vor dem europaeischen parlament auf lateinisch [Online]. Available at: <https://habsburgottoalapitvany.hu/de/was-ist-die-wahre-lingua-franca-otto-von-habsburgs-rede-vor-dem-europaeischen-parlament-auf-lateinisch/> (Accessed: 17 May 2023).

Regarding the anti-nationalist orientation of the Paneuropean movement, it is worth remembering the words of Franz Werfel. The Jewish author, born on the territory of the former Monarchy, describes in his famous novel ‘Forty Days of Musa Dagh’ a dialogue between a pastor and a Muslim dignitary. The Muslim dignitary states that nationalism fills the burning void Allah leaves behind when he is expelled from the human heart.¹⁷³ For Otto von Habsburg, the European idea was always linked, on the one hand, to peoples’ right to self-determination and on the other hand to his deep faith in the Christian God. The political activity of the son of the last emperor of the Monarchy during the seventies and eighties was characterised by a tenacious commitment to Europe, especially to the countries behind the iron curtain. A culmination of his efforts was the so-called Pan-European Picnic on the 19 August 1989. On this occasion, the border between Austria and Hungary was opened for a symbolic period. Some six hundred people took advantage of this moment and fled to Western Europe. In a speech addressed to his Hungarian and Austrian compatriots, which was read by his daughter Walburga, he spoke of the end of the dark years of dictatorship and asserted solemnly that the dawn of freedom was already visible.¹⁷⁴ From that moment on, Otto became an active promotor of the enlargement of the European Union and the mutual understanding between the nations involved in this process.

4.3. Cornerstones for a European Federation

Otto von Habsburg saw the idea of a United Europe as his life’s mission. Regardless of the twists and turns of fate, he always remained faithful to his beliefs and found a suitable framework through which to work toward his ideals. Since his time in United States, he was giving many lectures and published numerous books. He based his convictions not on an elaborate scholarly framework but on his own life experiences and his profound knowledge of European history. He believed that federalism should be the first characteristic of a United Europe. In 1974, as president of the Paneuropean movement, he stated that single states in Europe were simply too small to face the challenges of the time and expressed his conviction that the nation-states of the 19th century did not have a future from an economic nor from a political point of view.¹⁷⁵ He stated that the federalist structure of the planned union had the advantage of being able to expand territory without being imperialistic. Given the contractual organisation of federations, enlargement may be accomplished with ease while maintaining the independence of the new member states, which would always acquire rights and obligations through the extension of those already existing within the federation and by the free acceptance of new members. Regarding the territorial extension of Europe, for the archduke it was always evident that the countries behind the Iron Curtain were also part of the

173 Posselt, 2021, p. 26.

174 Demmerle and Baier, p. 465.

175 Ibid. p. 389.

community for which he was arguing. In a book edited in 1991, he observed with satisfaction that since 1989, a new solidarity had arisen among the people of the Danube region. He spoke about a new kind of friendship that was emerging between people from Hungary, Bohemia, Moravia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Croatia, Austria, and Bavaria, which had always existed in people's hearts.¹⁷⁶ Hungary stood at the top of this list, as Otto always attributed the country an outstanding role in the process of European unification. It is also striking that Bavaria was mentioned separately from the rest of Germany as a part of the Danube Federation. Habsburg, however, showed a positive attitude towards the reunited Germany and opposed all those suspicious about its size or history. In connection with the idea of *Mitteleuropa* – Central-Europe – he highlighted that it was crucial to take as a point of reference not the centralist tradition of the Bismark Empire but the federalist ideas of the Holy Roman Empire and the German Confederation. A second criterion for a united Europe was democracy. In his view, a democratic – even a direct democratic – approach was the best guarantee against dictatorial bureaucracies, and the state must be the guardian and promoter of natural law. Otto von Habsburg opted for a resolute and courageous definition of natural law as those eternally valid principles that the creator has given the world as an unwritten but living constitution.¹⁷⁷ This approach is similar to that which Benedict XVI used many years later in his address to the German Bundestag in 2011. Habsburg tried to find harmony between the objective aspects of natural law (the eternally valid principles), the subjective ones (as a living constitution concretisation of the natural law was up to the people using it), and its rootedness in the creator. He prioritised whichever form of state was best suited to safeguarding natural law;¹⁷⁸ the structure of the state relates to its content in the same manner in which the body relates to the soul.¹⁷⁹ Otto von Habsburg considered the function of a monarch to be at most that of a supreme guardian of the law. In this sense, the European politician perspective approached that of Carl Schmitt, who saw a strong head of state as the guarantor of the constitution.¹⁸⁰ Already in 1957, Otto von Habsburg claimed that in an ideal state, judicial power should prevail over legislative and executive power. Regarding Montesquieu's system of the separation of powers, he was of the opinion that experience since the French Revolution showed that a balance between the three powers was not a realistic option. Experience put into evidence that one of the three powers always gains the upper hand. He asserted that a key point in every constitutional state was that everyone who holds power as well as every citizen assumes a restriction of his rights. The task of the judicial power consists in being the guardian of these voluntarily accepted limitations.¹⁸¹

176 Habsburg, 1991, p. 22.

177 Demmerle and Baier, 2007, p. 249.

178 Ibid. p. 249.

179 Ibid. p. 249. On the notion of natural law used by Benedict XVI. in the German Parliament cf. El Beheiri, 2017, pp. 90–112.

180 Schmitt, 1929.

181 Habsburg, 1959, pp. 105–107.

From an economic point of view, Otto von Habsburg is aligned with economic theorist Wilhelm Röpke, with whom Habsburg met during his exile in the US.¹⁸² After the end of World War II, Röpke wanted to support the transition of Germany from national socialism to a market economy, believing that the establishment of a free market was an important goal to attain. However, in order to protect weaker members, the state would have to regulate the free market through laws and participants would have to hold themselves to legal and ethical standards.

Subsidiarity was another essential feature of the union for which the archduke advocated,¹⁸³ following the definition given in the encyclical *Quadragesimo anno*. According to the church's social teaching, the principle of subsidiarity is founded on human dignity and aims to protect personal freedoms. The encyclical states that *'a community of a higher order should not interfere in the internal life of a community of a lower order, depraving the latter of its functions, but rather should support it in case of need and help'*¹⁸⁴. At the same time, the term subsidiarity comes from the Latin word 'subsidium' – help – and the principle of subsidiarity therefore also requires an attitude of support, promotion of welfare, and development. In view of the specific characteristics of the European Union, the politician mentions further aspects connected with the principle of subsidiarity. According to Habsburg, the people's right to self-determination is independent from the number of people belonging to a specific group or minority. Small ethnic groups in nation-states should have the same civil liberties as large nations. In practice, subsidiarity might oblige smaller units to transfer their competencies to larger units if they cannot fulfil them satisfactorily. From Habsburg's perspective, this criterion applies above all in foreign- and security-policy issues.¹⁸⁵

Conclusion

All of the events of Otto von Habsburg's life were closely linked to the ideal of a United Europe. He was a tireless fighter for peace and understanding between nations and people. He envisioned the nations of the Danube Monarchy united through an agreement freely accepted by all parties at the core of the new Europa. The protection and preservation of minorities played a key role in the agenda of the son of the last emperor of the Monarchy. According to the vision of this passionate representative of the new order, federalism, democracy, a moderate market economy, subsidiarity, Christianity, and natural law should be the fundamental values of the European community. Those values still bear an inspirational power for the challenges Europe faces.

182 Demmerle and Baier, 2007, p. 251. On Röpke cf. Ortiz, 2017.

183 Demmerle and Baier, 2007, p. 389. On the term of subsidiarity according to the social teachings of the Church cf. Guitián, 2017, No. 109.

184 Guitián, 2017, p. 45.

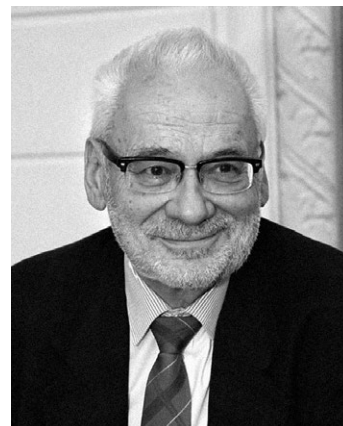
185 Demmerle and Baier, 2007, pp. 548–549.

5. Erhard Busek: *Homo politicus* and European visionary (1941–2022)¹⁸⁶

Nadja EL BEHEIRI

5.1. Biographical data and political career

Erhard Busek was born in Vienna in 1941 and died there on the 13 March 2022. Busek was a professional politician; his commitment to politics was shaped, on the one hand, by his passion for Europe and, on the other hand, by his conviction that education is an essential prerequisite for elevating living conditions on all levels.¹⁸⁷ The roots of his family on the father's side stretched back to Silesia, those on his mother's side to Bavaria. Busek felt deeply rooted in Vienna and identified with Rousseau's statement that '*What you are, you become through Paris*'. Vienna moulded his identity.



The capital of Austria has always been a linchpin between East and West. This feature of the city influenced Busek's engagement in local government as well as his dedication to the countries that lay beyond the Iron Curtain until 1989. In his childhood, he experienced the country's endeavours to rebuild itself after the Second World War. Austria and more specifically Vienna was his homeland (*heimat*) in the most noble sense of the word. As a politician, he profoundly understood the situation of the many refugees that sought protection and often a new homeland in Austria due to different crises. He stated that '*homeland must be granted. But a homeland can only be offered by those who seek it for themselves and are then able to share it with others*'.¹⁸⁸

Although he wanted to study history, as it seemed difficult to link a diploma in history to a specific professional future, he decided to attend law school. However, his interest in history influenced his intellectual biography. From a very young age, he was also an engaged catholic. As his father belonged to the Lutheran Church

186 Dr. Erhard Busek. Author: Franz Johann Morgenbesser from Vienna, Austria, Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic, source of the picture: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:2014_Erhard_Busek-5839_\(14547887566\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:2014_Erhard_Busek-5839_(14547887566).jpg).

187 Busek published various autobiographical texts. The most recent dates from 2014. For interesting insides cf. also the conversation with Anita Ziegerhofer and Franz Schausberger in 2021. Karl von Vogelsang Institut: Politische Erinnerungen [Online]. Available at: http://www.vogelsanginstitut.at/at/?page_id=3192 (Accessed: 17 May 2023).

188 Busek, 2014, p. 19.

and his mother to the Catholic Church, he always felt united to the ecumenical movement. During his high school and university studies, he took an active part in catholic youth movements (Katholische Hochschuljugend) and was influenced by personalities like Karl Strobl and Otto Mauer, both of whom were committed adversaries of National Socialism and promoters of the spiritual revival of the youth after the Second World War.¹⁸⁹ Shortly after graduating from the University of Vienna, he began his professional career as second secretary of the Austrian Christian-conservative People's Party (ÖVP), a position he held from 1964 to 1968. In 1972, he moved to the Austrian Federation of Trade and Commerce (Wirtschaftsbund), the representation board of the self-employed people. Together with the president of the association, Rudolf Sallinger, he advocated for the social security of freelance workers in Austria. At the same time, he began to show a pronounced interest in the countries behind the Iron Curtain and maintained numerous relations with civil movements and opposition groups in the former Eastern Bloc. From 1975 to 1976, he served as General Secretary of the Austrian People's Party, in 1975 he was elected to the National Council (Nationalrat). Since 1976, he served as the head of the People's Parties branch in Vienna. During his time in Austrian capital's local government, he supported issues such as environment, traffic, waste, urban renewal, and the active participation of citizens in decisions that directly affected them. He held office as Deputy Mayor and City Councillor of Vienna for nine years. In 1989, the year of great political change in Eastern Europe, he was appointed Minister for Science and Research, and in 1994 Minister for Education. In this function, he advocated for greater independence of universities from politics and promoted the harmonisation of Austrian higher education with the European Union system. During his mandate, he supported the introduction of universities of applied sciences (Fachhochschulen) within the area of higher education in Austria. It is also worth mentioning that when the Islamic Religious Community requested that female students wear headscarves during class in the eighties, Busek was asked to give his opinion as the Minister of Education. He argued that multiculturalism means the acceptance of others, along with all their differences.¹⁹⁰

From 1991–1995, he served as Vice Chancellor of Austria. Austria's entry to the European Union took place during this period. In the year 2000, he received an appointment as a Special Representative of the Austrian Government on the Enlargement of the European Union. In this capacity, he was intensively involved in Austria's accession negotiations with the European Union. He held different positions in Higher Education in Austria and received several honorary doctorates from European universities, including the Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest. Starting in 1995, he served as chairman of the 'Institute for the Danube Region and Central Europe'. When he left his position in the Austrian government and

189 Karl von Vogelsang Institut: Politische Erinnerungen [Online]. Available at: http://www.vogelsanginstitut.at/at/?page_id=3192 (Accessed: 17 May 2023).

190 Hafez and Heinisch, 2018, p. 668.

parliament, he dedicated himself to the Institute for the Danube Region and Central Europe, where he acted as chairman over many years. As a head of the Institute, he was a reference point and a source of inspiration for various issues concerning the Danube Region.¹⁹¹ From 2000 until 2012, he also held the position of Chairman of the European Forum Alpbach.

5.2. The Danube, second river of European integration

Erhard Busek referred to the Danube as the second river of integration. It characterises Austria's identity and is mentioned in the country's national anthem. The river Danube is a symbol of unity and coherence. After the reconciliation between Germany and France along the Rhine, the Danube was expected to provide a background for peaceful existence for the nations settled along the river.¹⁹² Busek expressed his political convictions about Central Europe in numerous writings. He published his first book in 1968 on the fiftieth anniversary of the proclamation of the first Republic and against the background of the revolutionary events in Europe, especially the Prague Spring. In this book, he explained that by the end of the First World War, Austria had two basic alternatives: to create a Danube federation or to join Germany. The idea of unification with Germany was mainly promoted by the socialist wing of Austrian politicians led by Otto Bauer (1881–1938). In his characteristically sharp style, Busek asserted that the ideas espoused by Austrian politicians between 1918 and 1938 were only helpless attempts to converge towards one of these two goals. In both cases, nationalism determined by the country's specific circumstances after the fall of the Monarchy impeded the realisation of the aspirations of both parties. According to Busek, nationalism was the cause of the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and remained an obstacle for unification with Germany.¹⁹³ With the experience of the Second World War, the politician suggested an ideal return to the Austria of the Babenbergs, emphasising that Austria should make use of its central geographical position for its own advantage and that of neighbouring peoples. Prague, Budapest, Belgrade, Warsaw, and Bucharest were among the cities with which the Austrian politician wanted to establish closer relationships. This rapprochement was to take place through economic cooperation alongside intensive cultural collaboration. Research and training centres should be established to disseminate the neighbouring countries' language, history, and culture. At the same time, all existing educational institutions were to convey to Austrian citizens the historical and world-political context of their neighbours. This would allow historical circumstances as well as political differences to be taken into account. Already on this occasion, Busek made another demand which, against the background of Marxist ideology, should be qualified as courageous.

191 Schäffer, 2022.

192 Schäffer, 2022.

193 Busek, 1968, pp. 62–63.

In connection with cultural approximation, Busek proposed that educational entities on all levels should launch a confrontation with the political and philosophical systems of the neighbouring countries. He suggested that the United Nations and other international organisations could contribute to reducing tensions and search for initiatives to face problems.¹⁹⁴ Busek did not approach the question of proximity to neighbouring countries – especially to those situated on the other side of the Iron Curtain – on a theoretical level, but regularly travelled to meet with opposition members and established contacts with dissidents. However, his colleagues in the Austrian government did not always approve of his efforts. Already in the late seventies and eighties, he was able to establish contacts with representatives of the civil rights movement such as Tadeusz Mazowiecki, Lech Wałęsa, Václav Havel, Václav Klaus, József Antall, and Jan Carnogurský. Among his interlocutors, we also find leading intellectuals from the resistance movement, such as György Konrád from Budapest, Władysław Bartoszewski (who became an ambassador in Vienna after the breakdown of the Soviet regime) and Leszek Kolakowski from Warsaw.

5.3. The concept of Mitteleuropa

Only three years before the fall of the Berlin Wall, Erhard Busek and Emil Brix published a book with the title ‘Projekt Mitteleuropa’. The authors tried to find a definition for the phenomenon in question and distanced themselves from the concept used by Friedrich Naumann. Naumann argued in a book published in 1915 for cultural and economic imperium under the leadership of Germany.¹⁹⁵ At the same time, Busek and Brix also reject the geographical identification of Mitteleuropa with the countries of the former Habsburg Monarchy.¹⁹⁶ According to the authors, Mitteleuropa should be defined by the region’s understanding of ownership and the distribution of property, its economic structure, its relationship with the church, and the design of its political institutions. Mitteleuropa is also characterised by the region’s common history, including the experiences of the Ottoman occupation, the Enlightenment, the French Revolution, the Napoleonic Wars, the independence movements of the year 1848, and the restoration of the absolute monarchy. Another common feature was the formation of nation-states in the 19th century and the experience of the First World War.¹⁹⁷ From this point of view, the authors assert that due to its different historical background, Switzerland does not belong to Mitteleuropa as they conceive it. The authors dedicate a separate chapter to the question of whether Germany should be part of Mitteleuropa. Similar to the case of Switzerland, Busek and Brix invoke historical arguments and discard Germany’s inclusion in the concept of Mitteleuropa. Although the existing linguistic community between Austria, Switzerland, Luxembourg, and South Tyrol

194 Ibid. p. 75.

195 Busek and Brix, 1986, pp. 25, 44–46.

196 Ibid. p. 21.

197 Ibid. 1986, pp. 17–25.

would support the idea of integrating Germany, the authors argue that Germany had already distanced itself from Mitteleuropa, first in the Battle of Königgrätz and then in the two World Wars.¹⁹⁸ Busek also raised the question of the spiritual content of Central Europe, identifying it through its Greek-Jewish-Christian heritage. Busek states that the concept of Mitteleuropa is not possible without a reflection on the values inherent to this notion. According to the Austrian politician, these values include the conviction that humans are created in the image of God, that they hold inalienable rights, and that they have the capacity to transcend themselves. The European spiritual tradition presents a linear and non-cyclical understanding of history alongside the conviction that the human spirit is its driving force. Busek highlights the notion of freedom as a characteristic of European identity:

This freedom, together with the dignity of man founded therein and the consequent entanglement of guilt, it is this freedom that Europe has proclaimed to the world. But therein also lies Central Europe's shared culture and its task for the future: to announce to the world the freedom, dignity and responsibility of man.¹⁹⁹

With this understanding of Mitteleuropa, Busek approaches the ideas of the vice-mayor of Vienna in the interwar period, Ernst Karl Winter (1895–1959).²⁰⁰ Winter stood for a firm commitment to Austria and was an active opponent of National Socialism. As a communal politician, he promoted social balance and environmental protection. Winter grounded his political task in the social teachings of the Catholic Church.²⁰¹ We also find an interesting contrast to Busek's Mitteleuropa project in surveys carried out in the 1970s and 80s asking Austrian citizens whether they feel more closely attached to Germany or to other neighbouring countries. In the period from 1970 to 1980, a considerable number (60 to 70%) of respondents answered that Germany was the country they felt was most similar to their own. In second place were Switzerland and Hungary. Czechoslovakia reached only between 2 and 7 percent.²⁰² Nevertheless, Busek was among the initiators of the Pentagonale, an entity of cooperation between the countries of Central and South-eastern Europe. Initially, Austria, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Italy, and Czechoslovakia took part in the project. In 1991, Poland joined. Since then, the project has operated under the name the Hexagonale. During these years, Busek also promoted and led the conference of rectors of Danubian universities.

198 Ibid. pp. 42–56.

199 Ibid. pp. 168–169.

200 Gehler, 2020, p. 918. Cf. Ziegerhofer, 2022, p. 39.

201 Holzbauer, 1992, pp. 110–111.

202 Thaler, 1999, p. 298.

5.4. *New times with new challenges*

With the opening of the frontiers to the countries of the former Eastern Bloc, Busek put considerable effort in fostering mutual understanding between Austria and its neighbours. He actively followed the development of countries that had recently regained their freedom and tried to face the challenges produced by the enlargement of the European Union in 2004 to include former communist countries and in 2007 when Bulgaria and Romania became members. Between 2002 and 2008, he coordinated the Stability Pact for South-eastern Europe, which had been created by the European Union after the Kosovo War to strengthen peace, democracy, and human rights in the area. He only ceased in his duties when the Pact was transformed into a Regional Cooperation Council.²⁰³

On a different level, Busek also searched for solutions to problems that had arisen from the phenomenon of globalisation. He asserted that globalisation has always existed, citing the formation of the first communities in early mankind and the transformation of society during the industrial age. The specific feature of modern globalisation is its speed, which confers on it a completely new quality. In this context, he called for the design of regulatory systems which, on the one hand, guarantee free economic space and, on the other one, also avoid the dangers related to the polarisation of rich and poor. These rules would have to be global in scope; according to the Austrian politician, the legal experience of the *Imperium Romanum* could serve as a model.²⁰⁴ However, reactions to globalisation were also necessary in fighting crime, in the drugs sector, and regarding the security of the possession and transfer of weapons, as well as in the field of human trafficking. On the political level, Busek called for the establishment of a European government. The European Council as an instrument is not only problematic in terms of democratic policy, it is also threatened by conflicts of interest. In 2018, Busek and Brix published a second volume on the situation of Central Europe titled 'Mitteuropa Revisited' with the subheading 'Why Europe's Future will be decided in the Region'. With the new volume, the authors wanted to address the challenges connected with the deep crisis that European integration had been facing for several years. As the subheading indicates, Busek and Brix firmly believed that regardless of its problems, the future of Europe would be determined within the area designated as Central Europe and politically organised within the framework of the Visegrád Group (V 4). They asserted that Central Europe is and should continue to be a project of peace. The Visegrád Group is an important means of regional collaboration and for the enforcement of common interests within the European Union.

In this book, the authors address difficult questions such as migration,²⁰⁵ the relationship between Europe and Russia, and the situation of Islam in Europe. Brix and Busek claim to strengthen the position of the countries that, until 1989,

203 Cf. Biermann, 2002, p. 211.

204 Busek, 2005, p. 25.

205 Busek and Brix, 2018, pp. 167-173.

belonged to the Eastern Area to avoid a political and economic division in those countries. They argued that those countries should not feel like second-class members of the European Union.²⁰⁶

Regarding Islam, the authors draw attention to a fundamental difference between the European way of thinking and the Islamic approach to personhood. In the European tradition, every person is considered the bearer of equal rights and duties. In the countries influenced by the Quran, rights and freedom can only be realised among members of the Islamic religion. The authors express these features through the dichotomy between *Gemeinschaft* (community) and *Gesellschaft* (society).²⁰⁷ Busek once again claims that cultural and political formations should be the means for promoting mutual understanding and overcoming crises. During the last months of his life, the war against Ukraine was a harrowing experience for him, as it questioned all of the values for which he had fought over his many years as a European politician and visionary. He tried to do everything he could to support the civilian population and to promote peace.²⁰⁸ At the same time, he reminded European politicians of their responsibilities: this new crisis that was unimaginable in the recent past shows that Europe must still live up to its mission.

Conclusion

Erhard Busek was a man of contrasts. He was an active representative of communal politics as well as a committed member of the Austrian federal government and a fighter for European unification. He was a dedicated member of the Christian conservative People's Party of Austria as well as an independent thinker. He forged his convictions through European history and Christian tradition, but he also displayed a startling openness to other religions. He acknowledged the difficulties of the modern era but remained convinced that the nations bordered by the Danube would continue to shape Europe's future throughout the 21st century.

206 Ibid. p. 217.

207 Ibid. p. 153.

208 Cf. Zulehner, 2022.

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Great Theorists of Central European Integration in Hungary

László PALLAI

ABSTRACT

In Hungary, too, the idea of Central European cooperation has constantly been on the agenda. The reasons for this interest are similar to those in Austria: with the emergence of the idea of the nation-state, existing political structures steadily lost their stability. Integrationist ideas have always been an alternative to the current power relations. Although these plans have remained present in the Hungarian political world, they have never had the chance to be realised: they have received minimal support from the great powers and society, and the peoples and governments of the region have not acted as partners for real cooperation. Miklós Wesselényi was one of the first to formulate a programme for the transformation of the Habsburg Empire and the need for reconciliation with various nationalities. Kossuth was the most prestigious figure of the Hungarian emigration after 1849, which is why the plan for the Danubian Confederation is mainly associated with him, though his fellow politicians formulated similar ideas. Oszkár Jászi's plan for the reorganisation of the Monarchy was born too late, as its fate had been decided prior to its publication in 1918. Between the two World Wars, Gusztáv Gratz and Elemér Hantos were the most active organisers, publicists, and experts in the field of Central European cooperation.

KEYWORDS

Hungarian history, history of ideas, history of politics, history of integration, history of the Reform Era, history of dualism, history of Hungarian emigration, history of the dissolution of the Monarchy, revolutions of 1918-19, Hungary between the two World Wars, Central European plans, Pan-European Movement, Miklós Wesselényi, Lajos Kossuth, Oszkár Jászi, Gusztáv Gratz, Elemér Hantos.

Introduction

From the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries to the present day, various federation and confederation plans, including various concepts about Central Europe, have remained present in the political world of the region between Germany and Russia, including Hungary. All of these plans have major ideological and historical significance: they highlight the fundamental problems of the region, the great power relations, and the challenges of the time. In Hungary in particular, these ideas have

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taken a variety of forms and been constantly reformulated, even if real political conditions did not give them the chance to be realised.

From the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars onwards, modern nationalism and the idea of nation states were the dominant political concepts in the Central European region. Hungary was part of a multinational empire led by Austrians despite the majority of other nationalities. However, regardless of the imperial framework, around 1800, in the so-called historical Hungary, the Hungarians, who played the leading political role, were already in a minority compared to the different nationalities. Without Croatia and Slavonia, the proportion of Hungarians was only at 44%. Comparing this ethnic proportion with the nationalities' political aspirations independence, it is clear that throughout the 19th century, the sustainability of the territorial integrity of historic Hungary became a fundamental issue in domestic politics. The fear of territorial dissolution dominated Hungarian political thought. These concerns led to the acceptance of the 1867 Compromise, which stabilised Austro-Hungarian relations for decades. Many Hungarian politicians hoped to preserve the territorial unity of historic Hungary by implementing some sort of integration. The first of these, and first in the Empire, was Miklós Wesselényi's concept. However, in historical literature and public discourse, the best known is Kossuth's plan, which was formulated in emigration.

The fate of the Hungarian integration plans was also determined by the failures of the various plans for Central European cooperation. There was a lack of support from the great powers: the agents of power influencing the countries of the region supported stability and predictability, which they found to be more desirable than some kind of precarious integration concept, which was not supported by public opinion. Further, the potential participating parties did not consider each other to be adequate partners in the formation of a new Central European order.

Even the Hungarian representatives of the integration concepts were not active, leading politicians; they had no decision-making power and influence. Miklós Wesselényi was a politician of the opposition, while Kossuth Lajos' plan was formulated in exile. Although Oszkár Jászi was appointed minister in November 1918, he had no chance either to save historical Hungary in any form or to implement his own integration plan. The aforementioned support of the great powers and the willingness of the neighbouring nations to cooperate were also lacking.

Elemér Hantos, the liveliest supporter of economic cooperation in Central Europe between the two World Wars, put forward his proposals as a private citizen. Economic phenomena and political intentions worked against Central European cooperation. Although Gusztáv Gratz had a great deal of political experience and was highly respected both at home and abroad, official Hungarian foreign policy did not see Central European cooperation as a framework for the realisation of national policy aspirations.

Therefore, Hungarian representatives' plans regarding Central European cooperation remained at the level of proposals and alternatives, never becoming a political reality. They have retained their value in terms of intellectual history,

and they can also be evaluated as a kind of specific contemporary idea. History, however, always offers us alternatives, and nothing is necessarily predestined.

1. Miklós Wesselényi (1796–1850)¹

Miklós Wesselényi, one of the most influential politicians of the Hungarian Reform Era, was born on 30 December 1796 in Zsibó, in what is now Romania, to a reformed aristocratic family.² His ancestors were committed to public affairs and were active in supporting culture and education, which determined the development of Wesselényi's political views. He inherited an outstanding physical endowment and fitness from his father, which made him a legend in his time. Endre Ady called him the Hungarian 'Hercules'.³ Following the habits of many other young aristocrats of the time, in 1821–22 he went on a Western European tour with his friend⁴



István Széchenyi, a leading figure of the Reform Era, which not only broadened his world view, but also enabled him to see Hungarian conditions in a European context. His political views were fundamentally determined by this journey. Again, following contemporary habits, he wrote a diary of his journey.⁵

He was not allowed to participate in the Diet of 1825, which had reconvened after a thirteen-year break, as he was a Transylvanian aristocrat, and the unification of Transylvania and the Kingdom of Hungary, one of the defining Hungarian grievances of the time, had still not been achieved after the expulsion of the Turks. Having bought property in Szatmár county, which belonged to the Kingdom of Hungary, he became an aristocrat of the country, and was thus entitled to participate in the Diet of the Estates, which met in Bratislava. Wesselényi subsequently became a leading figure in the reformist opposition in Hungary. He took a firm and hard line against the Habsburg government for its failure to carry out the necessary reforms. In 1831, he wrote his strongly worded '*Balítéletekről*' (*On Prejudice*),

1 Miklós Wesselényi, Hungarian politician, painting of Miklós Barabás, public domain, source of the picture: [https://hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wessel%C3%A9ny_i_Mikl%C3%B3s_\(politikus,_1796%E2%80%931850\)#/media/F%C3%A1jl:Wessel%C3%A9ny_i_Mikl%C3%B3s_Barab%C3%A1s.jpg](https://hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wessel%C3%A9ny_i_Mikl%C3%B3s_(politikus,_1796%E2%80%931850)#/media/F%C3%A1jl:Wessel%C3%A9ny_i_Mikl%C3%B3s_Barab%C3%A1s.jpg).

2 For the biography of Wesselényi see Trócsányi, 1965; Csetri, 2003.

3 Csetri, 1997, p. 3.

4 Velkey, 1996, pp. 79–106.

5 See the travel diary: Bátor Wesselényi Miklós Útinaplója 1821–1822 [Online]. Available at: <https://mek.oszk.hu/09200/09257/09257.htm> (Accessed: 12 June 2023).

which was not published abroad until two years later due to the censorship that still existed at the time. His work is one of the most important writings of the political thinking of the Hungarian Reform Era, *'the basic work of the main line of Hungarian liberalism, the liberal and nationalist tendencies of Wesselényi, Deák, Kossuth'*.⁶

Like his contemporaries, he understood that the most important problem of the reform era was the question of serfs, which was not a purely legal problem, but had economic, social, and organisational aspects. As a Transylvanian aristocrat, he was personally aware of the dangers of the unresolved question, having learned from the memory of the Romanian peasant uprising of 1784 of Horea.⁷ At the Diet of 1832–36, where the most important issue was the status of serfdom, he supported the declaration of the voluntary redemption of serfs (i.e., the possibility of abolishing serfdom through a mutual and voluntary agreement between the serf and the landlord). In the 1840s, he advocated for the idea of compulsory redemption with state compensation for the nobility.⁸ His programme, like that of other reformist politicians, inextricably linked the question of freedom and material advancement, which was one of the main motivations for serf redemption. As he said, *'The more free members with rights a nation has, the more powerful it is'*.⁹ The issue of serf redemption, in his view, was not merely a problem of the peasant and his landlord, but the key to the future and success of the whole nation. For the Hungarian reformist politicians of the time, the tragic lesson of the Polish liberation struggles was a negative example and there was a constant fear that the unsettled state of the peasant question could be used as a tool by reactionary and foreign powers to suppress national aspirations. Thus, the reformist opposition in Hungary followed the Polish events of the time with particular interest.

As the debates of the reform era unfolded, the difference between the two former friends Wesselényi and Széchenyi became more and more pronounced. One of the cornerstones of the dispute was the question of their attitudes to government.

Széchenyi appealed to the goodwill of the government and considered cooperation important for stability. Wesselényi, on the other hand, organised a political movement. It was obvious to him that the nature and direction of the imperial government forced the idea of progress, of the nation, of constitutionalism, into opposition.¹⁰

In addition to politics in parliament, Wesselényi was active in public life, science, and culture. He participated in the foundation of the Casino initiated by Széchenyi, supported the cause of Hungarian-language drama, and was elected an honorary member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in 1831. Through his practical work,

6 Baron Wesselényi, 1992, p. 5.

7 See in details: Egyed, 1996, pp. 51–64.

8 Csetri, 1998–1999, pp. 26–35.

9 Lukácsy, 1996, p. 9.

10 Velkey, 1996, p. 87.

he sought to expand and renew the agricultural knowledge of rural peasant society, for example by encouraging the spread of silkworm breeding. Like his friend István Széchenyi, he supported the introduction of horse breeding in Hungary and wrote a book about the subject.¹¹ He was a popular politician of his time, particularly in Transylvania. *‘Miklós Wesselényi became the most popular politician in Szeklerland: “the hero of the Szeklers”, whose image had already pushed the glazed earthenware pot off the walls of many homes’*, wrote a contemporary.¹²

This reputation was further enhanced by his efforts to save lives and property during the 1838 floods in Pest. In the early spring, 153 people, most of whom were from Pest, died as a result of the so-called ‘blockage flood’, and over 3,000 houses were completely destroyed or severely damaged. As one of the organisers of the rescue work, Wesselényi was named ‘Boatman of the Flood’ after the title of a poem commemorating the rescue written by the most famous poet of the time, Mihály Vörösmarty. Although the entirety of Wesselényi’s diary remains unpublished, the diary entries concerning events following the flood of 13 March 1838 have been published. These entries describe the devastating natural disaster and Wesselényi’s organisational work to save human lives and property in great detail.¹³

In 1835, the Hungarian monarch, Francis I, was succeeded by the less-fit-to-rule Ferdinand V. The narrow group in the imperial court, the camarilla, which effectively governed in his place, saw the time as right to stifle reform efforts in Hungary and intimidate its leaders with political lawsuits. In addition to Miklós Wesselényi, who was the best known and most respected figure among those on trial, they prosecuted the then little-known Lajos Kossuth and László Lovassy. Lovassy was the leading figure of the so-called ‘parliamentary youth’, who were law students completing their compulsory internships in the Diets of the Estates. On 9 September 1834, Wesselényi gave a speech at a meeting of the Szatmár County, in which he openly exposed the disingenuous Viennese policy on the serf question. He was prosecuted for treason for this speech but was defended by Ferenc Kölcsey, the author of the lyrics of the Hungarian anthem. Finally, in 1839, Wesselényi, who was held in public esteem, was sentenced to three years in prison, which he began serving in Buda Castle. His health was not suitable to endure the conditions of the dungeon, as his pre-existing eye disease deteriorated significantly and he lost a substantial part of his sight. This had a lasting psychological impact on him for the rest of his life.¹⁴ After seven months of imprisonment, he was allowed to retire to a sanatorium in Moravia for treatment, where he stayed until 1843.¹⁵ The Diet of 1839–40, which was the most successful of the Reform Era, freed the political prisoners who were still held, and Wesselényi was officially pardoned on 29 April 1840.

11 Baron Wesselényi, 1829.

12 Miskolczy, 1983, p. 1067.

13 Baron Wesselényi, 1938.

14 Trócsányi, 1960, pp. 794–811.

15 Kárpáti, 2019, pp. 563–584.

Upon his return to Transylvania, Wesselényi was primarily involved in local politics, becoming Viscount of Kolozs (Cluj) county. His last and most significant public role was at the Transylvanian Diet convened in the spring of 1848, where he played a decisive role in the adoption of the unification of Transylvania and Hungary into law on 30 May 1848. This marked his last political engagement; his health deteriorated and he died in Pest on 21 April 1850.

Wesselényi's practical and theoretical work covered a wide range of areas. He attached importance to the idea of education and the enlightenment of society. He organised a nursery school in his estate, in Zsibó.¹⁶

Apart from *On Prejudice*, Wesselényi's best-known and most resonant work is *An Appeal in the Hungarian and Slav Nationality Matter* (*Appeal* hereinafter), which was published in 1843 in Hungarian and later in German. The circumstances of the writing of the two works and Wesselényi's general health and mental state show a radical difference. At the time of writing *On Prejudice*, Wesselényi was still in a state of glowing health and mental balance. In fact, at this time, the Reform Era in Hungary was beginning to unfold alongside the national and county debates that gave the era its specific character. There was great hope and the defining political personalities of one of the most cited periods in Hungarian history, the Reform Era, were emerging. By the early 1840s, Wesselényi had become a physically and mentally tired and sickly man who had suffered many disappointments in political struggles. He describes himself in his book as 'a bourgeois dead man', 'rising from the depths of his grave'.

We know from Wesselényi's diary entries that he was working on a text in the summer of 1842, the manuscript of which was completed in January 1843 and published in Leipzig by Otto Wigand. He had planned to publish a series of articles in the *Pesti Hírlap* to promote his book and his ideas, as if to provoke discussion, but censorship prevented its publication.¹⁷ In 1844, the book was published in German. The censors watched Wesselényi's work with increased interest, as its ideas were fundamental to the future and structure of the Habsburg Empire, as well as to its basic foreign policy orientation. Kossuth would have liked to publish an excerpted version of the book in the form of an article, but repeated interference by censors meant that it could only be published under a pseudonym, stripped of its essential ideas and problems. Its hoped-for impact was thus lost.¹⁸

The basic idea presented in the work is concern for all of the dangers that threaten Hungary and its people: 'A word of warning about the danger threatening Hungary and its nationality'.¹⁹ Wesselényi recognised that the spirit of the times, nationhood, the national awakening, and the idea of the nation-state not only brought radical changes in Hungarian society, unleashed new energies, and formulated new aspirations, but that this phenomenon also applied to the nationalities of Hungary.

16 Kárpáti, 2020, pp. 5–17.

17 Deák, 1996, p. 17.

18 Varga, 1982, p. 108.

19 Baron Wesselényi, 1992, p. 14.

And our present age – even though many other traces of the past remain, and many progress and revolution that originated and began in the past – has the most genuine and outstanding character of all: the striving for the development of nationalities and national independence.²⁰

He was aware of the mobilising and social-forming power of the national idea, which was also evident during the French Revolution and the unity movements in Italy. He was also aware that the energies brought to the surface by the birth of nationalism could be used by the great powers for selfish and aggressive ends. It is no coincidence that he quotes an extract from a speech made by the Russian Tsar Nicholas I in Warsaw, which caused great concern in Hungarian political life and was later referenced in many cases when the warning of the Russian and pan-Slavic threat was pronounced.

You are no longer Poles, but Slavs, brothers of the Russians. I will speak to you as the Tsar of all the Russians, and soon I will speak to your other Slavic kinsmen as the lord of all our original possessions. Know the true direction of Russia's glory and mine! My empire bears within itself the seeds of future greatness.²¹

From the 1830s and 40s onwards, Russophobia, the fear of Russian aggression, became a constant element of Hungarian political thinking and national policy strategies, which was further intensified by the Russian intervention of 1849. These events and experiences had a fundamental influence on and motivated a number of major political decisions taken by the Hungarian political elite, such as the acceptance of the 1867 Compromise. Wesselényi also understood that pan-Slavic propaganda could use one more effective element for its political ends, namely the Orthodox religion. He stated that '*the power of Muscovy*²², *greater than its cannons, its vast armies, and perhaps even its treacherous diplomacy, lies in the Greek religion*'.²³ He also saw a real danger in the fact that the great powers, for their own political ends, also wanted to limit the potential of national movements by inciting contradictory ideas. The lessons of 1848–49, when the Habsburg reaction used the nationalities of Hungary against the Hungarian independence movement, confirmed Wesselényi's concerns. He was convinced, however, that the situation of the Slavic nationalities in Hungary was not a purely Hungarian problem, since aggressive Russian foreign policy and the pan-Slavic idea threatened the stability and peace of the whole of Europe.

According to Wesselényi, the effective solution to the threats and dangers outlined above, and thus the tasks of Hungarian politics, was '*to meet the reasonable*

20 Ibid. p. 30.

21 Ibid. p. 51.

22 i.e. Russia.

23 Baron Wesselényi, 1992, p. 72.

demands of the Slavs'.²⁴ He believed that it was important to build political trust between Hungarians and non-Hungarians:

We must strive to convince all our fellow Slav citizens of the following: that we neither hate nor despise the Slavs, but wish to embrace them as brothers and sisters, that we have no intention of depriving them of their languages, and that the hope of a constitutional national existence for Croatia and Slovakia can certainly only exist as a result of the close ties between Hungary and Hungary and the stability of its constitution...²⁵

To achieve this goal, Wesselényi proposed that a number of changes must be introduced for Hungarians, which were also the basic demands of the reform era: the extension of rights, equal civil rights, civil property, cultivation of the Hungarian language, and improvement of the state of education and literacy.

One hundred years after its first publication, Wesselényi's *Appeal* was published in 1944 in Cluj Napoca. The historical situation for Hungarians and the whole of Central and Eastern Europe seemed as ominous as it had been a hundred years earlier. The outcome of the Second World War was already clear, as was the tragic outcome of the great power relations for the small nations of the region, regardless of their side during the war. This was concisely summarised in Transylvanian historian Zoltán I. Tóth's review on the occasion of the book's publication:

A real need has been fulfilled, by the republication of his largely forgotten and, despite its merit, little appreciated *Appeal*. Two great questions of Hungarian fate are at its heart: the expansion of Russian power in foreign policy, and the question of nationality in domestic policy.²⁶

Tóth considers Wesselényi's work to be 'pioneering and visionary', the value of which is not diminished by the fact that it also contained a number of naive ideas. Further, certain elements of the work remain modern and relevant today. Wesselényi '*was the first to clearly perceive the close connection between education and the pursuit of constitutionalism on the one hand, and nationalism on the other*'.²⁷ In numerous other ways, Wesselényi's work was also pioneering internationally:

Wesselényi was the first Hungarian to recognize the need for national propaganda abroad and among the first to voice confederation plans in the Danube region. He was also the first Hungarian to recognise the great role of Polish emigration in the political plans and movements of the time.²⁸

24 Ibid. p. 195.

25 Ibid. p. 220.

26 I. Tóth, 1944, p. 520.

27 Ibid.

28 Ibid. p. 521.

Iván Zoltán Dénes, who wrote the foreword to the latest Hungarian edition of the *Appeal*, evaluates it in an international context:

It is a fundamental work, which is outstanding and remarkable in comparison with the intellectual and political achievements of the contemporary liberalisms and nationalisms of Northern and Southern Europe (Irish, Norwegian, Finnish, Italian and Greek), and especially with the synthesis of liberalism and nationalism, freedom and nation, primarily in Central and Eastern Europe (German, Austrian, Hungarian, Czech and Polish).²⁹

A more modern interpretation of Wesselényi's work highlights his efforts to reform the Habsburg Empire and elements of a move towards triallistic ideas. Other scholars have also tried to interpret these efforts in Western European terms: '*in his evaluation of the international situation, Wesselényi fully shares the position of the German liberals on the role of Russia, the possible French alliance, and the threats to Austria-Germany*'.³⁰ Wesselényi's concept raised several questions, especially regarding his proposals, which were far from the general public opinion in the Reform Era. This may explain the somewhat modest response the work received after its publication, as mentioned earlier. According to a historian's assessment,

Wesselényi's proposal in his *Appeal* for the transformation of the Habsburg Monarchy as a whole is unique in the period because it went against the dogma of the Hungarian political elite that Hungary's internal affairs were to be decided by the Hungarian king and political elite, in return for which the Hungarian Estates would not formulate a right to influence the affairs of other provinces (i.e. foreign countries).³¹

According to one of today's most prominent scholars of Central and Eastern European who has a particular focus on Hungarian, integrationist ideas, Wesselényi's appeal ranks first in the plans for the federalisation of the Habsburg Empire and is the foremost of its kind. In his opinion, however,

Wesselényi's reform proposal deserves attention not only because he was the first to raise the need for the federalisation of the Monarchy, but also because, for all its excellence, it accurately reflected the downsides of 19th century Hungarian national and national-political thought.³²

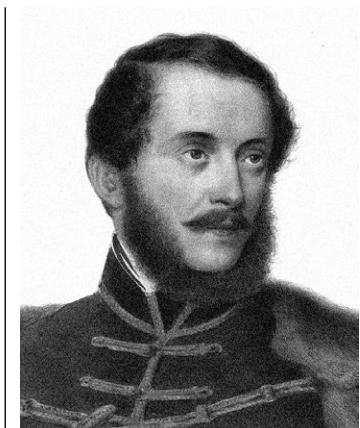
29 Baron Wesselényi, 1992, pp. 5–6.

30 Deák, 1996, p. 31.

31 Varga, 2020, p. 1195.

32 Romsics, 1997, p. 27.

2. Lajos Kossuth (1802–1894)³³



Lajos Kossuth, one of the best-known politicians and statesmen of 19th-century Hungary, was born on 19 September 1802 in Monok, Zemplén County, in a Lutheran noble family.³⁴ His ancestors received education in law and held office at the county level. Kossuth's family had no estates, so like other young men of similar noble birth, he studied law. Lajos Kossuth attended schools in Sátoraljaújhely, Eperjes, and Sárospatak. He graduated as a lawyer in 1823 and returned to his homeland, settling in Zemplén County. He served first as a county judge then a prosecutor in Sátoraljaújhely.

In 1831, cholera spread to northern Hungary from Galicia, causing a peasant uprising in the region. As public health official, Kossuth was responsible for preventing the spread of the epidemic and addressing the conflicts caused by the peasant uprising.³⁵ His experience of the epidemic and the resulting peasant uprising had a major influence on the development of his political views. He realised that the most important problem facing contemporary Hungary was the unresolved serf question, which presented enormous socio-political dangers. One of the reformist opposition's strong beliefs and fears at the time was that the serf question would divide Hungarian society. The Viennese government could then use this division for its own ends, as it had done on several occasions in Poland. The fear of a possible new peasant conflict forced the Hungarian reformers to implement changes. Kossuth became increasingly sensitive to social and political issues.

He participated as an envoy of absentee aristocrats (*ablegatus absentium*) in the Diet of 1825–27, which, despite the enactment of several progressive laws, failed to make progress on the most important issues, such as voluntary serf redemption and equality before the law. The most important aim of the 1832–36 Diet was again the enactment of voluntary redemption, but this also failed in a great disappointment to the reformist opposition. Once again, Kossuth attended this assembly as an envoy of the absent lords and he began to write reports on the proceedings of the Diet. As a result, the young lawyer from Zemplén, who was until then completely unknown,

33 Lajos Kossuth, Hungarian politician, August Prinzhofer – Johann Rauh: colored lithograph, public domain, source of the picture: <https://repository.library.brown.edu/studio/item/bdr:234082/>.

34 Pajkossy, 1998; Szabad, 1977; Deák, 1983; Kosáry, 2002.

35 Szállási, 1972, pp. 313–315.

began to attract more and more attention. Kossuth's aim was to bypass censorship and to inform the country's public about what was happening in Bratislava, since those not present could not learn about the debates in the Diet and the state of the reform process. Thus, Kossuth edited the Parliamentary Reports, a manuscript journal published in 345 issues.³⁶ As it was distributed from hand to hand, largely in secret, in manuscript copies, it may have reached a wider readership than the actual number of copies that were published. With the end of the Diet, the institutional framework for politics was transferred to the counties. Kossuth then edited the Municipal Reports, which aimed to inform the public about the reform debates in the counties. The government also became increasingly aware of the previously unknown Kossuth. The Municipal Reports were banned, but Kossuth nonetheless continued to publish them despite the repeated warnings he received. In May 1837, he was arrested along with other reformist politicians. He was sentenced to three and then four years in prison.

While the physical and mental health of the political prisoners who had been arrested at the same time – Miklós Wesselényi and László Lovassy – was severely affected by imprisonment, Kossuth was careful to maintain his mental health. He read books on economics and mathematics and studied English. A legend claims that Kossuth learned English with the help of a dictionary and a volume of Shakespeare, but in reality he used these tools to improve upon the knowledge he already held:

We know that during his years in prison Kossuth read many English and American authors in the original, so it would be a mistake to accept the view that Shakespeare was the sole source of Kossuth's considerable English knowledge. During his long years in prison, Kossuth read many books that would later help him to develop his oratory skills in English.³⁷

We can assume that Kossuth did not turn to English by accident, since one of the models for the reformers of his time in Hungary was England. The English constitutional monarchy was considered an example, and civilisation in England was the result of organic developments and not of revolution, as in France, where the old nobility had suffered considerable losses. The Diet of 1839–40, one of the most successful of the Reform Era in terms of its results, freed political prisoners. Before his years in prison, Kossuth was a hardly known political novice with a 'dubious' past in the counties,³⁸ but after his release, he became a martyred politician of great stature.

Upon his release from prison, the government invited him to serve as editor of the *Pesti Hírlap*, a post he held from 1841 to 1844. Metternich's move was a surprise

36 Pajkossy, 1998, p. 10.

37 Frank, 2002, p. 869.

38 Pajkossy, 1998, p. 8.

to the imprisoned Kossuth, and his reasons are unclear: *'according to one account, Chancellor Metternich saw the censors as a means of restraining the martyr of press freedom, while another says he expected the editor's radicalism to alienate more moderate liberals'*.³⁹ Kossuth played a major role in the development of political journalism in Hungary. His editorials in the journal generated a great stir, and the Pesti Hírlap became one of the most important forums for the debates of the Reform Era. The so-called Kossuth-Széchenyi debate unfolded in these forums.⁴⁰ Kossuth's 214 editorials played a particularly important role and established the genre in Hungary.⁴¹ Both Kossuth and Széchenyi agreed on the need for reform. Their differences of opinion were more related to the relationship with the government, the schedule, the social base, the methods, and the pace of the reform process. There was also a conflict between their political habitus and their emotional attitudes. They were both considered to be highly influential and distinctive personalities of the reform era, of which they were well aware.

By the mid-1840s, the situation of Hungarian industry had become the most important issue for Kossuth. On 1 January 1834, the German customs union, the Zollverein, which was under Prussian leadership and had become successful thanks to the theoretical and active organisation of Friedrich List, was launched. The Habsburg provinces were not part of this union. With the Zollverein, the process of the economic unification of the German territories slowly began. Viennese politicians were certain that being left out of the economic integration of the German territories would have a fundamental impact on the form of German unity. Therefore, in the mid-1840s, they firmly expressed the necessity that they join the Zollverein. In Hungary, national industry still existed in a nascent form. There was a danger that if the Habsburgs joined the Zollverein, Hungarian national industry would not be able to develop. Kossuth and his contemporaries watched these events with concern, as the dilemma rightly arose concerning the prospect of a Hungarian civil transition without a weak Hungarian citizenry and an independent national industry. The situation and future of national industry became at the same time a concern of the future of the whole Hungarian civil transition. The steps Kossuth took in support of industry (e.g., the Védegyelet (Industrial Support Association) and the first industrial exhibition) did not make any significant progress in solving the problem, since it was hardly possible to discuss Hungarian industry, but he did make Hungarian society aware of the problem.

At the end of the 1840s, factionalism emerged in Hungarian political life. Politicians committed to reform were organised in the Opposition Party, the programme of which was largely written by Kossuth. In 1847, the last Diet of the Estates was convened, in which Kossuth participated as one of the envoys of Pest County. The revolutionary wave that unfolded across Europe in the spring of 1848 accelerated

39 Ibid. p. 11.

40 Fónagy and Dobszay, 2003.

41 Pajkossy, 1998, p. 11.

the course of political change in Hungary. In response to the news of the Paris Revolution, he proposed a constitution for Hungary and other parts of the Habsburg Empire. He became Minister of Finance in the first responsible government under Lajos Batthyány, which was established after the Revolution of March in Pest. He played a major role in the creation of an independent Hungarian currency, which has been called the ‘Kossuth-bankó’ ever since.

To defend the achievements of the Revolution of March, it was turned into a fight for freedom. On 15 September 1848, the National Defence Committee was established on his proposal, and soon took over governmental functions with Kossuth as its president. Due to the Austrian military successes, the legislature and the government moved to Debrecen in early January 1849 under Kossuth’s leadership. Here, Kossuth was given the epithet ‘Moses of the Hungarians’.⁴² In March 1849, the Habsburgs made it clear that they did not consider the April Laws, to which the Emperor Ferdinand V had himself sworn, legitimising the achievements of the Revolution of March, to be binding. Partly as a result of this, the dethronement of the Habsburg dynasty was proclaimed in Debrecen on 14 April. Since this step did not make Hungary a republic, and the republican institution was considered an undesirable radical idea by the majority of the political elite, Kossuth became Governor-President, partly following the Hungarian historical tradition. After the publication of the Declaration of Independence, the fight for freedom developed into a war of independence, and Kossuth was a decisive figure in the events. His major recruiting speeches in the Great Plain in the autumn of 1848 laid the foundations for his future cult in the popular narrative.⁴³ However, Russia sent an interventionist army to Hungary in the spirit of Holy Alliance solidarity, and by August, the Hungarian army had been outnumbered and had laid down its arms. Kossuth and many others, rightly fearing reprisals, chose emigration.

Kossuth first emigrated to Turkey and then, in 1851, to England on an American steamship. In the spring of 1851, in Kütahya, Turkey, he drafted his constitution, which was amended in 1859. The idea of universal suffrage and self-government was then considered very progressive.

The most modern constitutions, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, are no more specific than Kossuth’s in stating that individual rights (freedom of thought, freedom of conscience and freedom of association) ‘may neither be modified nor abolished by legislation’. In the spirit of the French Constitution of 1789, he declares that the limit of individual liberties is ‘the inviolability of the liberty of others alone’. But he was equally conscious of the principle of the supremacy of the people, for he considered ‘the university of the citizens’ to be the source and depository of all rights.⁴⁴

42 Bényei, 2019; Zakar, 2003, pp. 87–108.

43 Hermann, 2002.

44 Orosz, 2002, p. 557.

In 1851 and 1852, Kossuth made a tour of the United States, where the impact of his journey is still marked by numerous statues and memorials. Although the tour had no political impact on Hungarian emigration, its afterlife was of greater importance. A kind of cult of Kossuth developed, which gained momentum during the Cold War period, partly due to Hungarian emigration.⁴⁵ He lived in Italy from 1861 until his death. Hungarian emigration became increasingly constrained. Western public opinion had a certain remorse for the Hungarian events of 1848–49, but it did not affect their basic foreign policy interests. Therefore, the emigrants were embraced by foreigners, which often led them to overestimate their hopes and to formulate unfounded hopes for themselves. They were sympathetic to Hungarian ideas and thoughts during the War of Independence but were forced by their own great power motives to tolerate – or in the words of a contemporary, ‘silently observe’ – Russian intervention.

Thus, Hungarian emigration in the 1850s and 60s did not achieve any real results and the great powers only temporarily supported Kossuth and his circle, continuing to prioritise their own interests. This also applied to the emigrant movements of other failed freedom fights, such as that of the Poles, which was the most prestigious emigrant movement in the 19th century. The Polish War of Independence of 1830–31, its fall, and the subsequent Polish emigration were followed with great interest by onlookers throughout Europe, including the Hungarian liberal reformist opposition. Prince Czartoryski, one of the leaders of the War of Independence, became the leader of the conservative group of the Polish emigration in Paris. He was also very active as a public writer and organiser. He maintained constant contact with other emigrant organisations and national movements through his extensive correspondence and his mandates, and his plans for the Central and Eastern European region had a great influence on his contemporaries, including László Teleki and other Hungarian emigrants. Given the history of integrationist ideas, this does not seem at all surprising, as every plan built on existing proposals and was often seen as a further development of an earlier idea.

With the Compromise of 1867, the opportunities for Hungarian emigration were drastically reduced. The majority of emigrants had already returned home. Lajos Kossuth firmly rejected the system of the Compromise because he feared for the future of historic Hungary in its full integration with the Habsburg Empire.⁴⁶ He chose further emigration to preserve his political prestige. Since 1861, he had been living in a unifying Italy. In 1865, he settled near Turin and became the ‘hermit of Turin’. The adoption of the Compromise stabilised relations between the Habsburg Empire and Hungary for a long period, which for Kossuth meant a reduction of political space and increasing isolation. In the meantime, his cult had slowly begun to develop in Hungary. He died on 20 March 1894 and his remains were brought to Hungary at the end of the month. His funeral became a national day of mourning,

45 Várdy, 1998, pp. 331–339.

46 Niederhauser, 1995.

although state employees and army officers were not allowed to attend by order of the emperor. The eulogy was delivered by Mór Jókai, the greatest writer of the era.

Those of us who believe in the immortality of the soul must believe that we have brought the ashes of Kossuth to Hungary along with his soul. The soul does not leave those whom it loves, and it has so much to love here.⁴⁷

Kossuth's confederation plan, published in 1862, is not unprecedented, but part of the process of the intense emergence of supranational ideas of integration with different contents in the emigration movements in the first two thirds of the 19th century. The political life of the period was characterised by many failed revolutions, liberation struggles, and uprisings, which led to widespread emigrant movements in many European cities. This was particularly true of Paris, London, and Geneva. The very existence of opposition and emigration in politics encouraged the spread of federalist and confederalist ideas as alternatives to existing power structures. Kossuth's emigration policy and his ideas about integration fit into this process. However, Kossuth was not the only Hungarian emigrant to turn to the project of uniting the peoples of the Danube region – László Teleki and György Klapka, among others, should also be mentioned.⁴⁸ A kind of rivalry even developed between them on this issue.

Kossuth had already outlined his idea of confederation in several forms in the early 1850s during his emigration in Turkey.⁴⁹ Although the revolutions and struggles for freedom of 1848–49 had failed, everyone knew that lasting stability had not been achieved in Central and South-eastern Europe. The weakness of the Habsburg Empire had become apparent, and it could only stabilise its position in Hungary with the help of the Tsar's intervention, which was a major loss of prestige in foreign policy. Kossuth was convinced that nationalist movements, the aspiration to statehood, would tear apart the multi-ethnic framework of the Habsburg Empire, and that if Hungarian politics could not offer an alternative to nationalist movements, it would lead to the loss of the integrity of historic Hungary. The irreversibly declining Ottoman Empire was also under pressure from the aspirations of the great powers and the independence and national unity movements in the Balkans.

First, the Crimean war made clear the fragility of the existing power situation in the region and again placed the inevitability of change on the agenda. In 1855, Klapka proposed the restoration of an independent Polish state and a Hungarian-South Slav-Romanian confederation.⁵⁰ In 1862, Klapka drafted a 30-point plan entitled 'Programme for a Danubian Confederation'⁵¹ at the instigation of the

47 Pajkossy, 1998, p. 216.

48 Mérei, 1965, pp. 58–72.

49 Pajkossy, 2002, p. 938.

50 Ibid. p. 938.

51 Ibid. pp. 944–946.

Italian government. Kossuth, however, was the most authoritative leader of the Hungarian emigration movement. The Italian government's representative Canini also held talks with Kossuth, and the Italian side drew up a memorandum, which Kossuth signed.⁵² Originally, the discussions and the memo were to be treated with the utmost discretion and were not intended to be made public. Kossuth shared the draft with Ignacy Helfy, the editor of the journal *L'Alleanza*, purely for information purposes, but he published it on 18 May under the title *Danubian Confederation* as Kossuth's proposal. Kossuth later commented on the incident: *'I presented it to Helfy as an idea in case he wanted to discuss the nationality question in his paper. Oh, the unfortunate man! he trumpeted it as my work, and it wasn't!'*⁵³

The proposal and its publication caused a storm. Relations between Kossuth and Klapka deteriorated, which further worsened the already unstable situation of the Hungarian emigration. A certain rivalry seems to have unfolded regarding who should be the first Hungarian to formulate the idea of the Danubian Confederation, in contrast to Kossuth's earlier statement. The states concerned also distanced themselves from the plan, as it became clear that the necessary partnership was lacking. However, Kossuth still supported the plan and even wrote a detailed explanation of the proposal entitled *Clarifications on the Danubian Confederation Plan*. Subsequently, Kossuth and the idea of the Danubian Confederation became inextricably linked, even though, as he said, it had not originally been his idea.⁵⁴ In international literature, Kossuth's name is also the most frequently mentioned among the Hungarian emigration's plans for confederation.⁵⁵

Until recently, Hungarian historiography did not know much about the content of the draft and the history of its origins. Only generalisations were spread in public opinion.

One of the most famous documents of modern Hungarian history of ideas and politics, Canini's memo, originally written in French, is still unpublished; the Italian version published in *L'Alleanza* can be classified as archival material in Hungary; the text has been published in Hungarian on several occasions, but always in the same inaccurate translation, with errors that give rise to false conclusions, and, moreover, research has not even been aware of this until recently.⁵⁶

The memo that Kossuth signed and annotated contains the following draft, which later became known as the Confederation Plan.⁵⁷ The Danubian Confederation would include Hungary, Transylvania, Romania, Croatia with its associated parts,

52 Ibid. pp. 946–956.

53 Ibid. p. 957.

54 Gergely, 1985.

55 Kühl, 1958, pp. 16–30; Wierer, 1960, pp. 58–60.

56 Pajkossy, 2002, p. 939.

57 Romsics, 2005.

and other Balkan countries that might become independent, in addition to Serbia. The most sensitive issue was the status of Transylvania, where the Romanian population had been in absolute majority since the early 19th century. According to Kossuth, even if the election in Transylvania were to decide in favour of independent statehood, there would still be a personal union between the two countries. The treaty of union would be adopted by the legislature, the main principles of which are as follows. Defence, foreign representation, foreign trade, customs policy, and a uniform system of weights and measures would be under common jurisdiction. The question of the legislature was still open as to whether the Danubian Confederation should have a unicameral or bicameral parliament. Should there be a bicameral parliament, the member states would send an equal number of members to the senate, regardless of their size, to ensure effective representation of the interests of the smaller states. The question of a common language would be decided by the federal assembly. The institutions of the Confederation would have their headquarters alternately in Pest, Bucharest, Zagreb, and then Belgrade. The head of the federal council would be the head of state of the member state in which the federal bodies met. Fundamental rights of religion, nationality, assembly, and language would be respected everywhere.

In his notes,⁵⁸ Kossuth wrote that he showed Canini the draft constitution drawn up in 1850 in Kütahya, mainly regarding nationality rights, which he copied in points. Kossuth strongly supported the independence of Serbia and Romania, but in order to stop Russian expansion, he asserted that it was necessary to maintain the Ottoman Empire. However, the smaller nations in this region could only secure their independent statehood if they were united in a larger political formation, or a confederation. It would also be necessary to secure the independence of Poland.

From the moment of its formulation, Kossuth's idea already bore the hallmarks of failure.⁵⁹ Neither the great powers nor the smaller states of the region supported it. It caused dissension and deep personal conflicts within the Hungarian emigrant movement. The Hungarian public did not see its ability to stabilise the historical situation of Hungary, let alone settle Austro-Hungarian relations.

The plan of the Danubian Confederation was an idea of a handful of Hungarian emigrants, who were increasingly losing their hopes and sense of reality, which went so far as to abandon the integrity of the historic Hungarian state in the area of concessions, and which was considered too little in Bucharest and Belgrade, and too much in Budapest, and therefore was not taken seriously anywhere.⁶⁰

58 Pajkossy, 2002, pp. 956–957.

59 Lendvai, 1995.

60 Romsics, 1997, p. 46.

3. Oszkár Jászi (1875–1957)⁶¹

Oszkár Jászi, social scientist, publicist, and politician, was born on 2 March 1875 in Nagykároly, in what is now Romania, to a family of Jewish intellectuals who later converted to the Reformed religion.⁶² One of his brothers later became a teacher at the Reformed College in Debrecen. The ethnic and religious diversity of his hometown and its surroundings was a decisive factor in shaping his world view, as was the slowly unfolding crisis of late-nineteenth-century Hungary and the whole system of dualism. He completed his secondary school education in his hometown and then studied law in Budapest, graduating in 1896. He first took a



state job with the support of his relatives, but the atmosphere of the workplace, the bureaucracy of the ministry, and the monotonous ‘filing work’ did not satisfy him.⁶³ Later, he devoted himself to social science research, newspaper editing, and public and political affairs.

He joined the bourgeois radical intellectual group that was emerging at the turn of the century.⁶⁴ In 1900, the social science journal *Huszadik Század* (*Twentieth Century*) was launched, and he participated in its work from the beginning, as editor from 1906 until its closure in 1919. *Huszadik Század* was considered the highest quality social science journal of the period. In 1901, the Social Science Society was organised, in the work of which he participated from the outset until its dissolution in 1919. Among other works, Jászi launched the Society’s publication series entitled Social Science Library. The intellectuals belonging to this academic environment criticised the economic and social conditions of contemporary Hungary and the backwardness and anti-democratic nature of its political institutions with scientific arguments and thoroughness. They strongly criticised the intolerance and sometimes violent ‘Magyarisation’ efforts of official policy towards nationalist movements at the beginning of the century. They supported the electoral reform, which was one of the most important domestic political debates of the period and became the main platform of several opposition parties, such as the Social Democrats. Jászi and the bourgeois radicals called for a universal and secret ballot, regularly

61 Oszkár Jászi, Hungarian social scientist, publicist, and politician, unknown photographer, in: Lazarus.elte.hu, public domain, source of the picture: https://hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/J%C3%A1szi_Oszk%C3%A1r#/media/F%C3%A1jl:J%C3%A1sziOszk%C3%A1r.jpg.

62 Hanák, 1985; Litván, 2003; Borsody, 1987, pp. 1–16.

63 Hanák, 1985, p. 14.

64 Pók, 1990.

referring to Western European models. This was one of the most frequently formulated Western criticisms of contemporary Hungary. Hungarian suffrage, which was still based essentially on the laws of April 1848, had by the turn of the century become significantly outdated, backward, and undemocratic. The Hungarian electoral law did not follow the changes that had already taken place in Western Europe from the last third of the 19th century onwards, including the significant expansion of the electorate and the spread of the secret nature of the electoral system. From the end of the 19th century, the land question was back on the agenda in a new way, facing new challenges. This question raised many problems, including ownership and social, organisational, and economic management. The need for land reform played a key role in the programme of Jászi and the bourgeois radicals.

One of Jászi's most influential articles was published in the journal *Huszadik Század* in 1907, entitled *Towards a New Hungary*. It can also be seen as a sort of programme of the progressive-minded politicians of the turn of the century in Hungary, a large proportion of whom were intellectuals or of the bourgeois radical political movement.⁶⁵ Jászi was harshly critical of the politicians of his time, of the political conditions of the state, and of the backward, feudal nature of the government. In his opinion, a new political leadership was needed, like that of Kossuth's generation in 1848. According to him, '*there is no one among the Kurucs of today's gentry parliament who would realise that an independent Hungary can only be created from today's colonial Hungary by the material and moral resources of millions of the Hungarian people*'.⁶⁶ One of the key ideas of the article is the need to organise a radical party, which would make social reform and the democratisation of political life its main political programme. An important role is assigned to the enlightenment of society and to familiarising it with modern, progressive ideas. The article asserts that a new type of independence is needed, as the existing one has been compromised in previous decades. The negative legacy in the history of Hungarian and Central European ideas is that the national-independence tradition has often been confronted with the ideal of modernity and progress.

Under these circumstances, it will be the duty of the new radical party – a difficult, grave duty, but one worthy of the greatest effort – to lead the unscientific, demagogic, agrarian-feudal idea of independence back to its true sources, and at the same time to mark out its means and path in the present in the spirit of modern science.⁶⁷

Economic independence from Austria and an independent customs policy was also highlighted as a necessity. Reforms were called for in public administration, the

65 Jászi, 1907, pp. 1–15.

66 *Ibid.* p. 3.

67 *Ibid.* p. 9.

judiciary, education, healthcare, and labour rights. However, all this would require detailed exploratory studies, research and, finally, programme delivery.

I would imagine that each person would work out the part of the programme that is closest to his or her studies or interests. For example: the tasks of Hungarian radicalism in the field of nationality, public education, warfare, etc. From these essays we could develop the complete ideological content of the radical party, which could then be offered to a wider public.⁶⁸

As a result of the methods formulated, social science research in Hungary boomed, and the foundations for laid for sociology and sociological methods. However, the organisation of the radical party Jászi proposed had to wait. He did not see an organisational framework for its development in the existing opposition parties. His problem with social democracy, which embraced social sensibility and ideas, was that it did not recognise the importance of the national idea and its mobilising, socially cohesive, community-building power. As he wrote,

'National feeling is a tremendous dynamic resource into which, if possible, without harming our ideals, the battleship of socialism must be fitted'.⁶⁹ The great contradiction of the era was that *'the whole idea was stillborn: it was to blend democratic Hungarian nationalism and radicalised bourgeois liberalism with socialism in the heyday of the orthodox Marxist socialism of the Second International'*.⁷⁰

In 1908, the Galilei Circle was organised, comprising a group of radical-minded university students who considered themselves openly atheist and free-thinking. Lectures and meetings were organised on the socio-political issues of Hungary at the time, with the frequent participation of Oszkár Jászi, among others. Many of its members and leaders joined the Communist Party at the end of 1918 and played a leading role in the Hungarian Soviet Republic. It is therefore not surprising that it was banned in 1919 and its reputation was extremely negative in inter-war Hungary. However, the party had to wait to be founded. Among the representatives of progressive ideas and bourgeois radicalism in Hungary, there was a high proportion of Freemasons, including Jászi. For years, there was an organisational debate as to whether Freemasons could form a party. The Civic Radical Party was founded on 6 June 1914, in the days before the outbreak of the First World War, under Jászi's leadership, but much later than he had hoped. In national politics, they did not play a particularly significant role because of their narrow social base and their entrenched position. This situation was changed by the so-called 'Aster Revolution'. Mihály Károlyi, who thus came to power, invited into his government bourgeois radicals who had no previous experience in government and who, due to the political conditions and electoral law of dualism, had no realistic hope of

68 Ibid. p. 15.

69 Hanák, 1985, p. 26.

70 Ibid. p. 27.

coming to power, as well as other former opposition politicians, such as social democrats. Three and later four ministerial positions were given to the bourgeois radicals as coalition partners. Oszkár Jászi was appointed minister without portfolio for nationality issues.⁷¹ He saw the task of his ministry as follows: *‘during the transitional period until the convening of the general peace conference, we want to create all the institutions and safeguards that can ensure the peaceful coexistence of the nationalities of Hungary without prejudice to future borders.’*⁷²

On 13 November 1918, he took part in the signing of the so-called Armistice of Belgrade, which the Hungarian government concluded with the Entente military leaders. Jászi and his circle hoped that this agreement would lead to the formal recognition of the Károlyi government by the Entente and to the country’s accession to more favourable territorial conditions. However, neither of these hopes materialised. Even after this, the Entente did not officially recognise the Károlyi government – it was considered a product of the revolution, and thus illegitimate. It did not manage to obtain a more favourable position on territorial issues. This not only subsequently sealed the fate of the Károlyi government, it foreshadowed its imminent downfall in the absence of official recognition, but also laid the foundations for its extremely negative perception between the two World Wars, largely blaming them for the territorial losses.

Jászi constantly negotiated with national minority politicians in order to maintain the most favourable territorial relations possible in historical Hungary. He promised broad national minority rights and territorial autonomy. In November 1918, in Arad, he led the negotiations with the leaders of the Romanian Nationality Council on behalf of the Hungarian government.⁷³ However, he could not achieve any results. Jászi later saw the situation more realistically:

Even before the negotiations it was clear that the Romanians could not be won over to any compromise on the basis of the unity of the old Hungarian state territory. Not only the mentality of the Transylvanian Romanians was already then unsuitable for such a plan, but the power relations were also completely to our detriment.⁷⁴

Attempts to reach an agreement with the Slovaks on similar lines were also unsuccessful.

It was not only the official recognition of the Entente that was lacking in success, the members of the different nationalities did not see their future in maintaining the old Hungary; all strove for independence. The retention of certain areas of Transylvania was made impossible by the decisions of 1 December 1918

71 Szarka, 1990, pp. 49–65.

72 Ibid. p. 52.

73 Bárdi and Zahorán, 2014, pp. 67–78.

74 Ibid. p. 74.

in Gyulafehervár, which made the whole of Transylvania part of Romania. Seeing his inertia and failure, Jászi resigned as minister in January 1919. He remained as foreign affairs adviser to Mihály Károlyi and president of the Foreign Affairs Council.

He did not support the Soviet Republic that came to power and had a very negative opinion of it. He explicitly condemned the use of terror, fearing its consequences. Even though the leaders of the Communist Party included several people Jászi had known very well in the past, such as the members of the Galilei Circle and other bourgeois radical events and organisations, he chose to emigrate during the Soviet Republic. On 30 April, he left first for Vienna and then, in 1925, for the United States, where he worked as a university professor.⁷⁵ This was a radical decision, as he was not only leaving his country but the continent. He explained his decision with the following words:

I consider the situation in Europe hopeless for a long time to come. [...] Instead of a dying Vienna, I longed for the atmosphere of a vast world culture, where all the problems of my work up to then would be given a new perspective. [...] I can also benefit the Hungarian cause more from a centre of the Anglo-Saxon world than from Vienna.⁷⁶

Jászi's emigration was certainly understandable. Between the two World Wars, the official ideology and propaganda in Hungary took a very negative view of bourgeois radicals and Jászi, who were largely blamed for the revolutions and the 'loss of the country' at Trianon. He visited Hungary once more in 1947 but was greatly disappointed by the conditions in the country and the failure of the idea of federation, which he had constantly promoted as a means of bringing the Danube peoples closer together and reconciling them. He expressed his disappointment with the situation in Central and Eastern Europe in a letter to Mihály Károlyi in which he denied '*the possibility of realising democracy and human freedom on the basis of the Bolshevik objective and the Bolshevik morality. On the contrary, they only drive us further away from it*'.⁷⁷ He died in the United States on 13 February 1957 and his ashes were brought back to Hungary in 1991.

Oszkár Jászi was very active in publishing.⁷⁸ His sociological and social science writings before the First World War described the social conditions of contemporary Hungary; the undemocratic features of the political institutional system, which he often described as 'feudal'; and the need for change. In 1912, he published his large-scale work *The Formation of Nation-States and the Nationality Question*,

75 L. Nagy, 1973, pp. 198–211.

76 Jászi, 1983, p. 5.

77 Borbándi, 1992, p. 372.

78 Oszkár Jászi Society for Foreign Policy: Jászi Oszkár műveinek válogatott bibliográfiája [Online]. Available at: https://web.archive.org/web/20140201132544/http://www.jaszitarsasag.hu/Jaszi_bibliografia.pdf (Accessed: 14 July 2023), Gyurgyák and Litván, 1991.

which showed Jászi's particular sensitivity to the historical and national problems of Central and Eastern Europe. He acknowledged the power of national movements and at the same time strongly condemned forced assimilation. From 1905 onwards, Jászi turned increasingly towards research into the national-nationality question. He was motivated by his personal political experience and his good relations with several nationalist politicians. Of all the progressive intellectuals of the time, he was perhaps the most realistic in recognising not only the topicality but also the real weight of the issue. The most quoted passage in the work is the following: '*this is why I claim that the nationality question is the Archimedean point of Hungarian democracy and state independence*'.⁷⁹ In his introduction to the book, Endre Ady, one of the most influential poets of the time, praised Jászi, with whom he was good friends: '*now this latest, gloriously brave and magnificent book is almost the heroic feat of a general who stands up for his army in a battle against the multitudes of his enemies*'.⁸⁰

He saw the creation of the United States of Europe as a necessary historical trend, which seemed particularly prescient at the time of the book's publication in 1912. Jászi understood integration economically and historically as an objective, organic process. He made constant reference to this in almost all of his works. He also recognised that the question of nationality, on which the future of Hungary depended, was not by chance the fundamental issue of his time. Historical experience had shown on several occasions that:

Hungary will be unable to act with any serious weight and force against Austria, not only in its fidgeting quarrels, but also in its serious economic interests, until Vienna can rightly claim that behind the Hungarian demands there is only a closed class rule, which can be easily broken down by mobilising the deprived nationalities.⁸¹

During the First World War, the *Mitteleuropa* plan, with its long historical antecedents, became an official German war aim. Books, studies, and drafts of the concept have been published in abundance. The most influential and controversial of these was Friedrich Naumann's *Mitteleuropa*, published in 1915. The text had a vivid echo in Hungary, as the country's entire intellectual and political class was aware that whatever the outcome of the war, it would radically transform their life conditions and their international environment:⁸² '*one of the cornerstones of the ideology of the bourgeois radicals was that the unification of nations, supranational integration, would promote the cause of progress in the economic, social and political spheres of intellectual life*'.⁸³ However, this does not imply an unconditional acceptance of German expansionist aspirations. Many accused Jászi of being a Germanophile and did not

79 Jászi, 1912, p. 519.

80 Ady, 1912, p. 835.

81 Jászi, 1912, p. 519.

82 Irinyi, 1973.

83 *Ibid.* p. 166.

understand how he could simultaneously be committed to democratisation and social reform and support German ambitions for great power. To understand this, it should be noted that the Mitteleuropa idea was not only supported in German conservative circles, but had many followers in liberal big capitalist groups: *'the bourgeois radicals are only enthusiastic about a Central Europe that doubles the economic productivity of Central Europe and gives its people more rights, more culture, more freedom and more prosperity'*.⁸⁴ According to Jászi, *'if, therefore, our alliance with Austria has been a very significant factor in cultural and democratic progress in Hungary, we may justly hope that the extension of the alliance to Germany will give an even greater impetus to the same development.'*⁸⁵

As the debates surrounding the Naumann proposal died down, from the end of 1916, Jászi's attention was increasingly focused on current Central European issues and the possible rapprochement of the small nations of the region. When Károlyi and Jászi held talks with British politicians in Bern in November 1917, Károlyi saw the future of the Danube question in a reorganisation similar to Kossuth's federation plan.⁸⁶ In the spring of 1918, however, the Monarchy's situation and international perception took an unfavourable turn. The failure of the separate peace not only worsened the Monarchy's relations with the Entente, it also increased Germany's suspicions. When representatives of Germany and the Monarchy signed an agreement to start negotiations for the establishment of a customs union in May 1918, it not only meant that Austria-Hungary was completely subordinated to Germany, but also that the Entente states – especially France and England – were faced with the dilemma of whether to opt for moderate mutilation or radical dismemberment in the future of the Monarchy. This is confirmed by the fact that from April 1918, the Entente recognised the emigrant national councils of the Monarchy's nationalities as equal belligerents. According to Kossuth's prediction of 1887, the fate of the Monarchy was finally decided for the historical Hungary. What Hungarian political and intellectual life had feared continuously since the beginning of the 19th century would apparently come to pass in a few months' time.

No one was able to offer a realistic and feasible alternative to the imminent total disintegration of historic Hungary. By April 1918, Jászi had prepared a draft entitled *The Future of Hungary and the Danubian United States*, but it remained unpublished until October 1918, when two editions were made available. In the foreword to the first edition, he explained the delay: *'various reasons have prevented its publication so far: partly the immaturity of the conditions, partly technical circumstances. Now, in the rapid pace of events, it is perhaps too late: practice is beginning to overtake theory'*.⁸⁷ He was well aware of the inevitability of territorial change, at least as far as the

84 Ibid.

85 Jászi, 1916, p. 451.

86 Hanák, 1985, p. 68.

87 Jászi, 1918, p. 5.

structure of the present Monarchy was concerned. Indeed, one of his chapters is entitled *'The Monarchy cannot be balanced within its present framework'*.

The future Central-European power structure would consist of an alliance of five states: Hungary, Croatia without Slavonia, Austria, the Czech provinces, Poland, and the Croatian-led state of Illyria. As the resulting states would remain multi-ethnic, a key issue would be to guarantee the rights of national minorities. Jászi would grant them broad territorial and cultural autonomies in line with the so-called Austro-Marxist concept of contemporary Austrian social democrats such as Karl Renner. Jászi feared a radical dismemberment of the Monarchy for several reasons. He was aware of the disastrous long-term consequences this would have for Austrian and Hungarian political relations. On the one hand, it would create an unstable situation, and on the other hand, he considered it historically necessary to strengthen and, where necessary, maintain the integration framework on a theoretical basis, stating that *'the greatest forces of development in the 20th century are opposed to all efforts to achieve economic and political isolation in the face of the great momentum of integration'*.⁸⁸ He considered Kossuth's project to form the basis of his work, which he knew had already been surpassed by time in many elements, but believed that *'its basic idea and basis [were] still solid'*.⁸⁹ He referred several times to Kossuth's 1862 draft and to Kossuth's later statements. According to Jászi:

The basic idea of Lajos Kossuth's Danube confederation plan was precisely that without the liberation of the states racially related to the Hungarian nationalities and without alliance with them, Hungarian independent statehood was inconceivable. It would be unthinkable even if a fortunate turn of foreign policy could formally restore the independence of the Hungarian state.⁹⁰

Jászi was obviously not fully aware of the plans of their smaller allies in the Entente and Central Europe, nor of their commitment to the radical partition of Hungary, since even in October 1918 he was still assuming Hungary's territorial integrity. It is a peculiarity of Hungarian political and intellectual life that before Trianon, all political tendencies and politicians – as we have seen from the example of Jászi – considered the inviolability of the territorial integrity of historical Hungary as a fundamental basis and requirement for any Central European reorganisation. No one dared to express the idea that the territorial unity of Hungary could not be maintained in its entirety, not even implicitly. Hungarian political society and public opinion were apparently unaware of the power needs and changes that had been present in Central Europe for decades or did not take their dangers seriously. In autumn 1918, in his negotiations with the leaders of the various nationalist

88 Hanák, 1985, p. 70.

89 Jászi, 1918, p. 7.

90 Ibid. p. 46.

movements, Jászi also took as his starting point the principle of self-determination that Wilson had supported in January. It was no accident that he was a reference point for the losers in the settlement of territorial issues. Either because they did not see clearly or because they did not have sufficient information, by the end of 1918 this concept had completely failed: no Entente power supported it, and the Americans were slowly backing out.

Jászi and the Ministry of Nationalities he chaired kept the federation drafts and the so-called 'Eastern Switzerland' concepts on the agenda. The structure of Switzerland, its linguistic-ethnic diversity, and the cantonal system were repeatedly used as a reference for plans to restructure the Habsburg Empire.⁹¹ There is a surviving draft, which was probably handwritten by Bódog Somló, a member of the Transylvanian Hungarian National Council, of a plan to settle the Transylvanian question. The draft, also signed by Oszkár Jászi and János Hock, the president of the Hungarian National Council, would divide Hungary into fourteen territorial units, cantons.⁹² This would have probably been insufficient for the nationalities to gain statehood, especially when the draft proposed the following on the issue of language:

Within a district, the language of the majority of the respective district would be official. With any other district or with the government, the language of communication would be Hungarian. [...] Only those who can speak Hungarian perfectly well shall be public employees, in any district.⁹³

Jászi adhered to his federalist ideas until the end of his life. In the US, he said:

A Danube federation would have solved the overwhelming dilemma of the left: it could have assumed German defeat, won the sympathy of the Western democracies, paved the way for a European confederation of the people under their leadership, and maintained the framework of the Monarchy despite defeat.⁹⁴

In 1953, he wrote a paper on the failure of his federalist plans. With the perspective given by the passage of time, and with a better understanding of the interests of the Western powers, he had a more realistic view of his options: *'it was obvious that a shattered Hungary was the last possible base for a viable federation. The surrounding triumphant small states were not thinking of federation, but of squeezing every possible advantage, of increasing their military, economic and prestige positions.'*⁹⁵

91 Kovács, 2008, pp. 52–64.

92 Bárdi and Zahorán, 2014, pp. 61–63.

93 Ibid. p. 62.

94 Jászi, 1983, p. 27.

95 Jászi, 1953, p. 15.

Upon his emigration to the US, the idea of writing a thorough analysis of the causes of the dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy occurred to him. The extensive work was published in the US in 1929 and in Hungary in 1983. Internationally, it is still Jászi's best-known work and is considered by scholars to be a representative documentation of the history of the Habsburg state.⁹⁶ It examines the Monarchy in its complexity, lists and analyses the cohesive and divisive forces, and details the aspirations of the national minority movements. However, it places less emphasis on the international context of the disintegration of the Monarchy and the consequences of its defeat in the war.

Although Jászi's ideas of federation often contained a certain naivety, an insufficiently realistic assessment of power relations, the problem of the common fate of the Danube people is an objective given and should not be subordinated to the interests of the great powers, but it contains a great deal of truth: *'the great problem of the Danube peoples would therefore be to reconcile the unimpaired independence of their state and national existence with the economic and cultural interests of the Danube community of fate'*.⁹⁷ He considers it necessary to develop a sense of regional community, a 'Danube patriotism', which would overcome the spread of 'self-serving nationalism' and create the possibility of real historical reconciliation and friendship.⁹⁸

4. Gusztáv Gratz (1875–1946)⁹⁹

Gusztáv Gratz was born on 30 March 1875 in Gölnicbánya, in what is now Slovakia.¹⁰⁰ He had an extensive practical and intellectual career. He was a national politician, a member of parliament, a minister of several ministries, and a German nationalist politician. He was a renowned publicist, historian, economic writer, and editor of numerous national and international journals and publications. His family moved to Hungary in the 18th century, presumably because of the religious persecution of Protestants, and settled in the Felvidék. His father was a Lutheran pastor. He received his higher education in Cluj and Budapest. He



⁹⁶ Jászi, 1983, pp. 42–43.

⁹⁷ Hanák, 1985, p. 99.

⁹⁸ Hanák, 1990, p. 232.

⁹⁹ Gusztáv Gratz, Hungarian politician, minister, unknown photographer, in: Vasárnapi Ujság, 1917. 25. sz., public domain, source of the picture: https://hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gratz_Guszt%C3%A1v#/media/F%C3%A1jl:Gratz_Guszt%C3%A1v.JPG.

¹⁰⁰ Paál, 2018; Gratz, 2007; Schödl, 1986.

soon became acquainted with journalism, and in 1896 he became a correspondent for the German-language journal *Pester Lloyd*, which was founded in 1854. The journal's main aim audience was the German community in Hungary, including the urban middle classes. Simultaneously, he wrote reports for other foreign periodicals (*Kölnische Zeitung*, *Die Zeit* in Vienna).

Gratz was receptive to socio-political issues and was aware of the problems of the dualist era in Hungary. These insights and his liberal stance led him towards the progressive trends that were emerging in Hungary at the beginning of the 20th century. He was one of the founders of the renowned social science journal *Huszadik Század* (Twentieth Century) and served as its editor-in-chief from its founding in 1900 until 1903.¹⁰¹ He also helped to organise the Social Science Society in 1901. The journal and the Society became the most important gathering places for reform-minded and progressive intellectuals at the turn of the century. However, political differences within the group soon emerged and led to a split. Gratz feared the spread of the idea of liberalism against the ideal of socialism. In his view, *'socialism, by giving the state the power to regulate our daily lives, would be so seriously intrusive on our individual freedom that we would find no more assurance of our personal well-being in it than in any other system of tyrannical meddling in our private affairs'*.¹⁰² Those who disagreed with the increasingly radical trend, such as Gratz, were gradually removed from the ranks of both the editors of the *Huszadik Század* (1901) and the leaders of the Social Science Society (1906). The separation of liberals and radicals fundamentally determined the future possibilities of progressive thought and the direction of its political development.

Between 1906 and 1917, Gratz was a Member of Parliament. He had already acquired a profound knowledge of parliamentary work during his journalistic career.¹⁰³ He won a seat in the ethnically diverse electoral district of Újegyháza in Transylvania, populated by Hungarians, Saxons, and Romanians. During his parliamentary career, he was active in the Transylvanian Saxon parliamentary group. He became acquainted with the situation and problems of the Hungarian economy, including the manufacturing industry, and the debates on economic policy and economic development. In 1912, he became the executive director of the Confederation of National Industrialists. From the point of view of economic policy, he held liberal views, which considered international economic cooperation, various forms of integration, and their deepening to be historically necessary and justified. He supported closer economic links between the Monarchy and Germany, which had been the subject of lively debate in Hungary during the First World War through Friedrich Naumann's book *Mitteleuropa* (1915), and considered it a necessary economic process.¹⁰⁴

101 Pók, 1990.

102 Cited by Paál, 2018, p. 79.

103 Paál, 2018, p. 57.

104 Irinyi, 1973.

At the beginning of 1917, on the proposal of the Hungarian government, he was appointed head of the Trade Policy Department of the Common Foreign Ministry. The same year, he was appointed Minister of Finance in the Esterházy government, and later Head of the Trade Policy Department of the Common Foreign Ministry. In this capacity, he represented the Monarchy in economic matters at the peace negotiations with Russia at Brest-Litovsk in 1918 and with Romania at the Treaty of Bucharest. These proved to be very useful for his political future, as it was through these negotiations that he gained international recognition, which he was later able to put to good use: *'Gustáv Gratz's role in the Brest-Litovsk peace negotiations is the highlight of his political activities during the dualist era, as he was directly involved in shaping world politics'*.¹⁰⁵ From the spring of 1918, the Monarchy became increasingly economically subordinate to Germany. This was illustrated by the signing of an agreement on 12 May at the German headquarters in Spa by the two sides' commissioners to begin negotiations on the establishment of a customs union. This caused great concern among the Entente Powers, particularly the part of the draft that stated that the customs union would be open to other applicant states. This was seen by Western public opinion as a step towards the realisation of one of the main German war aims, the creation of a German-led Mitteleuropa.¹⁰⁶ Economic negotiations for its creation were launched in Salzburg on 9 July 1918. Gratz was present in the Monarchy's delegation. However, the imminent defeat in the war put a halt to all efforts in this direction.

In a strange twist of history, at the end of October 1918, people came to power – for example, Oszkár Jászi and his circle – with whom Gratz had briefly shared a common ideological conviction at the beginning of the century. The separation, the differences in political paths and the radical differences in ideas and ideological convictions became even clearer at this time. Gratz remained a liberal, but

already as a young man he was convinced that radical change in the social, economic and political spheres rarely makes people happy, and that a viable state and society must therefore assert the principle of order against all movements towards violent upheaval.¹⁰⁷

After the break-up of the Monarchy and historic Hungary, Gratz fled the revolutions and moved to Vienna, where he joined the Anti-Bolshevik Committee organised by István Bethlen in April 1919. From November 1919 to January 1921, he was head of the Hungarian embassy in Vienna.

Between January and April 1921, he became Foreign Minister in the first government of Pál Teleki. In the early twenties, Hungarian foreign policy envisaged a revision of the Trianon Peace Treaty and the possibility of achieving a more

105 Paál, 2018, p. 154.

106 Pallai, 2019, pp. 27–36.

107 Paál, 2018, p. 187.

favourable territorial status through bilateral negotiations with neighbouring countries. Gratz held direct talks with Czechoslovakian envoys in Bruck an der Lejtha, Austria, in March.¹⁰⁸ However, they were unsuccessful, with the negotiators showing neither a minimum willingness to compromise with the other side, nor any serious consideration for the small concessions offered.

During these years, one of the most important problems of Hungarian domestic politics was the so-called king question, which deeply divided Hungarian political life, but the possible return of the Habsburg monarch also brought with it major foreign policy concerns.¹⁰⁹ Gratz shared legitimist views (i.e., he supported the return of Charles IV) and even played a major role in the second attempt at his return.¹¹⁰ The monarch offered him the post of Finance Minister in the government he was to form. After the failure of Charles IV's two attempts to return to power, Gratz was politically compromised as a legitimist. Along with other supporters of the Habsburg Restoration, he was arrested on charges of sedition and spent ten months in prison. As he continued to hold royalist views and expressed them in several lectures,¹¹¹ he was not given much room for manoeuvres in politics and could not hold a direct governmental position. He played an active role in economic governance and held senior positions on the boards of banks and large companies. The Foreign Office allowed him to retire on 30 June 1922 at his own request.¹¹²

Although he had no direct governmental functions, his relationship with Bethlen, which was highly controversial, remained intact.¹¹³ Evidence of this is the fact that he was a member of the editorial boards of the *Magyar Szemle* (Hungarian Review) and the *Foreign Affairs Review*, both of which were aligned with the government. He was a frequent critic of official Hungarian foreign policy and called for a return to reality; his criticism of Hungarian revisionist propaganda adequately summarises this:

Hungarian society has fallen into the old mistake of regarding the first ray of sunshine as summer, when the harvest can begin, whereas in reality the work of sowing has hardly been finished. In the broader society, everyone hoped for the imminent triumph of the idea of revisionism and indulged in uncritically rose-tinted illusions. Rothermere's article [...] was regarded as England's resolution.¹¹⁴

Starting in 1925, he edited the *Ungarisches Wirtschafts-Jahrbuch*, the most important regular publication on Hungarian economic conditions in German.

108 Juhász, 1988, pp. 77–78.

109 Kardos, 1998.

110 Paál, 2018, pp. 261–279.

111 *Ibid.* p. 282.

112 *Ibid.* p. 287.

113 Pritz, 2005, pp. 195–210.

114 Gratz, 2001, p. 221.

From the mid-twenties onwards, he was one of the leading nationalist German politicians in Hungary. In 1924, with Bethlen's support, he took over the presidency of the Folk Culture Association of Hungarian Germans, one of the most important Hungarian German organisations between the two World Wars. As a national minority politician, his ambitions included, on the one hand, the development and expansion of the native language and cultural rights and institutions of the German minority, and on the other hand the search for consensus with the government. The tensions between these two ambitions began to emerge in the late 1930s, when National Socialist German foreign policy saw Central and Eastern Europe, including Hungarian Germans, as a means of expansionist foreign policy.¹¹⁵ Gratz clearly rejected this German ambition, and therefore also abandoned his work on national minority policy at the end of 1938. Prior to this, the German Interior Minister Frick had made clear to Ambassador Sztójay that Gratz was unfit to be a national minority leader.¹¹⁶

In 1926, he again became a Member of Parliament. He was elected in the district of Bonyhád, which at that time still had a significant German minority. He was represented in several international organisations. He was a permanent member of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and a member of the Council and Executive Committee of the International Chamber of Commerce. He joined the governing party before the 1931 elections but retained the right to express his own views on the government. In 1931–32, Gratz made several private trips to neighbouring countries, where he discussed the possibilities of economic rapprochement with Central Europe.¹¹⁷ However, during the premiership of Gyula Gömbös, he gradually moved away from the group of government MPs, from which he eventually withdrew entirely, as the head of government forbade government MPs to participate in any kind of legitimist organisation. This was unacceptable to Gratz, who was known to be a legitimist. Gratz grew increasingly close to the Liberals led by Károly Rassay, and from 1936 he was a member of their parliamentary group. From 1939, he was editor-in-chief of the most important liberal daily newspaper, *Pesti Napló* (Journal of Pest). Both as a politician and as a journalist, he firmly rejected the increasing rightward shift in political, economic, and social life, and the German influence increasingly present in domestic politics. In the last years of the Second World War, he was involved in the work of a secret organisation led by István Bethlen among others, which was working to leave the war and prepare for the post-war period.

He firmly rejected anti-Semitism and the enactment of Jewish laws, which became more and more institutionalised at the end of the 1930s. On 10 March 1939, in the House of Parliament, he expressed himself clearly and firmly during the debate on the new Jewish law:

115 Tilkovszky, 1979, pp. 1–48.

116 Paál, 2018, p. 419.

117 Ibid. pp. 314–315.

Contrary to those who regard the suppression of the Jews as a duty arising from the Christian conception of the world, I hold the view that those who distinguish between man and man, who do not respect human dignity equally in all, and who seek to ration equal rights in different proportions, not according to the merit of each man, but according to his outward affiliation, are in contradiction with the fundamental ideals of the Christianity. Contrary to those who consider the Jewish draft to be an important requirement of national policy, I for my part am convinced that the implementation of this draft will not be seen as progress, neither spiritually nor economically, in the eyes of the world and of Hungarian posterity, but as a strange and regrettable miscalculation. A Christian is one who loves his fellow man as himself.¹¹⁸

In 1942–43, he travelled to Switzerland on business several times, where he met anti-German politicians.¹¹⁹ After the German invasion of the country on 19 March 1944, he was arrested¹²⁰ and taken to the Mauthausen concentration camp, from which he was released in July 1944 with the help of one of his German-born sons-in-law. According to the agreement, he was not allowed to return to Hungary and instead moved to his daughter's house near Vienna.¹²¹ At the request of the Provisional National Government, he prepared economic studies in preparation for the Paris Peace Conference. He was interrogated as a witness in several trials at the People's Court (e.g., in the case of Béla Imrédy).

He also wrote several major works in the field of history. The most important of these are his works on dualism, published in 1934, and on the revolutions of 1918–19, published in 1935.¹²² In recognition of his scientific work, he was elected a corresponding member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in 1941.

Between the two World Wars, he was a theoretical and practical supporter of economic rapprochement between the successor states of the Monarchy. He published many studies and articles drawing attention to the dangers of the nationalist economic policy, the policy of isolation, and the trade policy aimed at cutting off old economic ties, which, in his view, were in contradiction with the objective laws of integration.¹²³ The global financial crisis has radically altered the economic situation and international economic relations of the whole of Europe, especially of the successor states of the Monarchy. These processes had all taken a negative turn and changes seemed inevitable. Even France, which was at the heart of the political balance of power in Europe at the time, realised that the unfavourable economic developments were undermining the stability of the whole Versailles Peace Treaty. Alternative integrationist ideas and various attempts at unity, whether political or

118 Képviselőházi Napló XXII., p. 290.

119 Paál, 2018, p. 433.

120 Tilkovszky, 2000, pp. 371–391.

121 Paál, 2018, p. 436.

122 Gratz, 1934; Gratz, 1935.

123 Gratz, 1925, pp. 86–89.

economic, appeared with great intensity and in great variety during the crisis. With the 1929 proposal by French Prime Minister Aristide Briand, the concept of pan-Europeanism rose for the first time to the status of an official great power. Gratz was already familiar with the Pan-European movement, having attended its congresses in Vienna in 1926 and Basel in 1932. Although he identified with the ideal of integration and with the idea of pan-Europeanism and many of its representatives, he found the nature and atmosphere of the congresses alien and ineffective.¹²⁴

Gratz and his like-minded contemporaries saw an opportunity to rebuild a base for ideas of economic convergence between the successor states in the face of the challenges of the recession. Institutional forms were also created to promote their ideas. The so-called ‘Institutes of Central Europe’ were established one after the other. In March 1929, the Vienna Institute, which dealt mainly with transport and currency issues, was established as was the Institute in Brno, which studied cooperation between different production sectors, in September 1929. In the winter of 1929–30, a similar institute was set up in Dresden, with no specific function. Then, in May 1930, the Hungarian Institute for Central Europe was set up under the chairmanship of Gusztáv Gratz, with agricultural issues as its focus. The most active organisational work was done by one of Gratz’s closest colleagues, Elemér Hantos. The institutes tried to win public support for their cause through a series of debate events and publications.

Gusztáv Gratz, who collaborated with Hantos in the leadership of the Institute of Central Europe in Budapest, was a supporter of the supranational economic community of the peoples of Central Europe from a monarchic-conservative basis. Even after the failure of the legitimist attempts at restoration, he insisted on his stance that Hungarian foreign policy should above all promote cooperation with the Central European states, especially Austria and Czechoslovakia.¹²⁵

The Budapest Chamber of Commerce provided the venue for what is now considered a rather virtual institute. According to its Charter, the institute’s aim is ‘*to study and explore by scientific means and methods, free of any political motives, questions concerning the economic relations and contacts between Hungary and foreign states of importance for Hungarian economic interests, in the general interests of the Hungarian economy.*’¹²⁶

In March 1931, the German and Austrian foreign ministers again raised the idea of a customs union between the two countries. The idea caused a great deal of concern and resonance both among the Western powers and the successor states. Not only was the possibility of Anschluß interpreted, but the idea that the proposed customs union was open to other countries wishing to join also gave rise to fears of

124 Paál, 2018, p. 305.

125 Kövics, 1992, p. 120.

126 Quoted by Paál, 2018, p. 311.

a revival of the old German Mitteleuropa. Gratz perceived this danger, stating, *‘the content of the treaty, especially the provisions for the admission of new states, reinforces the perception that the agreement was only intended as a starting point for a larger economic alliance’*.¹²⁷ The judgment of the International Court of Justice in The Hague and the unfolding credit crisis, which hit Germany particularly hard, took the plan off the agenda, but the basic problem remained. As Gartz put it,

In the end, however, something will have to be done to remedy the economic situation in Central Europe, and this problem, the solution of which is entirely reserved for the future, will be a crucial one for the future, even if the German-Austrian customs union is finally implemented and even if it is replaced by some other form of union.¹²⁸

French foreign policy was facing a major challenge, as the negative response to the German plan now prompted Paris to generate a new concept. Ahead of the French, the Czechs presented an integrationist idea. The idea of an Austro-German customs union was a matter of great concern to the Czechoslovak government. In this situation, Beneš proposed the idea of a Czechoslovak-Hungarian-Austrian customs union. However, this plan was destined to fail. On the one hand, Beneš did not explain his idea clearly, he made radically different statements on the same subject, and the Western powers did not think that such a scheme would be able to handle the agricultural surplus. Further, political goodwill was lacking. Czechoslovak-Hungarian relations had traditionally been tense, and the customs war, which broke out in 1930, only deepened this. The Austrian and Hungarian governments saw Beneš’s plan as a politically questionable half-hearted economic solution. Among the proposed solutions, the Brocchi plan seemed to be realised when the Hungarian government signed the agreement with the Italians on 20 February 1932. Italy, however, was not a market for the agricultural states of the Danube.

The crisis also pushed Britain into action, and despite being the largest exporter of capital in the region, it had thus far been less vocal in solving the economic problems of the successor states. On 17 January 1932, the British government formally proposed the idea of a customs union of the six Danube states. Bulgaria was to be the sixth state. The British foreign policy was not only to counterbalance Germany’s ambitions for economic unity, but also their traditional affinity for some form of Central European cooperation. However, the British had to drop their plans because of the opposition of the French, the Italians, and the Czech.

In 1932, a new government came to power in France, marking a turning point in foreign policy.¹²⁹ Tardieu wanted to settle Franco-British relations, but also to

127 Gratz, 1931, p. 280.

128 Ibid. pp. 286–287.

129 Concerning this great power ambition: Ránki, 1981; Pritz, 1997; Meyer, 1955; Elvert, 1999; Elekes, 1934.

take decisive steps to prevent Germany's ambitions to the East. On 2 March 1932, he announced his plan in the House of Parliament, which was sent officially to the governments concerned on 5 March. To resolve the market problem, Tardieu proposed the establishment of a preferential customs system for the five Danube states. Although the idea itself was not original, the fact that it was proposed by France attracted greater interest. Italian and German foreign policy also felt the impact and were concerned that their plans for Central Europe might fail. While Germany sought to block the Tardieu plan by reformulating its earlier preference offer, Italy accelerated the implementation of the Brocchi plan. The fate of the plan was decided in London. The British government convened a conference on 6 April 1932 to discuss the details. Italian and German opposition to the proposal quickly led to its defeat, helped by the reserved attitude of the British.

The Tardieu Plan and the relationship between Elemér Hantos and Gratz were particularly noteworthy. The French politician formulated a system of preferences for the five Danube states that was very similar to Hantos' concept, which was published in several French languages. Multiple German and French newspapers suggested that there was a close link between Hantos' earlier work and the idea put forward by Tardieu. One German newspaper even described Hantos as the 'real father' of the Tardieu Plan.

The Tardieu Plan was presented on 27 May 1932 at the Foreign Affairs budget debate. Gratz linked the economic plan to political rapprochement with the neighbours.

As long as the tension with our neighbours does not give place to a more friendly atmosphere, this can hardly take place, so for this reason it is logical to strive for an easing of the tension with our neighbours. This is also necessary economically. Much of the trouble has come from our failure to retain neighbouring markets. There are many obstacles to a solution, but it does not seem impossible. Rapprochement is possible and should be attempted. With economic easing, perhaps the paths to political rapprochement will open.¹³⁰

The last serious proposal for a Central European rapprochement was Milan Hodža's 1936 draft. He proposed the reduction of tariffs, preferential treaties, and the creation of an international grain centre in Vienna to channel the agricultural surpluses of the Danube states to Western Europe.¹³¹ The plan had all the flaws of the economic bloc-building attempts: it lacked partnership or great power support, and the countries concerned were not reciprocal markets. Moreover, it was considerably delayed, since after 1934, Germany gradually opened its markets to the Danube agrarian states, but under certain conditions that played them off against

130 Pesti Napló (Journal of Pest) 28 May 1932, 83(116) p. 2.

131 Ránki, 1981, pp. 306–311.

each other. German economic expansion towards the successor states was once again under way.¹³² According to Gratz, the situation of the Danube peoples, and with them the general situation in Europe, was extremely worrying:

The peoples living here are also in a state of tension, which forces them to seek the support of certain great powers; France, Germany or Italy. The result is the situation that exists today: any conflict between the Danube Valley states can lead to a conflict between their various protecting powers, and any conflict between powers can also lead to a conflict between the Danube Valley states. From this situation, which is equally alarming for the peace of Europe and for the future of the Danube Valley states, [...] ¹³³

Gratz did not merely foresee the dangers of the future, he correctly summarised the historical experience he had lived through on many occasions: that there would be no peace in Europe without a reassuring settlement of the relations in Central Europe.

5. Elemér Hantos (1881–1942)¹³⁴

Elemér Hantos, economist, university professor, financial expert, and international economics writer, was born on 12 November 1881,¹³⁵ the son of Ignác Hantos, a prominent lawyer from Eisenstadt, Austria, in a middle-class Jewish family that had converted to the Reformed religion. His professional and political career was exemplary in turn-of-the-century Hungary. He completed his secondary education at the Lutheran Lyceum in Sopron. He attended university in Budapest, Vienna, Leipzig, and Paris. This not only gave him a broad knowledge of languages, but also an insight into the world and the development of a valuable network of connections. During his university years in Budapest, at the recommendation of the Rector, he was placed in the household of then-Minister of Culture, Gyula Wlassics,



¹³² Pritz, 1997.

¹³³ Gratz, 1936, p. 114.

¹³⁴ Elemér Hantos, Hungarian economist, state secretary, university professor, member of parliament, lawyer, unknown photographer, in: Pesti Napló Képes Melléklete, public domain, source of the picture: https://hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hantos_Elem%C3%A9r#/media/F%C3%A1jl:Hantos_Elem%C3%A9r.jpg.

¹³⁵ T. Boros, 1929, pp. 151–152; Németh, 2009.

which allowed him to develop a familiarity with the higher political circles. After graduating with a law degree, he spent a year in England on a state scholarship, where he wrote a book on the historical parallels between English and Hungarian constitutional development.

Upon his return to Hungary, he joined a law firm. He was one of the most active participants in the financial reform movement at the beginning of the century. Alongside László Lukács and Kálmán Széll, he founded the National Association of Financial Institutions, the National Pension Fund Association of Financial Institutions, and the National Insurance Institute of Financial Institutions. He was also Executive Vice President of all three organisations. From 1904, he was the Executive Secretary, and later General Secretary, of the Rural Financial Institutions Association. From 1904 to 1910, he served as editor of the Finance Institute Review, and from 1910 of the Financial Review. In 1910, he was elected as a representative of Marosillye (Hunyad County, now Romania) on the platform of the National Workers' Party and remained so until 1918.

As a member of parliament, he was active as a member of the parliamentary committees on justice, economics, and the discharge procedure. He fought for the removal of barriers to trade and for better working conditions for commerce workers. He advocated the introduction of an audit institution in line with international rules and considered it necessary to regulate and control the financial institutions, which had been organised in large numbers before the turn of the century. Thanks to his activities in this area, he became vice-president of the Chamber of Hungarian Auditors. His activities contributed greatly to the start of auditor training. In 1912, he presented the bill on the new international law on exchange.

During the First World War, he wrote several books and studies in Hungarian and German on the financial and economic effects of the war and its consequences for the post-war period. He was awarded the Lévy Prize of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences for his dissertation on *the financial military readiness, mobilisation, and warfare of the monarchy*, published in the first year of the war. The essential idea of the work is that

the relationship between war and economics is also reciprocal. Success in arms gives a stronger impetus to economic life, but a healthy economy is an essential element of success in war. Despite this, when considering all the economic effects of war, its expected benefits and foreseeable devastation, the conclusion is that, apart from colonial wars with fortunate outcomes, peaceful development is incomparably more beneficial to economic life than any war.¹³⁶

| 136 Hantos, 1914, p. 26. |

He saw the economic and financial situation of the central powers as balanced at the beginning of the war but worried about the destructive effects of prolonged war: *'we must prepare for the transition of the war economy to normal conditions'*.¹³⁷

In 1916, he became political secretary at the Ministry of Trade, where his political activities and character were well received. Ödön Fischer, president of the Hungarian Cobden Club, later recalled that Hantos was *'one of the few people who always discussed everything with the interest representatives before taking action and considered the working citizens of Hungarian economic life as his colleagues'*.¹³⁸ He was granted the title of State Secretary for life by King Charles IV in the spring of 1918 in recognition of his expertise and authority in financial matters. In 1917, he drafted a proposal for electoral reform, proposing a significant extension of the franchise by lowering the voting age and introducing women's suffrage. However, when the ruler appointed a new committee to reform the electoral law, Hantos and his close friend Béla Serényi left the party. He became a direct associate of the Prime Minister when the Wekerle government was appointed.

Alongside Sándor Wekerle, László Lukács, and Kálmán Széll, Elemér Hantos was one of the most distinguished financial experts of the Monarchy. In 1916, he became a private lecturer in finance at the University of Budapest's Faculty of Law. In 1918, he was appointed president of the Hungarian Postal Savings Bank, with the rank and powers of State Secretary. He was dismissed from his position during the Soviet Republic for refusing to issue Postal Savings Bank notes, though he was reinstated in August 1919. As he was in constant friction with the government commissioner appointed to his post, he resigned in 1921.

He attempted to return to politics as an MP twice. He ran as an independent candidate on a liberal platform, claiming that he did not agree with the economic and financial programme of any party.¹³⁹ In 1920, he ran in Budapest's District No. 12, where he came last, and in 1922 in Miskolc, where there was also a secret ballot, but he failed to achieve a result there either.

As a financial expert, he recognised the damage caused by the disintegration of the Monarchy and nationalist economic policies. His extensive academic and publishing work, as well as his practical organising work, covered credit policy and law, the world economy, and Central European economic issues.

Elemér Hantos, as a well-trained economist with an appreciation of the facts, was well aware of the unfavourable circumstances that constantly determined the conditions of economic life in the successor states between the two World Wars. The main problem for the region, apart from the deterioration in Europe's position in the world economy and with it that of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, was the contradiction of the peace treaties with economic processes and rationalities. The starting point of Hantos' analysis of the situation, both in the

137 Hantos, 1915, p. 26.

138 Hantos, 1922.

139 Hantos Elemér pályája (Career of Elemér Hantos), 1922.

1920s and 1930s, is a critique of the peace treaties from an economic point of view: *'the peace treaties not only dismembered the 'largest geographical unit' of Europe, but also one of the most perfectly centralised economic, financial, and commercial organisations'*.¹⁴⁰ He acknowledged and justified the Monarchy's nationalist aspirations, since the Habsburg state, *'as a political entity, could arouse the discontent of the nationalities living in its territory, but as an economic unit it was most perfect'*.¹⁴¹ Hantos uncritically idealised the Monarchy as an economic unit. He failed to address the important fact that the Monarchy had inherently preserved the disadvantaged situation of the underdeveloped territories.

The peace treaties also redefined the geographical meaning of Central Europe: *'before the war, the political and geographical concept of Central Europe was defined by the triple alliance of the German Empire, the Monarchy and Italy'*.¹⁴² In addition to the five Danube states, the new Central Europe also included Poland and Germany: *'today's Italy, although it is one of the successor states of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, cannot be said to be a constituent part of the new Central Europe with its ambitions to reach the Mediterranean and acquire colonies'*.¹⁴³ This enlarged Central Europe, whose population had increased from 116.3 million in 1926 to 150.3 million and whose territorial extension had increased by 500,000 km, *'has not yet been a gain in strength in terms of geographical expansion, area and population'*.¹⁴⁴ Because of the peacekeeping systems and post-war economic policy, *'the economic map of Central Europe gives the impression of being incomplete. In contrast to the past, it looks like an old coat sewn together from pieces of cloth that fit together in a completely mismatched way'*.¹⁴⁵

The peace treaties not only raised economic barriers, but also created mistrust, mutual fear and suspicion in the region, which made the usual forms of economic interaction impossible. The prevalence of nationalism created an unfavourable psychological climate which not only hindered the tasks of post-war consolidation, but also continued to poison the reconciliatory vision of the inter-war period: *'Trianon opened up a deep rift between us and our neighbours, a rift that may never be completely bridged, but which we must strive to bridge if we are to reach our old markets and the land of our old culture in a peaceful way'*.¹⁴⁶

Hantos was a political realist. He was aware that in Central Europe there could be no return to the political and territorial conditions that existed before the war. He avoided expressing his opinion on political issues whenever he could, as he generally had a low opinion of politics itself. He blamed politics – rightly – for the crisis in the successor states. He clearly saw that: *'no sane man can think of restoring the*

140 Hantos, 1932, p. 5.

141 Hantos, 1922, p. 5.

142 Hantos, 1932, pp. 18–19.

143 Ibid. p. 22.

144 Hantos, 1927a, p. 51.

145 Hantos, 1925b, p. 142.

146 Hantos, 1932, p. 5.

old political system of Central Europe'.¹⁴⁷ He has repeatedly said that what politics has done wrong, the economy must make right: '*the economic disadvantages of the many new borders must be neutralised by trade, transport and currency agreements between the various political entities*'.¹⁴⁸

Despite his criticisms of Trianon and the peace treaties from an economic point of view, he did not take a position on the question of revision. Nor could he have done so, because whether he spoke for or against it, he would have been immediately rejected by one of the partner states that had been selected for cooperation. However, his views and plans in Hungary were characterised from the outset by suspicion and mistrust.

Hantos envisages a missionary role for the economy. Mutuality, the recognition of similarities in economic problems, the search for common solutions, the hoped-for successes, make it possible to experience the unity that is meant to ease the tensions created by war and peace treaties. This is all the more necessary because:

The most important task in the mental field is to put the possibility of a new war out of people's minds [...] A new war would be bloodier and more fatal than any that has ever existed, because it would take on the character of a civil war. The sick organism of Central Europe would not endure such a war.¹⁴⁹

The basic economic problems of the 1920s in East-Central Europe were twofold. One was the financial question, the other was customs policy. Hantos's activities were mainly in these two areas. He came to international attention in 1920–21, when he published several works on the financial and monetary relations of the successor states.¹⁵⁰ Article 206 of the Treaty of Saint-Germain and Article 189 of the Treaty of Trianon stipulated that the successor states should overstamp the currencies issued by the Austro-Hungarian Bank and create new national currencies. This ended the monetary unity of the Monarchy, which had existed since 1816. Instead of the new national currencies, Hantos considered it necessary and possible to maintain the financial unity of the old Monarchy by creating common monetary policy measures.

There is only one way open to Central Europe today: to tear down the senseless barricades erected in the monetary field and to switch to a new currency by abandoning the existing monetary systems, to start rebuilding the monetary system instead of futile efforts to repair it. We need to create good new money, not fix the old bad one.¹⁵¹

147 Hantos, 1927a, p. 47.

148 Hantos, 1925b, p. 136.

149 Ibid. p. 138.

150 Hantos, 1920, pp. 11–27; Hantos, 1921; Hantos, 1921b.

151 Hantos, 1922, p. 12.

The most serious post-war financial problems include the lack of a secure, stable currency, uncontrolled inflation, and large public deficits. Nothing illustrates the anarchic state of affairs better than the persistence of smuggling, racketeering and black-market trade in the region in the post-war years. Hantos also warns of the serious social consequences of impoverishment: *'the public needs to be made aware of the inextricable link between budget deficits and the cost of living and made aware that the need to put finances in order must precede the large-scale social reform policies that are being urged worldwide'*.¹⁵²

Another major economic problem of the early twenties was the foreign trade policy of the successor states. In this area, instead of the nationalist economic policy of restoring or, to some extent, maintaining old economic relations based on rationality and mutual interest, the policy of cutting them off as much as possible prevailed. However, this did not fully achieve its aim, since, despite the decline in the share of trade between the successor states in the twenties, the main trading partners remained unchanged.

Despite changes of a political and economic nature, the relationship between the territories producing agricultural surpluses and those in need of agricultural imports is still such as to allow for a regular exchange of goods, the well-established system of economic complementarity that used to be the rule.¹⁵³

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The protectionist economic policy, which was a natural phenomenon during the war, was an unjustified restriction on foreign trade in peacetime: *'the legal foundations of Central European economic trade had been destroyed by the war, and the peace treaties reorganised it in such a way that there was no way of achieving 'close economic unification' of the older treaty areas'*.¹⁵⁵ Strict tariffs, prohibitive customs duties, bureaucratic licensing procedures, rigid administrative, and veterinary rules

152 Ibid. p. 9.

153 Hantos, 1929, p. 58.

154 Hantos, 1927a, p. 58.

155 Ibid. p. 52.

meant that there was less trade between the successor states than could have been made possible. As an immediate measure, Hantos considered it necessary to reduce customs tariffs by 25–50%.¹⁵⁶

The major powers' desire for economic stability was reflected in the organisation of numerous international economic conferences. The 1927 World Economic Conference was preceded by great anticipation. In the spirit of preparation, numerous studies and proposals appeared that either analysed general world economic or pan-European problems or concentrated on a particular aspect of international economic relations. For Elemér Hantos, the preparatory work for the congress provided a good opportunity to draft a memorandum on the situation in Central Europe on behalf of the *Mitteeuropäische Wirtschaftstagung*¹⁵⁷ (hereinafter MWT) and to present it to the international public at the conference. The work was published in three languages.¹⁵⁸ For the first time, Hantos had the opportunity to explore the roots of the region's economic problems and to develop broad outlines of his concept in a programme-oriented manner. In addition to credit and trade policy issues, it also outlined the problems in other sectors of the economy, each of which could be addressed through cooperation. He was aware that the complexity of the economy meant that lasting improvements could only be achieved if each of its components was addressed in a coordinated manner. In all the conditions of economic life – such as trade, transport, and communications – it identified the damages and deficiencies that had occurred since the war and identified the need for rapprochement in each of these segments as the only way out. After the World Economic Forum, in the second half of the 1920s, he elaborated in more detail, in separate studies, on the desirable forms and areas of cooperation.

5.1. Trade policy rapprochement

After the war, the region's economy did not return to normal for a long time. Its role in the world economy declined not only because of a drop in production, but also because of a significant drop in foreign trade. Even in 1924, it was still 30% behind its 1913 level. In addition to the adverse effects of the war, the trade policy of the successor states played a part in this.¹⁵⁹ High tariffs and a system of prohibitive restrictions became commonplace. This was mainly used by the successor states among themselves in order to cut off as many of the old economic links as possible.

Before the war, the states in the region traded on a contractual basis, with moderate tariff protection. After 1919, however,

156 Hantos, 1925a, 108.

157 It was initiated by Austrian wholesaler Julius Meinl to promote economic cooperation in Central Europe.

158 Hantos, 1927a, pp. 47–73; Hantos, 1927b; Hantos, 1927c.

159 Hantos, 1927a, p. 48.

the legal basis for economic exchange in Central Europe was destroyed by the war, and the peace treaties reorganised it in such a way that the possibility of 'close economic unification' of the older treaty areas was no longer open. The division of the Austro-Hungarian economic territory into seven parts was legally sanctioned by the peace treaties, without the appropriate conditions for maintaining the economic links between these territories being included in them.¹⁶⁰

The authors of the peace treaty were themselves aware of the dangers of the rapid disappearance of the old economic units. In a resolution of the Supreme Council of the Allied Powers of 8 March 1920, they criticised the newly formed states' policy of isolationism and demanded that the new borders should not interfere with the re-establishment of normal commercial relations. The Brussels Financial Conference of October 1920, the 1921 Portorose Conference, and the Genoa Conference of spring 1922 took similar general stances on this issue.

According to Hantos, the peace treaties themselves were a favourable starting point for trade policy rapprochement, as Article 222 of the Treaty of Saint-Germain and Article 205 of the Treaty of Trianon stated that Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary could conclude a tariff treaty for a period of five years, under which they would grant each other preferences. The problem with this, however, was that it imposed both time and territorial restrictions: *'the exclusion of Yugoslavia and Romania from the list of beneficiaries and the limitation of the treaties to 5 years contradict the principle of closer economic links'*.¹⁶¹ However, the autarchic economic policy and trade restrictions should not have been seen as partial solutions or relief but could have been eliminated by getting to the root of the problem.

Only the general dismantling of the customs barriers between the states living in the closest community can bring about a fundamental improvement in the situation, and therefore efforts must be made to establish a single customs and economic system for Central Europe, or at least for the successor states of the former Monarchy, so that any state can play a dominant role in such a customs union. There should also be less fear of jealousy between the customs allied states, since the differences in the successor states are far from being overwhelming, they are economically on the same level, their differences in production potential are complementary. The fear that one or other country, because of its economic preponderance, could seize the lead and assert a supremacy of power which would threaten the independence of the state, does not seem to be a reasonable one.¹⁶²

160 Ibid. p. 52.

161 Ibid. p. 53.

162 Ibid. p. 58.

For the more underdeveloped areas, a secure market and predictable outlets create a favourable opportunity to raise their economic level in a protected environment. This would be helped by an increase in the number of cartels: *‘in the area of the customs union, the facilitation of the proper adaptation of the various industries and the elimination of certain disproportions should be ensured by the extensive cartelisation of each industry’*.¹⁶³

5.2. Transport policies rapprochement

New borders and nationalist economic policies created significant barriers to the movement of people and goods. Whereas the movement of goods and people was previously free without any administrative restrictions in a large economic area, it was now hampered by various restrictions and objective barriers.

The current situation of transport in Central Europe is a faithful reflection of the whole Central European economy. [...] The new system of frontiers, with its customs duties, bans and passports, prevents the free development of economic forces, the development of transit traffic by interrupting transport lines, and the profitable construction of new traffic routes.¹⁶⁴

The provision of infrastructure is an essential element in the functioning of a modern economy. The region’s inherited disadvantage in this respect was exacerbated by the multiplicity of small entities carved up by the new borders, which had also led to a significant loss of competitiveness of the successor states’ products on the world market. The speed of transport slowed down as railway border crossings were established in settlements that were not transport hubs and stopping and waiting was not justified by the rationality of transport. As a result, the distance between Vienna and Kraków increased by 2 hours and the distance between London and Bucharest by 15 hours.¹⁶⁵

Before the war, the Monarchy’s railway network, together with the Dutch, Luxembourg, Romanian, and some Russian and Belgian lines, was part of the Union of German Railway Administrations, founded in 1846. This system, with a length of 101,500 km, was the largest transport system in Europe. After the war, however, several successor states withdrew from it, reducing its length to 73,098 km. On 1 December 1922, an international railway union was established in Paris, to which the main European railway companies were joined. Despite the continued existence of the German company, the division of the successor states into two railway companies defied rationality. Hantos proposed that the former association should be further developed and transformed into a Union of Central European Railway Administrations, which would best suit the geography of transport. The

163 Ibid. pp. 58–59.

164 Ibid. p. 59.

165 Hantos, 1929b, pp. 13–15.

new international association would also take over the equipment and facilities for reciprocal traffic that had been installed in the railways, *'converging technical systems, and in this way a certain degree of harmonisation could be achieved'*.¹⁶⁶ There was also a need for financial and formal standardisation of rates and tariffs with the following expected benefit:

In addition to the formation of a Central European railway union and the creation of an international tariff system, economic considerations give us another means of remedying to some extent the fragmentation of what was once a single economic body, and that is a single operating structure, which is clearly the internationalisation of the main lines in Central Europe.¹⁶⁷

In addition to inland traffic, international transport on the Danube faced similar disruptions. The Danube was not only the most important river route for the Monarchy, it was the imaginary axis of the empire's different economic structures. While the upper reaches of the Danube were mainly industrial areas (i.e., Austria and Bohemia), the southern stretches were agricultural regions and natural markets for industrialised regions. The Danube would thus play a key role in restoring the old economic links. The practical manifestation of this isolationist economic policy is clear in the Danube traffic statistics. In 1911, 6.9 million tonnes of goods passed between Regensburg and the estuary, but this figure fell to 3.7 million tonnes in 1924.¹⁶⁸ Significant shipping capacity remained unused. In fact, the unfavourable global economic trends and the general decline in European domestic trade played no small part in this reduction. However, the competitiveness of river transport was mainly undermined by administrative barriers and bureaucratic customs rules: *'according to calculations by experts from the League of Nations, these artificial barriers result in a loss of 6,000 days' worth every year. Danube navigation tariffs, which are on average 20-30% cheaper than rail, cannot compensate for this loss of time'*.¹⁶⁹ The difficulty of accounting was not only caused by the lack of a uniform tariff system, but also by the fact that these were not fixed in a single currency. A total of eight currencies had to be harmonised, the exchange rates of which were highly volatile.

5.3. Postal rapprochement

New borders meant restrictions on both communications and postal services. The development and spread of communication is a measure of the quality of a modern economy. In this respect, the countries of the region were lagging far behind. The problems caused by this technical underdevelopment were compounded by various bureaucratic constraints. The postal union that had existed between the Monarchy

166 Hantos, 1927a, p. 61.

167 Ibid. p. 62.

168 Ibid. p. 63.

169 Ibid. p. 64.

and Germany since 1872 was abolished by the peace treaties.¹⁷⁰ On 23 November 1921, the five Danube States and Italy concluded an agreement in Portorose that was aimed at introducing postal concessions. They abolished the unreasonably high international postal rates, simplified the mail service system, and sought to improve the flow of information by establishing new telegraph and telephone lines. However, these formal improvements failed to address the root cause of the original problem. According to Hantos, a Central European Postal Union should also have been set up in the area. In the absence of such an initiative, efforts should continue to be made to reduce international rates, abolish transit charges, and facilitate international postal cheque traffic.¹⁷¹

5.4. Production policy rapprochement

Hantos asserted that it would be desirable to organise the various production sectors in order to eliminate the overproduction that weighed on the region. Cooperation in this area could also be facilitated because it would not require the active involvement of governments.

Much progress has been made in this area in recent years. A whole range of industries in Central Europe have come together in carefully organised cartels, or at least simple market-sharing, to form a community of interests. It is true that the desired effect of this union in terms of commercial policy has not yet been felt. Cartelised industries have not given up on tariff protection.¹⁷²

In the field of industry, this may be a solution, but in the field of agriculture, Hantos argued, cartel-like arrangements were unthinkable, even though most of the states in the region were essentially agricultural.

5.5. Currency policy rapprochement

When the idea of the 1927 World Economic Conference was raised, the successor states had already gone beyond the creation of their own national currencies. Thus, the question of currency policy was not on the conference agenda. Hantos saw this as highly regrettable, since despite the financial restructuring – new national currencies, the return to the gold basis, and the elimination of the note printing – many issues and problems remained unsolved.¹⁷³ He believed that various forms of cooperation between central banks should be developed including the mutual facilitation of foreign exchange transactions, smoothing out fluctuations in the

170 Hantos, 1929c, p. 16.

171 Hantos, 1927a, p. 63.

172 Ibid. p. 70.

173 Ibid. p. 66.

purchasing power of gold, conversion of new currencies to a common currency, and a common credit policy strategy.

The global economic crisis marked a turning point in the history of the unification efforts between the two World Wars, with economic and political reorganisations that significantly increased the scope for integrationist ideas compared to the 1920s. Given the integration plans, it is unsurprising that many of these ideas came to light at the turn of the 1930s. As an alternative, the idea of rapprochement was widely expressed as a crisis management technique. The most important novelty was the fact that French Prime Minister Briand's 1929 draft raised the concept of Pan-Europeanism to the status of an official great power.

Hantos was highly critical of Briand's draft. He considered the creation of a pan-Europe to be economically necessary, but only feasible in the process of the organic unification of smaller units, such as the new Central Europe.

Briand's action in the League of Nations, in which he promoted a political alliance of European states, did more harm than good to the economic rapprochement of European states. As an ultimate goal, the customs union of the European states can never be ignored, but one must be aware that its realisation is not possible without intermediate stages. Therefore, it would be wrong to postpone cooperation between territories which are historically, geographically and economically linked and interdependent until the establishment of a Europe-wide economic union or even a customs truce.¹⁷⁴

The formulation of the idea of European unity proved to be short-lived. It helped, albeit modestly, to create the political environment in which economic unity plans for Central and South-eastern Europe could develop with intensity. The European solution to the crisis was replaced by regional and bilateral visions. The decline of the idea of pan-Europeanism was not only marked by the new foreign policy of the great powers, but also by a change in personnel conditions. The death of Stresemann in 1929 and the fall of Briand in 1932 also marked a change in the way the great powers were politicising.

Two systems of thought emerged in the regional implementation of the market problem. One was the attempt to create an agrarian bloc, the other was the agreement between industrial and agricultural states. The years of depression created a practical framework for economic cooperation between the agricultural states of Central Europe. The agricultural conferences of the successor states in 1930–32 were a new phenomenon in the process of integration. In the 1920s, it was not possible to organise formal multilateral economic negotiations between the states of the region. The Central European Navigation Conference, organised by Elemér

| 174 Hantos, 1932, pp. 77–78. |

Hantos in Budapest in May 1929 within the framework of the MWT, was the first event at which all the successor states were represented, although not formally.

Hantos welcomed the idea of agricultural conferences. His starting point was that previous isolated attempts to solve the problem of agricultural marketing, such as the boletta system in Hungary, had had little success: *'isolated efforts must be replaced by understanding joint work, and bilateral treaties by multilateral international agreements, especially with neighbouring agricultural states'*.¹⁷⁵ The first conference, with the participation of Hungary, Yugoslavia, and Romania, took place in Bucharest in August 1930.¹⁷⁶ Proposals were made for the establishment of a preferential customs system for overseas grain. Like Hantos, they advocated the establishment of cartel-like arrangements in the agricultural sector. They also called for the lifting of trade restrictions and veterinary regulations. The creation of an international storage system was seen as a way of preventing price fluctuations.

French foreign policy was faced with a major challenge because the negative response to the German plan had now prompted Paris to generate a new concept.¹⁷⁷ Fortunately for them, the resurgence of the reparations issues temporarily reduced Germany's foreign economic activity. The Germans adopted a position of withdrawal. At a meeting of the German committee of the MWT on 19 May 1932, the following was said: *'German policy must be set for the long term. For the official policy this means, above all, waiting. We will have the opportunity to intervene when France is no longer able to lend to the countries'*.¹⁷⁸ The Depression had also forced England to become active, although, despite being the largest exporter of capital in the region, it had thus far been less vocal in resolving the economic problems of the successor states. On 17 January 1932, the British government formally proposed the idea of a customs union of the six Danube states; Bulgaria was to be the sixth state. The British foreign policy was not only aimed at counterbalancing Germany's ambitions for economic unity, but also expressed Britain's traditional affinity for some form of Central European cooperation. However, the British had to abandon their plans because of opposition from France, Italy, and the Czech Republic.

The Tardieu Plan's relationship with Elemér Hantos was particularly notable. The French politician formulated a system of preferences for the five Danube states that was very similar to Hantos' concept, several of which were also published in French. Many German and French newspapers suggested that there was a close link between Hantos' earlier work and the idea proposed by Tardieu. One German newspaper even described Hantos as the 'real father' of the Tardieu Plan.¹⁷⁹ Hantos was modest on this point:

175 Ibid. p. 102.

176 Elekes, 1934, p. 130.

177 Balogh, 1933, pp. 211-218.

178 Ránki, 1981, p. 172.

179 Hantos, 1932, 86.

The Tardieu Plan, however, is a microscopic part of my Central European Plan, both in scope and content, and deals only with one segment of it, that of trade policy, while it does not cover the agricultural, industrial, traffic and monetary policy aspects of the Central European problem.¹⁸⁰

He also suspected that his two pamphlets, published in French, may have influenced the outcome of the plan, one for the League of Nations' European Committee at Briand's request, the other for the Lausanne Conference in defence of the Franca Plan. He agreed with the aspirations of the Tardieu plan but regarded the proposal itself as only a starting point.

The Tardieu Plan is an attempt to build a bridge between us and our neighbours [...] The Tardieu Plan itself is merely a framework for achieving the goal of economic integration [...] What appears to be definitive in the Tardieu Plan is the geographical demarcation which is the underlying idea of the plan and which can be expressed by the phrase 'Five States, one river'. This territorial demarcation can be extended to another country, Bulgaria.¹⁸¹

He also understood that the fate of the whole plan depended on the attitude of the great powers. He rightly feared that a settlement plan proposed by a great power would be accompanied by the constant suspicion of others. At the Lausanne Conference in June 1932, Hantos took the view that the interests of Germany, Italy, and Poland would not be harmed if the five states did not increase their tariffs against them.

Following the plan's failure, France was no longer in a position to have a substantial influence on the fate of the region and was no longer able to control events. The fact that the crisis had even less impact at home made it possible for France to be active in Central European affairs in 1930–32. France's economic and financial situation seemed stable. The depression unfolded here later, from 1932 onwards, and severely limited its foreign policy options. Italy and Germany thus remained in the contest to determine the fate of the Central and Eastern European region.

Hantos was given no further room to manoeuvre. In Austria and Czechoslovakia, which were most threatened by German ambitions, there seemed to be some interest in his proposals, but it was no longer possible for him to influence the unfavourable developments. In his later works, he also raised the idea of a Danube bloc, although he himself was very sceptical about it.

The allure of economic policy agreements based on political considerations seems to be spreading across Europe. The economic agreements of the

180 Ibid.

181 Ibid. pp. 86–87.

Little Entente have also proved to be a powerful burden on political friendship. Regional cooperation has only had a salutary effect where the natural preconditions for economic agreements between neighbouring countries are in place. These preconditions are present in the relationship between Hungary and its neighbours, and Hungary could see the most benefit from Danube Valley cooperation. The result we can achieve in this area depends not only on our local energy, not only on our economic intelligence, but also on our political acumen. It is therefore with hope, but not without some unease, that we turn our gaze to the imminent re-development of the Danube Basin.¹⁸²

After Elemér Hantos's prediction of collapse was realised, he rarely appeared in public. After the Berlin-Rome Axis, he proposed the creation of the so-called Danube Axis in a small paper, a formation that would be free of the influence of any great power, such as that of Italy or Germany.¹⁸³ Its creation was not only in the interest of Hungarian foreign policy, but also a fundamental national strategic goal.

The reorganization of the Danube Basin, the organic harmonization of the Danube peoples of the same fate and destiny, the unification of the Danube countries, cultural and political against all other imperialist influences and foreign domination, this is the real task of Hungarian politics, this is the vital interest of the Hungarian nation.¹⁸⁴

His hope was that politics would take the path of the future, recognising the realities of the economy: *'finding a way of political agreement, promoting economic relations, these are the two tasks that will solve the Danube problem'*.¹⁸⁵ The rhetorical summary of his programme – 'Unite or Collapse!' – has become the motto of those who advocate rapprochement in Central Europe.

He died in 1942 and was buried in Budapest. His obituary in the *Economic Review* summarised the significance of Hantos' career, but also expresses his concern for the tragic great power ambitions of his time:

Hantos, as all this shows, was a forerunner in the service of the great economic policy idea that later emerged and now dominates, through his relentless zeal for the economic unification of Central Europe. But he and his comrades wanted to create peacefully what today the dominant powers would rather unite by mobilising the whole world in war.¹⁸⁶

182 Hantos, 1935, p. 21.

183 Hantos, 1937, pp. 3–4.

184 Ibid. p. 4.

185 Hantos, 1935, p. 166.

186 Navratil, 1942, p. 677.

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Romanian Theorists of Central European Integration

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ABSTRACT

In the following chapter, we examine the map of intellectuals who attempted to solve the issues faced by their society by creating a theoretical framework for the political transformation of their country and region. By the second half on the 19th century, it had become clear that the Empire needed political and administrative reforms as well as a new approach toward the representation of minorities and different regions. Many young Transylvanian people undertook legal studies after 1849 as a reaction to the increasingly liberal attitudes of the provincial elite. In fact, among the most sought-after professions in the era were those of lawyers and notaries, a clear indication of a modernising society. In addition, attending an ‘academy’ or a law school constituted a somewhat convenient path that did not require a specific intellectual vocation but necessitated a university degree, which brought with it a social status and opened prospects for advancement. Moreover, these graduates were increasingly in demand to defend new types of interests, from the legal and economic affairs of various state or private institutions to those of individuals. Alexandru Petrino, Aurel C. Popovici, Ion Maiorescu, Constantin Isopescu-Grecul, and Nicolae Densusianu became pivotal figures in the debate and intellectual efforts related to the issue of federalisation or the reorganisation of the Empire and the distribution of political power based on a more equal principle. This fight was one of the most important movements of Romanian intellectuals and political leaders at the end of the 19th century and the first decade of the 20th century.

KEYWORDS

reform, federalisation, Habsburg Empire, Austro-Hungary, rights, Maiorescu, Popovici, Isopescu-Grecul, Densusianu, Petrino.

Introduction

As early as the beginning of the 19th century, Romanians began to acknowledge that their association with the East through their relationship of dependency on the Ottoman Empire hindered their access to the benefits of modernisation. Like other peoples of Central and Eastern Europe, they had also discovered additional virtues of the State after contemplating the effects of Napoleon’s troops and the French and American Revolutions on this part of the continent. Additionally, some elements of

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progress, imported through other channels, appeared in this area as early as the 18th century.

From a comparative perspective of the East and the West, Romanians wanted to be culturally and ideologically attached to the latter via the indispensable link represented by Central Europe. Thus, it is not surprising that Romanian society's evolution toward modernity was associated with several political and state models that would ensure security, self-assertion, and economic and social progress. In this context, the idea of confederation or dynastic union agitated the spirits of Romanians.

The issue of integration into Central Europe had been discussed before 1867, though not in a systematised form or in conformity with the modern principles of the state like in the second half of the 19th century. The Compromise provided Romanian intellectuals with ideological support for designing and redesigning formulas of integration into a geographically defined political and state structure, but this took place in an era of 'nationalities' and 'nationalisms', which clearly complicated matters. In this context, given the diversity of the Habsburg Empire, federalism seemed a very attractive political project, although it also presented certain ambiguities and aspects that could even jeopardise stability. Furthermore, different visions on federalism circulated, some imagining it as a constitutional construct in which authority was distributed between two or more layers of government, while others as a political system in which power was divided between the centre and regions.

It should also be mentioned that Romanian intellectuals in the Old Kingdom of Romania showed very little interest in formulas that envisioned their country's integration into a state structure that covered Central Europe. In the years leading up to the Great War, they were rather more interested in the idea of a Balkan Federation. In the second half of the 19th century, however, they were up to date with everything that happened in Central Europe. They were well-informed about and reflected on the analyses and theories of federalism and dynastic unions elaborated by some of the region's thinkers. This period witnessed a growing number of projects on this subject. Among the Romanians proposing reform models on integration into Central Europe were Ion Măiorescu, Nicolae Densuşianu, Alexandru Petrinu, Aurel C. Popovici, and C. Isopescu-Grecul.

1. Alexandru Petrino (1824–1899)¹



A descendant of one of the wealthiest families in Bukovina, Alexandru Petrino was born on 18 May 1824 in Văscăuți/Wasskoutz, a town situated between Chernivtsi and Vijnita (today in Ukraine), on the border with Galicia (Eastern Europe). His father, Apostolo Ioan Petrino, was of Macedonian-Romanian origin and had first settled in Iași with one of his brothers. At the beginning of the 19th century, he moved to Bukovina, where he was granted Austrian citizenship in 1809, gradually acquiring numerous land properties. In fact, due to his attachment to Vienna and the wealth he had acquired, Apostolo Petrini was ennobled in 1836, receiving the

rank of Baron of the Habsburg Empire, while during the time he was in Moldova he had received the rank of ‘spătar’, which held military responsibilities.

His son from his second marriage (with Angelica), Alexandru, attended the gymnasium and ‘Philosophy’ courses in Chernivtsi, followed by studies at the Faculty of Law in Vienna, which he abandoned after his father’s death (on 28 December 1836) to take over the family’s business. Not long after, it seems that Alexandru Petrino moved to Paris to complete his legal studies, only returning to Bukovina in 1847. He showed great skill in managing his landed properties, becoming one of the richest landowners in Bukovina and carrying out important activities for the cultural, religious, and economic support of the region. At the same time, alongside his brother Petru, he inherited several landed properties in Bessarabia, as well as real estate in Vienna. Incidentally, Alexandru’s brother was the father of one of the poets who was appreciated in the salons of Chernivtsi in the 1860s, and later also in Iași.

After the promulgation of the 1860 October Diploma by Emperor Franz Joseph, which was a kind of Constitution that put an end to neo-absolutism in the Habsburg Empire, Alexandru Petrino shared the reform projects initiated in this document. The author of the document, Agenor Gołuchowski (who was originally from Galicia), was also Minister of the Interior and continued the ideas of the Czech František Palacky, supporter of federalist principles in the form of Austro-Slavism. Such support from Petrino was natural, as Gołuchowski’s measures aimed – among

1 Alexandru Petrino, Romanian politician, Czihak, A.F. in: Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Inventarnummer Pf 100.469:C(1), public domain, source of the picture: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Alexander_von_Petrino#/media/File:Alexander_von_Petrino_\(1824%E2%80%931899\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Alexander_von_Petrino#/media/File:Alexander_von_Petrino_(1824%E2%80%931899).jpg).

other things – at obtaining support for the Monarchy from the local aristocracy, especially in the eastern regions of the Empire. The actions had as a programme the concept of federalism, but based on large national territories that could oppose centralism.

However, while Transylvania was gaining a wide autonomy due to the end of the military regime established after the defeat of the 1848 Revolution, the Diploma stipulated that Bukovina would be included in Galicia, which displeased some of the Bukovinian political activists. The reason was that the Slavs were becoming the majority, thus ending the status of the province which, by the Constitution of 4 March 1849 had become a hereditary province of the imperial crown, with the status of duchy, separated from Galicia.

In this context, Alexandru Petrino was thus familiar with the ideas contained in the 1860 October Diploma, while his noble rank meant that as early as April 1860, he became a member of the enlarged Imperial Council (*Verstärkte Reichsrat*) in Vienna – a consultative body during the transition to the constitutional regime the spiritus rector of which was Agenor Gołuchowski, who was also a confidant and adviser of Emperor Franz Joseph. The Romanian bishop Andrei Șaguna was co-opted to represent the Romanians from Transylvania and Andrei Mocioni to represent those from Banat and Crișana in this council. From this position, Petrino strongly expressed himself in favour of reforming the Empire on federalist principles, then actively involved himself in the political life of Austria, all the more so since the emperor had to make concessions to the old conservative nobility through the Patent of 26 February 1861, a document with constitutional value, drafted by Anton von Schmerling, Gołuchowski's successor at the Ministry of the Interior.

Based on the mentioned document, the Monarchy was reorganised on a federal basis, with the provinces now having Diets (*Landtag*), genuine local parliaments, with the right to enact laws. In this context, Bukovina became an autonomous province of the Imperial Crown, with its own flag and coat of arms, with a government and Diet that would operate in Chernivtsi, the latter being made up of thirty members, from which the emperor appointed a president, with the title of *Landeshauptmann* (Captain of the Land). At the same time, political parties were created in the region essentially as extensions of the political orientations of the Vienna parliament: the 'Federalist' group, which fought the Constitution of February 1861, advocating for the provisions of the Diploma of October 1860; and the 'Constitution' party, supporter of the February 1861 Patent, each of which contained quite a few orientations and factions.

In this context, in Bukovina, Alexandru Petrino was the leader of the 'Federalist' or 'Autonomist' movement. This group also included Gheorghe Hurmuzaki (brother of Eudoxiu Hurmuzaki, leader of the 'Centralist' group, attached to the Constitution Party in Vienna), Ioan Mustață, Gh. Flondor, Iacob Miculi, and Cristof Iakubovici, all of whom had noble titles. Another member was Samuil Morariu, who would become the metropolitan of Bukovina and Dalmatia in 1880

under the name of Silvestru Morariu Andrievici. Morariu was a fervent supporter of federalism and became a member of the upper chamber of the Austrian Parliament. The influence of the federalist leader was so great in Bukovina that his political group was also called ‘Petrino’s Party’. It was considered conservative and nationalist and therefore acting as a ‘Romanian party’ because its members were concerned with promoting the Romanian language, the Orthodox Church, Romanian schools, the placement of as many Romanian officials as possible in local public administrations.

In other words, Alexandru Petrino’s political programme aimed to preserve the ethnic and cultural character of Bukovina within a federal Austria, with a broad provincial autonomy. For this reason, he maintained especially close ties with the Polish and Czech federalists. Being at the same time a member of the new Bukovina nobility, he supported the fastest and most efficient modernisation of the region’s infrastructure (the Chernivtsi-Lemberg railway can be credited to his efforts), contributing to the legislation regarding the economic development of Bukovina, while at the same time speaking out firmly against the idea of a centralised empire, criticising some provisions of the Compromise of 1867, then getting involved in the debates regarding military service (being appointed rapporteur for this bill). He always supported these ideas in his capacity as a deputy in the local Diet, where he was elected several times, but especially in the Vienna Parliament, although its work was suspended between 1865 and 1867. In this context, many of his speeches in the Vienna legislative forum included genuine calls for an efficient organisation on a federative basis, especially targeting issues related to the administrative-bureaucratic side of the state, infrastructure projects, as well as the aspects of broadening the electoral base in the provinces of the empire.

If immediately after 1861, the ‘federalists’ had a majority in the legislative chamber of Bukovina, in the elections of February 1867, the ratio changed in favour of the ‘constitutionalists’. In the 1870 elections, the ‘federalists’ again obtained a majority mainly due to Alexandru Petrino, who – in his capacity as the elected representative of Bukovina in the Vienna Parliament (elected in the Suceava constituency) – had managed to coalesce the Czech, Polish, Italian deputies (those from Trieste, Istria, and Gorizia), and Germans in the form of an opposition bloc to the government of Leopold Hasner von Artha, generating a current of opinion that was also favourable to the federalists in the provincial Diets. In this context, Petrino spoke against any ‘special’ deal in favour of any nation of the Empire, because in this way, the idea of reconciliation and a federalisation on equal grounds would disappear. As it goes without saying, these statements primarily concerned the Austro-Hungarian compromise of February 1867, resulting in the dual Monarchy in which the government in Pest was on an equal footing with that in Vienna. Petrino’s success in creating a significant coalition in the Vienna parliament was also due to the fact that he was a good orator and had significant diplomatic tact in the relationship with his political partners. He received no lack of criticism, especially on the

topic of the concept of the nation. In fact, a part of the press ridiculed him on this topic, the 'Neue Freie Presse' even calling him a 'political condottiere' due to the uncertainty of his ethnic affiliation.

On 12 April 1870, Alfred Potocki became the head of the government, as well as the Minister of Defense. He was of Polish origin and he had previously held the portfolio of the Ministry of Agriculture (1867–1870). His great support of federalism had brought him very close to Alexandru Petrino. In fact, they were also friends, and in this context, Petrino was commissioned in May 1870 to take over the Ministry of Agriculture, thus becoming the only Romanian to reach such a high position within the Habsburg Empire. He did not remain the head of this department for long, the Czechs and Germans did not fully support the Potocki government, and Petrino's interest in the prosperity of Bukovina was not shared by the cabinet in Vienna, the central press unleashing a fierce press campaign against him (especially from the Viennese newspaper 'Neue Freie Presse'), which is why he was replaced in October 1870. Moreover, Alfred Potocki did not stay in power for long either. As his federalist project was not shared by the Czechs in the Viennese Parliament, he resigned on 6 February 1871.

Later, the appointment of Adolf Auersperg as the head of government in Vienna on 25 November 1871 led to the dissolution of the Diet in Bukovina (which was dominated by federalists), as well as those in Bohemia, Upper Austria, Kraina, Moravia, and Vorarlberg, also promulgating an important electoral reform. In these circumstances, Alexandru Petrino tried to revive his federalist group, establishing a Society of National Autonomists in April 1872, with a press organ, 'Der Patriot', a weekly newspaper, published in German, the official language of the state. The periodical was focused on political and economic information and in opposition to 'Czernowitzer Zeitung', which supported centralist tendencies. 'Der Patriot' existed only for a few months (April–December 1872), promoting the ideas of federalism in a period less favourable to it. We should mention here the remarkable contributions of I.G. Sbiera, Gheorghe, and Alexandru Hurmuzachi, the group of which Alexandru Petrino was the leader. Further, although the Society of National Autonomists was mostly made up of the large-land-owning elite, its political programme was moderate and was aimed at maintaining the autonomy of Bukovina and the Orthodox Church. It spoke out against the centralising tendencies of Vienna, supporting the extension of the right to vote on other social categories, ensuring public education, freedom of the press, and the material and spiritual progress of all nationalities in the empire.

In 1875, Alexandru Petrino gave up his political activism in the federalist group of the Parliament in Vienna, dealing only with the administration of his own affairs and the representation of his political group in the Diet of Bukovina until his death in 1899.²

2 See: Bălan, 1929b; Bălan, 1946; Turczynski, 1993; Ceaușu, 2000; Cocuz, 2003; Luceac, 2007; Ceaușu, 2010; Drahta, 2014; Ceaușu and Lihaciu, 2021; Höbelt, 2022.

2. Aurel C. Popovici (1863–1917)

Born on 4/16 October 1863 in Lugoj, a town in Banat that was brought under Hungarian authority by the act of 1867 after enjoying autonomy in direct relation to Vienna, Aurel C. Popovici was the son of a middle-class craftsman. He spent his childhood in a multicultural urban environment, speaking German, Romanian, and Hungarian. He went to primary school at a Romanian, Greek-Orthodox confessional school, and completed the first part of his high school studies at the local Hungarian-language high school. Although over time he developed a veritable cult for learning foreign languages (speaking at least six languages fluently by adulthood), he seemed to have struggled in the first two classes of Hungarian high school, opting to continue the next three years at the Romanian Gymnasium in Braşov in order to take the baccalaureate exams at the Greek-Catholic High School in Beiuş, in 1884.

Like other Romanians in Transylvania, Popovici became a student at the Faculty of Medicine in Vienna where he became involved in the ‘Young Romania’ (‘România Jună’) Society. He showed a special interest in politics and in 1886, he made his journalistic debut in several issues of the Oradea magazine ‘Familia’, dealing with *Forme și fond în cultură*³ [*Forms and Content in Culture*]. Increasingly involved in the political struggles of the Romanians in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Popovici neglected his university studies, marrying the Austrian Maria Ana Polt from Vienna in 1888 in the Greek Orthodox rite.⁴ Now with his own family, but also in the absence of school successes, Popovici headed to a provincial university in Graz, where the demands seemed to be lower, but even here he failed to keep up with his medical studies, which he would never complete.

In fact, many of the young Romanians studying in Vienna in the second half of the 19th century and until the First World War remained captive in their ethnic ‘community’ (organised in a student society, ‘România Jună’) and became adherents to nationalism, which prevented them from taking advantage of the fabulous intellectual atmosphere of the metropolis since the turn of the century.⁵ While the Jews or the Czechs, for example, won enormously, even contributing to the Viennese cultural explosion, the Romanians stayed in their shell, grinding and preoccupied with small matters and without a cultural horizon, such as nationalism, absorbed in the background by ideology and politics, always fighting over this cause. Thus, even among themselves, the Romanians from Vienna and Budapest showed differences, political passion, clashes, and conflicts.

In this context, Popovici was strongly involved in the elaboration of all kinds of polemical documents regarding the national issue in the framework of disputes between Romanian and Hungarian students materialised through memoirs,

3 Popovici, 1886.

4 Crişan, 2008, pp. 25–26.

5 Schorske, 1980.

answers, and replies, especially during the year 1891. This was the period in which he frequently circulated between Graz, Vienna, and Budapest in order to organise the Romanian students in relation to the political direction of action concerning Hungarians. All kinds of solutions and concepts were circulated, of which Vicentiu Babeș's proposal to achieve a 'Romanian-Hungarian dualism' stirred spirits even more, especially since he was the leader of the Romanian National Party in Transylvania (1891–1892).⁶

In fact, apart from the radical nationalist Romanians, there were also others – such as C. Brediceanu, Vicentiu Babeș, Al. Mocioni – who advocated for a reconciliation of Hungarian and Romanian objectives even in the context of the *Ausgleich* achieved in 1867. That is, according to the latter, the solution of the Romanians had to be sought in Budapest, not in Vienna. In this context, Vicentiu Babeș wanted in December 1891 to name Popovici as an editor-in-chief of the periodical 'Luminătorul', but the intervention of several compatriots made him give up the idea. For example, Corneliu Diaconovici speaks in good terms about Popovici's culture, adding however that the publication should not be entrusted to someone who 'did his [education] in cafes', considering him a bit exalted and 'airy-fairy'. According to Diaconovici, Popovici could have brought trouble to the people from 'Luminătorul'.⁷

At the same time, between 5–8 October 1891, Popovici took part in a delegation of Romanians invited to Prague for an industrial exhibition. This moment was significant because many of the Czech intellectuals aspired either to the autonomy of the provinces of the Habsburg Empire or to rebirth as an independent state, like Hungary, in the formula of the 'Kingdom of Saint Wenceslaus'. This presented a good opportunity for Popovici to discuss with the representatives of the 'Czech youth' grouping formulas for the reorganisation of Central Europe, especially from the perspective of federalism.

Moreover, together with other young Romanians, Popovici had already engaged in drafting a *Reply* to a Hungarian students' memorandum. He was the coordinator of this document of just over 150 pages in which arguments were presented from a historical perspective for a judicious solution to the problem of nationalities, taking into account the idea of a liberal federation as an alternative to the Magyarisation policy.⁸ In fact, federalisation was presented as a viable alternative to dualism, in opposition to earlier centralism, by individualising the nations of Austria-Hungary, and it was proposed that this process could begin with the eastern part of the empire. The reply was also translated into French, German, Italian and English in order to increase the impact of the Romanians' ideas and vision on the governments and public opinion in Western Europe. At the same time, Popovici also contributed

6 Cipăianu, 1980.

7 Polverejan and Cordoș, 1973, pp. 187–188.

8 The title of the document *Chestiunea română în Transilvania și Ungaria. Replica junimii academice române din Transilvania și Ungaria la „Răspunsul” dat de junimea academică maghiară ‘Memoriului’ studenților universitari din România*, first edition Sibiu, Institutul Tipografic, 1892, p. 152.; second edition in Bucharest, Tip. Carl Göbl, 1892, p. 155.

to the final version of the Memorandum elaborated under the auspices of the Romanian National Party in 1892 and intended for the emperor in Vienna, by which – in summary – he requested the annulment of the act of the Austro-Hungarian union, resorting to a reorganisation of the Habsburg Empire on federal principles.

Subsequently, as he was among the signatories of this document from 1892, but especially of the aforementioned *Reply*, Popovici and others were put on trial by the Hungarian authorities (held in Cluj, on 30 August 1893), in which the jurors found him guilty of several counts. He was sentenced to four years in prison. The following year, other members of the Romanian National Committee were also brought before the court in Cluj (between 25 April and 7 May 1894) in a trial that resulted in convictions for fourteen of the accused. Thus, the Memorandum created a significant fault not only between Romanians and Hungarians, but even among Romanians, because it was not the product of the majority. The signatories were not considered by all their compatriots to be representatives of their nation. Moreover, with few exceptions, some adherents to the document became famous only through their association with the Memorandum. This was also the reason the Romanian delegation in Vienna in May 1892 was not received by the emperor. The authorities, the press, and politicians there distanced themselves from the Romanians. Moreover, the Romanian deputies from Bucovina did not make any gesture of adhesion with the authors of the Memorandum.

This explains why, following the trial in the summer of 1893, Popovici left Transylvania in order to avoid prison in a kind of exile in Bucharest. A veritable colony of Romanian intellectuals from Transylvania had settled in the Romanian capital for a better financial situation but for some also as a place to continue their anti-Hungarian activism, as in the case of Eugen Brode, Ioan Slavici, and Popovici. Moreover, after only a few months, Popovici published two works of a mostly theoretical nature on the subject of nationality,⁹ in which Hungary's federalisation project took an increasingly consistent shape, opposed to the pan-Magyarism that irritated all the ethno-cultural groups in the Carpathian Basin. In other words, in this formula, Budapest could become an important factor of order in Eastern Europe.

Thus, in the context of the political struggles even between the Romanians studying within the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Popovici became a fervent follower and promoter of the Central European federalist ideology, but also of nationalism and anti-Semitism. Moreover, his texts from 1894, which invoked the direction of federalism, but only at the level of Hungary, also promoted nationalism as a political instrument.¹⁰

Although Popovici had settled in the Romanian capital, he continued to retain his Austro-Hungarian citizenship, working as a journalist in Bucharest and for a while as a substitute teacher at various schools there, and in 1900–1901 at the Romanian High School from Bitolia (Macedonia). Moreover, Popovici was also

9 Popovici, 1894a, pp. 45; idem, 1894b, p. 52.

10 Tănăsescu, 2017, pp. 439–461.

an acclaimed author of German-language textbooks (alone or in co-authorship), many of which were used until the 20s. At the same time, he remained attentive to what was happening in the Habsburg Empire, getting involved in the movement of Romanians not only from Transylvania, speaking out in the ‘crisis’ of the ‘Tribuna’ magazine (in the spring of 1896), on the Congress of Nationalities (from 10 August 1895, held in Budapest), participating in the project of the impressive *Enciclopedia română* [Romanian Encyclopedia] elaborated by Corneliu Diaconovici between 1895–1904, appearing in three volumes (on which Popovici collaborated with political texts, especially regarding federalism and nationalism), taking a stance towards the Millennium celebrations, conducting polemics on the national question, and speaking out against socialist and anarchist movements.

Although it was late compared to other ‘federalist’ contributions, Popovici’s 1906 project comes as if to put order in the various variants of reorganisation of the Habsburg Empire, at the same time ideologically systematising the previous contributions. On the other hand, his model of federal structure also had correspondences in other geographical spaces, such as the United States of America, Brazil and Mexico, so it seemed viable for this part of Europe as well. In this context, the work that would bring him fame at the time, *Die Vereinigten Staaten von Groß-Österreich*¹¹, also follows the line already drawn by František Palacký – extensively quoted by Popovici –, who had spoken since 1848 for a Federal Austria on a national basis, with the equality of all ethnicities and confessions. Basically, federalisation was for the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the next the viable solution for Central Europe, all the more so since the *Ausgleich* had already marked the possibility of a confederal alliance¹². Incidentally, in a speech held in Iasi on 13 October 1895, the Romanian Prime Minister D. A. Sturdza stated that ‘*the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, as it is constituted, is a necessity of the first order for the European balance, as well as for the safety of our kingdom*’.¹³

Through his work in this context, Popovici proposed the reorganisation of the Austro-Hungarian Empire based on the principle of nationality. At the time, he perceived nationality as the only criterion capable of organising state formations. Unlike other goals of this kind, such as ensuring peace and freedom of economic exchange, Popovici’s project aimed at affirming the Romanian nation from a political perspective within the Habsburg multinational empire. In fact, the Romanians – considering themselves obstructed from asserting themselves – primarily wanted to be freed from the Hungarian ‘oppressor’. In this way, Popovici strongly opposed ‘historical federalism’ (nobility), to which Franz Joseph had sought to return through the Diploma of 20 October 1860, which marked the end of neo-absolutism and the beginning of a constitutional government.¹⁴ In fact, since 1860, another of

11 Popovici, 1906, p. 427. A good Romanian version appeared posthumously in Pandrea’s translation: 1997.

12 See Leoncini, 2007, pp. 23–31.

13 Apud Maiorescu, 1915, pp. 9, 138.

14 Malfér, 2010, pp. 95–120.

Popovici's compatriots, *Vincentiu Babeş*, had expressed himself firmly against federalism on the basis of the autonomy of the historical provinces, which had to be replaced by the criterion of autonomy on a national basis.

Popovici's project aimed to transform Austria into a federal state based on national rather than 'historical' individualities by establishing fifteen autonomous national territories (thus respecting ethnic borders), a federal parliament, a common army, and a customs unit. It is significant that in the configuration of the fifteen territorial formations, he proposed that national and linguistic requirements had to be respected, each having a governor appointed by the emperor, benefiting from a national legislation, with their own language. However, German would be the language of the empire and must be known by all. Thus, Popovici proposed giving up the invocation of history, the abrogation of dualism, the realisation of Greater Austria on the dynastic principle, military force, and national federalism.¹⁵ In these circumstances, the peoples of the empire would remain attached to Austria due to a community of interests between them. This solution called into question Hungarian dominance over other peoples of Transleithania. In fact, the federal model Popovici proposed mainly aimed at diminishing the importance of Hungary in the context of the *Ausgleich*, and the failure of his project is perhaps less due to the assassination of Franz Ferdinand than to the Hungarians' influence in the Court of Vienna.

Popovici's ethnic federalism based on national autonomy was opposed to the historical federalism that the Austro-Marxists Karl Renner and Otto Bauer supported. The latter was based on 'personal autonomy' within the Empire; nations would organise themselves not on territorial principles, but as 'associations' between individuals.¹⁶ In other words, the Empire was supposed to be preserved, but by transforming it from a hegemonic structure of national and social subjugation into a federation of national and cultural groups, in which the various ethnicities were not subjugated to one another, but coexisted in a pluralistic structure. In this way, Popovici made a 'decisive contribution' to neoconservative theory.¹⁷

From another perspective, the United States of Austria would also have been situated between Russian federalism and the German confederation. Under these circumstances, the federalism of the Habsburg Empire would have guaranteed the preservation of all the nations in this space, from the Germans, Austrians, Hungarians, Czechs, Romanians, and Slovaks to the Ruthenians, Saxons, and Szeklers. However, Popovici presented little concern with the disappearance of small ethnic enclaves (such as the Szeklers, the Saxons, or the Swabians) due to the development of large industry.

Critical observations of the manner in which Popovici conceived federalism are not presented here, and his conception was not unique within the Empire. However, the models he invoked (the United States of America and Switzerland) had nothing

15 Cf. Popovici, 1997, pp. 21–22.

16 Renner, 1906; Bauer, 1907.

17 Cf. Nemoianu, 1989, pp. 31–42.

to do with his proposal: both exemplified federal states that were political and not national constructions. Although Popovici used a certain verbal aggressiveness, supporting the firm authority of the state at the same time as decentralisation, he presented a good understanding of *Bundesstaat* (federal state) and *Staatenbund* (confederation of states), considering the former to be the best option.

Some have argued that the crown prince of the Habsburg Empire, Franz Ferdinand, might have been enthusiastic about Popovici's project, without having any direct testimony to this effect. It is true, however, that the prince seemed to be a convinced follower of the reorganisation of the Empire on federalist grounds, even long before the appearance of Popovici's work. We should not forget, however, that as early as 1849, the Czech František Palacký had formulated a federal programme that attributed Austria a saviour role. Still, while Palacký saw the Empire from the perspective of ethno-cultural groups as a state that respected national individualities, and therefore also citizens' rights, Franz Ferdinand wanted a construction based mainly on administrative criteria – a kind of extermination of the colossus that would have diminished civic participation in decision-making, even if it apparently preserved local autonomy. This is also because the archduke hoped that German would become the state language.¹⁸ By contrast, Popovici wanted to protect Romanians against Magyarisation, but did not want to Germanise them.

Many attributed the great ideas of reforming the Empire to Franz Ferdinand.¹⁹ Anti-Magyarism particularly excited the Romanian and Slavic populations, who hoped that the archduke would support a federal 'Greater Austria' and even share trialist, federalist-trialist, or trialist-federalist ideas. However, the archduke was not anti-Hungarian, but wanted to obtain a balanced resettlement of the Empire among all nationalities. In fact, he did not adopt any of the reform plans of the Monarchy, let alone that of Popovici.

Popovici was not part of the so-called 'Belvedere Circle', the members of which were close to Franz Ferdinand.²⁰ Although Romanians were poorly represented in the group, Popovici's book attracted the attention of those who gravitated around the archduke, such as Al Vaida-Voevod and five other Romanians. They formed the smallest group of collaborators (which included the hierarchs Miron Cristea and Augustin Bunea, as well as the united bishop from Oradea, Demetriu Radu) compared to other national presences (such as Poles, Hungarians, Croats, Serbs, Slovaks, Ruthenians, Albanians), with personalities like Ottokar Czernin, Milan Hodža, Conrad von Hötzendorf, and József Kristóffy and several other minor figures.

In this context, the so-called 'audiences' to which Popovici was received by Franz Ferdinand are questionable, as the various testimonies are indirect. However, we know that as soon as Popovici's volume was printed at the end of February 1906, he met in Vienna with Vaida-Voevod and Teodor Mihali, all of whom were received in

18 Skowronek, 2017.

19 See Bled, 2013.

20 See Williamson Jr., 1974, pp. 417–434.

audience by Maximilian Beck, at that time the archduke's legal adviser, and later even the prime minister of Austria, to whom they presented the federalist project, asking him to present it to Franz Ferdinand.²¹ It seems that he was nevertheless received in audience by the archduke in February 1907, in Vienna, and then on the occasion of Franz Ferdinand's visit to Sinaia in the summer of 1909, together with followers of the federalist idea (Vaida-Voevod, Iuliu Maniu, and others)²², a meeting that generated a genuine press scandal in Hungary.²³ A last meeting with the archduke took place on 16 February 1914, when Popovici was received alongside Vaida-Voevod in relation to a possible Romanian-Hungarian 'reconciliation' proposed by Count István Tisza. In the autumn of that year, while he was in Vienna, Popovici had declared to Bernfeld Burnea that he was 'absolutely against the entry of Romania in Transylvania'.²⁴

Without having made any important theoretical contributions to the idea of the federalist project, Popovici's project was supported by several Transylvanian Romanian political leaders, especially Iuliu Maniu, Al Vaida-Voevod, and Vasile Goldiș – personalities who in the interwar period played important political roles in Romania – as well as priests, such as Teodor Mihali, Augustin Bunea, Miron Cristea, and D. Radu.²⁵ Other Romanians who had settled in Vienna, such as Sterie Ciurcu and Lazăr Popovici, also supported Popovici's thesis, the Transylvanian federalist group being numerically reduced. The significance of Popovici's approach resides in the context of the elaboration of his book against the backdrop of the deepening political crisis between Vienna and Budapest, even putting dualism into question, while in Hungary the Magyarisation process took on new values. In this context, the Romanian political leaders from Transylvania gave the measure of a pronounced activism. Thus, following the elections of 1905 and 1906, the Romanian National Party had eight deputies, and respectively fifteen in the Budapest Parliament.

Moreover, it should be noted that like Popovici, Vaida-Voevod – one of the most active deputies in the Parliament of Budapest – showed an attachment to his countryman's federalist project, just as both asserted themselves as virulent anti-Semites, xenophobes, and racists. It is not by chance that Popovici's work aroused interest among the Christian Social Party and its president, Karl Lueger, who in mid-September 1905 had just proclaimed the need for federalisation.²⁶ Thus, Popovici '*became the theoretician of the right-wing Austrian federalists*'²⁷ and his work enjoyed a good reception in the capital of the empire, especially from social-Christian press outlets like 'Wiener Reichspost'.

21 Cf. Maior, 1993, pp. 95–97.

22 Mândruț, 1994, p. 297.

23 Crișan, 2008, pp. 224–225.

24 Marghiloman, 1927, p. 353.

25 Cf. Mândruț, 1994, p. 296; Crișan, 2008, pp.151–152.

26 Geehr, 1993.

27 Graur, 1935, p. 221.

In Transylvania, by contrast, the few references to Popovici's book are relatively dry and general. In fact, Octavian Goga expressed himself as a convinced anti-federalist, and Vasile Goldiș categorically distanced himself from Popovici's federalist theories in 1907. In Romania, although Popovici's work appeared with the financial support of the government led by D.A. Sturdza,²⁸ few members of the intellectual and political circles were enthusiastic about the work. I. I. C. Brătianu was not opposed to Popovici's book, though Take Ionescu showed scepticism regarding the solution to the crisis experienced by the Austro-Hungarian Empire and was convinced that it would fall apart anyway.

Although Constantin Stere initially seemed to take a somewhat ironic tone toward Popovici's work, characterising it as merely concerned with 'our old Habsburg empire' with which no one was satisfied,²⁹ upon a closer reading, he seriously discusses the book that a Viennese newspaper qualifies as 'Das grundlegende Werk' (fundamental work) and considers it 'loyal and moderate'.³⁰ Moreover, the 'poporist' ideologue shared the idea of reorganising the Empire as a solution to its salvation, to become '*a center of crystallization of cultural and political life for all the peoples of the Danube valley and the Balkans*'.³¹ However, Stere reproached Popovici for the idea that the Habsburg Empire is '*indispensable for the life and healthy political evolution of Europe*' because – like Popovici – he wonders if federal Austria would still be viable in the context in which Russia would become a constitutional state that would grant wide autonomy to various nationalities.³²

P. P. Carp and Titu Maiorescu declared themselves in favour of the book, as did Barbu Ștefănescu-Delavrancea, N. Filipescu, and Al. Marghiloman, with their political partisans. The latter notes in his political diary underscore the fact that N. Filipescu shared the older project of Ion Maiorescu, '*who had dreamed of Romania under the Austrian sceptre*'.³³ Moreover, Ottokar Czernin attributed a variant of trialism to Filipescu, in which Romania would unite with Transylvania and form a new state with Austria in a structure similar to the relationship between Bavaria and the German Empire.³⁴ As goes without saying, King Carol I kindly appreciated Popovici's book, using it to understand the realities of Transylvania, especially the relations between the Romanian politicians there.³⁵

After the publication of *Die Vereinigten Staaten von Groß-Österreich*, Popovici engaged in many editorial activities, especially in the magazine 'Sămănătorul', from which the historian Nicolae Iorga had made a tribune of nationalism. Later, many of these texts were collected in a volume with the suggestive title *Naționalism*

28 Cf. Ibid. p. 222.

29 Stere, 1906a, p. 171.

30 Stere, 1906b, p. 325.

31 Ibid.

32 Ibid. p. 324.

33 Marghiloman, 1897–1915, p. 87 (note of 22 November 1911).

34 See Filipescu, 1914–1916, foreword by Cantacuzino, 1925; Cf. Graur, 1935, p. 244.

35 Marghiloman, 1897–1915, p. 89.

sau democrație [Nationalism or democracy], published in 1910.³⁶ In fact, the book brought together almost everything that was most important from the author's political thought. This volume, which had the subtitle *O critică a civilizației moderne, [A critique of modern civilization]*, was designed with a second part dedicated to the national Renaissance, which was never completed or – according to some testimonies – merely lost.³⁷

At the end of 1910 and throughout the following year, Popovici became involved in various polemics with his compatriots from Transylvania on the subject of the political orientation of the 'Tribuna' newspaper. His attacks especially targeted Octavian Goga, a sort of emblem of the young generation of Romanians from Hungary at that time.³⁸ During this period, he also made the decision to move to Vienna at the suggestion of his friend and disciple Vaida-Voevod, where he resumed his political activism, published press articles, and gave lectures. Moreover, in the autumn of 1913, he was among the founders of the 'Gross-Österreich' Society led by Schverer Waldheim, which promoted federalist ideas.

At the outbreak of the First World War, Popovici left for Switzerland and eventually settled in Geneva. As Romania remained neutral, he and Vaida-Voevod travelled to Berlin in an attempt to influence Germany's foreign policy in favour of the government in Bucharest. Romania's decision to enter the war on the side of the Entente then put Popovici in an ungrateful situation vis-à-vis Vienna and Berlin. Even under these circumstances, on the eve of the end of the First World War, Popovici sought to revive the idea of federalism, even proposing the solution of a coup to the emperor as a way to defeat the Hungarian opposition and to realise the oldest project of the United States of Great Austria. His work appeared posthumously,³⁹ since he died on 9 February 1917 in Geneva, where he was buried.

However, with the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Peace of Versailles, the federalism Popovici envisaged seemed obsolete. Only in the circumstances of the end of the interwar period does his work seem to be relevant, especially by capitalising on his nationalist vision and invoking his 'project' concerning the United States of Austria. Still, the 30s of the last century were marked by strong anti-Semitism, and Popovici's older speech – from the period when he had settled in Romania – was aggressively anti-Jewish, extolling the virtues of Christianity and Orthodoxy in particular.⁴⁰ In this context, over which the revisionism preceding the Second World War was superimposed, the first Romanian translation of his famous work from 1906, *Die Vereinigten Staaten von Groß-Österreich*, by Petre Pandrea,⁴¹ was published.

36 Popovici, 1910.

37 Cf. Mehedinți, 1937, p. 5.

38 Popovici, 2006, p. 280.

39 Popovici, 1918, p. 244.

40 See, for instance Nandriș, 1937, p. 38.

41 Popovici, 1939, p. 328.

3. Ion Maiorescu (1811–1864)⁴²



Representative of the second generation of activist scholars of the Transylvanian School (*Școala Ardeleană*) in Transylvania, Ion Maiorescu is a well-known figure in 19th-century Romanian historiography. He is particularly remembered for his activity as an organiser of national education.⁴³ He was a convinced pro-Austrian, which placed him in conflict with other Romanians, who took issue with his pan-Germanism. In addition, his figure was shadowed by that of his son, Titu Maiorescu,⁴⁴ one of the great spirits of modern Romania who became prime minister during the Second Balkan War and presided over the Bucharest Peace (1913). Ion Maiorescu

was deeply attached to German culture – its discipline and rigor, its conservatism, and the Bismarckian political system, which he considered to be the only model that would serve the interests of Romanian society, accusing the French model of too much superficiality and revolutionary spirit. This set him apart in a society that had been deeply attached to francophone culture since the first quarter of the 19th century and whose intellectual elite had been predominantly formed in the Hexagon.⁴⁵

Born in a village in Transylvania, in Bucurdea (German: Botschard, Bothard; Hungarian: Búzásbocsárd) at the beginning of 1811, Maiorescu's initial family name was Trifu. The son of a peasant, but with ancestry through his mother from another great representative of the Transylvanian Romanian Enlightenment, Petru Maior (1756–1821), Ion Trifu was destined for an ecclesiastical career. He followed his secondary studies in Blaj, which was the spiritual centre of the Greek-Catholicism of Transylvanian Romanians and went on to study at the Seminary in Pest, where he was ordained as a priest. With the support of Bishop Ioan Lemeny, he travelled to Vienna as a scholarship student, where he studied theology, history, and philology and was deeply influenced by his exposure to German Enlightenment.

He returned to Transylvania to an ecclesiastical and didactic career in line with his training. With the support of his protector Ioan Lemeny, who was a follower of

42 Ion Maiorescu, Romanian linguist, Constantin Lecca – Paul Rezeanu: Constantin Lecca, Editura Arcade, 2005, public domain, source of the picture: https://hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ioan_Maiiorescu#/media/F%C3%A1jl:Constantin_Lecca_-_Ioan_Maiiorescu.jpg.

43 The only monograph, with the historical marks of the time of its publication belongs to Stoica, 1967, p. 163.

44 Ornea, 1997.

45 Cf. Nastasă, 2006. See also idem, 2007, pp. 275–288.

the Hungarian revolutionary movement. However, Maiorescu gave up the idea of dedicating his life to the priesthood in 1836. The young student who had recently returned from Vienna stayed in the house of his friend, Ioan Popasu, in Braşov over the summer, where he met and married Popasu's sister, Maria. It seems that the Popasu family was of Aromanian origin and had come to Braşov from Râmnicu Vâlcea, an old urban centre in Wallachia. Their denomination was Greek-Orthodox, and Ioan Popasu later became bishop of Caransebeş.

Ion Trifu settled in Wallachia in 1836 and changed his surname to Maiorescu, with direct reference to his maternal lineage through Petru Maior. He initially received a teaching position in Cerneţi (in Oltenia), which was the beginning of an important reforming teaching career.⁴⁶ Only fifteen years had passed since the revolutionary movement of Tudor Vladimirescu, which had put an end to the Phanariote era in which the few schools that existed were taught in Greek. The French language had been privileged from the middle of the 18th century, especially at the level of the cultural-political elite.

However, the establishment of a network of national schools taught in Romanian was proposed starting in 1821, though timidly at first. It is not by chance that a Transylvanian – Gh. Lazăr – is considered the founder of education in the Romanian language. Since 1818, many Transylvanian scholars moved to Wallachia, spreading the trend of Latinism promoted by the Transylvanian School under the auspices of the Church United with Rome (Greek Catholicism). In this context, Maiorescu was appointed principal and inspector of the Central School in Craiova, an important urban centre of Oltenia, a region that had been under the administration of the Habsburg Empire (1718–1739) for almost two decades. Unfortunately, the teaching staff were mediocre, and Maiorescu did not hesitate to present this situation to his friend from Transylvania, George Bariţiu, who was teacher at a high school in Braşov and founder of 'Gazeta de Transilvania'. When Bariţiu published Maiorescu's letter from Craiova, the scandal was enormous.⁴⁷

In this context, Maiorescu came into conflict with most of the Wallachian French-speaking 'education' establishment, such as Ion Heliade-Rădulescu. More unfortunate, though, was his conflict with Florian Aaron, a Transylvanian who had also settled in Wallachia initially as a teacher in Craiova and now at the 'Sfântu Sava' School in Bucharest. Aaron was one of the main promoters of the ideas of the Transylvanian School. Beyond his reproaches related to the poor training of the Wallachian teachers, Maiorescu tried to impose another model of education, advocating for the assimilation of the German language and culture in an environment in which French was dominant.⁴⁸ Thus, he provided his son Titu Maiorescu with a

46 Suciu, 1927, pp. 251–252, 272–273, 313–315, 336–337.

47 For I. Maiorescu's activity and cultural environment in Craiova before 1848 see Florescu, 1992, pp. 7–48.

48 Stoica, 1965, pp. 79–90.

German education, which later had a serious impact on the evolution of Romanian society until the beginning of the First World War.⁴⁹

Although this episode seems to have turned him into an outcast among his guildmates and in the city at large, the voivode Alexandru Ghica showed him much appreciation. However, Maiorescu's desire to reform the educational system was not to everyone's liking, so in 1842, he was removed from his position.

He then returned to Transylvania and his wife's relatives in Braşov for a short time until he moved to Moldova in the same year, where his contribution to the reorganisation of education had a greater impact.⁵⁰ In Moldova, he succeeded in preventing the introduction of the French language as the main vehicle of teaching in higher education. However, as a promoter and defender of the Latinity of the Romanian language, Maiorescu was accused of Catholic proselytising in Iaşi, in a country deeply dominated by Orthodoxy.

In the meantime, prince Gh. Bibescu, who appreciated Maiorescu's pedagogical and educational organising skills, arrived in Wallachia. Thus, he recalled the latter to his side, entrusting him with the direction of the gymnasium in Craiova, and in August 1843 he was even received by ruler Bibescu in Bucharest, who gave him all the confidence in terms of the organisation and development of education, especially from the position of school inspector for the whole of Oltenia. From now on, he develops a rich scholarly activity in the field of historiography and linguistics, his writings being dominated by Latinist excesses. However, enjoying the esteem of the ruler Gh. Bibescu, Maiorescu⁵¹ will be granted a noble rank, namely that of 'serdar'⁵².

Also, during this period, a close friendship was formed between Maiorescu and Gh. Magheru, thus joining the group of revolutionaries from Wallachia. This is how Maiorescu will have an active presence at Islaz, on the occasion of the reading of the proclamation of 9/21 June 1848, a true programme of political and social reform of the country. Moreover, Gh. Bibescu's trust in Maiorescu being known, the latter was tasked to communicate the content of the Proclamation to the ruler, two days later recognising the provisional revolutionary government, so that the prince immediately abdicated and sought refuge in Braşov.

To support the cause of the Revolution, the Bucharest government decided to send three diplomatic agents abroad to plead with the French, German and Ottoman authorities. Thus, Ion Ghica went to Constantinople at the beginning of June, Maiorescu to Frankfurt am Main, and Nicolae Bălcescu had to go to Paris, accompanied by A. Ubcini, so that A.G. finally arrived in the capital of France. In

49 Nastasă, 1999.

50 Cristian, 1977, pp. 311-324.

51 Maiorescu had been received by him at the beginning of April 1848, Bibescu knowing about the revolutionary disturbances that were being prepared, but without taking measures to stop them. Cf. Bodea, 1982, p. 411.

52 Cf. Bibescu, 1894, p. 577 (on 24 October 1846).

fact, only the latter and Maiorescu were the only ones empowered by the government as plenipotentiary ministers.

In fact, Maiorescu had been accredited on 22 July 1848 with broad prerogatives to the government and the German Parliament in Frankfurt, the power of attorney specifying that he had the capacity of agent *'beside the honorable German Diet, being authorized to treat and make commitments in his name and the country's'*.⁵³

Among the multiple actions of the provisional government in Bucharest, the danger of the defeat of the revolution requires actions of collaboration with the Habsburg Empire, in the context in which the invasion of Wallachia by the tsarist troops was increasingly foreshadowed, in order to restore the old political arrangements. That is why, before being accredited in Frankfurt am Main, Maiorescu is also considered the most suitable to get in touch with the Austrian authorities in Transylvania, but also with the compatriots there, but not in the context of any pan-Romanian action⁵⁴. Maiorescu's intervention aimed primarily at a possible unit of action, as self-protection against counter-revolutionary actions.

Being in Sibiu since 10 July 1848, with a special authorisation from the provisional government in Bucharest, Maiorescu met with the presidium of the Austrian General Command in the locality, to probe the manner in which the authorities in Vienna would react in the event of a Russian invasion in Wallachia⁵⁵. He could not be given an answer immediately, only about three days before receiving the letter of accreditation for Frankfurt (around 19 July), Maiorescu being informed by Alois von Pfersmann – the deputy of the general commander of Transylvania, Anton Puchner – about the answer coming from the capital of the Habsburg Empire, that it was not going to get involved militarily, but only to protest if its interests would be affected by the Russians in Wallachia⁵⁶. Probably from now on – and together with A.G. Golescu, who had also been with Maiorescu in Sibiu for a while – the idea of a confederation of 'Austrian nations' crystallised, thus counterbalancing the Hungarians, portrayed day by day as 'enemies' of the Romanians, although there was no shortage of negotiations between the two peoples for a joint action against the Habsburgs⁵⁷.

With this answer, Maiorescu heads for Braşov for a few days, to then go to Frankfurt am Main. Passing through Pest, he lingered here for four days, not without being the victim of an incident, reported by the Romanian Transylvanian press. Arriving in the Hungarian capital on 14 August 1848, it seems that Maiorescu was denounced to the police authorities by two compatriots (Emanuil Gojdu and I. Popovici) as a spy and the carrier of a secret correspondence for Vienna. In this context, he is detained and subjected to a search, but also to an interrogation in the presence of the Minister of the Interior, Szemere Bertalan, although he was not

53 Ion Maiorescu's accreditation letter in Brătianu, 1902, pp. 671–672.

54 Cf. Dragomir, 1946, p. 318.

55 Balog, Cosma and Varga, 2016, p. 345. See also Bănescu and Mihăilescu, 1912, pp. 166–168.

56 Balog, Cosma and Varga, 2016, p. 388.

57 Greffner, 1976, pp. 149–163.

arrested, based on the credentials for Frankfurt. Not only Maiorescu, but all Romanians in transit through Pest, went through such situations, for easy to understand reasons. In fact, nothing compromising was found on him, in fact, he even met with Kossuth Lajos, who asked him to intervene with the Romanian government to send an accredited diplomatic agent to Pest citing the need for close collaboration between Romanians and Hungarians. We also find the episode related in Szemere's correspondence:

Arresting him, I ordered his papers to be taken, but I found nothing suspicious in them. He presents Golescu as a fanatic, whom the Romanian government removed for that very reason. [...] Because he was sent by the Romanian government to Frankfurt and in order not to cause trouble between the two governments, when apart from the Romanians all our neighbors are our enemies, [...] he was finally allowed to leave⁵⁸.

Not incidentally, after Maiorescu's meeting with Kossuth mediated by Szemere, the latter declared in the Parliament of Pest, on 26 August 1848, that the destiny of the two peoples was to ally in order to preserve their national being.⁵⁹ In fact, the future prime minister of Hungary, Szemere Bertalan, was one of the fiercest supporters of a Romanian-Hungarian alliance.⁶⁰ Negotiations in this direction continued even after the defeat of both revolutions, from Bucharest and Pest-Buda.

Once he was set free, a banquet was organised for Maiorescu on the eve of his departure for Frankfurt.⁶¹ However, Maiorescu's blunder at Pest was full of significance: on the one hand, because the Hungarians, through their Minister of the Interior, would not allow those from Muntenia to agitate the Romanians from Transylvania; on the other hand, the finding that not being able to establish a common line of the revolution against the Austrians, the Romanians will think – mainly through Maiorescu – of another formula, by excluding the Hungarians and creating a kingdom with an Austrian prince and under the suzerainty of Germany, as will be seen below.

Arriving in Frankfurt am Main on 23 August 1848, he became the active promoter of a campaign to support Wallachia in the face of inherent Ottoman and Russian intervention. Moreover, on his way to Paris, Ștefan Golescu told his mother (from Frankfurt, on 27 October 1848) that 'by a happy accident' he had met his cousin, Alexandru G. Golescu and Maiorescu. He stated that they were '*filled with dignity and with their heads held high; a day will come when Romania will be grateful to them*'.⁶² The reasons are easy to determine, and more details can be found in the memoirs of Ion Ghica, who was also a revolutionary who had been sent like

58 Deák, 1942, p. 190.

59 Cf. Tóth, 1966, p. 276.

60 See Szüts, 1941, p. 69.

61 Cf. Gazeta de Transilvania, 1848, nr. 73 from 6 September (st.v.).

62 Nestorescu-Bălcești, 1977–1978, p. 193.

Maiorescu to Constantinople in 1848. Later, he would be Prime Minister of Romania over several terms. In fact, Ghica reproduced several letters, reports, and memos addressed by A.G. Golescu and Maiorescu to the governments by which they were accredited.

The two memos addressed by Maiorescu to the ‘German ministry’ in Frankfurt am Main, mainly to Baron Heinrich von Gagern, the president of the National Assembly (Nationalversammlung), are obviously relevant to the present volume. The first was dated 17/29 September 1848 and presents a history of the Romanian Principalities in relation to Turkey, but especially to Russia, which wants to become from a ‘protecting power’ to a ‘dominating’ one. All of Europe knows that the latter wants territorial expansion, especially at the expense of the Ottoman Empire, reminding, however, that Germany also has interests in the Lower Danube. In this context, it would be desirable for the Romanian Principalities to have a ‘*state relationship with Austria under the prince of this house and under the protection of the German Empire*’, and ‘*the high central power [Vienna] [...] could easily find the way that unites German interests with those of the Principalities*’⁶³. In fact, around the same time, František Palacký emphasised in a memorandum addressed to the Frankfurt Parliament that the state structure created by the Habsburgs would be ‘*indispensable to the security of Europe and humanity. Honestly, if the Austrian Empire had not existed, it would have had to be invented in the very interest of Europe, of humanity*’⁶⁴.

The second memorandum addressed by Maiorescu to the German Ministry, dated 4/16 November 1848, addressed the issue of pan-Slavism, which was no longer a ‘chimera’ but was made possible through confederated states or an alliance of all Slavs. Developing this theme, the signatory of the document drew attention to the danger of pan-Slavism and offered a solution to remove this danger. Further, he reproached the Frankfurt Parliament for neglecting its interests in South-eastern Europe, just as Austria was inexplicably passive in matters in the region. In this context, Maiorescu showed the ‘High Minister’ from Frankfurt the means by which the east of Europe could become an area of interest for Germany, and for all the countries on the Danube. These arguments were valid: from the east of Prussia to the Black Sea there were two well-defined peoples – the Hungarians and the Romanians – who were separate from the Slavic peoples. In addition, there were strong German communities, especially in Transylvania. Even if there were temporary misunderstandings between Romanians and Hungarians, these two peoples would over time be an obstacle to pan-Slavism, because both nations were ‘*the vanguard of civilized peoples in Eastern Europe*’.⁶⁵

Therefore, the project of a Hungary allied with Romania and both attached to Germany ‘through a state connection’ – as Maiorescu had previously proposed, on 17/29 September – ‘would remove the danger of pan-Slavism’, the east of Europe

63 Ghica, 1889, p. 131 (all Memoriu, pp. 120–131).

64 Apud Béhour, 1991, p. 106.

65 Ghica, 1889, p. 140.

coming under the influence of Germany. Moreover, *'it is a general belief of all enlightened and wise Romanians and Hungarians' that 'they without Germany are too stupid against pan-Slavism'*, suggesting at the same time the start of 'negotiations' with Turkey for the *'redemption of the [Romanian] Principalities and for the union place in a state, under a prince from the house of Austria and under the protection of Germany'*⁶⁶. Also in September 1848, in line with the views of Maiorescu and A.G. Golescu, the 'elected representatives' from Blaj also expressed themselves, in a memorandum addressed to the Vienna Parliament, for 'a fraternal federation' within Austria, together with 'our brothers from the Danube Principalities'⁶⁷. Later – on 13/25 February 1849 – the Greek Orthodox, led by their bishop Andrei Șaguna, submitted an eight-point Memorandum to the emperor to support 'the union of all Romanians from the states of Austria' in a federative framework⁶⁸.

On 10/22 December, after the revolution in Wallachia had already been repressed and the revolutionaries were in exile, Maiorescu wrote from Vienna to his friend General Gh. Magheru in Trieste to inform him about his activity in Frankfurt and the confederation project, on which no decisions had yet been made. This was also because Germany was seeking to appease Turkey regarding its desire for expansion at the expense of Russia, citing at the same time the Constitution drawn up by the Frankfurt Parliament, which established as a principle that

no country which is not German, i.e., whose people is not German, will never be able to incorporate itself with any German state. The German principles which today rule over non-German countries will henceforth stand towards these countries only in a relationship of personal union.⁶⁹

This did not mean that Germany was not sensitive to the Romanian problem; the Frankfurt Parliament had already discussed the subject five times before Maiorescu left for Vienna, with the last intervention on the Principality on 3 November 1848. At the same time, Germany also addressed the British government concerning the Danube issue, aiming for the two countries to have the same attitude of support for the Principalities. Only Vienna was passive on this issue, until – Maiorescu was told – the Romanians would reconcile with the Hungarians.⁷⁰

However, it must be emphasised that all of Maiorescu's aforementioned actions were somewhat confidential. This explains why, at the time, the press did not report the details of the discussions on the side of the two Romanian Memoirs Maiorescu presented to the Frankfurt Parliament. Writing from Paris to Ion Ghica, who was

66 Ibid. pp. 142–143 (second document, full text, p. 132–145, 171). Din documentele Parlamentului de la Frankfurt asupra Principatelor Danubiene, pp. 145–152.

67 Bodea, 1982, p. 911.

68 Ibid. pp. 960–962.

69 See: Ghica, 1889, p. 160.

70 Ibid. pp. 159–168.

in Constantinople, on 17 December 1848, A.G. Golescu showed that it was not desirable to discuss a union of the Romanian principalities with Austria:

What Maiorescu did is a secret thing, and if it is discovered we can uncover an agent; even he and I had worked without taking instructions from anyone, because we saw that this was the only way we would attract Germany's sympathies and attention to us.⁷¹

In addition, Maiorescu and A.G. Golescu hoped to attract Austria's sympathy and that of Romanians from Transylvania and Bucovina. At the same time, the Romanian representative at the Frankfurt Parliament pressed for the organisation of a conference in which both France and England would participate, in which the situation of the Principalities on the Danube would be discussed⁷².

Moreover, the settlement of a solution regarding the form of confederation proposed by Maiorescu was associated in Frankfurt am Main with the Italian question. In other words, if Austria loses Italy, then it will be compensated with the Romanian Principalities, then the Ottoman Empire will be rewarded, and in the new territories the Constitution of Austria will be imposed, which only provided for a parliamentary chamber and unbiased vote, being led by a prince or king from the family of Austria⁷³.

Meanwhile, the tsarist troops were in Moldova, while the Turks – in a first stage – accepted the state of affairs in Wallachia, by recognising the provisional government, but led by a 'royal lieutenant' made up of three people approved by Constantinople (Cristian Tell, Nicolae Golescu and Ion Heliade Rădulescu), as being moderate. This governing body was also aware of Maiorescu's actions in Frankfurt am Main, praising 'our brother' for his initiatives, 'which deserve all the gratitude of the Romanians'⁷⁴. However, the pressure of the Russians on the sultan determined the entry of Ottoman troops into Bucharest in the middle of September 1848 and the end of the revolutionary atmosphere, the leaders until now going into exile.

The revolution in Bucharest being suppressed, Maiorescu loses the capacity of 'plenipotentiary of the Danubian Principalities', in this context heading to Vienna, where he was 'well received', but not being regarded as a diplomat of Wallachia, but only as a 'Romanian Transylvanian', as he tells Nicolae Bălcescu on 7 February 1849. However, he had with him letters of recommendation from Anton Schmerling to Prince Felix von Schwarzenberg and Karl Ludwig von Bruck, which gave him greater credibility.⁷⁵ In a continuation of his efforts in Frankfurt, Maiorescu presented to the Viennese authorities another Memorandum with the theme

71 Ibid. pp. 85–86.

72 Ibid. pp. 85–86, 91.

73 Ibid. p. 643. For context see Delureanu, 1993, pp. 965–998.

74 Ghica, 1889, pp. 633–634.

75 Cf. Delureanu, 1993, pp. 988–989.

‘Romanians from the states of Austria’ and the confederation solution.⁷⁶ Along the same line, Bălcescu’s actions were recorded in 1850–1851, in exile until the end of his days.⁷⁷

Settled in the capital of the Habsburg Empire, Maiorescu became an official in the Ministry of Justice and was included in a commission aimed at creating a Romanian legal terminology. Here, he collaborated with two of his compatriots, August Treboniu Laurian and Aaron Florian. The latter took great care to present Maiorescu to Romanians not only as a follower of pan-Germanism, but also as a propagandist of Greek-Catholicism, which put him in conflict with the Greek-Orthodox Metropolitan bishop Andrei Țaguna. Intrigues were the order of the day between the two confessions of the Romanians, also targeting their important people, especially those ‘united’ with Rome (the Greek-Catholics) having to face all kinds of plots against them. In such a context, Maiorescu will be retired in the spring of 1856, although he would have liked to stay in Vienna further, his son taking the courses of the Therezian Academy here.

Maiorescu’s oldest protector, Prince Barbu Țtirbei, had been reinstated as ruler of Wallachia after the defeat of the Revolution, and with the outbreak of the Crimean War, he had found shelter in Vienna for almost a year (from October 1853), where the two probably they also met. Returning to Bucharest in the fall of 1854, Barbu Țtirbei intended to continue the reforms already started, especially in the development of the school network and education, and Maiorescu accepted his offer to return to Wallachia.

However, he did not immediately settle in Bucharest, but made a documentary trip to the Istrian Peninsula (then part of the Habsburg Empire). Although he recorded interesting observations that his son, Titu Maiorescu,⁷⁸ later published, it remains unclear why he travelled here to the Peninsula and in what context. The trip may have been made within the framework of the Austrian confederation project, especially since after returning to Bucharest in 1858, the caimacam Al. Ghica no longer offered him the position he was offered under Barbu Țtirbei.

One event occurred after another: on 24 January 1859, the double election of Ion Alexandru Cuza as ruler of Moldova and Wallachia took place, and on 22 April Maiorescu was appointed president of the Public Guardianship (‘Obșteasca Epitropie’), a state institution that dealt with the organisation and development of school education, and on 14 October, he became director of the Schools Guardians. From this new position, he entered into conflict with his known rival I. Heliade-Rădulescu (who wanted a monopoly on school textbooks), as well as with some teachers, many of whom were Romanians from Transylvania in Wallachia, of the Greek-Orthodox denomination. In this context, he resigned in the summer of 1861, travelling again to Istria only on scholarly concerns.

76 Ghica, 1889, p. 173.

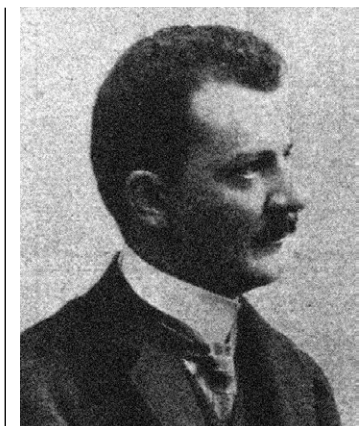
77 Berindei, 1985, pp. 71–84; Mendella, 2014, pp. 134–143.

78 Maiorescu, 1874. (Second Edition, published by Maiorescu, 1900.).

Back in Bucharest, a cluster of illnesses (pulmonary emphysema, diabetes and an older liver disease) kept him in bed for more time. Maiorescu died on 24 August/5 September 1864, as soon as he is appointed a professor at the Faculty of Letters in Bucharest, recently established by law.

Even if the federalisation project proposed by Maiorescu failed at the time, also because the Frankfurt Parliament was dissolved by the king of Prussia, his ideas were heard by many politicians of the time. Moreover, in the complex geo-political context of Central and Eastern Europe, the proposal of federalisation will from now on become a career, over time being taken over and sometimes rethought by two other Transylvanians, Aurel Popovici and Al. Vaida-Voevod.

4. Constantin Isopescu-Grecul (1871–1938)⁷⁹



A lawyer and politician from Bukovina, Constantin Isopescu was born on 2 February 1871 in Chernivtsi, where his father Dimitrie was a teacher at the local pedagogical high school and an inspector of Romanian schools and representative of this province in the Vienna Parliament. The family was loyal to the Habsburg emperor, Constantin's maternal grandfather – Gideon Ritter von Grecul – being an archimandrite, with important administrative positions in the region, while his paternal grandfather had remained an orthodox priest. As Dimitrie Isopescu had five children, Constantin was adopted by his maternal uncle, who had no

descendants, thus adding to his original family name the patronymic of Grecul.⁸⁰

Isopescu followed his secondary studies in Chernivtsi, where he also became a student at the Faculty of Law of the 'Franz Joseph' University, which had been founded in 1872. In this period, he wrote his first press articles, especially of a literary nature. Once he obtained his doctorate, in 1897, C. Isopescu-Grecul entered politics, as a member of the Romanian National Party from Bukovina, collaborating with most of the Romanian press in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, but also in the Kingdom of Romania. For the latter he used the pseudonym 'A Romanian from Bukovina'. As early as 1893, he became a magistrate, in the position of imperial prosecutor, and from 1905 he also embraced a university career in Chernivtsi,

79 Constantin Isopescu-Grecul, Austro-Hungarian-born Romanian jurist, politician, and journalist, unknown photographer, in: Wiener Bilder, 12. Juni 1907, p. 8, public domain, source of the picture: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constantin_Isopescu-Grecul#/media/File:Isopescul-Grecul_Konstantin.png.

80 Bejinariu, 2013.

going through all the hierarchical steps: assistant, private lecturer in 1906⁸¹, and from 1909 he became full professor of Criminal Law and Criminal procedure.

Following the parliamentary elections of 14 May 1907, C. Isopescu-Grecul became a member of the Imperial Council (*Reichsrat*), as a representative of Bukovina, a position he would keep – in various guises – until the collapse of the Habsburg Monarchy, at the end of 1918. Always manifesting himself as a loyal citizen of the Empire, Isopescu-Grecul came into conflict with the nationalist ideology promoted within the Romanian National Party in Bukovina, being excluded from this political formation, a context in which he created his own Independent Party, together with Teofil Simionovici and Nicu Flondor, becoming the leader of this parliamentary group. His loyalist vision brought him close to two other influential Bukovina politicians, Aurel Onciul and Alexandru Hurmuzaki, also members of the Imperial Council and convinced pro-Austrians⁸², with whom he would collaborate from 1909 in the ‘Latin Union’ parliamentary group, to which several deputies also joined Italians loyal to the Monarchy.

As a legal specialist, C. Isopescu-Grecul was involved in the development of a new military criminal code, in 1911 becoming an adviser to the emperor, and two years later being ennobled. In the context of the outbreak of the first Balkan war, he was sent on a diplomatic mission to Bucharest by the Austrian Foreign Minister, Leopold Berchtold, on his behalf promoting the idea of establishing an independent Albanian state, with an important representation of the Aromanians. The project had become somewhat topical, in the context in which the idea of a Balkan federation circulated in this region⁸³, as a result of the existing realities in the region, especially after Austria had annexed Bosnia-Herzegovina, in the fall of 1908.

The project was however much older and closely related to the aspiration of obtaining independence by the most important ethno-cultural groups in the region in relation to the Ottoman Empire. For example, Cristian Racovski – a Romanian citizen and left-wing ideologue – had developed the idea of a Balkan Confederation, which would unite Turkey, Romania, Greece, Serbia, and Montenegro, thus counterbalancing the expansionist tendencies of the Austro-Hungarian and Tsarist Empires in this area.

Since it is a question of spaces that are not clearly determined from an ethnic point of view, Racovski hoped that the nationalisms of the peoples, resulting from the struggle for independence against the Turks, would mitigate the obstacles. Although the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina in October 1908 by the Habsburg Empire had considerably diminished the enthusiasm, the idea would be revived several times, so that in the summer of 1915, during a conference in Bucharest, Racovski imperatively returned to the idea of a federation.⁸⁴

81 Isopescu-Grecul, 1906.

82 Olaru, 1997; Gafița, 2009.

83 Perivolaropoulou, 1994; Mitu and Mitu, 2008.

84 Damianova, 1989.

The outbreak of the First World War led to a multitude of projects for the reorganisation of Central and Eastern Europe in political terms, from aiming at local autonomies, especially on the ethnic basis, to the aspiration for state independence of some peoples within the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Ever since the time when the Central Powers seemed to dominate the situation in the war, various projects were circulated regarding the fate of the peoples of the Danube Monarchy. For example, on 30 May 1917, the Czechs demanded the transformation of the Empire into a confederation of free peoples; the Poles wanted independence; the Slovenians, Croats, and Serbs aspired to a state of their own; and the Ukrainians wanted Galicia, the issue of this region being the order of the day. Moreover, since December 1916, a project was being prepared to regulate the autonomy of Galicia, even if it seemed premature, especially because it provided for the exclusion of Bucovina. That is why the proclamation of the autonomy of Galicia without Bukovina caused unrest among the Romanian representatives of this region, the president of the Viennese council of ministers receiving – on 28 November 1916 – Teofil Simionovici (the head of the ‘Romanian club’) and the deputy C. Isopescu Grecul, assuring them that in return for loyalty, Bukovina would acquire a good position in the empire⁸⁵.

Moreover, in this context, the belligerents showed a special interest in Bukovina, an autonomous province of the Crown of the Empire (*Kronland*), which since 1861 also had its own Diet, in which the most important ethno-cultural groups were represented, without any ethnic majority⁸⁶. Although Ukrainians seemed to have a slightly larger share, they were poorly represented at the elite level. For Russia, the geostrategic position of Bukovina mattered more than the presence of the Slavic element, although the latter was supported by Moscow everywhere in Austria.⁸⁷ The government in Bucharest was not indifferent to the fate of this region either, although the Romanians had somewhat lost their political primacy in Bukovina, especially in favour of the Ruthenians and the Jews, to whom the Germans and the Poles were added. The Ukrainians had their own intentions, to attach at least a part of Bucovina to Galicia, in order to establish a province with wide autonomy within the Habsburg Empire. It was also a project supported by Vienna itself, which wanted a Greater Ukraine in the east as a counterweight to Russia’s interest in supporting the creation of a Greater Serbia.⁸⁸

In the context of these plans, C. Isopescu-Grecul made a statement in the parliament in the capital of the Empire, in the session of 22 July 1918, expressing

85 „Bulletin périodique de la presse austro-hongroise de la langue allemande” (du 28 novembre au 7 décembre), Paris, no. 20, 18 décembre 1916, p. 5. („Periodic bulletin of the Austro-Hungarian press of the German language” (from November 28 to December 7), Paris, no. 20, December 18, 1916, p. 5.)

86 In 1910 in Bukovina, based on language there were 38,4% Ukrainians, 34,4% Romanians, 21,2% Germans, including Jews; 4,5% Poles; 1,3% Hungarians (Cf. *Die Ergebnisse der Volks- und Viehzählung vom 31. Dezember 1910 im Herzogtume Bukowina*). On this province see: Scharr, 2010.

87 Varta, 2008.

88 See Varta, 1993, pp. 37–39; Ungureanu, 2003.

his anxiety and that of the Germans in Bukovina towards the project of annexing Bukovina to Austrian Ukraine. On this occasion, he also reminds the fact that the Bukovinians have proven their loyalty to the crown and that the Romanians and Germans should not be sacrificed for the sake of the Slavs, thus encouraging pan-Slavism. That is why Isopescu-Grecul advocates the autonomy of a Romanian-German Bucovina, with the capital at Chernivtsi and the northern border along the Prut River, within a federal Austria.⁸⁹

In these circumstances, C. Isopescu-Grecul became extremely active in finding convenient solutions for the Romanian residents of Bukovina. It manifests itself more and more sharply against local nationalisms, it takes a stance regarding the actions of other ethnic groups in the empire to acquire some autonomy in their own name, without a reorganisation of Austria-Hungary for the benefit of all. Moreover, he met with the head of the cabinet in Vienna, Ernest von Koerber, discussing the matter, and assuring him of the province's loyalty to the emperor.

However, the progress of the war was not at all favourable to the Triple Alliance, the summer and autumn of 1918 heralding its end, with unsuspected consequences for Austria-Hungary. Already the 14 points formulated by Woodrow Wilson on 8 January 1918, as the foundation of a post-war Europe, had generated among the Poles, Czechs, Hungarians, and Slavs in southern Austria aspirations that were not aimed at the reorganisation of the Empire, but at independence. In fact, the collapse of the Bulgarian front caused the situation of Austria-Hungary to become extremely fragile from September 1918, a context in which C. Isopescu-Grecul and other leaders of the national parties in the Empire were summoned on 18 September by Prime Minister Maximilian Hussarek von Heinlein to discuss the project of a future 'federal self-government'.

However, the proclamation of Karl I of Habsburg, *To my faithful Austrian people*, issued on 3/16 October 1918, promised a reorganisation of the empire on federative principles, 'in which each people would form its own state community, within its territory'.⁹⁰ A federation made up of six independent states (Austrian, Hungarian, Czech, Yugoslav, Polish, and Ukrainian) was conceived, with Transylvania remaining within Hungary alongside a part of the Banat, with the other part returning to Yugoslavia. However, Bukovina was not mentioned in the document, which only stated that the inhabitants of the region would decide the form with which they would enter the federation.

In this context, on the very second day after the publication of the proclamation, C. Isopescu-Grecul was summoned to an audience by Emperor Karl, together with the other heads of the parliamentary groups⁹¹, so that at noon he could ask in the Viennese parliament – with the consent of others five Romanian deputies from this forum – the proclamation of autonomy for the four million Romanians

89 Calafeteanu and Moisuc, 1995, pp. 360–362.

90 „Glasul Bucovinei”, Cernăuți, I, 1918, nr. 1, 22 October, p. 5.

91 Isopescu-Grecul, 1938, p. 180.

in Austria and Hungary, as part of a federal monarchy, of a reorganised Austria.⁹² In fact, Isopescu-Grecul was closely supported by Aurel Onciul, who stated that Austria is the salvation for Romanians, advocating that all countrymen (including the Kingdom of Romania) become part of the Habsburg Monarchy. Moreover, Aurel Onciul, together with Alexandru Hurmuzachi and Gh. Sârbu, at some point also conveyed the idea of uniting Bucovina with Galicia under the tutelage of Vienna.⁹³

At the same time, as a reaction to the aforementioned Proclamation, Romanians from Vienna established a Romanian National Council in Austria, on 4/17 October, with C. Isopescu-Grecul being elected president. He even obtained an audience with the emperor (his last meeting with him), on 5/18 October, informing him that the Romanian deputies in Vienna refuse to keep Transylvania within Hungary, not even agreeing with the inclusion of Bucovina in Ukraine⁹⁴. In fact, he developed the ideas now exposed to Karl I on 22 October, during the debates in the Vienna parliament on the imperial manifesto, in the form of an interpellation signed by Romanians and Czechs. On this occasion, Isopescu-Grecul requested for Romanians from Bukovina and Hungary the right to constitute their own state within the new Austrian federation. However, the decision had to be taken quickly, because otherwise the Entente promised other formulas for the reorganisation of Central and Eastern Europe⁹⁵. In this meeting another Romanian deputy, George Grigorovici, with socialist views, stated that the best solution for consolidating and ensuring peace in this region would be the union of the Kingdom of Romania and the provinces inhabited by Romanians with Austria in one federal state.⁹⁶ Their ideas were also supported by another important Bucovinian politician, Aurel Onciul, whose creed was always the reorganisation of the Empire on federal principles, in agreement with the aspirations of the Ukrainians.

The next day, all of the Romanian deputies left for Bukovina, leaving only C. Isopescu-Grecul and Teofil Simionovici in Vienna. Meanwhile, things were rushing in Chernivtsi, so the two also headed for Kraków on 25 October, but had to turn back due to fighting between Poles and Ukrainians at Przemysl in Galicia.⁹⁷ As the events of the war were unfolding rapidly and not to the benefit of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, in the last session of the parliament in Vienna, on 28 October 1918, only these two Romanian deputies from Bukovina, convinced loyalists and followers of federalism, participated.

On 3 November 1918, Austria-Hungary signed the armistice with the Entente, and on 11 November, Germany also admitted defeat. On the same day, Karl I renounced the throne, the state thus proclaiming a republic. In this context, the Ukrainians aspired to the division of Bukovina on ethnic criteria, also taking

92 Bălan, 1929, p. 84.

93 Gafița, 2008, p. 265.

94 Isopescu-Grecul, 1938, pp. 176–184; Țugui, 2014, p. 61.

95 Isopescu-Grecul's speech was published in „Morgenblatt” from 27 October 1918.

96 Bălan, 1918. For his federalist project: Brătuleanu, 2012.

97 Isopescu-Grecul, 1918, p. 183.

advantage of the fact that since the end of October, they had controlled Chernivtsi from an administrative and somewhat also from a military point of view. However, in circumstances sufficiently presented by the historiography of the period, the Romanian army entered Chernivtsi on 9 November and the Ukrainians left the city. Thus, three days later, the government of Bukovina was established, headed by Iancu Flondor. On 28 November 1918, the General Congress of Bukovina proclaimed the union of the region with Romania.

In the new political and military context, C. Isopescu-Grecul embraced the decision to unite Bukovina with Romania and was appointed by King Ferdinand I as his diplomatic representative (with the title of ‘commissioner’) in Vienna to solve the problems related to Bukovina and Transylvania. At the same time, he was also entrusted with the position of Romanian ambassador to Czechoslovakia, with whose government he had established ties since the end of November 1918. In these circumstances, Isopescu-Grecul had meetings with representatives of the Hungarian government led by István Friedrich, in a period when the Romanian army was on the territory of Hungary. In the summer and autumn of 1919, the Romanian diplomat firmly advocated for the establishment of good Romanian-Hungarian relations, declaring several times the fact that ‘*the peoples of the Lower and Middle Danube form an economic whole*’, being desirable a Romanian-Hungarian Federation. For the moment, Isopescu-Grecul advocated for ‘a customs union that could be achieved’ between the two countries, and then an alliance, the closest possible⁹⁸. In fact, he was giving voice to an older aspiration regarding the reorganisation of this part of Europe, and if the project of a federal Austria was no longer current, he would have pronounced either for a Romanian-Yugoslav dynastic union or for a Romanian-Hungarian federation. In fact, C. Isopescu-Grecul was a supporter of the Kingdom of Hungary starting in the fall of 1919.

Returned from diplomatic missions in Vienna and Prague, C. Isopescu-Grecul worked as a jurist at the Ministry of Agriculture and Royal Domains (1920–1921) in Bucharest, at the same time getting involved in wood business on an industrial scale, which ensured him an exceptional financial situation. He also became a Professor at the Faculty of Law of the University of Chernivtsi, and its rector between 1930–1933, teaching Criminal Law as the main subject, but substituting in certain periods for the chair of Political and National Economy or Civil Law⁹⁹.

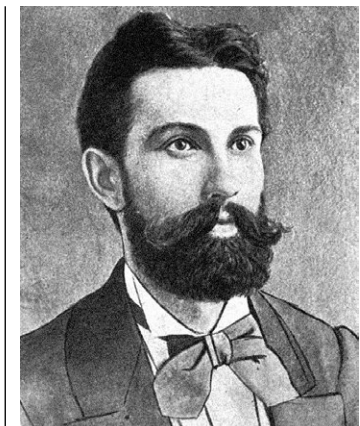
From a political point of view, Isopescu-Grecul was active from 1928 in the National Peasant Party, led by his old friend Iuliu Maniu, with whom he had collaborated in Vienna a decade before. From this position, he was a deputy and then a senator in the Romanian Parliament. He was among those who took a stand against the anti-Semitism promoted in the interwar period by the extremist parties.

98 Cf. „Le Temps”, no. 21237 from 31 August 1919, p. 1.

99 Arh.St.București, *Ministerul Instrucțiunii Publice*, dos. 529/1934, f. 14–15; dos.520/1935, f.8-9 ș.a.; For his academic activity at Cernăuți see: Tarangul, 2016.

He passed away on 29 March 1938, in Chernivtsi. Though he was perceived by his contemporaries as a controversial figure, he was even recognised by his political enemies as a ‘bureaucrat’ trained in the Austrian spirit.

5. Nicolae Densușianu (1846–1911)¹⁰⁰



Born on 18 April 1846 in Transylvania (in Densuș, Hunedoara county), Nicolae Densușianu was one of the four sons of the Greek-Catholic priest Vizantie Pop. Of these, two followed their father’s career (Beniamin and George) and the other two became important names of Romanian culture from the turn of the nineteenth–twentieth centuries.¹⁰¹ Like his older brother Aron (b 1837), Nicolae attended secondary school in Blaj, where he adopted the surname Densușianu, based on his birthplace, to become individualised among the numerous students named Pop.

In fact, many of the intellectuals in Transylvanian Romanian society were enrolled in this school, as Blaj was the headquarters of the Romanian-United (Greek-Catholic) episcopate and a location for the flourishing of Romanian culture and civilisation. Following in Aron’s footsteps, Nicolae studied law at the Law Academy (‘Rechtsakademie’) in Sibiu starting in fall 1865.

Many young Transylvanian people opted for legal studies after 1849 as a reaction to the increasingly liberal attitudes of the provincial elite. In fact, the career of a lawyer or notary became one of the most sought-after professions in the era, a specific aspect of modernising societies. In addition, attending an ‘academy’ or a law school constituted a somewhat convenient path, which did not require some specific intellectual vocation, but it meant a university degree, which confirmed a social status and opened prospects for advancement. Moreover, these graduates were increasingly in demand to defend new types of interests, from the legal and economic affairs of various state or private institutions to those of individuals, being a clientele profession. Not by chance, the ever-increasing influx of young people to legal studies in old Hungary was perceived by contemporaries as a ‘degree malady’¹⁰².

100 Nicolae Densușianu, Romanian ethnologist and collector, in: unknown author, Nicolae Densușianu (1846–1911), public domain, source of the picture: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nicolae_Densu%C8%99ianu#/media/File:NicolaeDensușianu.jpg.

101 Antonescu, 1974; Lazăr, 1995–1997.

102 Apáthy, 1912, p. 25.

As a law school student, Nicolae Densușianu had remarkably good results¹⁰³, which led to tuition exemption, and more so as his father had died in 1857. In this context, he arrived in Bucharest in the summer of 1867 to apply for a scholarship at the recently founded Academic Society (soon to become the Romanian Academy). The application was successful and the scholarship granted for the academic year 1867–68 helped him to complete his studies, graduating on 20 July 1869.

As the focus of this text is to discuss Nicolae Densușianu as a theorist of an integration formula in Central Europe, we will have to dwell more on his period as a student of the Law Academy in Sibiu, because now we are witnessing a special interest in this direction, particularly with his publishing in 1868 a long and consistent study on *The Romanian People within a Federation [Poporul roman în federațiune]*¹⁰⁴.

Nicolae Densușianu's student years actually coincide with a genuinely liberal era in the history of Transylvania after the revolution of 1848/1849. The horizon of political activism opened up for the Romanians here, obviously stimulated by the fact that the Transylvanian Diet held its meetings in Sibiu between 1863–1865, and there – among other things – adopted laws regarding the equality of rights of the three nations, Romanian, Hungarian and German. It is also the reason why a good part of the Hungarian deputies boycotted the works of the Diet. They wanted the adoption of a Nationalities Law that would proclaim the unitary and indivisible character of the Hungarian political nation. In these circumstances, the Court in Vienna would dissolve the Diet of Sibiu, annulling all its decisions, and in February 1867 they reached a compromise (*Ausgleich*) with the Hungarians, thus giving birth to the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy¹⁰⁵.

In this new formation they still functioned almost like two distinct states, sharing only foreign policy, an army, and economic life, and the Emperor of Vienna also becoming King of Hungary. In this way, the autonomy of almost half a century of Transylvania disappeared when it was declared part of Hungary, including populations of other nationalities in these circumstances. The non-Hungarians were not only disappointed by the attitude in Vienna, they were especially dissatisfied with their inclusion in the reborn Hungarian kingdom in this manner. This was exacerbated by the preparation of laws regarding the union and nationalities in the Parliament of Pest.¹⁰⁶ These laws were adopted at the end of 1868, generating reactions particularly from the Romanians and Serbians.

In this context, Romanians like Aron Densușianu began adopting the passive strategy of non-participation in official Hungarian political life. This would be the *grosso modo* context in which two periodicals, 'Federațiunea' and 'Albina', were published in Pest, functioning as means of expressing of the Romanians in the Diet of Pest, but also of Romanians from western Transylvania. It was not by chance,

103 Cf. Istrati, 1913, p. VIII.

104 Densușianu, 1868.

105 Evans, 2006; Deák, 2008.

106 See Gidó, Horváth and Pál, 2010.

then, that the abovementioned study by Nicolae Densusianu was published in the periodical with the suggestive title 'Federațiunea' (*The Federation*) from 15 January 1868 to 12 March 1876, with Alexandru Roman as owner and main editor. Roman was a former Professor of Romanian language and literature at the University of Pest, and from 1865 occupied a deputy seat in the Parliament of the capital of Hungary¹⁰⁷. In fact, it was a periodical intended to convey ideas and counter-projects to the recently concluded *Ausgleich*, with many virulently anti-Hungarian articles, which led to many press lawsuits against it¹⁰⁸.

In fact, the article-programme of the newspaper, signed by Alexandru Roman, set as its goal the defence of Romanians' rights against 'injustice and absolutism' which took a constitutional form, at the same time wanting the publication to be a guide in the use of the Romanian language, which is in – a process of consolidation, without 'Germanisms, Hungarianisms and barbarisms'¹⁰⁹, thus promoting the pro-Latin programme of the Transylvanian School movement (in Romanian Școala Ardeleană).

In this context, the article signed by the very young Nicolae Densusianu (at the age of 22 years old), entitled *Poporul român în federațiune* [*The Romanian People within a Federation*], appears quite verbose today, having been written in a Romanian language that was still unconsolidated, especially in terms of spelling. The focus is on establishing a connection between the concept of federalism and the national principle. As it goes without saying, the focus was on the Hungarians and their status in the new state resulting from the 1867 Compromise, while the Romanians were excluded as a people in the percentages in the governing act. This is the reason why, speaking – for instance – about Romanians and Hungarians, as 'neighbouring peoples', Densusianu claimed that only a 'federation' between these 'states and nations' 'will always represent the strongest guarantee for their future'.¹¹⁰

From this perspective, Densusianu appealed to history, presenting the oldest Romanian-Hungarian-Polish ties and alliances, with the resulting benefits for these peoples. Insisting more on Romanian-Hungarian relations, the author denied the idea of the existence in the Middle Ages of vassal relations between Wallachia and Hungary, the old treaties between the two countries being in fact forms of 'federation'.¹¹¹

Although he invoked all kinds of medieval and modern historical sources in support of his assertions, Romanian historiography was almost non-existent at that time, but was especially poor in terms of working with a corpus of documents. In addition, Nicolae Densusianu's training was not only incomplete, but

107 On this topic see Neamțu, 1995.

108 Neamțu, 1978.

109 'Federațiunea'. Jurnal politic, literar, comercial și economic, Pesta, I, 1868, nr. 1 (Wednesday, 3/15 January), p. 1.

110 Densusianu, 1868, p. 449.

111 Ibid. p. 450.

also unrealistic, as was later proven in his historiographical production discussed below.

Divided into segments published in four newspaper issues, Nicolae Densușianu's text was designed as it progressed, which is why it sometimes lacked coherence. However, the author feels the need to dismantle some prejudices of Hungarians regarding Romanians, especially in the matter of 'trust'.

Appealing to history again, the author seeks to prove the fact that the Romanians did not show 'perfidy and violation of friendship with their neighbours', keeping their 'covenants', which were, however, violated by the kings of Poland and Hungary,¹¹² based on the examples convenient to the demonstration.

However, history also provides arguments according to which one can speak in Transylvania of the existence of a 'Romanian-Hungarian federation', '*a federation based on the principle of national sovereignty*'. The problems with the Romanians started when '*Hungary, which was built on a federative basis, enters an absolutist feudal state*', the dualist pact meaning a '*violation of the national treaties concluded both with Hungary and with the Habsburg house*'.¹¹³

Therefore, the best political system to 'ensure the freedom of the nations under the Habsburg scepter' would be '*a constitution removed from the federative consensus*', which would bring other peoples together on a footing of full equality, withdrawing Hungary's prerogatives over Transylvania¹¹⁴.

Referring to a previous project of a 'Danube Confederation', promoted by the Hungarian revolutionaries from 1848/49 and shared up to a point by the Romanians, Nicolae Densușianu shows the limits and causes of its failure, because in fact the benefits would also return to the leaders of Pest. Because of this, the Hungarians did not obtain the adhesion of the other nations. Further, the project of the Austro-Hungarian 'compromise' created the framework for 'civil struggles between nations', which '*only through a federative consensus can be united under one and the same Habsburg house*'. Concluding as it were, a 'reconciliation' of Romanians with Hungarians could only be done through a federation.¹¹⁵

Although the context in 1867 could have been a stimulating framework for Romanians to rethink a possible state formula for Central Europe, the proposals were not strong enough and not at all articulated within the 'Federațiunea' newspaper. Only Nicolae Densușianu's text – cited above – was outstanding, through dimensions and historical arguments, but focused on the perspective of rivalry with the Hungarians. On the other hand, the misunderstandings between Romanian politicians in Transylvania ('activists' and 'passivists') and confessional dissensions (Greek-Catholics vs. Greek-Orthodox) prevented the formulation of some projects

112 Ibid. nr. 115 (Saturday, 3/15 August), p. 455.

113 Ibid. nr. 122 (Tuesday, 20 August /1 September), p. 481.

114 Ibid. p. 482.

115 Ibid. nr. 123 (Thursday, 22 August /3 September), pp. 487–488.

with a chance of being realised together with the Hungarians, which would have generated stability for the Central European space.

However, we must note that although Nicolae Densușianu's text approached the idea of a federation at least conceptually, as a solution for the organisation of a part of Central Europe, the theoretical foundations of such a state-type union remained for this author only at an undeveloped stage. Even so, over time, Romanian historiography almost did not mention this feeble contribution, which nevertheless offered solutions for coexistence between the important nations of the region, Densușianu becoming known especially for his largely fanciful historiographical constructions which today are unusable. In fact, in the very year of the publication of the study mentioned above, Nicolae Densușianu also published his first study of comparative mythology, with reference to Romanians, in the magazine 'Familia', to which he had started to collaborate with poems since 1866.

This is why his later bio-bibliography was devoid of any reference to the subject of federalisation, leaving only his passion for history to speak about Romanian-Hungarian-Austrian-Polish relations. In 1869, he graduated from the Faculty of Law in Sibiu and became a notary in Făgăraș, where his brother Aron Densușianu was a lawyer, later also taking the necessary exams for the same profession. Thus, Nicolae Densușianu was recognised as a lawyer on 23 October 1873 in Târgu Mureș.¹¹⁶ In the same year, Aron Densușianu – who was also a member of the Făgăraș municipal council – was investigated and sent to court for disturbing the public peace at the Royal Court in Târgu Mureș and held in preventive detention for a month (21 October – 20 November 1873), a process that had a rich echo in the press, ending only in 1878. In fact, in the context of his imprisonment, part of the Romanian press in Transylvania – the newspapers 'Federațiunea', 'Albina' and 'Gazeta Transilvaniei' – published a famous letter, 'Sofia, mother of the Densușianu men'.

After a short legal activity at Tabula Regia in Târgu Mureș, Nicolae Densușianu together with his brother will open a legal practice in Brașov at the end of 1873. From now Aron also carried out a rich cultural activity, editing, among other things, the newspaper 'Orientul Latin', which appeared from February 1874 to the end of September 1875, and to which Nicolae also collaborated¹¹⁷.

Nicolae Densușianu moved to Bucharest in April 1877 and received Romanian citizenship in less than a year. His degrees were recognised and he consequently became a member of the Ilfov county lawyer's bar. Aron Densușianu crossed the mountains in 1881, settling in Iași in Moldova, where he became a Professor of Latin literature at the University.

In the very year of settling in Romania, Nicolae Densușianu published together with Frédéric Damé an ethnographic work, *L'element latin en Orient. Les Roumains du Sud*¹¹⁸, with the obvious aim of contributing to an impressive image of the new

116 Istrati, 1913, p. XII.

117 Antonescu, 2010.

118 Densușianu and Damé, 1878.

modern Romanian state. Although founded in 1859, the history of Romania is older, with Latin-speaking people spread over a good part of the Balkans and able to constitute a barrier between East (Ottoman Empire) and the civilised West.

At the same time, the Romanian Academy entrusted him with the mission of researching the archives and libraries in Hungary in 1878–1879. He spent fifteen months finding and collecting documents related to Romanian history, a mission completed with an extremely detailed Report.¹¹⁹ The period in which he studied the archives in Transylvania, discovering an impressive number of documents related to the 1784 Horea's Uprising, was later captured in the *Memoirs* of Francisc Hossu Longin, in whose house in Deva Densușianu resided for a long time¹²⁰.

In these circumstances, Nicolae Densușianu was elected a corresponding member of the Romanian Academy on 15/27 April 1880, in order to replace Ioan Bianu in the position of archivist-librarian of this institution. The position was offered from the fall of that year until 1884. The latter, a decade younger than Densușianu, was also a Greek-Catholic from Transylvania and had also undertaken secondary education in Blaj. He also later settled in Bucharest, where he was entrusted with the management of the Academy's Library in 1884, later leaving for specialisation at universities in Western Europe, to later become a professor at the University of Bucharest.

At the intervention of Ion Brătianu (the leader of the Liberal Party), Nicolae Densușianu was appointed on 10 March 1884 as a translator at the General Headquarters of the Army¹²¹ and later became its librarian and head of office. It was a rather comfortable position that allowed him to work until the end of his life on several historiographical projects that were much appreciated in the period, although his volumes did not use the methodological rigors specific to the period. However, his works related to Horea's Uprising in Transylvania and Hungary were appreciated (*Revoluțiunea lui Horea în Transilvania și Ungaria*¹²²), then awarded by the Romanian Academy. He also published *Monumente pentru istoria Țării Făgărașului*,¹²³ [Monuments for the history of the County of Făgăraș], a collection of documents. In 1887, he began publishing a corpus of documents regarding the history of the Romanians, made up of six volumes totalling almost five thousand printed pages, in the famous series initiated by Eudoxiu Hurmuzachi.

Naturally, he also dealt with military history,¹²⁴ but above all, he left to posterity an impressive volume entitled *Dacia preistorică* [*Prehistoric Dacia*]. Although he had begun writing the volume as early as 1885, it was published two years after his

119 Densușianu, 1880.

120 Longin, 1975.

121 Istrati, 1913, p. XX.

122 Densușianu, 1884; Teodor, 1984.

123 Densușianu, 1885.

124 Densușianu, 1912; a manuscript of his was also published posthumously about *Istoria militară a poporului român*, ed. I. Oprișan, București, Edit. Saeculum I.O., 2018, 463 p.

death,¹²⁵ which occurred on 24 March 1911. At the same time, in addition to several studies published in specialised periodicals, Nicolae Densușianu had the ‘Rumänien’ column in ‘Jahresberichte der Geschichtswissenschaft’, where he published between 1885–1904 reports on Romanian historiographical activity.¹²⁶

Therefore, Nicolae Densușianu’s documentary discoveries from the research period in Old Hungary (1878–1879) were the basis of several of his works. At the same time, the discovery of the original act of the ‘union’ of the Orthodox Church with Rome later generated a media polemic between him and the scholar-priests from Blaj on this topic.

125 Densușianu, 1913.

126 Iancu, 2011.

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Theories of Central European Integration in Croatian Politics and Culture (1848–1971)

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ABSTRACT

This chapter presents authors involved in Croatian politics and culture between 1848 and 1971 who advocated for Central European integration. In discussing these figures, we examine Austro-Slavism, Croatian-Hungarian unionism, efforts to create the Danube confederation (1918–1945), and the state of Central Europe during the Cold War before the crucial events of the 1980s. After the revolutionary year of 1848 shook the traditional constitutional ties between Croatia and Hungary, Austro-Slavism appeared and offered an alternative to the old Croatian-Hungarian unionism. Austro-Slavism sought to connect the Croats with other West Slavic and South Slavic peoples on the principles of linguistic and ethnic bonds, attempting to form a new political alliance on a different basis than that with the Hungarians. Different forms of Slavism, including Croatian and Hungarian nationalism, led to conflicts between Croats and Hungarians especially in 1848, but the Croatian-Hungarian settlement of 1868 revived the Croatian-Hungarian union, which had suddenly been broken in 1848. After the breakdown of the Monarchy, Emperor Charles I advocated for the restoration of the Habsburg Monarchy. As he failed to attain the Hungarian throne in 1921, his plans remained unfulfilled. A little later, his successor, the Archduke Otto von Habsburg, revived interest in the Danube confederation as a response to Hitlerism and Stalinism and its expansionism towards Central Europe and attempted to lobby the American and British establishments in favour of a Central European confederalism. These initiatives generated interest in Croatia, which was to be integrated into the project. Among those who paid closest attention to the plans were Catholic and conservative groups in exile because the Danube Confederation was to be formed on the basis of anticommunism and anti-sovietism. Due to the contest between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia in 1948, certain circles of Croatian emigration stopped writing about the idea of a Central European Danube confederation and began to place their expectations on the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the creation of an independent Croatian state. However, the Prague Spring of 1968 and next the Croatian Spring in communist Yugoslavia brought back interest in Central European issues among Croatian emigrant circles. Already in the early 1970s, it was speculated that the Eastern Communist bloc would not be able to survive the blows of the Central European nations' national movements. The political right and left in Croatia during the second half of the 20th century were fiercely divided over Central European integration. While the right advocated for an independent Croatian state, which would have been open to Central European integration, the left wanted to see Croatia as an integral part of the Yugoslav state and the Balkan region. Unfortunately, due to the limited scope of the chapter, several important issues

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could not be discussed, such as the relationship between Croatian President Franjo Tuđman and the Visegrad Group in the 1990s during the time of democratic Croatia.

KEYWORDS

Central European Integration, Austro-Slavism, Croatian-Hungarian Unionism, Danube Confederation, Milan Šufflay, J. Josip Strossmayer, Ivo Lendić.

1. Vision of Austro-Slavism

One of the distinctive ideas related to Central European integration that strongly characterised Croatian political culture in the 19th century was undoubtedly the project called Austro-Slavism, though it was not an original idea in the wider context of Croatian political life at the time. Still, this conception left a significant impact on the formulation of Croatian policy, especially during the turning point of 1848. The Croatian version of Austro-Slavism was an attempt to distance itself from the old union with Hungary; it is thus no coincidence that precisely with the Croatian political elite's adoption of Austro-Slavism in 1848, Croatian-Hungarian relations reached their lowest point. Thus, the state-legislative alliance between Zagreb and Pest was interrupted for the first time in its long history.

Among the main proponents of German romanticism was Johan G. von Herder (1744–1803), who made a decisive contribution to the emergence of Austro-Slavism in his well-known work *Outlines of a Philosophy of the History of Man*. He advocated Slavic genius among Germans and all of Europe of his time, wholly believing in the special historical mission of the Slavic peoples and attempting to persuade his contemporaries that the bright future of European culture would precisely belong to them. An idealised imaginary of the Slavs he designed in the German culture thus created the conditions for the later rise of Slavic or Slavophile ideology, one of the versions of which was Austro-Slavism. Herder's influence on the interpreters of Slavism such as Kollar, Pallacky, and Borovsky is unquestionable, but through them also on the entire Croatian national movement in the 1830s and 1840s.¹

The Austro-Slavist idea wished to integrate into its own programme the reconciliation of Austrian monarchism with the modern national movements of the Slavic nations. After the emancipation through the cultural regeneration of the first half of the 19th century, the Slavic nations were looking for a step further in terms of their further political emancipation by means of Austro-Slavism. This eminently Slavic movement expressed its loyalty to the Habsburg Monarchy, expecting that only by relying on it they could defend themselves against Great German nationalism from the outside and Great Hungarian nationalism from the inside. New ideas inevitably came to life in the Monarchy after the French Revolution, which were calculated to change its political order.

This Slavistic ideology kept pace with other reforms in the Habsburg Empire, such as the political system in the sense of extending political rights to non-nobles,

1 Ivanišin, 1963, p. 211.

economic reforms in the direction of building a capitalist economy, as well as the overall strengthening of the national cultures of the Slavs and other peoples. It was quite clear that the Monarchy needed to be internally reformed in order to stand the test of the new times, primarily the national idea that was dominant in European life of the 19th century. Austro-Slavism was thus offered as a solution for reforming and modernising an old state on behalf of the interests of the Slavic nations.

Considering the Slavic element had the largest share of the population, the improvement of its political status was an imperative in the age of democracy. It thus wanted to bind the Habsburg dynasty and the Slavic nations by fate so that in the future, this would become a new political formula for the development and maintenance of the vitality of the Monarchy. Austro-Slavism was actually a joint Slavic response committed by the Slavic peoples of the Monarchy, primarily Czechs, Croats, Slovaks, Poles, Slovenes, Ukrainians (Rusyns), and Serbs. On one hand, there was a confrontation to centralise the Monarchy by the German ruling minority gathered around dynasty, and on the other hand, an effort to neutralise Hungarian nationalism in the Kingdom of Hungary. As far as external circumstances, almost all of the preachers of Austro-Slavism agreed that the small Slavic peoples needed the Monarchy in order not to become victims of the expansionism of their far bigger neighbours, the imperialist-ambitious Germans and Russians. This was the *raison de être* of Austro-Slavism according to the interpretations of many Austro-Slavists because the Great-German project in 1848 intended to integrate the whole of the Monarchy with Prussia, whilst Russia, no matter how attractive its Slavic bonds, was not sympathetic due to its anti-liberal despotism.

The epicentre of Austro-Slavism was situated in the 19th-century Czech lands where a national movement had developed, followed by a prosperous economy and culture. The less-developed Croats thus took this as their political, cultural, and social model. In 1848, the National Party (*narodnjaci*) adopted the idea of Czech Austro-Slavism and used it to articulate its own policy in their relations with Austria and Hungary.² The Austro-Slavist concept and Slavic orientation generally speaking was ideally attached to the central party's programme of political, financial, and cultural emancipation from the Kingdom of Hungary. From the Czech perspective, Austro-Slavism was turned against Germanism and German political and cultural hegemony over the Czech historical lands, while for Croats and Slovaks, it was an instrument against growing Hungarian nationalism. In addition, Austro-Slavism was also an expression of a broader phenomenon of Czech and Croatian liberalism in the revolutionary year of 1848, which not only created political changes but also social ones in the Habsburg Monarchy.

These conceptions were accepted by the Croatian national revivalists through mutual cooperation with the leaders of the Czech and Slovak national movement, as they were by Czech historians and writers like František Palacki and Karel

| 2 Šidak, 1973, pp. 51–52. |

Havliček Borovski, and Slovak cultural figures such as linguist Josef Šafarik and writer Jan Kollar. Not surprisingly, Prague and Zagreb were the centres of Austro-Slavist thought, where Czechs and Croats dreamed up the reorganisation of the Monarchy. Such a reorganisation was to suppress the Hungarian factor in the new constellation and so affirm the political power of Slavic nations according to the democratic principle, as their population significantly exceeded that of the Hungarian and Germans in the Empire.

Thus, there was a collision of historical and natural law in the relationship between Hungarian nationalism and (Austro)Slavistic nationalism, considering Hungarian nationalism relied on historical rights contained in the institutions of the Kingdom of Hungary. The appeal of the Austro-Slavists to language and nationality was also not favourably viewed by the historicism and legitimism of the dynasty and the Viennese administrative centre of the Empire. One of the huge obstacles to the possible realisation of the Austro-Slavic vision and the connection of the Slavic peoples into a single political entity was the territorial discontinuity between the West Slavic and South Slavic territories in the Monarchy.

A series of distinguished Croatian politicians and cultural activists around 1848, first and foremost Ljudevit Gaj (1809–1872), Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski, Dragojlo Kušlan, Bogoslav Šulek, and even forthcoming leaders like Josip J. Strossmayer and Franjo Rački, stood for the very popular Austro-Slavistic ideas. The great personality of the Croatian forty-eight movement, Ljudevit Gaj, paradoxically brought his Slavic and Austro-Slavistic conceptions from Pest, the cultural centre of the very beginnings of the Slavic romantic movement. He was educated and lived in Pest in the 1820s, and the true Slavic national renaissance took place there during those years.³ In particular, these ideas were expressed in the journal *Slavenski jug* and at the society *Društvo Slavenska lipa na Slavenskom jugu* in Zagreb in those revolutionary days of the notable 1848, which were edited and organised by Dragojle Kušan.⁴ The peak of these trends was the attendance of Croatian politicians at the Slavic Congress in Prague in 1848, at which, according to Šidak, there was an attempt to politically concretise an excessively abstract pan-Slavic idea by way of the Austro-Slavist political programme for the first time⁵

The external surroundings were no less important for understanding the development of the Austro-Slavist programme. There were the menacing winds from the West and the East – the ever-present Great German and Great Russian expansionism towards the Monarchy and its nations. Unlike the Poles, the Czechs, Slovaks, and Croats had certain Russophile sentiments related to pan-Slavistic ideas, but they still adhered to more realistic political concepts, which is why they are their famous ‘Slavic solidarity’ (*slavenska uzajamnost*) would lean on Austria and the Habsburg dynasty.

3 Šokčević, 2006, p. 63.

4 Markus, 2009, p. 197.

5 Šidak, 1960, p. 217.

The structure of the Russian state with the absolutist rule of the emperor was another reason for the Slavic liberals' caution towards Russia: the Russian brutal suppression of the Polish uprising in 1830 was still fresh in their memories. In the same manner, pleading for pan-Slavism could discredit the Slavic leaders before the authorities of the Monarchy because it might have meant a flirtation with Moscow imperialism, which was always ready to threaten the interests of the Monarchy and its very existence in the case that Slavic nations answered the Russian pan-Slavist call.

Insisting on the federalisation of the Monarchy, the Austro-Slavist movement tried to suppress the long-term centralism and absolutism of the Viennese centre, which did not abate from the end of the eighteenth to the first part of the 19th century. Federalism of free and equal peoples was the main *credo* of the Austro-Slavist programme. Likewise, it appeared as a movement against the new Hungarian policy to create a modern Hungarian national state from the historical Kingdom of Hungary. An even greater threat came from the German world, where the Great-German idea expressed at the Frankfurt Parliament in 1848 was about to attract the Austrian lands.

Austro-Slavism became the ideology of the Croatian national movement in the revolution of 1848, led by the then-larger current of Croatian politics, the ex-Illyrians, now called the National Party (*narodnjaci*). The National Party was the dominant power in the Croatian Parliament of 1848. At the session on 5 June 1848, Article XI enacted by the same Parliament stated that it supported the creation of a federalised monarchy in accordance with the Austro-Slavist plans.⁶ At the June and July sessions of the Parliament, the orders of the 'ban and dictator' Josip Jelačić were adopted to declare the political autonomy and territorial integrity of the Triune Kingdom of Croatia, Dalmatia, and Slavonia, which meant to be separated from Hungary and connected with the Austrian constitutional lands.⁷

Thus, Jelačić's military intervention in Hungary could be considered from the viewpoint of this Austro-Slavistic ideology, and not only as his military loyalty to the ruler. That ideology of the Croatian national movement from 1848 created an atmosphere of staunch anti-Hungarian resentment across Croatian lands, most clearly shown in the military conflict and the collapsing of state-legislative relations with Hungary in 1848. The same ideology offered a proposal for modernising the old monarchy, which still functioned on medieval principles and norms. The emphasis on the linguistic and ethnic criteria in the redefinition of the Habsburg Monarchy ran counter to the historical constitutionalism and legitimism. Thus, Austro-Slavism also had revolutionary intentions in the remaking of the Monarchy.⁸

Dragojlo Kušlan (1817–1867) was one of the main Croatian theorists of Austro-Slavism. He gave a speech at the Slavic Congress in Prague in 1848 in which he stated that federalism should have linguistic-ethnic foundations, with a single

6 Džoić, 1999, p. 415.

7 Markus, 2009, p. 189.

8 Šidak, 1973, p. 72.

parliament for the entire state in charge of the common affairs of the army, foreign trade, and finances. According to Kušlan's ideas, the state would thus convert to a constitutional monarchy and the Croatian Kingdom would enter a close alliance with Vojvodina and the Slovenian lands.⁹

Without a doubt, this slowly eroded the traditional political alliance of Hungarians and Croats built on the historical constitution that had been formed organically over the centuries. The real essence of Austro-Slavism consisted, at least in the Croatian case, as an anti-Hungarian policy which, if not openly at first, later certainly paved the way for the destruction of the old Croatian-Hungarian unionism. Naturally, this provoked upheavals in other parts of the monarchy. Because of this, Vienna was wary of Austro-Slavism, since it set out to thoroughly re-evaluate the traditional structures on which the Monarchy itself rested. Thus, Austro-Slavism appeared as a revolutionary idea in the spirit of a revolutionary time. Once the Viennese reaction defeated the revolution in 1849, it triumphantly proclaimed an utterly centralistic constitution called the March Constitution. However, this would be only a provisory act promulgated by the monarch himself, which paved the way for Neo-Absolutism in the 1850s.

Thus, the strong resistance in Croatia to the national movement and its pan-Slavism, which relied on linguistic and ethnic relations, is understandable. As a final consequence, this could have caused the breaking of relations with Hungary and the formation of a new political entity with the West Slavic or South Slavic peoples of the Monarchy. The promoter of resistance to such a political course was represented by the Croatian-Hungarian Party. It was decisive to defend the old traditional constitutionalism and the historical ties between Croats and Hungarians, which will be discussed in the next subchapter on Croatian-Hungarian unionism.

The March Constitution in 1849 enacted by the very young ruler Franz Joseph I dispelled all possible illusions about the reconciliation of the Austrian idea with the Slavism. This also brought a great political resignation to Croatia, standing on the side of Vienna and the military assistance of Croatian troops against the revolution in Hungary and Austria did not bring any political profit. The Croatian political movement of 1848 experienced great disappointment when realised that Austro-Slavism served only as a means to cement even more the absolutism and Viennese centralism after the downfall of the revolution. It was no different with other Slavic nations, anti-Austrian sentiment began to intensify in the 1850s and 1860s, especially after the settlement of the Emperor with the Hungarians in 1867. Thus, Gaj and Kukuljević, take part and prepare the Slavic pilgrimage to Moscow in 1867, but the two most prominent members of the National party and (South) Slavic orientation, Rački and Strossmayer, yet were not present there it was not opportune for them.¹⁰ On the pilgrimage appeared some remarks that Croatia could be able to count on tsarist Russia after the installation of dualism.

9 Šidak, 1981, p. 220.

10 Prelog, 1931, pp. 280-282.

Alexander Bach's neoabsolutist regime in the 1850s once again put Croatian politics back on the track of restoring relations with the Hungarians, which will get its culmination in the conclusion of the Croatian-Hungarian settlement in 1867. It turned out that the only way to defend Croatian political autonomy lead to an agreement with the Hungarians on the basis of historical law and ancient constitutionalism. Despite of this, the National party in the post-1848 period accepted the Yugoslav/South Slavic ideology as a substitute for the failed hopes of Austro-Slavism, to which Strossmayer and Rački stand out. They had been reviving the National Party and its old programme of 1848. Since 1861 they conducted their strategy on the Austro-Slavistic foundations, declared for the federalisation of the Monarchy and thought of a practical trialism between Austria, Hungary and Croatia.¹¹



1.1. Strossmayer and Austro-Slavism

As a bishop and priest by his own vocation, Josip Juraj Strossmayer (1815–1905)¹² presented a specific criticism of the Great Austrian centralism. Speaking against the centralism of the regime he believed that an overly centralised government with a lot of power and competences did not correspond to the nature of a true Christian state, rather that it was suitable for pagan states and societies. Strossmayer thought that federalism is much closer to the organisation of the state on Christian virtues. This was why Strossmayer also embraced Austro-Slavist idea, his programme was 'Croatian state autonomy

and territorial integrity of Croatian lands within the federalist reorganized Monarchy'. He also inherited the anachronistic idea of Austria as defender of Catholicism from the early modern age when it had been defending Catholic Europe against Protestantism and Turkish invasion. It is not strange that he trusted to the past and future 'divine mission' of the Monarchy.¹³

According to the bishop of Djakovo, the Austrian idea politically protected small Slavic nations from powerful neighbours, but not only that Austria also promoted interests of the Catholic Church in Central and South-eastern Europe, given the special relations between the dynasty and the papacy. For Strossmayer, the religious interests of the Catholic Church and the political demands for the federalisation of the Monarchy was very compatible. The prelate thought that it would

11 Džoić, 1999, p. 404.

12 Josip Juraj Strossmayer, Croatian politician, Roman Catholic bishop and benefactor, in: old Croatian book, public domain, source of the picture: https://hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Josip_Juraj_Strossmayer#/media/F%C3%A1jl:Josip_Juraj_Strossmayer2.jpg.

13 Markus, 2012, pp. 69–72.

be able to realise its own 'divine mission' in future times only if it was capable of reforming by itself and would give up the centralist and absolutist tendencies. Decentralisation and federalisation of the Austrian Empire have no alternative, apart from the fact that centralism is not a reflection of the Christian order, it also carried the hegemony of the Austrian Germans over other nations:

Centralization does not respond to the spirit of justice and the Gospel itself, which commands all people not only in the private life, but even more in the public one: Don't do to others what you don't want to be done to you. Centralization is the predominance and domination of one nationality over another; therefore, it is not freedom, but the real slavery of the underprivileged.¹⁴

However, all of these incentives around the centralisation of the Monarchy, the transformation of historical Hungary into the Hungarian modern state, and the Austro-Slavist federalisation were comprised of the same modernisation impulses. Regardless of the fact that they were opposed to each other in their goals and interests about how to transform the traditional monarchy into a modern state. The radiations coming from Western Europe imposed transformation of it as an imperative. The only question was whether this transformation would take place in a revolutionary or evolutionary way. The conservatism of the monarchical establishment was aware that the *status quo* was unsustainable, and that changes were inevitable to the organism of the state. They adhered to the guiding thought that any changes would be possible only by respecting the current traditional order. Of course, the fear of breaking out new revolutions also pushed them in the direction of urgent modernisation of the state, unreformed institutions did not offer good base for the times to come.

The failure of the revolution in the Monarchy clearly suggested that an evolutionist path would be followed. Yet neo-absolutism of the 1850s indicated that the modernisation of the Monarchy was necessary, even if it was carried out 'from above', under supervision from the Viennese centre with the help of the Emperor and loyal aristocratic, bureaucratic and military forces. The military defeat in Northern Italy in 1859 and the collapse of state budget forced the Viennese regime to abandon centralist and neo-absolutist policies. The dualistic system established by Vienna and the Hungarians in the Austro-Hungarian settlement in 1867 consolidated the state after another military defeat at war with Prussia in 1866. The Prussian victory shook the Monarchy so much threatening with apparent disintegration. It meant an increased danger for the Croats and Hungarians in case that the Austrian lands would become a part of the great German state that would be created on the ruins of the Monarchy. In such unfavourable circumstances, the Croatian political factors had to accept the settlement with Hungary in 1868.

The construction of the dualism led to the final defeat of Austro-Slavism in the politics of the Monarchy. However, the Croatian elites did not accept easily

| 14 Lukas, 1926, p. 16. |

disappearance of Austro-Slavism. Stjepan Radić was the founder of the Croatian peasant movement that would dominate Croatian political life after the First World War. He studied and lived in Praha where was heavily influenced by Tomáš Masaryk and Czech national movement, regarding that Croats and Czechs had to be firmly connected in the common struggle against the dualistic regime, against Wien and Budapest. Then the revival of Austro-Slavism was something rather natural to further Radić's political formation. At the beginning of the political career in 1905 tried to revive some Austro-Slavistic conceptions in the new epoch. By this treatise he wished to offer a solution to Croatian politicians and the intelligentsia in struggle against the dualistic system.¹⁵

The reform of dualism and the federalisation of the Monarchy were again imposed as a solution to the Croatian question, which was particularly important to Stjepan Radić due to his special sympathy for the Czech nation, politics, and culture. He pleaded far more for federalisation than for trialism, which was common among Croats at the time. Besides, trialism would offer the creation of a third unit of the Monarchy by gathering South Slavic countries around Croatian state right (*hrvatsko državno pravo*) (Slovenian countries, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Triune Kingdoms of Dalmatia, Croatia, and Slavonia). His work appeared just after the 1903 crisis of dualism in Hungary, when he felt that he could contribute to the solution of the new political crisis with his schema for a new federalisation.

(Yugo)Slavism arose as a variety of the authentic Austro-Slavist ideology in Croatian politics of post-1848 era. It seems that Austro-Slavism gave a direction that would eventually lead to the disintegration of the Croatian-Hungarian union along with the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. The creation of the Yugoslav state and the abandonment of the Central European integration of the Croatian nation will last from 1918 to 1990, with a brief interruption during the World War II. Thus, paradoxically from the initial desire to stay in the process of the Central European integration through Austro-Slavism, the Croatian lands finally found themselves in a common framework with the Balkan states of Serbia and Montenegro under the guise of the Yugoslav idea.

2. Croatian-Hungarian Unionism

We can also treat Croatian-Hungarian unionism as a form of Central European integration in Croatian political culture that lasted for almost eight centuries in continuity. It tried to redefine itself in the 19th century to be able to face the challenges of the modern era. Unlike modernistic Illyrianism and Austro-Slavism which were invented, Croatian-Hungarian unionism had on its side tradition, legality and the experience of the coexistence of two peoples. Having the traits of traditionalism opposed to Illyrianism and various types of Slavism, from Pan-Slavism

15 Matković, 1993, pp. 125–139.

to Austro-Slavism to Yugoslavism, which belonged to the domain of revolutionary theories. Just like the agenda of Croatian liberals, Magyarisation policy of the Hungarian liberals over non-Hungarian communities could be qualified as revolutionary alike. The revolutionary exaggerations of Hungarian and Croatian liberalism badly shook the later relations between Hungarians and Croats.

The threat of Viennese absolutism got closer the Croatian and Hungarian nobility to cooperate even more from the end of the 18th century. At the time of Illyrianism of 1830s Croats did not seek models for their national movement from the Czechs as much as they did from the Hungarians.¹⁶ Some of the most prominent Croatian politicians of that time such as Ljudevit Gaj, and Ante Starčević and Josip J. Strossmayer were educated in Pest and grew up in the Hungarian world, regardless of the fact that they all expressed anti-Hungarian attitudes lately.¹⁷ The question of the introduction of the Hungarian language into Croatian lands and the abandonment of the neutral Latin language in public life brought the first germs of a conflict that would escalate in the military conflict between Croats and Hungarians in 1848. Croats could not accept the transformation of multinational Hungary into a modern Hungarian national state. In order to protect themselves they sought support among the Slavic world as an objectively weaker side in this national contest. The rupture of the state-legislative relations between the Triune Kingdom of Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia and Hungary reached the lowest point in the historical relations of these two nations so Croatian-Hungarian unionism would also disappear temporarily (1848–1868).

Croatian-Hungarian unionism was not based on language and ethnic element as was the case with Austro-Slavism but on the constitution and historical law. All the drama of the Croatian political scene consisted of disagreements over these two integrations based on different starting points of naturalism and historicism, 'nationality' and 'constitutionality'. Because of this dilemma, Croatian modern politics was in conflict between Slavophiles and Magyarophiles, between linguistic and constitutional-historical approaches regarding the Croatian national question. In the period of Schmerling's centralism in the first half of the 1860s, the National Party split into two currents, when one of its faction prioritised constitutionalism over nationalism and thus switched to the unionist side.¹⁸ The motto of the leader of the National party and Austro-Slavists Ljudevit Gaj was following: '*may God live the constitution of Hungary, the kingdom of Croatia and the Illyrian nation*'. It could sound paradoxical, because no matter how much Gaj and his like-minded people thought about the vague constructions of Illyrianism and pan-Slavism, the real political autonomy of the Three Kingdoms was found in the 'constitution of Hungary' of which they were aware very well.¹⁹

16 Šokčević, 2006, pp. 60–61.

17 Ibid. p. 50.

18 Šidak, 1972, pp. 91–92.

19 Kolak Bošnjak, 2012, p. 105.

Illyrianism appeared as a cultural, linguistic and literary movement in the Croatian environment from the 1830s, but it also showed political ambitions very soon. This particularly frightened the Croatian Magyarophiles, who thought that Gaj and his associates were working to create a separate ‘Illyrian’ or South Slavic state which would have been separated from Hungary. Such a state would mean that the Hungarians would be surrounded by the Slavic political entity from all sides. Later, prominent unionist Levin Rauch warns of the revolutionary mark of the Illyrian movement and pan-Slavist connections in Russia and Serbia, which supposedly work in a conspiracy to overthrow the existing order in the Monarchy and Hungary.²⁰ The main political party that defended the traditional alliance between Croatia and Hungary was the Croatian-Hungarian Party (*Horvatsko-vugerska stranka*) founded in 1841. The members of it dominantly originated from the noble class, although they also had adherents among bourgeois class and peasant nobility (Turopolje municipality).²¹

All of them used privileges of the Croatian-Hungarian constitution, and therefore any speculation with ‘new ideas’ such as Illyrianism and Slavism was out of the question. Like their Illyrian opponents, they also defended the autonomy of the Croatian Kingdom within Hungary but contrary to them they did not question the Croatian-Hungarian union outside of political system. Admittedly, there was a general consensus of the Magyarophiles and the Slavophiles about the autonomy of the Croatian Kingdom, both saw it as the continuation of the medieval Croatian Kingdom.²² However, there was a nuance here as well the Illyrians insisted that Hungary and Croatia were to be equal states, while the Magyarophiles were ready to accept the subordinate status of the autonomy of the Croatian Kingdom within Hungary.²³ Despite the fact that Jelačić and the National party were in power, the Magyarophile movement still existed in Croatia in 1848 and 1849, and some of the prominent members, such as Antun Danijel Josipović, Koloman Bedeković, Josip Brigljević, Aurel Kušević, sided with the Hungarian revolution and ended up in Hungarian exile as political refugees.²⁴

The Unionist Party in Croatia was established later in 1861 as the successor of this old party. A considerable number of the leading members of the Party were the old ones of the Magyarophile movement such as Levin Rauch, Ljudevit Salopek, Stjepan Pavleković, Aurel Kušević, and others like Mirko Šuhaj, Mirko Bogović, Robert Zlatarović, Ivan Nepomuk II. Erdödy, Josip Žuvić, Julije Janković, Lazar Hellenbach i Jovan Živković.²⁵ This was created after the restoration of the political life in 1861, it certainly advocated for a close union with Hungary. Their programme and that of the former Croatian-Hungarian party were almost realised in 1868,

20 Ibid. pp. 103–104.

21 Ibid. p. 91.

22 Ibid. pp. 124–125.

23 Ibid. pp. 129–130.

24 Ibid. pp. 74–75.

25 Kolak Bošnjak, 2021, pp. 48, 51, 52.

when the Settlement was arranged between Croatia and Hungary. The unionists played an important role to implement it. Law theorists tried to give answers to the character of the Settlement, so the main consensus was reached that it was a real union with the important exception that there was hegemony of Hungary under Croatia.²⁶ Oppositional Croatian politics did not reconcile with the dualistic order and the subordination of Croatia but it failed to change neither the settlement nor the dualistic regime more significantly (1868–1918).

2.1. Milan Šufflay – The Last Apologist of the Croatian-Hungarian Unionism

Milan Šufflay (1879–1931)²⁷ was the last significant messenger of the Magyarophile tradition of Croatian politics. No one before him defended this political tradition with such a sophisticated intellectual level as this distinguished historian and nobleman by origin. Šufflay attempted to find a symbiosis of the Croatian-Hungarian state so that the two would continue to live in a common state even if the Monarchy were to collapse. Šufflay's ideas about the Hungarian-Croatian federation were never realised after 1918, but regardless of that, his role in the formulation of Croatian nationalism of an anti-Yugoslav orientation in the interwar period remains indisputable. Šufflay is along with Ivo Pilar and Ante Starčević left a great spiritual influence on the interwar Croatian intelligentsia, both the older generation that rejected Yugoslav idea and the young generation that had just formed since 1929.



He clashed with the Yugoslav nationalism of the Croatian liberal intelligentsia in the last decade of the Monarchy. The most solid criticism of Yugoslavia in the 1920s in Croatian public life thus came from the Magyarophile political tradition of Milan Šufflay. His nostalgia for the Monarchy and the vanished Croatian-Hungarian union resulted in his negative attitude towards the Yugoslav state. Apart from Ivo Pilar, no one among the Croatian intelligentsia presented such an elaborated critique of Yugoslav ideology as Šufflay. Because of all of that, he experienced political persecution in his academic career before and after 1918. His supervisor, the prominent Croatian historian Tadija Smičiklas, supported the young Šufflay, nevertheless they disagreed about Hungarian-Croatian relations for the sake of the Smičiklas' Yugoslavism.²⁸

26 Džoić, 1998, p. 94.

27 Milan Šufflay, Croatian historian and politician, public domain, source of the picture: https://hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Milan_%C5%A0ufflay#/media/F%C3%A1jl:Milan_%C5%A0ufflay.jpg.

28 Stevović, 2021, p. 69.

Šufflay successfully obtained a doctoral thesis in historical sciences at the University of Zagreb in 1901, but later continued his studies in Vienna and Budapest. He worked in Budapest some time as an assistant at the National Museum and taught auxiliary historical sciences at the University of Zagreb (1908–1918). To the end of 1918, he was retired by the new authorities which were preparing Croatia to go into a new alliance with Serbia. Labeled by them as an Magyarophile, was forced to be in the opposition of the Yugoslav state, had contacts with the first Croatian political emigration of pro-Habsburg and pro-Hungarian feelings arose after the dissolution of the Monarchy, it was an emigrant circle in Vienna and Budapest consisting of Ivo Frank, Josip Frank and Pavao Rauch.

The Hungarian historian József Bajza belonged to this circle. He was a colleague and friend of Šufflay and one of the foremost experts of Croatian history in Hungary at the time. Inspired by Šufflay, Bajza addressed with the South Slavic, Croatian, and Montenegrin question. Bajza and Šufflay were like-minded historians and public intellectuals: both expressed regret for the collapse of the Croatian-Hungarian union. Critical of his own national policy, Bajza believed that Hungarians supported the push of Croats into Yugoslavia and the alliance with Serbia. On his opinion, Hungary bore a large part of the burden for the collapse of the centuries-old union of the two nations. Like Šufflay, he secretly hoped for a Habsburg restoration, without which the restoration of the Croatian-Hungarian community would hardly be possible. The entry of the Croatian lands into Yugoslavia meant a break not only with the political tradition of the Croatian-Hungarian union, but also a break with the Latin culture and Central European civilisation.²⁹

It did not take long time for Šufflay to become a target of the Yugoslav regime. At the end of 1920 he was brought before the court on the charge of working for the 'resurrection of Tomislav's state.'³⁰ He unsuccessfully tried to revive his professional career in 1926. He lobbied Maček, his classmate and Stjepan Radić the then Minister of Education, but it was unsuccessful never came back as a professor of history at the University of Zagreb. Meanwhile, Budapest University accepted him to be a professor at the Department of Southeastern European History in 1928, however, as a political enemy, the Yugoslav authorities did not allow him to issue a passport to travel to Hungary.³¹

Šufflay used knowledge from history and then very popular geopolitics in order to publicly and politically prove the unsustainability of the Yugoslav state, as well as the Versailles Treaty in Europe. He regarded that laws of geography determined politics like most of his contemporaries, warning the public life that the Versailles Europe and the Versailles Balkans were in opposition to the main geopolitical laws. To Šufflay's viewpoint, Versailles also reshaped Europe without any consideration for its historical and cultural structures.

29 Stevović, 2021, pp. 70–71.

30 Mortigjija, 1944, p. 3.

31 Antoljak, 1995, p. 138.

The Peace of Versailles took almost no account of geopolitical forces. The peacemakers in Paris were driven primarily by revenge and reward. Only then the self-determination of the nations. Thereby whole of the economic units were destroyed, which harmonious functioning was arranged by the crust of the earth over the centuries. Even today, Europe, especially Central Europe, and of course the Balkans is in a chaotic state. It is not only national disputes, ideas-forces of historical nations and their memory that are working to dismantle the Versailles building, but primarily geopolitical forces.³²

He believed that Croats in Yugoslavia or any other Balkan community would lose the Western orientation that they had developed and preserved during the Croatian-Hungarian union and the Habsburg Monarchy. Only the restoration of the Monarchy and the Croatian-Hungarian Union could bring the Croats back to their lost Western and Central European orientation. Later, Šufflay came closer to the ideology of establishing an independent Croatian state. He saw balkanising effects on the Croatian people due to the rise of Yugoslav nationalism, which conquered the Croatian intelligentsia of his time. He once stated that, *'when those Croatian travelers half-frozen of the Belgrade frost and Russian ice will return one day from their Balkan excursions, they will be warmed themselves by the fire of Western non-Balkan Croatia'*.³³ Šufflay thought that Yugoslav nationalism tried to discredit Croatian autonomy in the Monarchy, claiming that the Croatian-Hungarian settlement and the Monarchy in general was a political evil that needed to be destroyed for the supposedly liberation of the Croatian nation.

In response, Šufflay wrote that the settlement in 1868 recognised the Croats as a 'political people'³⁴ and as well as a subject of international law, while the Triune Kingdom of Croatia, Dalmatia and Slavonia became the national state of the Croats. However, after finishing the Great War the Croatian question ensued to preoccupy European and world politics, as did the national crisis in Yugoslavia itself:

Until the Great World War, even until the collapse of the Danube Monarchy, the political struggle of the Croatian nation was comparatively very simple. It had the armor of their autonomy. Located in a European state, in a monarchy with great and ancient international authority. Huge international concerns and world problems did not reach him through this triple armor. Within his autonomy, the Croats led an idyllic party struggle. As part of its own autonomy, it waged a struggle with Pest for strengthening of it, by no means a mortal struggle for its survival. Today it is completely different. The Croatian nation stand in battle not only without any armor, but naked. It has no autonomy. It is in the Balkan fog, from which the state system has

32 Šufflay, 2000, p. 172.

33 Mortigjija, 1944, p. 3.

34 Šufflay, 2000, p. 84.

yet to be created. The Balkans have always been a European whirlwind. Today it is stronger than ever. This is where the interests of the European superpowers intersect. We are not only looking here through the eyes of the British, Russian and Italian Argus. The gigantic hand of Great Britain and Russia, then the fingers of Italy, are already directly growing there.³⁵

3. The Idea of the Danube Confederation

Aspirations towards broader Central European integration did not disappear in the 20th century, although they were no longer at the centre of the main discussions of Croatian politics. The main debate concerned the creation of an independent Croatian state on the one hand and the maintenance of a common Yugoslav state on the other one. It should be said that many advocates of an independent Croatian state were more or less open to integration with the Central European sphere, which could not be said for the advocates of the Yugoslav state union. Considering the specific geographical position and the Croatian national element in Bosnia and Herzegovina, it was not only seen as a Central European state, but its location was understood to be far more complex. Thus, the political analyst and later Croatian emigrant Milivoj Magdić (1900–1948) when defined foreign policy of any independent Croatian state said it had not only a Central European role, but also an Adriatic and a Balkan role.³⁶

In the first half of the 20th century numerous authors, politicians, publicists and writers and cultural workers in the Croatian public wrote positive reviews about the Austrian period. Dissatisfied with the situation in the Yugoslav state, their nostalgia for the previous period came to the fore more and more. This was especially felt when there was a significant decline of Yugoslav ideology in Croatian political and intellectual culture since 1929. The realisation that even the Yugoslav episode did not resolve the Croatian national question among Croatian elites led to the conclusion of how futile it was to abandon the old political framework. Along with the political crisis, there was also an economic crisis that began to be felt even before the World Economic Crisis (1929–1933) due to the disappearance of the large market of the Monarchy. The frustration was further intensified by the fact that they lost the autonomy they had under the Monarchy and that the Croats won it again with a difficult political struggle only in 1939, when the Banovina Hrvatska was formed. In such an atmosphere, ideas about the Danube confederation, the return of Croatia from the Balkans to Central Europe found fertile ground.

This was especially significant for those political currents that accepted the ideas of an independent Croatian state, while Yugoslav groups and the political left continued to hold Croatia in the Balkan region defending the ideas of a common

³⁵ Ibid. p. 163.

³⁶ Magdić, 2021, p. 147.

Yugoslav state. It is therefore not surprising that the communist movement in Croatia worked on the re-establishment of Yugoslavia during the World War II. The Left were peculiarly anti-Austrian because it considered the Monarchy to be a pillar of European reaction, so all ideas about the restoration were rejected in advance as conservative and reactionary ones. Such a confederation would also stop the penetration of communism into the European continent, which did not suit the Stalinist and Sovietophile Croatian and Yugoslav communists. As a leading figure of the Marxist intelligentsia in Croatia and Yugoslavia, Miroslav Krleža played a major role in the articulation of the anti-Austrian and anti-Habsburg discourse and everything that came from it. Krleža's opus was impregnated for the most part on the demonisation of the Habsburg Monarchy, which later became an important methodology in Croatian culture and historiography during Tito's Yugoslavia.³⁷

As for the Catholic Church in the Croatian lands, it was not united in the Yugoslav orientation of Croatian politics. At the beginning of the creation of Yugoslavia, most parts of the Church supported the creation of a new state, either out of conviction or out of proverbial opportunism. However, as the Church did not have a settled position in the state by a single law because the authorities refused to sign a concordat with the Vatican state in 1937, it increasingly moved in anti-Yugoslav course. Additionally, we should add the cultural war that the Yugoslav regime waged against the Catholic Church since the beginning of the 1920s. Of course, there were never-overcome pro-Habsburg sympathies in the Church, so it is no coincidence that precisely the Catholic groups of the intelligentsia would show the greatest interest to pursue the idea of Danube confederalism during the World War II.

The Archbishop of Sarajevo Josip Stadler (1843–1918) stood out in the defence of the Monarchy at its very end. He opposed the Yugoslav unification with Serbia and Montenegro, demanding the preservation of the Monarchy and respect for the Croatian state law tradition. Stadler realised that the growing Yugoslavism from the First World War as a means of destroying the of the Monarchy and Croatian statehood. Worried about the success of the Yugoslav idea at the expense of the Monarchy for it would seriously threaten the position of the Catholic Church in the southern part of the Monarchy and the Balkans itself. According to Stadler, the Croatian politics had to be conducted on the basis of the state law tradition and to maintain relations with Budapest and Vienna. Giving up the state law tradition and those relations would put the Croatian nation and the Catholic Church in a disastrous position. The pro-Yugoslav movement was extremely harmful to Catholic interests since the Church would not have the same support in the new Yugoslavia as it had in the largest Catholic country in Europe, Stadler inferred. In the state of the South Slavs, the majority of the population would be Orthodox with a significant Muslim minority, as an archbishop in Bosnia and Herzegovina, he was also very afraid of Serbian expansionism if the Monarchy collapsed.³⁸

37 Markus, 1994, pp. 81–98.

38 Kljaić, 2017, p. 63.

The idea to create the Danube Confederation was resurrected again during World War II. Regardless of the fact that it was then a marginal combination of world politics, it remains worth analysing, particularly because since the 1980s, the similar Central European idea was resurrected in the time immediately before the fall of real socialism and the Berlin Wall. The Danube Confederation was closely related to the calculations about the restoration of the Habsburg Monarchy, which was very much alive right after the end of the World War I, proclaimed of by the Emperor Charles I. Instead of the old dualism, a confederalist concept of organising the restored Monarchy was offered. His efforts to ascend the Hungarian throne failed in 1921, as well as his dreams of making the Danube confederation. After the diplomatic pressure of the guardians of the Versailles order, he had to go into exile on the island of Madeira, where he died soon.

His idea of the Danube confederation was later propagated by his son, the Archduke Otto Von Habsburg (1912–2011), who wanted to animate American and British politics led by Franklin D. Roosevelt and Winston Churchill in the World War II.³⁹ The restoration of the Monarchy was offered by Otto von Habsburg when the new structure of Europe was being prepared during and at the end of the World War II.⁴⁰ The Danube confederalism from the Baltic to the Adriatic would include Poland, Hungary, the Czech lands, Slovakia, Croatia, Slovenia and even Bavaria and would be built on anti-communist and anti-Nazi foundations. World War II also showed what atrocities happened across Central Europe which found themselves squeezed between Hitler's Germany and Stalin's Soviet Union. The proposal to create such a confederation could meet with a good response in those countries. However, the subsequent deep penetration of the Soviets into Central Europe and the Soviet occupation made it impossible to form such a confederation.

4. Vinko Krišković, Ivo Lendić, Bonifacije Perović: The Baltic-Adriatic Vertical as an Anti-Communist Bulwark

Echoes of the mentioned initiatives were also felt in Croatia of the 1940s among Catholic and conservative circles. Those circles stood silently in opposition to Pavelić's regime in the Independent State of Croatia and were critical of the unquestionable alliance with Hitler's Germany. As they were anti-communist, they could not even join the partisan movement. After all, they were also against the restoration of the Yugoslav state. Knowing very well that Croatia would not be

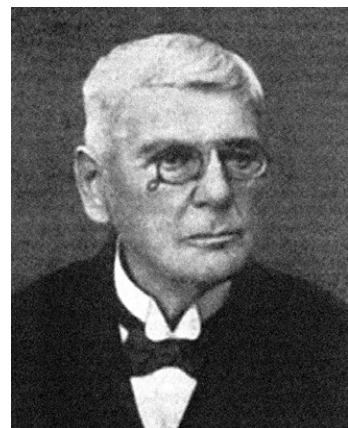
39 The New York Times (1940) Danube Federation Backed by Archduke; Pretender to Austria's Throne Outlines Plan for Unity [Online]. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/1940/03/07/archives/danube-federation-backed-by-archduke-pretender-to-austrias-throne.html> (Accessed: 27 June 2023).

40 Radica, 1982, p. 501.

an independent state in post-war Europe, they hoped for this solution of making the Danube confederation, to which Croatia would join as a member. Thus, the programme of the Danube Confederation seemed to be the ideal way out of the situation regarding the threat of Soviet penetration, the installation of Communism and the reconstruction of Yugoslavia. After penetrating of the Soviets into Central Europe and the coming to power of Tito's communists in Croatia and Yugoslavia, they brought the idea of the Danube confederation into political emigration.

From a long distance, they would try to affirm the Danube confederation in the articles and analyses in the post-war years. Writing about it, they hoped that there could be another war between the Western Allies and Soviets. According to such a scenario, the Western Allies would win, push the Soviets out of Europe, and thus create opportunities to create such a confederation, which then would also include the anti-Soviet and anti-communist Croatia. Regarding Croatian political emigration, difficult moments occurred after 1948, when Tito's regime in Yugoslavia had become an ally of the West after Stalin's expulsion of Yugoslav communists from the international communist movement. This event made it clear that Yugoslavian communism would not collapse as they wished, but since then it also had the support of Western politics. That eliminated any possibility that Croatia could find itself in the anti-Soviet Danube confederation. Although it was not real anymore, yet the idea of the Central European orientation of Croatia remained to live in the Croatian emigrant and dissident culture up to the Fall of the Berlin Wall.

Vinko Krišković (1862–1951)⁴¹, a professor of law at the University of Zagreb, found himself in emigration after 1945. Before the dissolution of the Monarchy, adhered to the trialist conception, whereby all the Croatian lands Dalmatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, with Croatia and Slavonia would be gathered in one special unit separated from Austria and Hungary. Later, he oriented himself towards the idea of an independent Croatian state, that was why he supported the Independent State of Croatia in the war. In the post-war times, he wrote his political testament, to which he emphasised that once again it was shown what a political failure was the destruction of the Monarchy for Europe and how Central Europe became a victim of the neighbouring superpowers. He placed the burden of guilt on America for the disappearance of the Monarchy so believed that it owed a moral and political



⁴¹ Vinko Krišković, Croatian viceban and politician, unknown photographer, in: hkv.hr, public domain, source of the picture: https://hr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vinko_Kri%C5%A1kovi%C4%87#/media/Datoteka:Vinko_Kri%C5%A1kovi%C4%87.jpg.

debt to the nations of Central Europe.⁴² For that reason, the Americans was obliged to correct mistakes and to get the Central European nations out of the power of Soviet communism. In the restoration of the Central European confederation, to which Croatia would join Krišković was looking for a way out for Croatian national freedom and a wide bulwark against communism under the auspices of the USA.⁴³

Ivo Lendić (1900–1982) was a writer from Croatian Catholic circles who emphasised that the war victors should consider the history and culture of Central and South-eastern Europe when arranging the borders of the new Europe. He objected to British foreign policy regarding the Yugoslav case. It was known to had been built on two different western and eastern cultural traditions and as such was unsustainable. According to Lendić, the reconstruction of Yugoslavia is a pure British interest without considering the historical and cultural context. Just like Krišković, he accused the Americans and British of being responsible for the penetration of the Red Army even into Vienna, the heart of Central Europe. Lendić was familiar with Otto von Habsburg's initiative in America and expected the reaction of the American side.⁴⁴

That was why he pointed out that the Americans could restore the Danube confederation within the borders of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. This gave the last hope that the Croatia could get rid of the alliance with Serbia. Lendić expected a new war between America and the Soviet Union, which would eventually lead to the collapse of Tito's Yugoslavia. In such conditions, Croatia should become an integral part of a wide area '*from Kaunas to Kotor, a kind of restoration of the Danube Monarchy, which would include Hungary, Poland, Croatia, Slovenia, Bavaria and the Catholic circle gathered around Vienna*'. So, the Croatia would return to the framework of Central Europe geopolitically again and not only that but Lendić thought that it was the return to the centuries-old continuity of Croatian geopolitics, and therefore the Yugoslav phase was actually a rupture and discontinuity in relation to that of the authentic geopolitical orientation of Croatia.⁴⁵

Lendić also called for '*centuries-old Catholic solidarity and unity of the Catholic peoples*' cultivated under the Jagelons and the Habsburg especially. The solidarity shown in the fight against the Turks, Mongols and Protestantism would have to be reactivated around a unified anti-communist strategy against the threat of the Soviet Union. He had seen the axis of the confederation around Vienna-Zagreb-Budapest-Warsaw. While accepting the Czech lands to this confederation, he was ready to criticise the Czechs for having forged an anti-Austrian ideology and formed the Little Entente directed against Croatia, Austria, and Hungary.⁴⁶

In this way, Central Europe would become the vanguard of Western Europe's defence from the communist east, as it historically had such a mission for centuries.

42 Krišković, 1955, p. 79.

43 Ibid. pp. 121–122.

44 Lendić, 2001, p. 171.

45 Kljaić, 2017, pp. 81–82.

46 Ibid. pp. 81–82.

The Danube confederation would stop the expansionism of Soviet imperialism, especially ambitious one after the war victory over Germany.

And the opportunities in Croatia are unusually ripe for that solution. Croats now find themselves isolated in the vicious circle of the Yugoslav state concept, which they themselves invented, but which proved to be wrong. In the Yugoslav combination, they are out of their element like fish out of water, like storks from a fable at a banquet in foxes. In the Danube combination, all the vitality of the geopolitical, cultural and economic function of the Croatian soil necessarily comes to the fore, and the Croats become an equal partner of Austria and Hungary. Out of an object they become a subject.⁴⁷

Since there was no war between the Western allies and the Soviet Union, as Tito's Yugoslavia became a Western partner post-1948, all of Lendić's plans for the reorganisation of Central Europe had no chance of being fulfilled.

The outbreak of the Prague Spring and Croatian Spring in the 1960s refocused the interests of Croatian emigrants on the status of Central Europe. They thought that the collapse of the communist bloc could only come from there, as Croatian emigrants with a strong anti-communist orientation so closely followed the events in the region.

The Croatian sociologist Bonifacije Perović (1900–1979) spoke about the failure of Soviet policies in the Eastern bloc, where there was latent resistance to the Soviet occupation and the real-socialist experiment as well. After the Hungarian Revolution and the constant Polish resistance shown on several occasions, and then the Prague and Croatian Spring, Perović spoke about the evident failure of communist policies to cancel the historical memory of Central European nations.

Peoples for whom communism tried to interrupt their historical and cultural heritage, deprive them of their freedom for the sake of a utopian future, and at the same time, failing to achieve a new humane and cultural order and growth, return to their own sources, their past, their national community.⁴⁸

Hungarians, Poles, Czechs and Croats in Yugoslavia were initiated with the request '*to return to their sources and beginnings, to their national culture and history*'. Unlike the Orthodox East under communism, the Central European nations who

belong to the Western cultural circle and therefore with a clearer awareness of their cultural values, there they tried earlier and more strongly to

47 Lendić, 2001, p. 193.

48 Perović, 1971, p. 91.

return to themselves, to freedom and to free themselves from the suffocating cultural anonymity into which they were Communism threw in.⁴⁹

At the beginning of the 1970s, Perović had a deep conviction that the national idea would win in a sharp clash with imperialist and internationalist Soviet communism. The scene of the future fight, as it turned out later, will be Central Europe, as Perović himself correctly predicted. Neo-stalinist Tito's attitude confronted the Croatian Spring in 1971, tens of thousands of people ended up under repression and in jail, but it was for Perović only a Pyrrhic victory for the Yugoslav regime. The same were the Soviet interventions in Hungary and Czechoslovakia. The ideas of national freedom and human rights are so strongly rooted in the Central European area and in Croatia that no principle of force of Soviet and Yugoslav communism can destroy it, concluded Perović.

Conclusion

Ideas of Central European integration characterised Croatian political culture in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In particular, it was relevant in the period when the Croatian lands were part of the Monarchy before 1918. Croatian-Hungarian unionism and their state-law alliance with its great and long tradition was the true expression of Croatian Central European integration throughout almost all Croatian history. Austro-Slavism was supposed to be the Croatian response to Hungarian nationalism and the aspiration to completely subjugate the Croatian position to Hungary in modern times. Since 1850 the Yugoslav idea began to emerge from Austro-Slavism, which would be politically articulated at the beginning of the 20th century. It pursued the Croatian lands to leave the Monarchy and Central European integration. Nevertheless, the entry of the Croatian national territories into the Yugoslav states in the 20th century, did not stop the discussions on Central European issues in the Croatian politics and culture.

As there was considerable resistance to the Yugoslav state union in Croatia in the 20th century, many members of the Croatian political and intellectual elites dreamt about the return of Croatia to the Central European region. The right-wing, national and conservative political spectrum was in favour of such a direction, while the liberal and left-wing spectrum saw Croatia in Yugoslav and Balkan integration. Thus, in the last century, Croatian politics and culture no less was strongly divided between Central European and Yugoslav or Balkan integration. The idea of the Danube confederation appeared on the margins at the World War II in the Croatian public. Catholic and conservative circles sought the exit from Yugoslavia and the creation of an anti-communist block of states on the Baltic-Adriatic vertical, which would be established against the Soviet Union and international

| 49 Ibid. p. 266. |

communism. When this did not happen, Croatian emigration continued to closely reflect the Central European area, to follow the national movements of Hungarians, Poles, Czechs and Croats. Despite the communist dictatorship, they hinted at imminent changes and the victory of the rich and vital national tradition over the communist utopia. Interestingly, after the collapse of the Eastern Bloc and Yugoslavia, democratic Croatia did not join Central European integration in the form of the Visegrad Group, despite the existence of positive historical tradition in the Croatian politics and culture towards this type of integration.

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Great Theorists of Central European Integration in Serbia

Srdjan CVETKOVIC – Danilo ŠARENAC

ABSTRACT

This chapter presents the biographies of six important Serbian intellectuals who worked in Serbia and Vojvodina during the 19th and 20th centuries: Ilija Garašanin, Svetozar Miletić, Vladimir Jovanović, Dimitrije Mitrinović, Slobodan Jovanović, and Borislav Pečić. Ilija Garašanin was a Serbian statesman who served as a Minister of the Police and Army in the Principality of Serbia. He strongly believed in establishing a modern bureaucracy and maintaining law and order and was the creator of the first written Serbian national programme. Svetozar Miletić was a temperamental and skilled orator. He was a liberal who played a very important role in the national awakening of the Serbs in Southern Hungary in 1848. He stressed the need to support citizens' individual liberties. Vladimir Jovanović was seen as the most educated intellectual in Serbia in his time. This liberal believed in the coexistence of ideas of national liberation and struggles for citizens' rights. Dimitrije Mitrinović was a Serbian avant-garde critic, theorist, philosopher, essayist, poet, and translator. He was one of the most unusual intellectuals in the Balkans at the beginning of the 20th century. He was alternately seen by his contemporaries as a charlatan and mystic but also as a visionary of a united Europe and the 'new man'. Slobodan Jovanović was a lawyer, historian, and politician known for his ideas about the reform of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and the implied establishment of 'a fair border' between Serbs and Croats. Borislav Pečić was another famous Serbian writer, intellectual, and politician. As a writer, he fought for the democratisation and Europeanisation of Serbia. He reconciled national, democratic, and European concepts in the Serbian tradition and asserted that they are not in opposition but should instead be interwoven and integrated.

KEYWORDS

Integration, intellectual, Yugoslav idea, Serbia, United Europe, Ilija Garašanin, Svetozar Miletić, Vladimir Jovanović, Dimitrije Mitrinović, Slobodan Jovanović, Borislav Pečić.

Introduction

The Serbian state ascended in the 19th century at the crossroads of great empires. National unification, a modern idea that flooded the entire continent at the time, was also prevalent in the Balkans. As the century of nationalism, the 19th century led to the inevitable disintegration of multinational states. The idea of uniting all Serbs into

Cvetkovic, S. – Šarenac, D. (2023) 'Great Theorists of Central European Integration in Serbia' in Gedeon, M. (ed.) *Great Theorists of Central European Integration*. Miskolc-Budapest: Central European Academic Publishing. pp. 199–246. https://doi.org/10.54171/2023.mg.gtocei_6

one state was formed at the beginning of the 19th century as a programme of national integration and creation of a nation-state within maximum limits. It was gradually realised by manoeuvring between the great powers, but also through conflicts with them. In the 19th century, Serbian politics was most often correlated or in conflict with the interests of Austria, Russia, and Turkey. The first Serbian national programme in renewed Serbia was conceived in 1832 at the court of Prince Miloš in Kragujevac. This plan would later serve as the basis for ‘Načertanija’ by Ilija Garašanin.

During the first half of the 20th century, France, Britain, and Germany exerted power over Yugoslavia, while in Socialist Yugoslavia during the Cold War, relations with the US, the USSR, and some non-aligned countries prevailed. In the post-communist era, the main problems in Serbia’s foreign policy were its relationships with the US and NATO and with the EU and Germany. Geostrategic interests and Serbia’s position meant that it was exposed to severe exclusions and numerous wars with both its neighbours and the great powers.

This chapter addresses several of the essential aspects of Serbia’s intellectual development in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Through the biographies of six well-known thinkers and activists, the authors have reconstructed not only the ideas about Serbia’s internal development and progress, but also about Serbia’s place in the Balkans and in Europe as a whole. The authors have especially stressed the intellectual concepts that focused on potential collaboration and mutual assistance.

1. Ilija Garašanin: a Statesman and a True Conservative (1812–1874)¹

Ilija Garašanin was born in the days of the First Serbian Insurrection. He was part of the generation that was involved in the fight to increase the autonomy of the vasa Serbian principality. Serbia, which was still dotted with Ottoman garrisons, was striving for independent internal development and eventually for full sovereignty and free hands in foreign policy. On two occasions, Ilija Garašanin held some of the most influential positions in the Serbian government. In this way, he played a crucial role in several turbulent political developments in the 19th century. Moreover, he was one of the essential



¹ Ilija Garašanin, Serbian statesman, Lithograph of Ilija Garašanin by Anastas Jovanović, National Library of Serbia’s collection Zbirka grafika Anastasa Jovanovića. COBISS ID 123249164, source of the picture: https://www.wikidata.org/wiki/Q1259535#/media/File:Ilija_Gara%C5%A1anin_table_crop.jpg.

figures in the creation of Serbia's modern bureaucracy as well as its police and army. He was known for his traditionalism but was also perceived as a realistic statesman. He worked on conceptualising ideas about Serbia's future development and became known as the creator of the first national programme centred on the unification of all Serbs. However, his plan had a wider dimension, encompassing intense collaboration with other South Slavs. The interpretations of his political programme varied over time, provoking much controversy. This was especially the case in relation to the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s.

1.1. Birth and childhood, early education

Ilija Garašanin was born in 1812 at the very end of the First Serbian Uprising (1804–1813). He was born in the village Garaši, near Kragujevac, close to the epicentre of the uprising. His family originated from Montenegro. However, Garašanin family was not only geographically close to the centre of important historical events of 1804. Milutin Garašanin, Ilija's father, was a cattle trader, but also a prominent participant in both Serbian revolts. His biography bore some similarities with that of the leader of the First Serbian Uprising, Karadjordje Petrović (1762–1817). Namely, they were both cattle traders but they both fought in the Austro-Turkish war (1788–1791) as volunteers within the Serbian Free Corps.

However, Milutin Garašanin truly distinguished himself in 1815, as he played a considerable role in preparations for the second Serbian Uprising. As Karadjordje Petrović was out of the country at the time, the rebellion was ignited by the Serbian Prince (knez) Miloš Obrenović (1780–1860). Due to this role, the Garašanin family became very close with the Prince Miloš Obrenović, the most powerful figure in post 1815 Serbia. Despite being an illiterate trader himself, Milutin Garašanin appreciated the value of education. As there were no schools in Serbia at the time, he brought teachers at his own expense, all in order to provide teaching for his children. The tutors were the Serbs from the Habsburg Monarchy.² Young Ilija Garašanin proved to be intelligent and diligent pupil. His father continued to invest into his education.

Ilija Garašanina was sent to the neighbouring Austrian town of Zemun. There he went to the Greek and later to the German school. After four years of schooling, Garašanin was fluent in two foreign languages and with good general education. However, he did not pursue university, but returned to his village of Garaši to participate in the family business, the cattle trade with the Austro-Hungary.

1.2. The Autonomous Principality and its Political Clashes

Still, this seemed to be just a pause in his father's plans to propel his son's career. When he was 21 his father wrote a letter to the all-powerful ruler of Serbia, Prince Miloš Obrenović. Milutin Garašanin recommended his son for an official position within the principality's service. This pledge was granted and Ilija Garašanin spent

| 2 Mekenzi, 1987, p. 23. |

the following four years as a customs officer at the border with the Habsburg Monarchy, near Belgrade.³

Serbia at the time was gradually acquiring an internationally recognised autonomous status within the Ottoman Empire under Prince Milos Obrenović. Namely, the Second Serbian Uprising was ended by the negotiations that led to the establishment of the Serbian Principality. The status between Serbia and the Ottoman Empire was further arranged by the series of Ottoman edicts issued between 1829 and 1833. This meant that Serbia was slowly acquiring elements of statehood as the core elements of the Ottoman rule now implied only to the annual tax and the presence of a few Ottoman garrisons in the country.⁴ Daily life in Serbia was changing rapidly, as the Turks were leaving while the Serbs begun occupying more prominent positions. This situation is observable in the first census from 1834, in which the Principality of Serbia had around 700 000 Serbs and only 15 000 Turks.⁵

While the power of the Ottomans was disappearing the influence of the Prince Miloš Obrenović seemed unstoppable. He ruled Serbia without any constitutional nor legal limitations. He was the sole authority and often he acted as a true despot. This provoked internal revolts. There were as much as seven significant mutinies against him between 1815 and 1830. In one of these clashes, the Garašanin family lost much of their property as the angry rebels saw them as ardent supporters of the Prince Miloš Obrenović.

Pressure against Prince Miloš Obrenović mounted. Moreover, the role of the Great Powers became very important at this stage of Serbia's internal development. After 1835 all major world powers opened their consulates in Belgrade. Russia tried to control Prince Miloš by treating him as one of its own subjects. On the other hand, the Austria's presence in Serbia was unquestionable. Prince's Miloš harsh rule, on the one side, and the appearance of resolute opposition, on the other, intertwined with the interests of major European powers.

In 1838 Serbia was granted constitution by the Great Powers, though formally by the Ottoman empire. It was so called *Turkish constitution* that remained valid until 1869. This document was a compromise between the two groups. It meant the establishment of the Council of 17 men. They were to discuss all decisions with the prince. The Council membership was for life. Moreover, an Assembly was to meet regularly. The men who entered the Council were mostly opponents of the Prince Miloš Obrenović. Soon, these men from the Council acquired a new colloquial name: the Constitutionalists. Who were they? Some of them were popular commanders from the anti-Ottoman revolts, such as the case with Toma Vučić-Perišić (1787–1859). However, the majority of the Constitutionalists were the Serbs originating from the Habsburg Empire. Apart from the struggle with Prince Miloš

3 Ibid. p. 24.

4 For a more comprehensive history of the initial development within the Serbian Principality see: Ljušić, 2004a.

5 Mekenzi, 1987, p. 27.

Obrenović, yet another rift was now opened in the Serbian society: between the Serbs from Serbia and the ones who arrived from Austro-Hungary.

1.3. Garašanin as an Irreplacable Political Figure

During these critical developments the position of Ilija Garašanin changed considerably. After four years in the customs, he was appointed to be the commander of the newly established Serbian army, in 1837. He had no military education, but was given the rank of colonel. His discipline and loyalty to the prince evidently proved to be crucial criteria. At the same time, he became one of the 17 members of the above-mentioned state council, together with his father.

Prince Miloš Obrenović could not function in the system that imposed so many restrictions on his power. He decided to leave Serbia in 1839. The prince's position was to be kept however within his family. His son Milan inherited him. Still, he died only few months later, and the new prince was named. It was the second son of Miloš Obrenović, Mihailo Obrenović (1823–1868). As his father, he was unwilling to let go the power in favour of the Constitutionals. The new Obrenović ruled autocratically with the assistance of Russia.

Soon, the full-scale clash was inevitable. Ilija Garašanin was involved into combinations for bringing the new dynasty in Serbia, the Karadjordjević family. Consequently, as other opponents, he was forced to flee for Constantinople. After pressure exerted by the Great Powers the political emigrants, mainly Constitutionals, were allowed to be back into the country.⁶ A series of minor mutinies against the prince followed. Danger of the full-scale war and anarchy loomed. In one such event in 1842, the prince, as part of the reprisals, ordered that Milutin Garašanin, Ilija Garašanin's father, as well as his brother, were to be imprisoned and executed. This left a deep imprint on Ilija Garašanin.

Prince Mihailo Obrenović was soon forced to abdicate in 1842 and, fearing for his life, he left for Austria. The Assembly elected the son of Karadjordje Petrović, Aleksandar Karadjordjević (1806–1885), as the new ruler. Ilija Garašanin played a modest role in this shift as the main leader of the rebellion was Toma Vučić-Perišić, the Minister of Interior. Garašanin was however elected on a new powerful position, the assistant of the Ministry of Interior. He was again appointed to the Council as well.⁷ The changes made in the constellation of power in Serbia were not welcomed by Russia and Toma Vučić-Perišić had to leave Serbia. This meant the rise of Garašanin, who became the Minister of Interior in 1844. This was the first time Garašanin was fully in power, which he retained until 1853.

Things were not yet settled in relation to the new dynasty. More precisely, the change on the Serbian throne had to be validated by the new Assembly – this was the condition imposed by Russia. Garašanin played here an immensely important role in controlling the deputies and directing their political views. Ultimately, the

6 Ibid. p. 33.

7 Ibid. p. 38.

confirmation of the Aleksandar Karadjordjević as the new Serbian prince went smoothly. It is important to underline the role of international Polish emigration for this process. The group of influential Poles, operating from Paris and working for the restoration of Poland, established close collaboration with the Constitution-
alists' regime. The emigrants were led by former Russian minister of foreign affairs
count Adam Czartoryski (1770–1861).

Ilija Garašanin spent the entire decade as a Minister of interior. His focus was on creating functional bureaucracy and keeping law and order. He especially stressed the importance of disciplined bureaucracy and efficient police.⁸ During this time he constantly worried about the potential collapse of social order due to continuous unrest of various opposition groups, specifically the ones led by the sympathisers of the Obrenović dynasty. Security concerns grew as the Constitutionalists became bitterly between themselves.

As the Serbian government was only at the very beginning of its developed and systematisation, Garašanin's duties were very diverse. He was not only responsible for the police and the army. He was dealing also with traffic and education. Ilija Garašanin played crucial role in established Serbia's post service as well as in founding the first agricultural school. His role as modernising the country continued with his work on establishing the Artillery school (the Military academy) in 1850 and the first weapon factory in Serbia in 1853, the first one in the Balkans.⁹

Despite investing great deal of his energy into everyday problems related to security and administration, Ilija Garašanin had decided to create a document that conceptualised thinking about future strategic path of the Serbian state.

1.4. The Draft (*Načertanije*)

One of the essential components in the biography of Ilija Garašanin is his role in the creation of the first Serbian national programme. It was the document entitled *The Draft* (*Načertanije*), written at the end of 1844.¹⁰ This document was composed of several concept available at the time to any Serbian statesman. These included, Serbian medieval traditions, contemporary European revolutionary spirit but also the legacy of the two Serbian uprisings against the Ottoman Turks.¹¹

However, in order to fully grasp the genesis of this document, it is important to underline the role of the above-mentioned Polish emigrants, grouped around Adam Czartoryski. Namely, these men closely observed the development of Serbia since the days of the First Uprising against the Ottomans. They believed Serbia should pursue an independent path avoiding Austria and Russia, thus escaping the danger of being partitioned in similar manner as it happened to Poland. They also stressed the idea that the Slaves of the European Turkey must unite. The Ottoman Empire

8 Ibid. p. 39.

9 Pavlović, 2004, p. 41.

10 Over time *Načertanije* provoked a number of authors to analyse it, see: Stranjaković, 1939; Ljušić, 2004b; Bataković, 2014; Dragović-Soso, 2004, pp. 170–184.

11 Bataković, 1994, pp. 157–183.

was seen as a necessary ally at this moment but a doomed empire on the long run. The Poles also widened the perspective of the Constitutionalist by turning their attention to the role of the prominent Croats, the ones who were part of the Illyrian movement. It should be noted that French and British influences were visible as well in the Draft. More recently, the cooperation of the British diplomats stationed in Constantinople and the Polish emigrants became known in more detail.¹²

These Polish views were elaborated in two documents that were presented to the Constitutionalist. Firstly, in January 1843 count Adam Czartoryski wrote: *Advice on how Serbia should behave*. Here he underlined that Serbia should have the leading role in extracting the Balkan people outside of Russian sphere of influence.¹³ The second document that influenced the creation of the Serbian national programme was the *Plan for Serbia's Slavic Policy*. It was written by the new Polish representative in Belgrade, František (Franjo) Zach (1807–1892). Later on, František Zach, became an example of a very successful adaptation of an emigrant in Serbia. He played essential role in the creation of Serbia's Artillery school. Moreover, in 1876 he came at the head of the newly established Serbian General Staff, in 1876.

Many of the Czartoryski's and Zach's ideas were visible in the Garašanin's Draft. However, he disregarded many of the strong points from the *Polish* documents. Garašan's text was much more Serbian oriented as he hardly mentioned Croats and was not generally not that interested in pan-Slavism. Actually, Garašanin changed the word 'Yugoslav' in every place in the document with the word 'Serbian'. Garašanin neither accepted Zach's argument that Serbia should lead a Yugoslav policy in its own interest. Garašanin was more focused on reinstating the Serbian Medieval state as this idea was popular among the Serbian elite at the time.¹⁴ One of the interpretations of the changes Garašanin made in respect to the the *Polish advices*, was that he acted as a rational politician, that he actually adapted the programme to Serbia's modest military and economical capacities and to the existing public perceptions within Serbia.¹⁵

He was also more moderate about the potential role of Russia in Serbian liberation and unification. Russia's help was welcome if it did not come at the too high price. Garašanin believed that Serbia and Russia were close by faith and language and other features but he was no sentimental in this respect. In the essence, Serbia should act freely and independently in foreign policy and not being under the influence of foreign powers. Other Serbs should liberate themselves and join Serbia as soon as possible. For Garašanin, it was Austria who was the main and true enemy of Serbia's independent development.

However, the Draft bore the seeds of Serbia's territorial enlargement beyond the regions that were populated by the Serbs. For example, Garašan mentioned the

12 Ibid.

13 Mekenzi, 1987, p. 67.

14 Ibid. p. 78.

15 Ibid. p. 79.

possibility of linking Serbia with the Albanian tribes, enabling this way control over Medova, the port at the Adriatic Sea.¹⁶

What did he do in implementing this program? As Garašanin was at the head of the secret board in Belgrade he could invest great amount of energy into creating a wide network of agents in the neighbouring Ottoman and Habsburg empires. His work focused on Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is worth noting that Garašanin multiplied his contacts with the Croats who were part of the Ilirian movement, especially with Ljudevit Gaj (1809–1872). Serbian activities, especially propaganda, in Bosnia came to a halt due to the eruption of the conflict in Southern Hungary, in Vojvodina. Garašanin was trying to pursue a cautious policy as he feared that more direct and massive Serbian support to Serbs in Hungary might cause an international condemnation. After initial hesitation, assistance from Serbia came in volunteers, equipment, and experienced officers.¹⁷

The revolutionary events of 1848 presented danger for Serbia as well. Fear grew that prince Miloš Obrenović might use the opportunity and seize power in Serbia. Moreover, liberal opposition in Serbia was on the rise and cries for greater political freedoms were being heard. Garašanin was opposed to any idea of allowing the establishment of a powerful and independent Assembly. He asserted that if an Assembly was to meet, it could only happen in the controlled circumstances.¹⁸ Garašanin was a true conservative in domestic policy.

Despite being Interior Minister, Garašanin played important international roles. He worked also established very cordial relations with the Montenegrin ruler, Petar II Njegoš (1813–1851). In 1848–1849, Garašanin also worked extensively on deepening his contacts in Bulgaria and tried to push for the unification of Serbia and Bulgaria.¹⁹ In September 1852, Garašanin was appointed Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs. Due to his views about Russia and his links with Polish emigrant circles, Garašanin was forced to resign under direct Russian pressure after only six months in this post, in 1853. Despite being officially out of power, he continued to exercise strong influence on governmental decisions. He was the first Serbian statesman who advocated close and cordial relations with France.²⁰ Furthermore, he used his French contacts to attract the attention of British diplomats. All this taken together created an undisputable impression that Garašanin was trying to fully turn Serbia westward.

One of the problems for the Russian side was the Law of Public Order drafted by Garašanin. This law lasted from 1850 until 1941 in Serbia and established the strong authority of the police. The law was very severe; it was believed that it had initially been aimed at containing the pro-Russian opposition in Serbia. However, Garašanin

16 *Ibid.* p. 100; Košutić, 1998, pp. 325–345.

17 Mekenzi, 1987, p. 133.

18 *Ibid.* p. 111.

19 *Ibid.* p. 99.

20 *Ibid.* p. 151.

claimed that the law was essential in maintaining law and order in a country that could easily slip into anarchy.

Another important crisis took place with relation to the Crimean War (1853–1856). Garašanin was still out of power but far from being without political influence. He advocated for neutrality and Serbia did not interfere into this conflict.²¹ However, Garašanin was more and more becoming an opponent of Prince Aleksandar Karadjordjević who was becoming ever more autocratic. Over time, Garašanin became a collaborator in a pro-Obrenović plot to change the dynasty. Prince Karadjordjević was by late 1850s in an open political war with the members of the Council.

In 1858 Garašanin was back in the government, again as Minister of Interior. Despite being part of the government, Garašanin was also one of the leaders of the opposition against the prince. He worked closely with other opponents of the prince such as Toma Vučić-Perišić and the influential Serbian trade Miša Anastasijević. The plan was to call for an Assembly where the prince will be dethroned. Since 1848 until 1858 not a single meeting of the Assembly took place. The plan was to do it now. The candidates who were to be elected for the Assembly were to be the supporters of the triumvirate: Garašanin, Toma Vučić-Perišić and Miša Anastasijević. It was Garašanin's task to influence the selection of the Assembly's candidates. In order to do so, Garašanin could rely on his bureaucratic and security apparatus.

1.4.1. 'Načertanijein' Practice

Preparations for the *Svetoandrejska skupšina* did not go smoothly. The army still supported the prince Aleksandar Karadjordjević and there was a danger of a civil war. Garašanin played here an important role in mediating between the army and the opposition.²² Once the Assembly's two months long meetings started, events surprised Garašanin. He could not control the events at the Assembly as the new force appeared, the liberals. Young Serbs who were returning from the western universities were becoming a force on their own right. The prince Aleksandar Karadjordjević was deposed but, on Garašanin's surprise, the new elected ruler was the old Prince Miloš Obrenović.

Garašanin could not work with his old opponent. However, Prince Miloš Obrenović died shortly, in 1860. His son, Mihailo Obrenović became the Serbian prince for the second time. Despite previous bitter clashes with Prince Mihailo Obrenović, Garašanin now became his right hand. In 1861, he was named the prime minister. He showed his *Načertanije* to the Prince who fully embraced it. These were the days of enlighten absolutism in Serbia. Garašanin and the Prince agreed that the Serbs were not ready for constitutional state.

Garašanin was given almost free hands in pursuing his foreign policy plan. He thus diligently worked on establishing contacts and finding support for his ideas

21 Jovanović, 1931, pp. 422–431.

22 Mekenzi, 1987, p. 270.

for a Balkan federation. By mid-1860 Garašanin became disappointed in Great Powers realising that any form of such federation cannot count on their support. In this respect Garašanin modified his views stating that the Balkan nations must rely only on themselves. By mid 1860s his plan was that the entire Balkans must rise against the Ottomans in a coordinated way.²³

In the meantime, in 1862 serious clashes erupted in Serbia between local population and the Ottoman garrisons. The situation was worst in Belgrade. Garašanin was again indispensable, preparing military action but also leading negotiations with the Ottoman commanders. In 1867, after years of international diplomatic activities, the decision was reached that the Ottoman garrisons should leave Serbia.

By 1867 only pieces remained from Garašanin's plans for the Balkan alliance. Only the links with Montenegro were solid, all others were lost. The Balkan federation prove to be a highly unrealistic idea. Despite this, by 1867 Garašanin thought that Serbia was ready for the war with the Ottomans and that national liberations should be continued right away. However, Prince Mihailo Obrenović was hesitant. He actually completely changed his mind believing that the Serbian army was too weak. The opinions between the two were diverging on other matters as well, including the prince 'divorce and plans for a future marriage'. Garašanin was replaced in 1867 and he never returned to power again.²⁴ He died in 1874.

Garašanin was the politician who gave vital contribution for the creation of Serbia's defensive as well as repressive apparatus. He was also the man who formed modern bureaucracy. He was the forerunner of the so-called *Paris Serbs* who will present the next generation of educated Serbs, the ones who arrived from European universities. Garašanin did not share their ideas and faith in constitutional democracy and free Assembly. He preferred focus on law and order, he liked the *village life of the old days*. However, his opponents liked to underlined that he was no idealised statesman. They spoke about his possibility to shift loyalties as well as his harshness in using the repressive apparatus.

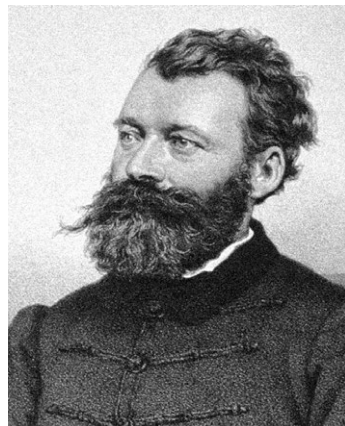
Garašanin ideas about the foreign policy had a great impact on Serbia's thinking thorough the century. His *Načertanije* caused many controversies. It was often taken out the context of the first half of the 19th century, and treated as a modern nationalistic programme. Without a doubt many expansionistic features were evident. However, for some it was a visionary pro-Yugoslav document that led to 1918 unification, that was centred around the Piedmont's role of the Kingdom of Serbia. For others it was search for exclusively Serbian enlargement (pejoratively seen as a Greater Serbian program). It is important to mentioned that the document was used in the introductory section of the indictment against the former Yugoslav president Slobodan Milošević in front of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY).

23 Jovanović, 1963, p. 85.

24 Ćorović, 1938.

2. Svetozar Miletić: A National and Liberal Tribune (1826–1901)²⁵

Svetozar Miletić has often been described as the most important Serbian political personality north of the Danube and the Sava rivers in the 19th century. He was perceived as a rebel by nature and advocated for an active approach in politics. He claimed the Serbs in Hungary should *fight and not beg for their political rights*. His robust public appearance and eloquent expression of liberal concepts as well as national interests made him a hero of the Serbs in Vojvodina and elsewhere. Ultimately, he was a tragic figure, as persecution influenced his end.



2.1. Birth and childhood, early education

Svetozar Miletić was born in the village Mošorin in Vojvodina, in Hungary in 1826. He was one of seven children in a peasant family. The village was mostly populated by the families of soldiers on the Military Frontier. After finishing elementary school in his village and three years in the local German school, Miletić went to the Serbian orthodox gymnasium in Novi Sad. He later continued his education in Bratislava. This was a formative experience for him, as he encountered pan-Slavism and liberalism for the first time.²⁶

He first came to prominence during the revolutionary turmoil of 1848–1849. He gave a passionate speech in the village of Čurug to Serbs who were about to be sent as soldiers to Italy. He urged them to stay in their villages and to defend their own homes and called on them to join the emerging Serbian national movement. His pleas failed, however, and the troops went to Italy. The authorities tried to arrest him and he went to Belgrade, trying to direct the people's dissatisfaction against the Ottomans.²⁷ In Belgrade, in May 1848, Miletić was trying to organise an attack on the Ottoman garrison with local youth. However, as soon as the Serbian authorities found out they said to him that he should *make troubles elsewhere*. Miletić was expelled from Serbia.²⁸

25 Svetozar Miletic, Serbian journalist, author, politician, Lithographs by Josef Kriehuber, 1867, in: Wolfgang v. Wurzbach: Katalog der Porträtlithographien Josef Kriehubers (2. Auflage 1955) Nr. 1482, public domain, source of the picture: https://hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/F%C3%A1jl:Svetozar_Miletic_Litho.jpg.

26 Miletić, 2011, pp. 15–17.

27 Kovacević, 2009, pp. 14–15.

28 Mikavica, 2006, p. 28.

2.2. *Miletić and the 1848*

The key event in the Serbian effort to fight for their own autonomy within the Habsburg Empire and Hungarian Kingdom was the May Assembly, held from 13 until 15 May 1848. Svetozar Miletić was participating in the proceedings, despite his age of only twenty-two years. The political accord with the Hungarian elite was not reached and the soon the fighting erupted. Svetozar Miletić was mostly occupied with propaganda and diplomacy, but he did fight in one battle. He was sent to Croatia as well as across Vojvodina to keep the moral high ground and to find weapons and equipment.

In December 1848 Miletić published two important articles. Then he claimed that Slavic people must win liberty. Natural rights must surpass historical rights of Austria. He was hoping to see a confederate solution for Austria and this would be most favourable for the Serbian request for their own autonomous territory within Hungary. Ultimately, at the end of revolution, in August 1849, Miletić was some sort of front line correspondent, writing detailed and very accurate reports.

After the revolutionary events ended, Svetozar Miletić was disappointed and left the political movement. He had decided to finish his law studies in Vienna. Interestingly, the stipend for his studies came from Serbia, from the prince Mihailo Obrenović. Miletić was already a well-known figure among the Serbs in the Balkans.²⁹ Afterwards, he worked as a clerk in a small municipality in Vojvodina. After many difficulties, he was finally granted permission to open a law office in Novi Sad in 1857.

2.3. *The Energetic Tribune*

Things again became electrified in 1860, when absolutism was abolished in Austria. Svetozar Miletić was back in politics with his entire energy.

He firstly published an article formulating the new postulates of the Serbian national politics in the Habsburg empire. He claimed that *the Serbs have place a line above their accounts with Vienna*. This meant that the Serbs had earned nothing while fighting for Vienna. The new path was to reach a deal the Hungarian liberals, not with Vienna. However, Svetozar Miletić firstly clashed with the Conservative Serbian elite from the Habsburg Monarchy who disapproved with Miletić's views and decided to remain loyal to the court.³⁰

Still, Miletić was on the rise and his speeches made a stunning impact on the Serbian public. He published a number of texts and was present in various societies across Vojvodina. He published in the *Serbian journal* (Srpski dnenvik), the Banner (Zastava). He was member of the *Serbian reading room in Novi Sad*. Also, he was one of the founders of the Serbian National Theater in Novi Sad. Besides propagating collaboration with the Hungarian liberals, Miletić argued for the cultural and political unity of the Serbian people. He was active in the movement of United Serbian Youth

²⁹ Ibid. p. 16.

³⁰ Miletić, 2001, p. 13; Kovačević, 2009, pp. 31–33.

(Ujedinjena omladina srpska) and he often travelled to Principality of Serbia where he met other liberals. In 1865 he was very active in propagating the Serb-Hungarian friendship. He claimed that it is possible to fight for the autonomous Serbian Vojvodina within Hungary and to remain in good terms with the Hungarian elite.

The new political change took place in 1867 with the Austro-Hungarian agreement. Now, Svetozar Miletić had to adapt his course and underline the importance of preservation of the Serbian national identity in fears of the Hungarian pressure. He claimed, *'as long as there is one Serb in Hungary he should be called the people'*. In 1869 he founded the Serbian Peoples Free Party (Srpska narodna slobodoumna stranka). He was twice the Mair of Novi Sad (1861–1862) and (1867–1868). During his office he, in vain, tried to introduce the Serbian language as one of the official languages in administration. However, his activities place them on the collision course with the Habsburg authorities. He was sentenced to prison in 1870–1871, for three years. The reason was his criticism of the Croatian ban and Croatian Diet.³¹

2.4. The Antistate Element

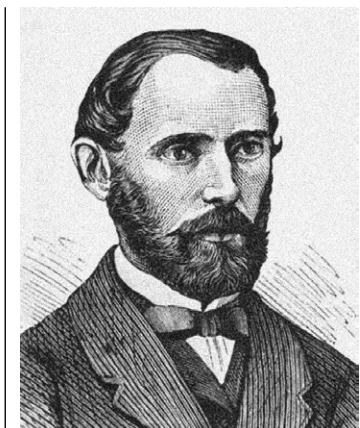
He was continuously perceived as a figure who undermined the state authority with his clear political ideas and their energetic articulation. For the second time he was arrested in 1876. He was deprived of his immunity which he enjoyed as a party deputy. He was sentenced only in 1878. He was sentenced on 5 years for high treason. The conditions were now much worst for him in prison than was the case the first time when he was allowed to read, publish and receive his political colleagues. He was pardoned in 1879, but his time in jail ruined much of his physical and mental health.³² In 1880–1882 back in the political life, but things had changed. The Serbs in Vojvodina were less enthusiastic about his struggle for change of the position of the Serbian population. Many thought that they should find a way of adapting to the new post 1867 realities. His party lost its initial strength and had to dissolve in 1884. Miletić was a broken men haunted by paranoid visions. From 1883 until 1889 he was in mental hospital in Budapest. He was released but he was not capable for any political activity. He died in 1901.

Svetozar Miletić was a type of a liberal imbued with pan-Slavism, nationalism than spread across Europe as part of the 1848 revolutions. However, Miletić always claimed that national freedom must coexist with citizen's consciousness. National rights must not be protected at the expense of endangering constitutional liberties and citizens' equality. He also fought against the Serbian conservative circles, often imbodyed in the Serbian Orthodox Church. Miletić always underlined the possibility of reaching an agreement with the Hungarian and Croatian side. He strongly believed that the political and territorial existence of the *Serbian Vojvodina* can be achieved on mutual benefit. In this respect he wrote about the federation of Hungary.

31 Kovačević, 2009, pp. 89–91.

32 Mikavica, 2006, pp. 21–22.

3. Vladimir Jovanović: A Liberal at Any Cost (1833–1922)³³



The biography of Vladimir Jovanović reveals the increasing influence the Serbian youth, educated abroad, played in the second half of the 19th century in the Principality of Serbia. These men became the true exponents of western democracy and liberal principles. Vladimir Jovanović shows that education abroad was important, but that travelling and making international contacts also had an immense role for their formation as liberals. At the same time, this generation of liberal thinkers and activists could not make a distinction between the national liberation and the unification of all Serbs, from the questions of legality or people's

sovereignty. However, the liberal and democratic principals were not welcomed by the Serbian authorities. On several occasions Vladimir Jovanović had to flee from Serbia, while on two occasions, he had to flee from Serbia.

3.1. Birth and childhood, early education

Vladimir Jovanović was born in 1833, in the Serbian border town of Šabac. He was one of the six children. His background was humble but from his mother's side he was the ancestor of one of the key commanders of the Karadjordje Petrović, the leader of the first Serbian uprising against the Ottoman Turks (1804–1813). Jovanović finished elementary and high school in his home town. However, his hard work and capacities were noticed. He got a stipend to be able to continue his education in Belgrade, at the newly established Belgrade Lyceum. At the time, this was the highest-ranking educational institution in Serbia. Jovanović firstly he studied philosophy and later, he went to the legal department. He graduated with the highest merits.³⁴

He desired to pursue further levels of specialisation with the aim of studying political economy. However, in 1854, he received a stipend for the agricultural academy in Hungary. He later managed to transfer to the similar institution in Germany. In total he spent only 2 years of his formal education abroad. Much of this time he did not even spend in one place: he travelled extensively across the

33 Vladimir Jovanović, Serbian politician, Unknown author – Opao, year 1877, digitized by the National Library of Serbia, public domain source of the picture: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vladimir_Jovanovi%C4%87_\(politician\)#/media/File:Vladimir_Jovanovic.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vladimir_Jovanovi%C4%87_(politician)#/media/File:Vladimir_Jovanovic.jpg).

34 Ćorović, 1922, pp. 459–465.

Netherlands, France, and Belgium to see how the political and economic systems in these countries functioned. He returned to Serbian Principality in 1856.³⁵

3.2. *Becoming a Liberal*

While abroad, he became acquainted with the youth organisations that students had organised across Europe since 1848 events. Vladimir Jovanović, once back in Serbia, became one of the key personalities in the Serbian Youth Movement (*Družina mladeži srpske*). The society fought for national liberation as well as domestic liberalisation of politics and social relations.

The critical moment for Vladimir Jovanović career came in 1858. This was the year when national Assembly was summoned for the first time in ten years. The plan of influential members of the Serbian conservative elite was to replace the dynasty. The idea was to bring back Prince Mihailo Obrenović to power. However, this calculation was flawed. Namely, the increasing role of the young Serbian liberal intellectuals became very palpable at the Assembly. Consequently, Vladimir Jovanović was named as one of the secretaries at the Assembly (*Svetoadrejska skupština*). In the essence, *Svetoandrejska skupština*, presented a mixture of an assembly understood as a Convent, inspired by the French revolution, and a patriarchal form of democracy, seen at the Serbian countryside.³⁶

At the Assembly, the liberals fought for a systematic changes in Serbia. Vladimir Jovanović used the Assembly for presenting the core principles of liberal teachings. As he explained, the essence was that the Serbian people should decide what kind of state does it want. The institution of the Assembly, the liberals claimed, was to serve to reduce tensions in the society and to avoid bloodshed and civil conflict. Vladimir Jovanović underlined the essential role of the powerful Assembly and free and fair elections of the deputies. The sovereignty belonged to the assembled citizens, claimed the liberals.³⁷

These principles were included in the Assembly's decisions. Assembly was to meet each year, the elections of the deputies were to be free, while the state budget was to be brought before the Assembly for the approval. In addition, the press was to be free. Even individual ministerial responsibility was introduced. However, in reality, these concept remained a dead letter. The new prince of Serbia was actually its old ruler, Prince Miloš Obrenović, the last person to accept such *novelties*. Vladimir Jovanović even had to leave Serbia due to pressure of the new authorities. After the death of Prince Miloš Obrenović, he returned, but things were far from calm.

The new Serbian prince, Mihailo Obrenović, was suspicious about any opposition and he was not willing to allow any democratic principles to be introduced. Countering the arguments of the liberals the prince claimed that Serbia was still 'half-Turkish' having still the Ottoman pasha sitting in Belgrade surrounded by his

35 Ibid.

36 Bataković, 1998, pp. 235–240.

37 Mijatović, 2011, p. 21.

troops. Any *western based* political change of the system was branded as a dangerous experiment.³⁸ Jovanović was not discouraged, he launched a new journal, named *Narodna skupština* (National Assembly). The problems started right away. The first number was instantly banned, and the three editors, including Vladimir Jovanović, were sent to prison for 8 days.

Since the educated youth began returning to Serbia, a new division opened up. These newcomers from Vienna, Paris, and Berlin became colloquially known as *the Parisians*, in contrast to the so-called *Germans*, the previous generation of the Serbs who had come from the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy or were educated there. However, Vladimir Jovanović was beyond these categories. His general knowledge was much more comprehensive and his erudition was hard to match.

Despite his opposition to the prince and the government, Vladimir Jovanović obtained a position at the Belgrade Great School (Velika škola). This institution was the forerunner of the Belgrade University. Jovanović thought political economy. At the same, he wrote a lot. The themes varied from political economy, notions of freedom and legality to various social problems including poverty and loans. Soon, he became the true leader of the Serbian liberals. These admirers of democracy and parliamentarism included several prominent Serbian intellectuals such as Stojan Bošković and Alimpije Vasiljević.

The full-scale clash between the liberals and the prince was unavoidable. In 1859 the mandates of the liberal deputies were cancelled and they were forced out of the state service. Vladimir Jovanović managed to keep his post at the university, at least until 1864.

During his lifetime, Vladimir Jovanović was the editor of several journals. In 1859 he was the editor in chief of the *Serbian papers* (*Serbske novine*). However, after the complains of the Ottoman pasha in relation to one of the texts, Jovanović had to flee from the country as his life was in danger. He left for Belgium and England. There he deepened his understanding of the British parliamentarism. During his trips he managed to become acquainted with many high-ranking political figures as well as international emigrants such as Giuseppe Mazzini, Lajos Kossuth or Mikail Bakunin.

Then the 1862 came when a minor incident between the Ottoman garrison in Belgrade and the local Serbian population evolved in an open conflict. Tensions were high across Serbia. Vladimir Jovanović used his international contacts, especially the ones in Britain, to find diplomatic support for the Serbian cause. It became evident that the Serbian liberals could not separate the national question from the issue of citizen's virtues. In London he managed to meet British statesman William Gladstone and other influential figures. It is important to mention his close ties with Italian revolutionaries at the time. With Mazzini Jovanović even made a more detailed plans about mutual assistance during their struggle for national liberation. However, all actions were stopped by the British diplomats as soon as the

| 38 Ćorović, 1922, p. 455. |

plans begun to take a more definite shape. Similar plans were made with the leader of the Hungarian national movement, Lajos Kossuth. Here, talks were held about the possibilities of a Danube confederation. These plans were vague or never came close any materialisation, but they reveal the good will and desire to collaborate in solving similar problems.

3.3. *An Activist and a Minister*

Once back in Serbia, Jovanović became very active in the Society of Serbian Literacy (Društvo srpske slovesnosti). The society primarily dealt with the issues of literacy and standardisation of the language. However, over time, political issues became intertwined with its activities. In 1864 Jovanović lost his position and had to leave Serbia again. It was all related to these activities in the above-mentioned society. The reason was Jovanović's brutal criticism of the Serbian elite that surrounded the Prince Mihajlo Obrenović, in one of his lectures held at the Society of Serbian Literacy.

Vladimir Jovanović left for Geneva where he launched a new journal: *Sloboda* (Freedom), later renamed to *Serbian Freedom* (Srpska Sloboda). The journal was short-lived, 1864–1866. Jovanović also collaborated with the Serbian liberals in Vojvodina, in the Habsburg Monarchy. He kept close ties with Svetozar Miletić (1826–1901). For example, when Svetozar Miletić founded the famous Serbian paper *Zastava* (the Banner) in Novi Sad in 1866, Vladimir Jovanović was invited to serve as the co-editor. Together, the liberals from the two countries proclaimed that the young Serbs should unite wherever they are, that their intellectual forces should work together. The idea of youth was linked with the statehood of Serbia. The liberals argued that the entire Serbian nation presents *youth* as the nation was still striving for its independence from the Ottoman rule.

After the assassination of the Prince Mihailo Obrenović in 1867 Vladimir Jovanović was arrested and kept in pre-trial detention for 7 months. Due to his criticism of the government, he was an obvious target. He was, however, released without any charges.

The Serbian rebellion in Bosnia and Herzegovina of 1875 changed many things in the life of Vladimir Jovanović. He believed that the moment was ripe for a national unification and that the general Serbian, and even Balkan-wide, revolt was pending. Consequently, he and other fellow liberals entered the Serbian government. Vladimir Jovanović became the minister of finance. He was in office until 1880. Jovanović left after his clash with Prince Milan Obrenović (1854–1901).³⁹ The main reason was the prince's plan to allow extraordinary economic concessions to Austro-Hungary. The problem was also Jovanović's writing about the state malversations in construction of the railway system. Jovanović and other liberals were thrown out from the government in 1891 and sent into retirement.

39 Bataković, 2014, pp. 89–95.

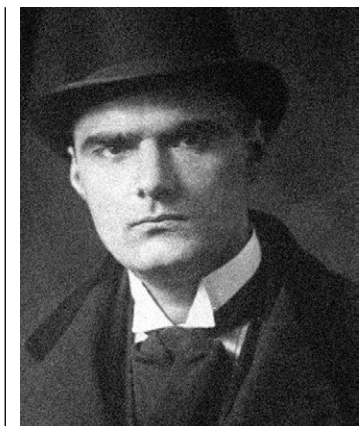
Jovanović left not only the government but the politics and the entire public life. Disappointed with the functioning of the political system and his inability to change it, he went into an internal exile. However he remained an expert for all political matters in Serbia. This absence from daily politics also meant that his biography had nothing to do with the bloody fall of the Obrenović dynasty in 1903. He remained a state advisor 1890–1903 but without any important role. In 1891 he and his fellow liberals published an open letter to all patriots with the call to unite and to leave the partisan policy aside.⁴⁰ The public saw this effort as a naïve attempt. His liberal principles did not leave him even in old age.

In 1863 while in London he published his manuscript *Serbia and the Eastern Question*. In 1876 he translated the work of John Steward Mill *Considerations on Representative Government*. In 1870 he published the *Political Dictionary*, a sort of political encyclopaedia encompassing essential concepts and notions.

Vladimir Jovanović died in 1922 after he witnessed the South Slavic unification and numerous political changes. He is remembered as an audacious activist and as a comprehensive liberal theoretician. He understood that liberalism implies not only freedom of exercising political rights but also systematic political education and free press. As he claimed, people cannot go to the elections *blindfolded*. He was most impressed by the British parliamentary system. His son, the famous Serbian intellectual Slobodan Jovanović (1869–1958), said that his father was the first true anglophone in Serbia. Indeed, his fascination with the Western political system of parliamentarism and democracy was undisputed. Vladimir Jovanović was also a thrilled nationalist of the *Mazzini type*. Unfortunately, his memoirs disappeared during the Austro-Hungarian occupation of Serbia.

40 Milosavljević, 2012, pp. 246–250.

4. Dimitrije Mitrinović – a charlatan or a visionary of the New Europe? (1887–1953)⁴¹



Dimitrije Mitrinović is mostly mentioned in Serbian culture as one of the many individuals who were part of the intellectual climate in the Balkans in the first decades of the 20th century. In the artistic sense, he is often found in anthologies of expressionist lyrics. In the political context, he is most often mentioned as one of the ideologues of the political-revolutionary organisation *Mlada Bosna* (*Young Bosnia*). Nevertheless, he had a wide range of interests and was evaluated by his contemporaries and connoisseurs in many different ways; he was alternately seen as poet, charlatan, rascal-guru, spy, playboy, revolutionary, prophet, mystic,

and occultist. His biography can be divided into three periods: 1887–1912, when he lived in Bosnia and Herzegovina; 1913–1914 in Munich; and 1914–1953, which he spent in England.

4.1. Birth and childhood, early education

Dimitrije was born on 21 October 1887 in Donji Poplat in today's municipality of Berkovići (Stolac) in Herzegovina as the oldest of ten children. He spent his childhood in Zovi Dol near Nevesinje. His parents – father Mihajlo and mother Vidosava – were teachers. In such a family, he received a solid primary education. He finished primary school in Blagaj, and entered the grammar school in nearby Mostar in 1899. He grew up in an area the citizens of which held vivid memories of the Herzegovinian uprising against the Turks (1875). In Mostar, he first encountered the heated revolutionary and avant-garde teachings of that time. Already in grammar school, he became an active member of secret national revolutionary organisations in the fight against the annexation of the province of Bosnia and Herzegovina to Austria-Hungary. He led the *Matica* literary society and then was a member of the *Sloboda*. In the Mostar grammar school, he attended the same class as Bogdan Žerajić, the idol of the young Bosnian revolutionary youth, the future assassin of General Marijan Varešanin, the Austrian leader of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Even as a grammar school student, he published a large number of poems, art and literary criticism and essays in various magazines: *Bosanska vila*,

⁴¹ Dimitrije Mitrinović, Serb and Yugoslav author, poet, translator and mystic, public domain, source of the picture: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dimitrije_Mitrinovi%C4%87#/media/File:Dimitrije_Mitrinovi%C4%87,_1920.jpg.

Nova Iskra, Delo, Brankovo kolo, Srbobran, Pokret, Hrvatski pokret, Slovenski jug. Like other young people who had just blossomed intellectually, he was caught by a true fever of national, political and literary ideas, from Mazzini, Apis and Kropotkin, to Tomas Masaryk, Chernyshevsky, Ivan Meštrović and Jovan Skerlić, as well as Marinetti and Whitman. Although their ideological notions were not always completely clear and defined, they yearned for freedom from the imperial restraints and fantasised about changing the world.⁴²

4.2. Faculty, titles and vocation, influences he received

After finishing grammar school in Mostar in 1907, Mitrinović continued his studies of philosophy, psychology and logic in Zagreb, Vienna and Belgrade. After two years of study at the Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb (1907–1909), he became more involved in the work of the magazine *Bosanska vila*, where in 1910 he became the youngest member of the editorial staff. The magazine brought together a wide circle of authors from South Slavic territories. This is where the first works of later well-known Serbian writers Ivo Andrić and Miloš Crnjanski were published and where the Serbian-Croatian cultural unity was affirmed. Mitrinović often travelled to Belgrade, from where he also received material assistance.⁴³ As a talented orator and literary critic, he was moving within the Belgrade-Zagreb-Sarajevo triangle, acting as a propagator and interpreter of revolutionary Yugoslav ideas. He is one of the contributors to the influential magazine *Slovenski jug*. He is the initiator of the *Zora* monthly magazine of the community of South Slavic students in Vienna. During 1911, he was hired by the Serbian government to promote the works of the sculptor Ivan Meštrović and a number of other Serbian and Croatian artists in Rome. In the magazine *Srpski književni glasnik* (Serbian Literary Herald) Mitrinović praised Meštrović's sculptures as a means of spreading and affirming the Yugoslav idea. He would do the same in 1915, when he was in London, where he organised a large exhibition of Meštrović's works.⁴⁴

For him, liberated and revived sense of Serbian national identity, as well as of Yugoslavian one, would be a small step towards the final plan of United Europe and the unification of the world community.⁴⁵ Mitrinović had a significant reputation among younger people in the Balkans, spreading cultural influence and avant-garde European ideas. He led a group of young revolutionaries of the Yugoslav orientation who mixed the national political ideas of Prince Mihailo Obrenović and Ilija Garašanin, Juraj Strossmayer and the Illyrian movement, Vidovdan (Saint Vitus day in Serbian) mythology of Meštrović's poems, and literature that glorified the 'intoxication by the fight for freedom'. Many, under the influence of those teachings, dreamed of themselves shooting the emperor and sacrificing themselves

42 Rigby, 2006, pp. 1–3; Palavestra, 2003, pp. 12–13; Pajin, 2010; Markovich, 2023, pp. 23–24.

43 Rigby, 2006, pp. 3–5; Pajin, 2010.

44 Palvestra, 2003, p. 25; Rigby, 2006, pp. 6–8, 11; Pajin, 2010.

45 In those years, Mitrinović advocated Yugoslavian identity in various texts. One of the most impressive formulations can be found in Mitrinović, 1912; Palavetra, 2003, p. 16; Pajin, 2010.

for freedom and national unification. Mitrinović from the very beginning imposed himself by his intellectual potential, wide views, but also by his talent for conspiratorial work. He collaborated with prominent members of *Young Bosnia* but also with the youngest writers such as Augustin Ujević and Ivo Andrić.⁴⁶ *Young Bosnia*, whose ideologist is also considered to be Mitrinović, was an informal organisation. It was a collective name for a wide circle of individuals of various initiatives and actions, from cultural and political ones, to assassinations, which created the impression among many that the whole its orientation was terrorist.⁴⁷

4.3. Munich adventure and acquaintance with Wassily Kandinsky

In the beginning of 1913, Mitrinović decided to continue his studies in Vienna and Munich, which at that time was an important centre of art studies for many students from the Balkans. He graduated in philosophy in Tübingen in 1914 at the dawn of the First World War. His stay and work in Munich will be marked by his association with *the Blue Rider* art group (Der Blaue Reiter) led by Franz Marc and Wassily Kandinsky, but also other actions, to which he devoted more time and energy than to his studies. In Munich, he increasingly turned away from Yugoslavism towards European utopia. In the beginning of 1914, he met and became close to Kandinsky. He soon prepared the lecture '*Kandinsky and the new art – taking tomorrow by storm*', which he held on 27 February in the hall of the museum in Munich. Friendship with Kandinsky and sharing the same views with him in the sphere of abstract art, soon translated into the field of social action. They tried to establish the *Foundations of the Future* movement, with a messianic-utopian vision of the salvation of 'universal Europe'. Mitrinović promoted the idea of gathering prominent individuals who would enable peace and prosperity for the world. This idea was already initiated by Erich Gutkind and Frederik van Eeden.⁴⁸ Gutkind and

46 Serbian Nobel prize winner Ivo Andrić admits that he was influenced by Mitrinović's advice to learn English and to read Whitman, a poet whom he would later mention as one of the most important in his reading: '*who revealed to me that beyond these unfortunate casbahs there are others and better and happier worlds*'. Grujičić, 2005.

47 The members of *Young Bosnia* were many young people attracted to national ideas bili: Pero Slijepčević, Bogdan Žerajić, Vladimir Gaćinović, Pavle Bastajić, Vladimir Čerina, Gavrilo Princip...The first assassination in 1910, on the Austrian general Varešanin, viceroy of the annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina (by Austria-Hungary in 1908), was carried out by Bogdan Žerajić (1886–1910) who fired five shots and killed himself with sixth. The second assassination, more famous one, was the assassination of the heir to the throne, Franz Ferdinand, on June 28, 1914, carried out by minors, Nedeljko Čabrinović (1895–1916) and Gavrilo Princip (1894–1918), which was followed by an ultimatum to Serbia, and then (on July 28) the attack of Austria-Hungary and the beginning of the First World War. Palavestra, 2003, pp. 29–30; Pajin, 2010.

48 They had similar ideas, expressed in the joint book *World Conquest through Heroic Love* (Welt-Eroberung durch Helden-Liebe, Berlin-Leipzig, 1911), and this was preceded by Gutkind's book *Sideric Birth* (Siderische Geburt, 1910.), which Mitrinović much appreciated. Palavestra, 2003, p. 40; Nemanja Radulović, 2022, pp. 139–159; More about this group of intellectuals see in: Van Hengel, 2022.

van Eeden suggested that Mitrinović become a member of their Blut-bund group. Gustav Landauer, Martin Buber, Henri Borel and others were also members, and the group met in the summer house of the Gutkinds in Potsdam.⁴⁹ They believed that the working classes needed the leadership of intellectuals with a vision in order to achieve socialism. According to him, positive social changes are possible through personality transformation and cooperation, rather than through class struggles and the conquest of political power. Hence, according to him, an alliance and togetherness of leading minds and spirits was needed, as a moral force that would influence the further development of the world towards peace and harmony. As one of the group's intellectual gurus, he planned for 1915, a collection of works by prominent intellectuals of Europe, with the joint title 'Towards the Mankind of the Future through Aryan Europe'. Mitrinović and Kandinsky planned to make promotional trips and lectures throughout Europe.⁵⁰ All these activities were interrupted by the news of the assassination of Crown Prince Franz Ferdinand by his friends from *Young Bosnia*. Fearing arrest, he went to London, where he made himself available to the Serbian embassy. He had entered Britain a few days before 4 August 1914, when Britain and Germany went to war. The war and destruction also caused a split between the German and other members of the Blut-bund group and its dissolution.⁵¹

4.4. London years 1914–1953

By moving to London, Mitrinović became a member of several other important intellectual circles. In 1914, he issued a platform for the movement, called *Independent Europe*, where he laid the foundations for the concept of uniting the peoples of the European area. He presented a vision of a united 'third Balkan' as a synthesis of the two previous ones – Hellenistic and Byzantine as a link between the New Europe and the New East. Later, he would move away from that idea and go towards the form of a universal utopia and a united Europe and its peoples and a universal

49 An invitation to cooperate was also sent to Rainer Maria Rilke, Dmitry Merezhkovsky, Ezra Pound, Rudolf Eucken, H. G. Wells, Romain Rolland, Upton Sinclair, Rabindranath Tagore and others. More in: Van Hengel, 2022; Pajin, 2010.

50 The list of potential collaborators also included: Henri Bergson, H. G. Wells, Rosa Luxemburg, Gustav Landauer, Maxim Gorky, Peter Kropotkin, Bernard Shaw, Knut Hamsun, Tomas Masaryk, Ivan Mestrovic, Anatole France, Franz Oppenheimer, Pablo Picasso, Houston Stuart Chamberlain, Jean Jaures and others. Mitrinović's proclamation to the intellectuals ends with the following words: 'the peoples, as the immediate bearers of life, that human ocean of the whole of Europe, must convert themselves and unite for that humanity of Aryan Europe, against the will of the states that prepare world wars and maintain the old capitalist order; and that requires trust and faith in Europe as a whole'. Mitrinovic, 1990, II, pp. 196–202; Palavestra, 2003, pp. 41–42.

51 Like Mitrinović, Kandinsky had to leave Germany and returned to Russia. After the war, Kandinsky will return to Germany and participate from 1919 in the creation and work of the Bauhaus. Palavestra, 2003, p. 41; Rigby, 2006, pp. 21–30.

utopia of a united mankind. His biographer Palavestra calls this evolution, a path ‘from national dogma to planetary utopia’.⁵²

During 1915, in London and Paris, in cooperation with the Serbian embassy, he organised lectures and exhibitions about the works of Ivan Meštović and his Yugoslav project the Vidovdan Temple. In cooperation with the Serbian priest, on whom he had a great ideological influence, Nikolaj Velimirović and Niko Županić, he wrote the work *the South Slav Monuments*, which was published in English.⁵³ As a propagator of Yugoslavism, he was nevertheless deeply disappointed with the mode of unification and the national narrow-mindedness that was manifested during the creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. For the rest of his life, he will only visit Yugoslavia one more time. After the introduction of the January 6 dictatorship in 1929, Mitrinović came to Belgrade at the invitation of King Alexander Karadjordjević. He was presented as a veteran of the revolutionary movement from which the South Slavic state arose. King Alexander initially thought that help in forming a new Yugoslav ideology could come from Mitrinović, listened to his ideas about the Yugoslav nation, about federation and socialism, about connecting religions and churches, but cooperation did not take place. His radical and utopian ideas and advocacy did not fit into the unitary projects of the ‘king-unifier’ who was soon assassinated. Mitrinović, as a unique and independent personality, found himself ideologically distant both from the king and from the left opposition.⁵⁴

In London in the beginning of the twenties, he joined the circle of intellectuals and artists called the ‘Bloomsbury Set’ (they met in the Bloomsbury quarter), where he brought many pro-Yugoslav intellectuals. He began cooperation with the magazine *New Age*, where Nobel laureate George Bernard Shaw was one of the editors. *The New Age* magazine was known as a representative of the Fabian socialism movement (Fabian society, founded in 1884), and advocated evolution towards socialism without revolutions and upheavals. From 1921–1926, he was contributing to topics about politics, science and philosophy. He wrote under a pseudonym about how man in his actions must not give in to mere force and inertia and fate, but to actively shape the world around him with his actions.⁵⁵

In 1926, he became president of the English section of the Adler Society for Individual Psychology. He then founded the group *New Europe*, which would exist intermittently until 1957. With his old revolutionary passion, Mitrinović devoted himself to propagating utopian ideas – often obscure and exotic ones. During 1932, the group organised a series of lectures under the joint title ‘Dispelling of Popular Myths’, some of which were: ‘Poverty is of God’, ‘Science will solve it all’, ‘The press

52 About his national and political programme and the transition from Yugoslavism to Europeanism, see in Palavestra, 2003, pp. 51–85.

53 Rigby, 2006, p. 50; Pajin, 2010.

54 Palavestra, 2003, pp. 339–341.

55 Rigby, 2006, pp. 54–78; Palavestra, 2003, pp. 303 ff. Pajin, 2010.

informs the people', 'There is nothing be done about it' etc. The first and only issue of the magazine *New Europe* appeared in September 1934.⁵⁶

He was also the editor and founder of the *New Britain Quarterly* magazine, which appeared in October 1932. The contributors were mainly from the circle of members of *New Europe*. His letter to Hitler was published in it, where he tried to make Hitler 'come to his senses', telling him that he was leading Germany into a war that would lead to self-destruction on the continent. During (1932–1934) the group grew into the New Britain Movement (NBM). They differed from the *New Europe* in that they put focus on Britain and domestic conditions, rather than on Europe. The idea was to create a socio-political alternative, which would be above the duality that was fighting in Europe at that time – communism or fascism. In articles in various magazines, he pointed out that communism and fascism annul the individual by referring to the higher goals of the community, hence it was necessary to find a different solution to the relationship between the individual and the community. He advocated for Britain to arm itself and act quickly to stand up for justice and humanity. Otherwise, war would break out on the continent, and a possible German victory in Europe would distort the human universe.⁵⁷ After the war, the surviving members of the pre-war group got together at the end of 1945 and founded the *Renaissance Club*. The atomic bombing (of Hiroshima and Nagasaki) was especially condemned. The main activity was public lectures, with the aim of showing people possible ways out of the post-war crisis. The club existed until 1965, organised about 200 lectures, with lecturers from science, philosophy, culture, literature and religion.⁵⁸

4.5. The world of Mitrinović's ideas

'The new mankind will create itself through the union of European republics. The future of humanity cannot be created by blind historical and fateful instincts, through world wars that are being prepared on all sides...'. He wrote prophetically in *Independent Europe* as early as 1914 on the eve of the First World War.⁵⁹ He often found his utopian and philosophical ideas by studying and was under influence of other great thinkers of his time. He attached his views to the doctrine of the *Theosophical Society*, but they were also close to the school of psychoanalysis of Sigmund Freud and Carl Gustav Jung.

In the series of articles 'World Affairs' (New Age), Mitrinović gave a detailed vision of the world as a living organism, where each nation played its appropriate role as part of a living whole. In it, even the sides of the world represented certain

56 The president of the society was for a time the famous chemist and Nobel laureate Frederick Soddy in 1932. The society would publish a whole series of publications and become one of the more interesting intellectual circles of the English capital between the two wars. Rigby, 2006, pp. 337–357; Pajin, 2010.

57 Mitrinovic, 1935.

58 Mitrinović's texts on: Pajin, 2010.

59 Pajin, 2010.

aspects of the psyche and internal actions to which we as a whole are prone. He believed that Europe, the cradle of the development of individual self-awareness, had an obligation to take the initiative in the further development of the rest of the world. The first step would be its integration and unification. Mitrinović combined his organicist point of view with the Christian and Hegelian philosophy of the 'All-Human'. He connected the establishment of the 'kingdom of heaven on earth' with his idea of a united mankind, which left behind a history of wars and conflicts. According to him, the self-awareness of the modern individual represents the final stage of a long period of development based on Christianity, which spans millennia. Historical progress and development was subordinated to the leadership of individuals – selected geniuses. Therefore, he sees the salvation of the human race through the creation of a community of individuals, who would take responsibility for the whole of mankind, understood as a unique and divine entity.⁶⁰

He advocated individualism that applied both to individuals and to cultures, i.e. individualism should not be the goal of any new homogenisation, but the voice of the individual should be heard in one general unit, which could be expressed through ritual, belief, language, creativity. He believed that mankind was at a turning point and saw the need for 'crowd creativity'. He saw this through the unification of all cultures, for the merging of all revolutions into one revolution of humanity, for the 'universal parliament of nations'. Mitrinović already warned that humanity must change the course of progress if it wanted to move forward on the path of sustainable development and not on the path of wars and extreme ideologies.⁶¹

4.6. Death, echoes of his works, reception, influence

After his illness, Mitrinović increasingly withdrew from London and social life. He lived in Richmond until his death on 28 August 1953 and was buried in Highgate Cemetery, London. His followers then founded the New Atlantis Foundation at the University of Bradford, which still looks after his legacy today and is responsible for the posthumous publication of many of his texts. The collection includes over 4500 documents written in English, German, French, as well as Serbian, and includes some of the books from his private library, from Sanskrit manuscripts, hieroglyphs, romantic and avant-garde adventures in various languages to contemporary philosophical and religious writings. He was a passionate philosopher and theoretician of politics, religion, and esotericism. In 1956, Bradford University left part of his legacy to the Belgrade University library, and in 2003 and 2004, Belgrade donated a part of his writings to Bradford. In May 2021, the first scientific

60 According to his idea, the first revelation – 'totality imbued with the divine' and the second 'Christian revelation of the divine in the human' are finished, and the third is 'the future of mankind that lies on mankind itself', that is, on the 'community of individuals'. With the third revelation of an individual genius, they assume responsibility for the fate of the world. Pekušić, 2013; More texts in: Mitrinović, 2004.

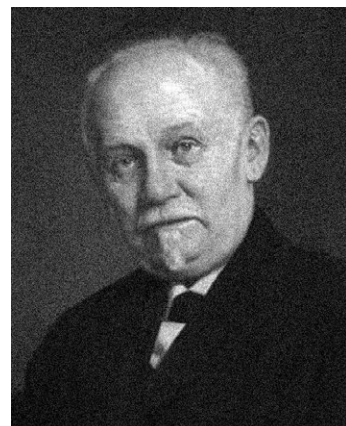
61 *'Thee human spirit is the driver of conscious life. He is the Third Force, the other two are the natural drive to maintain and the drive to get used to another individual...'* Pekušić, 2013; Mitrinovic, 2004.

conference ‘Dimitrije Mitrinović and his legacy’ was held in Belgrade, organised by the Centre for British Studies of the Faculty of Political Sciences in Belgrade and the Anglo-Serbian Society.

Although he was characterised as a utopian, one of Mitrinović’s great ideas did come true – the project of a united Europe. Because as early as 1920, he called on European states and peoples to create an ‘all-inclusive European culture’ as a ‘conscious and self-aware unit’. That idea came to life precisely in the years of his death, admittedly, more as a consequence of the economy, the development of technology and strategic interests than the idea of panhumanism, cultural and religious ecumenism that he wholeheartedly propagated.

5. Slobodan Jovanović (1869–1958)⁶²: Serbs and Yugoslavia

Slobodan Jovanović was born in Novi Sad on 3 December 1869, in what was then Austria-Hungary. His father, Vladimir Jovanović (1833–1922), was a well-known politician, thinker, and one of the founders of liberalism among Serbs. As a believer in the ideals of the French Revolution, his father Vladimir named his son Slobodan (‘to be free’ in Serbian) and his daughter Pravda (‘justice’ in Serbian). These were the first such names in Serbia, with which he wanted to influence the spread of enlightened and liberal ideas among Serbs. Vladimir lived in Austria-Hungary as a political exile; because of his ideas, he had been fired and transferred from the civil service and was constantly under police surveillance.⁶³ In 1872, the family moved from Novi Sad to Belgrade, where Slobodan entered the First Boys High School in 1879 and graduated in 1886. After his high school graduation, Slobodan’s father took him to Munich and Zurich (1886–1891) to continue his education. As a state cadet, Slobodan Jovanović enrolled at the Faculty of Law in Geneva. After graduating in 1890, he continued his studies of constitutional law and political science in Paris.⁶⁴



He returned to Belgrade in 1891 and entered the civil service, first as a clerk in a provincial court, after which he was transferred to the Ministry of Foreign

62 Slobodan Jovanović, Serbian writer, politician, Portrait of Slobodan Jovanović by Uroš Predić, 1931, source of the picture: public domain, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slobodan_Jovanovi%C4%87#/media/File:Slobodan_Jovanovi%C4%87,_by_Uro%C5%A1_Predi%C4%87_\(1931\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slobodan_Jovanovi%C4%87#/media/File:Slobodan_Jovanovi%C4%87,_by_Uro%C5%A1_Predi%C4%87_(1931).jpg).

63 Trkulja and Vučinić, 2009, pp. 11–22; Soleša, 1998, p. 161.

64 Trkulja and Vučinić, 2009; Stajić, 1959, pp. 258–261.

Affairs in 1892, and already in 1893 he was appointed as an attaché in the Serbian Embassy in Istanbul. The following year, he received a promotion and became the head of the Education Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where his primary task was to provide advice on educational and ecclesiastical issues. First, his task was to organise and spread Serbian propaganda in Macedonia and other countries with a Serbian population that were then under foreign rule. This activity particularly influenced Slobodan Jovanović and his later thoughts on the issue of Macedonia.⁶⁵

5.1. Teaching career and the Great War

At only 26 years old, Slobodan published the study 'On the Social Contract' in 1895, a critique of Rousseau's theory. As early as 1897, he was elected as an associate professor and soon a full professor at the Faculty of Law of the Higher School in Belgrade, which became the University of Belgrade in 1905. After the introductory lecture on state sovereignty, he soon began to publish texts on legal and constitutional issues of contemporary Serbia. He wrote about the issue of the bicameral parliamentary system and the role of the constitution-making body of the Grand National Assembly. He was particularly interested in fine literature and art, and started writing literary and theatre reviews. He was one of the founders of the Belgrade style, he wrote in a 'crystal clear, easy, simple, completely accessible' way. He was one of the founders of the *Srpski književni glasnik* (Serbian Literary Herald) in 1901, which was supposed to deal with literature, science and art, as well as follow modern trends in all countries where the Serbian people lived.⁶⁶

In 1905, he became a corresponding, and in 1908, a regular member of *the Royal Serbian Academy*. He published a whole series of political debates, significant historiographical works and literary reviews.⁶⁷ He only stopped working at the Faculty and Academy during the Balkan Wars, as well as during the Great War, when, as a conscript, he was appointed as the head of the press office in the Supreme Command. During 1915, under the pressure of the triple offensive of Austria-Hungary, Germany and Bulgaria, the Serbian army began to retreat through Albania. Slobodan Jovanović accompanied the Serbian Supreme Command to the island of Corfu. In the middle of 1916, still in the service of the press office, he went with the Supreme Command to Thessaloniki, where the Serbian army was transferred to the allied Salonica front. Even during the Balkan wars, he, as the head of the press office, met and befriended Colonel Dragutin Dimitrijević Apis, the head of the intelligence service of the Serbian army. Although Apis was removed from the position of head of the military intelligence service, he still maintained a strong influence on the officer corps, which threatened the authority of both the regent Aleksandar Karađorđević

65 Pavković, 2008, pp. 17–18.

66 Trkulja and Vučinić, 2009, pp. 253–258, 219.

67 From 1911 to 1931, Jovanović wrote a series of eight books covering the political history of modern Serbia from 1838 to 1903. Kosta, 1993, p. 137.

and the Serbian government. The regent, his officers and the Serbian government therefore organised a trial for Apis in 1916 before a military court, where Apis and his two associates were sentenced to death and executed. During the preparations for the trial, Jovanović, as an acquaintance of Apis, was removed from his position in the Thessaloniki press office of the Supreme Command and returned to Corfu, where the seat of the Serbian government was. The then Minister of the Interior unsuccessfully requested that Jovanović also be subjected to an investigation in connection with the accusations against Apis. Jovanović himself had doubts about the legal basis and political expediency of the process against Apis.⁶⁸

Until the end of the war, Jovanović was appointed as an associate of the Serbian government in matters of international law and in that capacity attended the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 as a member of the royal delegation. At that time, he was not a great advocate of South Slavic unification, nor a supporter of the Yugoslav idea. After the First World War, he returned to professorship and lectures. From 1920, he turned more and more to political sociology, sociology of religion and writing in the fields of jurisprudence and history. The focus of his scientific interest was constitutional law, while the main historical works were related to the political, constitutional, and diplomatic development of Serbia in the second half of the 19th century. He left a strong impact in all of the scientific fields in which he was involved and dedicated his last lectures at Belgrade University to sociology.⁶⁹ He spent three years from 1928 to 1931 at the head of the Serbian Academy of Sciences.

5.2. Serbian Cultural Club

Although he was close to politics and was an undisputed political authority, Jovanović avoided taking an active position as a politician throughout much of his life in order to have more space for independent intellectual action and interpretation. He began his active engagement in politics only when the Serbian Cultural Club was founded in 1937; even then, however, he appeared first as an ideologue of the reorganisation of Yugoslavia on a national basis and his role was far from that of a practical and professional politician.⁷⁰ After the Marseille assassination of King Alexander in 1934, a large faction of Serbian intellectuals became convinced that the state power was not able to protect Serbian national interests in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Jovanović believed that concern for Serbian interests had ceased and that the idea of national unity in the form of integral Yugoslavism had been embraced. There was no concern for Serbian national, economic, or cultural

68 Dragutin Dimitrijević Apis (1876–1917) was one of the officers conspirators of the May Coup in 1903, when King Aleksandar Obrenović and Queen Draga were killed. He was also the leader of the conspiracy organisation Black Hand (Unification or Death) (Crna ruka, Ujedinjenje ili smrt in Serbian). He was accused of supplying weapons to the members of Young Bosnia who assassinated the Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand and of transferring them to Bosnia. More in Jovanović, 1990.

69 Trkulja and Vučinić, 2009; Đorđević, 2009, pp. 228–229.

70 Pavlović, 1993, pp. 9–10.

integration, and there was no attempt to bring the Serbs spiritually closer together. There was no space for the concept of a country that held were multiple religions, customs, mentalities, traditions, dialects, and ways of life.⁷¹ According to Jovanović, disappointments in the new state came from both sides of the *'liberated provinces were dissatisfied in Serbia and Serbia was dissatisfied in liberated provinces'*.⁷²

Therefore, he led a group of Serbian intellectuals in a campaign to establish a Serbian Cultural Club in Belgrade. In December 1936, the first assembly was held in the premises of the Serbian Literary Association and the club's work was officially approved on 15 January 1937.⁷³ The Serbian cultural club was created on the model of similar organisations in France and Great Britain, as well as the Serbian cultural society Prosvjeta.⁷⁴ The original intention of the Club was to place itself on the Yugoslav stage as a public forum, a gathering of Serbian democratic and patriotic forces of the then Serbian civil society, its democratic opposition and leading intellectual, scientific, cultural, and business circles. The Serbian Cultural Club was intended to be a place of meeting and discussion for all those who were interested in issues of Serbian culture and were not tied to any political ideology. Some members were democrats, some were republicans, there were also unitarians and federalists, but most of them were not supportive of the radicals and the regime. Some declared themselves Anglophiles, others Francophiles; some stood for Serbianism, the others for Slavism. Jovanović believed that an exchange of ideas would undoubtedly be useful and that it would contribute to the unification of views in matters of general national importance. Jovanović was elected as president⁷⁵ and the lawyers Dragiša Vasić and Nikola Stojanović were elected as vice-presidents, while Vaso Čubrilović was the secretary of the Serbian Cultural Club.⁷⁶

Jovanović believed that Serbian national culture must be nurtured within the framework of Yugoslavism. For him, cultural unification is a long historical process and can be carried out by the historical forces found in Serbism, Croatism, and Slavism.⁷⁷ According to Jovanović, a good Serb, a good Croat, and a good Slovene can also be a good Yugoslav, and it is incorrect that a good Yugoslav can only be one who has stopped being a good Serb, Croat, or Slovene. The basic motto of the club

71 Dimić, 2006, pp. 506–507.

72 Ekmečić, 2017, p. 421.

73 Simić, 2006, p. 11; Dimić, 2006, p. 508; Popović, 1989, pp. 112–113.

74 The Serbian educational and cultural society Prosvjeta was founded in 1902 in Sarajevo with the aim of preserving Serbian culture and identity in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Popović A. Nebojša, 2003, pp. 218–219.

75 Jovanović was the first and only president of this organisation. Jovanović, 2009, pp. 241–242.

76 Of the seventy founders of the club itself, twenty-three belonged to the teaching and scientific staff of Belgrade and other universities, five of whom were rectors of Belgrade University. The eight founders of the Club were at the top of industrial and banking associations. The founders were also heads of judicial institutions. The founders of the club were two retired generals and many artists, architects, engineers, doctors, lawyers, and merchants. Popović, 2001, pp. 218–219.

77 Popović, 1989, p. 114.

and the common goal of the members was formulated as ‘strong Serbism in a strong Yugoslavia’. If the tribal principle of federalisation were to be adopted, he believed that it would have to be implemented consistently, ‘if all Croats were to unite in one banovina (provinces into which Kingdom of Yugoslavia was subdivided), then all Serbs would also have to unite in one banovina’.

5.3. Criticism of the Cvetković – Maček agreement in 1939

At the beginning of the Second World War, with the agreement of 26 August 1939 between the Prime Minister of the Yugoslav government, Dragiša Cvetković, and the leader of the Croatian Peasants’ Party, Vlatko Maček, the Banovina of Croatia, a new political reality emerged. Jovanović and the Serbian Cultural Club soon changed from a primarily cultural movement into a political one.⁷⁸ With this agreement, the Banovina of the Sava and Primorje, as well as the districts of Dubrovnik, Šid, Ilok, Brčko, Gradačac, Derвента, Travnik, and Fojnica, were merged into one banovina under the name Banovina of Croatia, with headquarters in Zagreb. All internal affairs were transferred to the jurisdiction of the Banovina of Croatia.⁷⁹ However, although the creators of the agreement presented it as necessary for the survival of the country in wartime circumstances, even the Croats were not satisfied with this solution. They demanded their own administration and the right to conduct politics on economic, judicial, administrative, and social affairs. They also demanded autonomy for the Bay of Kotor and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

There was also dissatisfaction among the Serbs, primarily because of the way in which the Agreement itself had been adopted, as well as regarding the territorial delimitation.⁸⁰ The Serbian Cultural Club became one of the biggest opponents of the Regulation on the Banovina of Croatia. They took issue with the following aspects of the Agreement: the dissolution of the Yugoslav parliament and the reorganisation of Yugoslavia without a clearer definition of the borders of Serbia, which made the greatest sacrifices for the creation of Yugoslavia; the territorial shaping of Croatia by applying unclear criteria, sometimes ethnic, sometimes historical, sometimes economic-geographical; and the (il)legitimacy of Dragiša Cvetković to represent the Serbs in the negotiations with the Croats.⁸¹ According to Jovanović’s understanding, the creation of the Banovina of Croatia Hrvatska marked the start of the disintegration of the country, but the Serbian question remained unresolved.⁸²

78 Ibid. p. 116.

79 The common ruler appointed the ban, Prince Pavle appointed a military volunteer from Thessaloniki, Ivan Šubašić to be the first viceroy. The new banovina included 4.400.000 inhabitants, of which 168.000 were Muslims and 866.000 were Serbs. Dimić, 2006, p. 509; Radojević, 1992, p. 66.

80 Čorović, 1997, pp. 447–448, 117; Ekmečić, 2017, p. 422.

81 Radojević, 1992, p. 66.

82 The first secretary of the Club, Vasa Čubrilović, parted ways with the Serbian Cultural Club due to criticism of the Agreement. His brother Branko Čubrilović, who then represented the Agricultural Party, entered the government of Dragiša Cvetković. Đorđević, 1994, p. 32; Stijović, 2004, p. 17; Boban, 1965, p. 249.

Jovanović's slogan 'Strong Serbia in a Strong Yugoslavia' should have been implemented by organising some kind of conference of distinguished Serbs who would consider solving the problem of the reorganisation of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Jovanović called together people who advocated for integral Yugoslavism, as well as those who were openly against it. The president of the Serbian Royal Academy, Aleksandar Belić, Archimandrite Justin Popović, and Milan Grol, one of the leaders of the Democratic Party, joined the Serbian Cultural Club. There was also a youth section of the Serbian Cultural Club modelled after the members of the *United Youth of Serbia (Ujedinjene omladine srpske)* and *Young Bosnia (Mlada Bosna)*. Jovanović was more in favour of an organisation with supra-party intentions, while the younger part of the Serbian Cultural Club tended to form a political party. The goal was the delimitation of Serbian territories and the creation of a Serbian unit within the framework of Yugoslavia.⁸³

5.4. President and Minister of the Yugoslav Government-in-Exile 1942–1944

Italy's attack on Greece on 28 October 1940 brought the war to the very border of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. For Slobodan Jovanović, this was sufficient to reduce the activity of the Serbian Cultural Club related to the Agreement. The external danger and the need to face the war as a united front pushed other issues into the background.⁸⁴ Yugoslavia's accession to the Tripartite Pact on 25 March 1941, although forced, caused enormous dissatisfaction primarily among the Serbian people, and especially in military and church circles. All this, with the considerable help of the external factor of Great Britain, resulted in mass demonstrations against the pact with Hitler and the military coup on 27 March 1941, which overthrew the Cvetković-Maček government. Testimonies in literature and journalism connected Jovanović with conspirators in military circles. Allegedly, at that time, Jovanović was also an advocate of cooperation with the USSR.⁸⁵

After the German occupation of Yugoslavia, he escaped with the government first to Jerusalem and then in July 1941 to London. In early January 1941, due to disagreements in the government, General Dušan Simović was dismissed. Jovanović received a mandate from King Peter II on 1 January 1942, and all political parties were represented in his government. Jovanović's government introduced two innovations. The first was the appointment of the leader of the Ravna gora movement, Dragoljub Mihailović, as Minister of the Army, Air Force, and Navy. By the end of Jovanović's mandate as president of the refugee government, Mihailović was promoted first to divisional general, then to army general and head of the Supreme

83 In accordance with the new orientation, the newsletter of the club, the *Srpski glas* was launched from 16 November 1939 until 13 June 1940, when it was banned. After the military coup on March 27, 1941, only one issue of the newsletter came out again just to declare the support for the coup d'état. The owner and editor of the paper was Dragiša Vasić. Popović, 2003, pp. 222–223; Simić, 2006, p. 22.

84 Trkulja and Vučinić, 2009, p. 280.

85 Milikić, 2023, pp. 246–254.

Command. This appointment as minister was intended to strengthen Mihailović's position in Yugoslavia and speed up allied aid. Another novelty was the creation of the Prime Minister's Military Cabinet, headed by Major Živan Knežević.⁸⁶

Jovanović's government supported Mihailović's substantial position that he would prefer to wait for the weakening of the occupiers and victory on major fronts before leading active resistance in order to avoid German reprisals against the civilian population. Otherwise, the programme of Mihailović's movement did not differ from the programme of the pre-war Serbian Cultural Club, headed by Jovanović, with its pro-Western orientation, anti-fascism, and anti-communism, and motto that 'strong Serbianism in a strong Yugoslavia'. The Ustaše genocide against the Serbs in Croatia reduced its Yugoslav base. German reprisals against the local population dissuaded him from openly resisting the occupier, while the growing partisan movement reinforced its anti-communist stance. Already in October 1941, upon the first news of Mihailović's uprising in the country, Jovanović said that the moment for the uprising was inopportune because of harsh German reprisals. In May 1942, Slobodan Jovanović expressly ordered Mihailović '*not to take premature actions due to useless and disproportionate casualties and terrible reprisals*'. However, this increased the risk that the resistance movement gathered around the communists would take over leadership from Mihailović. Therefore, Jovanović and his ministers failed to convince the Allies to provide significant material aid to Mihailović with their limited resources.

From 26 June to 10 August 1943, Jovanović held the position of Deputy Prime Minister in Miloš Trifunović's cabinet. When King Petar II, under the pressure of British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, decided to remove Prime Minister Božidar Purić and appoint Ivan Šubasić as Prime Minister, Professor Jovanović opposed this decision and resigned from the government. Then, during the summer of 1944, in accordance with the reason for which he was appointed, Šubasić soon concluded an agreement with Tito. The king and the new government then dismissed Mihailović from the position of Minister of Defense (August 1944) and invited his supporters in the country to join the People's Liberation Army of Yugoslavia led by Tito. Jovanović considered this act of King Peter II and of British politics a betrayal of Serbian national interests and a betrayal of the Yugoslav army in the homeland. According to him, this practically meant handing over power to the communists in Yugoslavia and betraying the four-year struggle.

5.5. Political exile and president of the Yugoslav People's Committee (YPC)

As a prominent liberal and anti-communist, Jovanović remained in emigration after the war because of his convictions and thus repeated the fate of his father Vladimir. As the president of the government-in-exile after 1945, he found himself on the defeated side. Remaining faithful to the foundations and ideals of liberalism, he suffered condemnation and exile from the communist revolutionary

| 86 Ibid. pp. 255–272. |

authorities. In July 1946, at the trial of General Dragoljub Mihailović and a group of twenty-three persons in Belgrade, Slobodan Jovanović was sentenced in absentia by the Military Court 'to imprisonment with forced labour for twenty years, loss of political and certain civil rights for ten years, confiscation of all property and loss of citizenship'. He was convicted of 'treason and war crimes' even though he had spent the entire war in London as president or member of an internationally recognised government. Based on this verdict, a ban on the printing of his works was introduced in Yugoslavia. Even beforehand, without explanation, his name had disappeared from the list of academics in the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts Yearbook for 1945.⁸⁷ An attempt to publish his works in Belgrade during the 1980s was personally prevented by Slobodan Milošević, who held the influential position of president of the capital's communist organisation at the time, with the explanation that Jovanović was a Serbian nationalist.

Until his death, Jovanović continued to live in London in the modest and small Tudor Court Hotel. He continued his political activity through emigrant political associations and magazines. He was one of the most significant participants in the public life of the Yugoslav emigration and a contributor to numerous emigrant newspapers. In London in August 1945, he initiated the establishment of the *Yugoslav People's Committee*, with the aim of acting as the main organ of Yugoslav emigration. From September 1945 to the end of the 1950s, the Committee did not miss any significant opportunity in international relations without recalling 'the tragic case of Yugoslavia' under the communist dictatorship. As the supra-party organisation and the legitimate successor of the former emigrant government, it was made up of representatives of all political parties in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia that did not recognise the revolutionary communist government. The *Serbian People's Committee* (SPC) operated within the framework of the YPC, which recognised the YPC as a temporary representative body and subordinated to its leadership. Due to the Yugoslav character, but still with weak support in the ranks of the Slovenes and Croats, the Yugoslav committee was largely reduced to a Serbian organisation.⁸⁸ In addition to his political activity, in 1951, Jovanović was the initiator of the founding of *the Association of Serbian Writers in Exile*. In that Association, which organised monthly lectures, Jovanović spoke on the topics of Serbian history and literature.

The political activity of the Committee in unfavourable international circumstances with a bad material situation and emigrant organisations and associations

87 Cvetković, 2015, p. 338.

88 The founding members of the board were Slobodan Jovanović, president; Jovan Banjanin and Bogoljub Jevtić, vice president and member of the Main Board of the Yugoslav National Party; Većeslav Vilder, President of the Executive Committee of the Independent Democratic Party; Dr. Milan Gavrilović, president of the Serbian Agricultural Party, Radoje L. Knežević, member of the Executive Committee of the Democratic Party; Krsta Lj. Miletić and Miloš St. Bobić, members of the Executive Committee of the Radical Party. Later, three more members joined the board: 1948, Bećir Đonlagić, member of the Main Board of the Yugoslav Muslim Organization; 1952, Dr. Prvislav Grisogono and Frano Cvjetiša, well-known national workers. Jovanović, 1955; Bošković, 1971, pp. 110–115.

that were arguing with each other did not provide any serious results. The culmination of the action of these emigrant circles was represented by *the Memorandum of the Yugoslav Political Leaders* sent on 10 September 1945 to the conference of Allied Foreign Ministers in London. The memorandum, in addition to attacking the Provisional Government, called for the creation of a truly democratic all-party government that would organise free elections, as well as the sending of an allied military and civilian mission that would organise a non-political army and police force and monitor the elections. After that, the committee continued to address important institutions of the United Nations and the countries of Western Europe on various occasions and sent numerous petitions, memoranda, and appeals regarding the fate of Yugoslavia.⁸⁹ The backbone of the YPC platform was the following ideas: the fight against the communist regime; for democracy and the rule of law; preservation of free and federal Yugoslavia; and that the decision on the form of organisation of Yugoslavia (monarchy or republic) should be made after free elections at the Constituent Assembly.

Slobodan Jovanović published about sixty articles in the *Poruka*, the Committee's official newspaper, between December 1950 and December 1958. The authors of the articles in this newspaper were distinguished politicians, lawyers, academics, and university professors from the post-war Yugoslav emigration. His closest collaborators were Radoje Knežević as editor-in-chief of the newspaper and historian Kosta St. Pavlovic.⁹⁰ Through texts and public appearances, Jovanović focused his thoughts and research on the essential issues of democratic reconstruction and European reintegration of Yugoslav society and state after the Second World War. The focus of his analysis was on the possibilities of establishing a democratic legal state and the rule of law on the territory of Yugoslavia, as well as on the dangers of the strengthening of totalitarian forces in society, which would bring both Serbia and Yugoslavia to the brink of collapse.⁹¹

He died on Friday 12 December 1958, in his ninetieth year in London. He was buried in the Orthodox section of Kensal Green Cemetery in the north-west part of London. The Association of Serbian Writers in Exile erected a memorial plaque to Slobodan Jovanović in the Court Hotel in London, where he had lived from 1945 until his death in 1958. The fact that his books, despite the bans, were always read and highly valued speaks volumes about his work and reputation among the Serbian intelligentsia. He was rehabilitated first unofficially at the University and in the scientific public, and then in wider society. After many years of attempts to print his collected works, due to the unfavourable opinion of the communist authorities, twelve volumes were only printed in 1990. Even before the judicial rehabilitation in 2003, Jovanović's image appeared on the 5,000 dinars banknote.

89 Trkulja, 2020.

90 At the founding assembly, Jovanović was elected as honorary president, writer Miloš Crnjanski as president, and Miodrag Stajić as vice president. Popović, 2003, pp. 352–374.

91 Trkulja, 2020.

Finally, in 2007, Slobodan Jovanović was rehabilitated by the decision of the District Court in Belgrade, and the judgment by which he was sentenced to imprisonment and loss of honour was declared null and void. On 8 December 2011, his remains were transferred to Serbia, where they were buried in the Alley of Deserving Citizens at the New Cemetery in Belgrade. In November 2019, the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts organised an exhibition and a scientific meeting on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of his birth.

6. Borislav Pekić (1930–1992) – nation and democracy

Borislav Pekić was born on 4 February 1930 in Podgorica (Montenegro) to father Vojislav D. Pekić and mother Ljubica, née Petrović, originally from Bavanište near Pančevo (Vojvodina). Through his grandmother on his mother's side, he also had Aromanian roots. His father, a former Montenegrin komita, was a high-ranking civil servant who had been head of the county before the Second World War and deputy head of the Zeta Banovina in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.⁹² Due to the father's civil service, the family often changed their place of residence. Demonstrations against the pact with Hitler and the military coup on 27 March 1941 found him in Cetinje. This was one of the first important historical events that he later remembered, seeing all the delusion of its protagonists. After the April War in 1941, the collapse of Yugoslavia, and the occupation of Montenegro, Vojislav's father, then head of the department of the Zeta Banovina, was expelled by the Italian fascists. The family moved to Bavanište near Pančevo (Banat, Vojvodina). The German authorities in Banat offered Vojislav a position as a former civil servant, but he resolutely refused.

Borislav was popular among his friends in school and was given the nickname 'Štrk' (Stork) because he was extremely tall. He was also known for being an avid reader.⁹³ One of Pekić's first childhood traumas was his confrontation with communist revolutionary terror and the vindictive justice of the liberators. This was materialised in the shooting of German families (Volksdeutsche) at the location of the *Konjsko groblje* (Horse Cemetery) in Bavanište after the liberation on 20 October 1944. These terrible events, as well as his later imprisonment under the communist regime, left a strong impression on fourteen-year-old Pekić. He was forever formed as a rebel and a fighter for freedom against all types of totalitarianism.⁹⁴

92 Interview with Ljiljana Pekić, Belgrade, May, 2006; Cvetkovic, 2020, p. 7.

93 Unpublished material of the publicist Ljubomir Boškov from Bavanište in the possession of the author.

94 *'When the Deliblato partisan detachment marched into Bavanište with a limping, mustachioed commander. They picked up most of the native Germans and imprisoned them in the school. Among them were those to whom the Serbs owed a lot. A hundred half-naked men and women, tied by two wires, descended into the ravine and sank into the fog. Commander D. R raised the machine gun and fired the first burst into the ravine. The soldiers fired after him. The killed disappeared in the fog. Among the killed Germans from the village was E.D., the little girl I loved..'* Pekić, II, 1991, p. 278; Cvetković, 2020, p. 10.

6.1. *Early political activism and imprisonment*

After the liberation in 1945, the family moved and settled in Belgrade. He attended the Third Men's Grammar School, where he joined various illegal youth opposition groups. On the eve of the November 1945 elections, he engaged in anti-communist actions of the democratic opposition centred around Milan Grol and the Democratic Party. Activities were reduced to propaganda actions, distribution of the *Demokratija* newspaper, agitation and the like. Pekić and most of his radical young comrades considered even the symbolic presence of the opposition in the assembly in 1945 as collaboration. They thought that this was giving the necessary legitimacy to the revolutionary government before the international community. The actions of the democratic youth met with a fierce reaction from the fanatical members of the League of Communist Youth of Yugoslavia who kept a watchful eye on any potential 'enemy of the people'. They publicly burned the only opposition newspaper, *Demokratija*, and the colporteurs, among whom was the young Borislav Pekić at the time, were often beaten. Finally, on 8 November 1945, after the seventh issue, the typographical workers did not refuse to print Democracy as a 'treasonous' paper.⁹⁵

Everything that was not in accordance with the People's Front was labeled as treacherous and hostile. The electoral climate before the elections with the 'blind ballot box' was more like a wartime one than a democratic one. The campaign ahead of the assembly on 11 November 1945 and the purge of those who were supposed to be obstacles to the establishment of a revolutionary order began in the fall of 1944 under wartime conditions through proscriptions, arrests, or murders of almost all sympathisers of the old 'unpopulist regime'. The united opposition, which included the young Pekić, refused to participate in the act of legalisation of the party's dictatorship. Thus, on 20 September 1945, it called for a boycott and non-recognition of the elections.

At the beginning of 1946, in the grammar school Pekić attended, he was the victim of a mass action of 'defascisation' by 'reactionary elements' among the students, which was carried out by young members of the League of Communist Youth of Yugoslavia. At that time, throughout Serbia, hundreds of 'reactionary' students were either tortured or expelled from secondary schools and grammar schools.⁹⁶ 'Defascisation' seemed to have the opposite effect with Pekić. With his group as a student, and then from 1948, as a student of art history, he continued

95 *'We have the freedom to strike. As far as I know, the workers went on strike because the newspaper attacked and insulted the trade unions. There was a lot of illegality in that paper. The workers felt that they should not print that paper. They have the right to strike and we cannot interfere... Besides, it proves that workers are our subjects, explained Josip Broz Tito'*. Koštunica and Čavoški, 1983, p. 74.

96 *'I don't remember what my indictment consisted of. I mean, among other things, it included in my open attacks on Marxism in classes and propaganda against the actions of the National Youth, but the most important was my editorship of the grammar school wall newspaper'*. Pekić, 1991, pp. 329–331.

to be even more politically active during 1946-1948, both in Belgrade and in the surroundings of Pančevo and Bavanište.⁹⁷ The group mainly reduced its activities to propaganda-intelligence work. Such groups were made up of extremely young fanatic idealists who were predominantly of national and democratic origins. Most were the sons of civil families who did not want to come to terms with the new situation, despising the anemic nature of the citizenry and the civil political elite. Pupil and student groups were arrested and severely punished. This was especially true in the period immediately after the end of the 1945-46 war, and during the conflict with the Cominform, when the regime felt threatened.⁹⁸ In addition to the illegal youth groups, many opposition leaders and ordinary citizens were targeted by the regime as political or class enemies.

Borislav Pekić was one of the founders and secretary of the *League of Democratic Youth of Yugoslavia (LDYY)*, an illegal youth opposition political organisation. This group of twenty-eight young people who were mostly from Belgrade was active in secondary schools and at the University. It sought to be an alternative to the United League of Anti-Fascist Youth of Yugoslavia, which was controlled by the communists. The programme of the LDYY stated that '*Yugoslavia has become a slave of a bloody government*' and called on the membership to create a '*spirit of rebellion and resistance*', and to '*prepare for the fight against communism with the help of Western democratic states*'. Pekić drew up the Statute according to which the duty of LDYY members, was, among other things, to tirelessly prepare for the idealist – and even, if necessary, armed – struggle against communism by all means. Communism was defined in the programme as an authoritarian movement devoid of a social dimension: '*capitalism exploits the worker in the name of the exploiter's greed, communism exploits the worker in the name of improving the workers' existence*'.⁹⁹

Members of the LDYY were arrested in November 1948 and sentenced to long-term imprisonment. The prosecutor accused them of using violent means to overthrow the existing order, and even demanded the death penalty for some of the defendants.¹⁰⁰ The trial of nineteen-year-old Borislav Pekić and members of the LDYY before the District Court for the city of Belgrade was held between 5-8 May 1949. Twelve young people, most of whom were grammar school students, were sentenced to up to 122 years in prison. Borislav Pekić was sentenced to fifteen years in prison. The difficult time of foreign political tension surrounding the resolution of the Cominform and the split between the Yugoslav communists and Stalin led to much more drastic punishments than usual.¹⁰¹

97 Pekić, 1991, pp. 51-82; Testimony and unpublished material of publicist Ljubomir Boškov from Bavanište, May 8, 2007.

98 After the liberation, opposition groups of young people were found in almost every major city in Serbia. Groups of young idealists were falling one after the other (Tonus, Kružok, Dors, Plava Pantljika, Beli Orlovi...); Cvetković, 2020, pp. 28-29.

99 Pekić, 1991, II, pp. 51-82.

100 Danilović, 1993, p. 125.

101 See more in: Pekić, 1991; Cvetković, 2015, pp. 349-350; Danilović, 1991, pp. 125-130.

Borislav Pekić served more than five years as a political prisoner. On 12 August 1949, he came to the Sremska Mitrovica penitentiary to serve his sentence. For one month, he was placed in a cell without a ray of light, in total darkness, completely alone, on bare concrete. In difficult prison conditions and overcrowded prison cells, he fell seriously ill. He was then transferred to the Niš prison hospital, until the great amnesty on 1 December 1953. Prison life had forever damaged his health, giving him permanent lung disease.¹⁰² His three-volume novel ‘Godine koje su pojeli skakvci’ (*The Years the Locusts have Devoured*), inspired by this suffering, is the story of Serbian prison society during the revolution and the chronicle of the downfall of parliamentary democracy. During his stay in the Niš penitentiary, Pekić also ‘killed time’ by reading. He was a kind of prison screenwriter-playwright and staged prison plays. Despite his illness, he never wrote pleas for pardon. After the death of Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin on Republic Day 1953, as a sign of a new, more liberal course, the communist authorities boasted of the largest amnesty of convicts in history. Thousands of prisoners and inmates left the prison, and Borislav Pekić was pardoned.¹⁰³

6.2. On ‘gifted freedom’

Borislav Pekić spent the years after his release from prison in a sort of self-isolation. He devoted himself to reading, introspection, writing, and studying psychology in a frenetic attempt to make up for his years in prison and his violently interrupted youth. He remained obsessed with his concept of ‘gifted freedom’,¹⁰⁴ which encompassed the nature of totalitarian regimes and the way in which free individuals or members of the bourgeois class get by in them. Shortly after being released from prison, he enrolled in experimental psychology studies in the group of criminology at the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade. He only reached the third year and dropped out after being disappointed with the professor and the method of work at the university although, according to his contemporaries, he was one of the best students, well-liked among his company and finished the year with the highest

102 Đokić Velimir, *Robijanje demokrate, književnika i akademika Pekića*, manuscript, p. 182.

103 One detail during his release from prison in the Niš penitentiary clearly outlines Pekić’s character and unshakable moral views. At the prison gate after five years of imprisonment, he was offered a selection of pens to choose from. However, the principled Pekić stubbornly insisted, even then, in front of the prison door, that he needed his own pen. Interview of Borislav Pekić on Radio Studio B 1988, audio recording in the possession of the author.

104 Years after his release from prison, Pekić himself defined his status as a respected writer and former political convict in an unfree society as follows: ‘*Gradually, even in the company of high-ranking officials, whom I was faced by the misfortune of a public call, I acquired freedoms for myself that are not allowed to people of my kind and past. I was proud of my success until I understood that it humiliated me more than silence. Because those freedoms were granted, fleeting, temporary. Always ready to be denied. They did not originate from my civil status, but from a privileged position, which was generously granted to me by someone else’s arbitrary decision*’. Pekić, II, 1991, p. 365.

average grade.¹⁰⁵ At the same time, he wrote and published in magazines under the pseudonyms Borislav, Dimitrije, and Adam Petrović.¹⁰⁶

After leaving the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade, from 1958 to 1964, he worked part-time as a playwright and screenwriter in the film industry. He was a noted author of several film scripts. For a time, he worked at the *Lovćen Film*, where he was a synopsis writer, screenwriter, and playwright of several notable productions. He received awards at competitions for the film synopses *Gubavac* (The Leper) and *Odavde do Ararata* (*From Here to Ararat*). In 1958, he received an award for his screenplay for the film *Jedrenjak zvani nada* (*A Sailer Called Hope*), and in 1961 for Zdravko Velimirović's film *Dan 14*. (*The Fourteenth Day*), which was presented in Cannes.¹⁰⁷ In the early 1960s, he also tried his hand as an actor, playing a doctor in the comedy *Ne diraj u sreću* (*Do Not Touch Luck*) (1961) directed by Milo Đukanović. He wrote studiously, preparing for years and carefully studying his characters and subject matter. He devised the concept for his historical novel *The Golden Fleece* over fifteen years. For his novel *Pilgrimage of Arsenije Njegovan*, he 'overturned' an entire library of books on architecture and construction. He said that he had read the Bible more than a hundred times and knew it almost by heart.

His first novel, *Times of Miracles*, was published in 1965 and aroused great interest among the general reading public.¹⁰⁸ At the same time, he was a regular signer of petitions, appeals, and a participant in demonstrations in defense of artistic and human freedoms in Yugoslavia. During 1968–1969, at the time of student demonstrations and the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia, as a member of the editorial board of the liberal paper *Književne novine*, he was interrogated and detained by the police and courts.¹⁰⁹ The eternal rebel did not stay away from the student demonstrations in 1968. Although he ideologically disagreed with the goals of the protest, he had no qualms that young people should be supported against the communist dictatorship and single-mindedness.¹¹⁰

6.3. London Years

Due to the constant pressure he faced from the communist regime, Pekić and his wife Ljiljana left for London in the early seventies. Right before his trip to London, his passport was confiscated, so for the whole year, until he received the NIN award for the novel *Pilgrimage by Arsenije Njegovan*, he was under police investigation and separated from his family.¹¹¹ His passport had been confiscated due to his critical

105 Interview with Ljiljana Pekić, May 2006.

106 Interview with Ljiljana Pekić, May 2006.

107 Pekić, 1991, III, p. 42.

108 Based on this work in 1989, a film of the same name by director Goran Paskaljević was shot, who was later a notable Yugoslav representative at the Cannes Film Festival.

109 Cvetkovic, 2020, pp. 69–76.

110 Ibid. p. 76.

111 Biografija Borislava Pekića [Online]. Available at: <http://www.borislavpekić.com/> (Accessed: Day Month 2023).

views on the communist regime, which he expressed privately most often in homes and Belgrade taverns, signing anti-regime petitions and criticising constitutional amendments.¹¹² In the motley spectrum of the internal enemy, Pekić was classified and monitored by the State Security Service as a ‘Serbian right-wing’ and a ‘Serbian nationalist’ due to his anti-communist views and attitude towards the Montenegrin issue.¹¹³

Escaping the secret police and political persecution, in the peace of his London home far from the boiling Balkan pot, he wrote his best works.¹¹⁴ Even in emigration, he was sensitive to any human violations in Yugoslavia, especially those regarding artistic freedoms. Thus, after learning that the writer Ivan Ivanović had been sentenced for his work *Crveni kralj* (*The Red King*), he wrote the Association of Writers of Serbia to request their support.¹¹⁵

At the end of the seventies, he signed with the Nolit (publishing house) to publish the book *Kako upokojiti vampira* (*How to Kill a Vampire*), but soon the contract was canceled. Likewise, the Serbian Literary Cooperative refused to print plays, because he was a politically unsuitable emigrant. The big issue was his candidacy for admission to PEN. Only after returning to the country, when he was already a famous writer, he was elected vice-president of the Serbian PEN Centre, as well as a member of the board of the Association of Writers of Serbia. At the beginning of the 1980s, although he was mostly occupied with creation in London, he supported various petitions that were then often organised by various committees and individuals in Belgrade for the sake of defending the freedom of thought and expression of artists and public officials in Serbia and Yugoslavia. He belonged ideologically to the oppositional dissident scene that formed in Belgrade in the 1980s after Tito’s death.¹¹⁶

As a democrat, devoid of any narrow-mindedness, he had close literary and friendly ties with ideologically different people. However, as an intellectual in Serbia, he was often the target of criticism from opposing ideological sides.¹¹⁷ In the mid-eighties, Pekić was at the height of his creative oeuvre and was a recognised writer. With the genre novel *Besnilo* (*Rabies*) (1983), along with the *Golden Fleece* and *The Years the Locusts have Devoured* (1991), his works were included in the selection of the ten best novels in Serbian literature from 1982 to 1991, as chosen by readers. He became a corresponding member of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts from 1985, vice president of the PEN Centre Belgrade, member of the PEN Centre

112 Interview with Ljiljana Pekić, May 2006.

113 *Assessment of the actions of the internal enemy and foreign intelligence services in Serbia according to the material of the Republic Secretariate of Internal Affairs from 10.01 1972*, AY (Archive of Yugoslavia), 837, CPR (Cabinet of the President of the Republic) II-5-d, box 202.

114 Biografija Borislava Pekića, 2023.

115 Audio-document: *Intervju Borislava Pekića sa Dragim Stojadinovićem*, London 1974. – in the possession of the author.

116 More about the dissident scene in Yugoslavia in the eighties: Dragovic-Soso, 2004; Cvetković, 2007.

117 Pekić, 2002, pp. 9–10.

London, and a part-time commentator of the Serbo-Croatian section of the BBC in London. He was a member of the Association of Writers of Serbia and of the Association of Film and Drama Artists of Serbia. In the early nineties, he became a member of the Crown Council.

6.4. Political ideas and practice

After he returned to the country at the time of the restoration of multi-partyism in Serbia, Pekić committed himself to the restoration of the work of the Democratic Party to which he had belonged as a young man. During 1990, he was one of the founders, vice president, and member of the Main Board of the Democratic Party.¹¹⁸ At the Founding Assembly of the Democratic Party, on 2 February 1990, Pekić's position as vice president was undisputed. Regarding the programme of the party, he believed that the Democratic Party should be a modern civic party of the centre. In addition to advocating for a market economy, they would fight for a return to the modern form of capitalism, with built-in social corrections commensurate with the country's material capabilities. His ideological and political views were closest to the political centre: 'democracy and nation – yes, democracy or nation – no'. He was a great opponent of political extremes, but he also said that

being a democrat and not being an anti-communist is the same as being a gourmet and not liking to eat [...] I was brought up as a democrat. I strive to behave like a democrat and to overcome innate, human, totalitarian, I would almost say anthropologically given anti-democratic traits stemming from selfishness, lust for power, vanity and bad experience with people.¹¹⁹

6.5. Pekić's ideas about democracy and European integration

Pekić wrote a series of political essays, many of which have not been published. He believed that without political freedom, there is neither civil nor national freedom. Thus, political freedom is the foundation of all other freedoms. Civil freedom is a reasonable return of a part of the right ceded to the community. This reciprocal and pervasive relationship best defines his understanding of the nation and democracy. Freedom, he believed, cannot be denied even in the name of national interests, because freedom is the supreme national interest, without which the others are null and void. In democracy, as the most tolerable form of all in principle intolerable social systems, we can live together as people, as citizens, and as a nation. In them, we can reconcile disparate personal, group, national, and all other different interests to which we, as humans, are irrevocably condemned.

Like Nostradamus, he made many predictions in his novels that do not seem impossible today. His works present an apocalyptic vision of the world in which man becomes a slave to technology and a new totalitarianism in which the world

118 Pekić and Pantić, 2002, p. 35.

119 Pekić, 1993, pp. 41–43.

is on the brink of destruction, always at war and fiercely divided.¹²⁰ Pekić's political vision saw Serbia as a democratic country (with free elections, proportional electoral system) with tolerance that implies respect for different opinions and the dignity of minorities. He advocated for the transfer of power from the office of the President of the Republic to the National Assembly, as well as for media freedom and full public control over the work of all political bodies of the state. He was a great opponent of socialist utopias and all kinds of repression and political violence. In his mature years, Pekić – probably under the impression of the orderly British monarchy in which he had lived for a long time, but also with a deeper acquaintance with Serbian tradition – came closer and closer to the idea of restoring the Monarchy in Serbia. Although he was not an ardent monarchist, guided by political pragmatism and realism, as a great connoisseur of Serbian history and tradition, he believed that the constitutional monarchy was most in line with the Serbian political tradition. However, he believed that this change should only take place if it was desired by the people as expressed in a referendum. He did not approach the monarchy unequivocally, emotionally, or fanatically: he saw it only as a means of establishing democracy in Serbia, reconciling the traditional and modern in the Serbian being, and integrating Serbia into the European political space.

Precisely for rational reasons, he advocated wider European and Balkan integration as a civilisational step forward, towards peaceful coexistence on the continent of all peoples, while overcoming differences and preserving different religions and cultures. For him, the nation is a house in which freedom, order, and tolerance must be established for all individuals and groups and their various interests. In the same way, he viewed European integration as a way to overcome centuries-old divisions and recognise different interests and disputes that were the causes of bloody wars during the 20th century and earlier. Within the nation, therefore, democracy reconciles the various interests of citizens, and through European integration, the various interests of peoples within the European continent should be reconciled.

For Pekić, the idea of democracy and the European Union is not the promised paradise, but only the least bad of all possible solutions for the peace and progress of humanity and the Serbian nation within it. Even with his characteristic humour and scepticism, he noticed how many former communists and Bolsheviks, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, now Manicheanly reached out with such zeal for democracy and Europeanism that they excluded all doubt and all criticism in the same way as they had defended the Bolshevik ideology before.¹²¹ Pekić himself, on the contrary, remained reserved and critical of all ideologies, but clearly and unequivocally rejected political extremes and totalitarianism, against which he fought his whole life and paid a high price.

120 Ibid. pp. 276-278.

121 Pekić, 1993, pp. 41-42.

6.6. *Death and life after death*

At the end of the 1980s, caught in a wave of revolutions, Eastern European communist regimes began to fall one after another. During the March demonstrations in Belgrade in 1991, even though he was already old and quite ill, Pekić felt that he belonged on the street, with the youth and people who honestly and unreservedly fought against the authoritarian regime of Slobodan Milošević. The eternally young man and rebel, together with many intellectuals, found himself again on the streets of Belgrade on the same task as in 1945 in the fight for freedom. He gave interviews, worked to unify the opposition and harshly attacked the regime, demanding that members of the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences support the students and their demands for political freedom. He went on protest walks, clashed with the police in the Takovska street and received several blows with a police baton. He began his conscious life, fighting for freedom on the streets of Belgrade, as a colporteur of the *Demokratija* newspaper and in the same way, and ended it almost half a century later: *'the only rebellion I missed was the one from 1954 and I'm sorry, I just got out of prison and I didn't know about it and I can't make up for it anymore [...]'* he wittily noted in an interview.¹²²

In the last days of his life, he devoted himself to politics, seeking the immediate application of the moralistic principles of criticism, which had marked his life and creative literary work. At the end of 1991, as a civil intellectual, he agreed to be a candidate for deputy on the list of the Democratic Party in Rakovica, a working-class suburb of Belgrade. His defeat by the nationalist demagogue Vojislav Šešelj seemed to symbolically announced the decline and ten-year ruin of Serbian society. He edited the newspaper *Demokratija*, which inherited the tradition of the banned Democratic Party newsletter from 1945, of which he was a colporteur in his childhood. He tried in interviews and columns to have a sobering effect on the consciousness of the Serbian people with words and ideas. In the midst of that struggle, in which it seemed that he still had something to give, he was overcome by an illness that he persistently dealt with throughout his life. Borislav Pekić died on 2 July 1992 in London. He was buried in the Alley of Meritorious Citizens at the New Cemetery in Belgrade.

He received many honours and recognitions posthumously. It can be said that his importance and reputation and influence in society grows with the passage of time. His Royal Highness Crown Prince Aleksandar Karađorđević awarded Borislav Pekić with the Royal Order of the Double-Headed White Eagle, First Class. His wife, architect Ljiljana Pekić, and daughter Aleksandra, important supports in his life, today live in Belgrade and diligently organise and publish his legacy and unfinished works for the press. The *Pekićeva nagrada* (Pekić Award) was also established, which today represents one of the most prestigious awards in the field of literature. On 1 and 2 July 2000, the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Belgrade held a scientific meeting on the occasion of the seventieth anniversary of

122 Pekić and Pantić, 2002, p. 56.

the birth of Borislav Pekić. In recent decades, some streets and schools in Belgrade have been named after him, exhibitions about Pekić's life have been organised and documentary films have been shot. His image is on postage stamps. More recently, he even appeared in a video of the American embassy in Belgrade, which tries to emphasise Serbian patriotism and Europeanism in Pekić as a man of great reputation in Serbian society.

Borislav Pekić was officially judicially rehabilitated by the decision of the High Court in Belgrade on 17 December 2007. The fate of Borislav Pekić as a dissident, freedom fighter and political prisoner was discussed at the exhibition 'In the name of the people' in 2014, which was installed in the Historical Museum of Serbia in Belgrade. He received a memorial bust in the courtyard of the Third Men's Grammar School (2009) and the street where he lived was named after him (2012). Finally, in 2016, on the initiative of the Borislav Pekić foundation, a monument to him was unveiled on 2 March 2016, on the Cvetni trg in the centre of Belgrade.¹²³

Conclusion

The role of the Serbian theoreticians to Central-European intellectual traditions was presented through the most characteristic features of their biographies. The context in which the first Serbian intellectuals operated, at the beginning of the 19th century, implied semi-independent principality and heavy-handed local government. One of the key results of this situation was that the issue of national liberation and unification was placed as the ultimate priority. However, the fates of Vladimir Jovanović and Svetozar Miletić show that the issue of citizens' liberties was not forgotten and that it was seen as inseparable from the resolution of the national question. Dimitrije Mitrinović's case was similar, though it differed: for him, the boundaries of the Balkans or even Central Europe seemed too limited. He was inspired by his visions of a united Europe but also a modern type of individualism.

Struggles for individual rights and cooperation with neighbours of other nations were often without much chance for success. Serbia was primarily focused on achieving full independence and basic security. As shown by the views of the conservative Ilija Garašanin, for many in Serbia, insiting on the powers of an Assembly or Law were 'naïve novelties'. Nevertheless, the liberals did establish the foundations upon which later generations were able to continue their work. This was the case with Slobodan Jovanović and Borislav Pekić; these men reached new heights in the intellectual development of the Serbian and Yugoslav elite and operated in a much broader, Yugoslav, context. Nevertheless, they were the witnesses of Yugoslavia's numerous crises and eventually of the state's downfall. Slobodan Jovanović's aims at reforming the country failed, and he had to experience all the

123 Interview with Ljiljanom Pekić, Beograd, May 2006.

biterness of the Second World War. However, Borislav Pekić also experienced personal problems due to his writing. After returning to the country as a recognised writer, he became involved in politics. He was the founder and vice president of the Democratic Party, an ideologist and advocate of democratic Serbia in the European family. It can be said that this very concept was built on foundations that were at least in part placed by Ilija Garašanin, Vladimir Jovanović, Svetozar Miletić, Dimitrije Mitrinović, and Slobodan Jovanović.

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Between Central Europe and Europe (Slovenians and European concepts)

Žarko LAZAREVIĆ

ABSTRACT

In the case of the Slovenians, it is difficult to discuss elaborate European concept at various levels before the last quarter of the 20th century. As a rule, these concepts represented a summary or imitation of others that circulated in the European territory. Even if the Slovenians did not actively contribute to the development of European political concepts, they nevertheless learned about them and recognised themselves in them (or not). Perhaps they did not conceive Europe as an idea, but they certainly lived it. They reflected upon Europe during a period of profound turning points and a geostrategic vacuum. The idea that integration into a supranational community was necessary to ensure smooth national development, while maintaining an open economy would enable the internationalisation of the economy to achieve greater scale, was a historical constant.

KEYWORDS

Slovenia, Europe, Central Europe, European concepts, European integration, national ideology

Introduction

The awareness that Slovenians belonged in Europe was already present among the intellectuals and political public in the 19th century. It could not have been otherwise, as until 1918, Slovenians were governed by the Habsburg Monarchy, which was the epitome or an indispensable part of Central Europe and an important political and military power with grand ambitions to become a decisive European player. With the rise of print and literacy, as a political or geographical space, Europe was deeply embedded in the consciousness of the population, particularly due to the geography and history lessons taught in schools. Certain individuals clearly emphasised the awareness of the European character. Valentin Vodnik (1758–1819), one of the founders of the Slovenian national movement,¹ placed a part of Slovenia at the centre of Europe – the part that was also included in the Illyrian

1 Kos and Toporišič, 2013.

Lazarević, Ž. (2023) 'Between Central Europe and Europe (Slovenians and European concepts)' in Gedeon, M. (ed.) *Great Theorists of Central European Integration*. Miskolc-Budapest: Central European Academic Publishing. pp. 247–271. https://doi.org/10.54171/2023.mg.gtocei_7

provinces. The Illyrian provinces were a political-territorial unit established by the Napoleonic occupying powers. Illyria or the Illyrian provinces can be understood in different ways, but each interpretation also includes the Slovenian parts. Vodnik viewed this entity as an excellent opportunity for development, and even a cultural rebirth, as the French authorities allowed the use of the Slovenian language. He was also personally engaged in the process as a grammar school teacher and school supervisor, and he was also a poet. His words, in free translation, in the poem ‘Illyria Reborn’ were unequivocal.²

*At the head of Greece
Corinth stands,
Illyria in the heart
of Europe lies.*

*Corinth was
Hellenic eye.
Illyria the ring
of Europe will be.*

Vodnik’s words were naively elated in a moment of great enthusiasm, or a spark of poetic inspiration. However, they were also of uncritical pretentiousness, which is why they did not make much of an impact, although, the idea of Slovenia’s central position in Europe survived. Occasionally, during pivotal events, while reflecting on the potential future, the idea of Slovenia at the heart of Europe was reaffirmed – not only in the cultural and political sense but also in terms of transport and economy. Simultaneously, we should not overlook the awareness, already present since the 19th century, that Slovenia – although located on the periphery of the prevailing economic and social processes – was a part of Europe. This ambitious viewpoint was rare, as the national question became more prominent. The Slovenian national question involved the struggle for the equal development of language and culture and was becoming the driving force of the national (nationalist) movement. The focus of the elites shifted explicitly to the Habsburg Monarchy or, even more narrowly, to the regional level. The period of national rebirth affirmed Slovenians as a distinct ethnic entity and Slovenia as a geographical territory inhabited by Slovenians. Consequently, during the second half of the 19th century, efforts were made to nationalise the population.

In the context of the Habsburg Empire, the Slovenians’ relative political influence as a community was modest, while the focus on the Monarchy’s regional or even local contexts narrowed the view. There was hardly any reflection on Europe as a whole. The complexity of the relations within the Habsburg Monarchy itself called for a great deal of intellectual attention. The perception of threat to the

| 2 Vodnik, 1988. |

Slovenian nation and the fear of assimilation – of drowning in the ‘German sea’ – further limited the view. However, the situation changed after World War I. In Yugoslavia, Slovenians, as a constitutive element of the new state, (partly) lost their fear of assimilation. The Yugoslav state framework enabled political, cultural, and economic development based on Slovenian identity. Simultaneously, the interwar period – with the pan-European idea gaining broader support in Slovenia – was also a time when Europe was unsuccessfully attempting to gain a new balance in the aftermath of World War I. These events also prompted the reflections on Slovenians in European contexts, especially the issue of Central Europe.

Under the communist regime, ideas of Europe manifested themselves in the dichotomy between Europe’s East and West, i.e. in the Cold War division and the Yugoslav policy of non-alignment. With the political liberalisation of the communist regime in the second half of the 1980s, the European dimension re-entered the intellectual space, featuring two different aspects, defined by the political narrative as the two faces of ‘Europeanisation’. On the one hand, the focus was on the popularisation of the cultural and historical concept of Central Europe, according to which Slovenians represented an integral part of Europe. On the other hand, the process of ‘Europeanisation’ also included the transitional period. During this process, the concept of Europe became narrower, and was reduced to the European Union. ‘Europeanisation’ meant joining the Euro-Atlantic integrations. The entire process of this transition (Europeanisation) served several objectives. The first and most important was the institutional alignment of the state, society, and economy with the Western European countries. During the second stage, that is once the ‘Europeanisation’ was complete, the integration into the European Union was to follow. This integration into the Western international structures became a common goal of the political elites, and also enjoyed large-scale public support. The accession to the European Union would safeguard democratic development and encourage economic progress in the long term, thanks to the stable and predictable democratic environment. Meanwhile, joining the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Pact would provide long-term security.³

This article does not aim to present the issue of the perception of Europe or the concepts of Europe as an idea in detail and in the entire historical arc of the 20th century – instead, its aim is much more modest. The focus is on the individual concepts contextualised with regard to the time of their emergence. Each concept in itself is just a minor intellectual episode, a snippet of documented time, especially if we consider the Slovenian territory from the European perspective. However, despite their episodic character, the concepts collectively illustrate the historical conditionality, continuities, and discontinuities of the reflections about Europe throughout the 20th century, as well as the national question in the Slovenian intellectual arena. The article presents a stream of thought about Europe in four chapters. The first focuses on the presentation of the prevailing ideas, Pan- and Central

3 Lazarević, 2022, pp. 137–155.

Europe that shaped broader intellectual environment. However, some exceptions are also presented, in the form of thoughts from the margins of social space that have not found broader resonance. Then, three concepts and their authors are presented: the European Federation (Edvard Kocbek), Intermarium (Lambert Ehrlich) and European Union (France Bučar). Each of the three concepts represents a particular time and intellectual environment. Edvard Kocbek the interwar period, Lambert Ehrlich the period of the Second World War and France Bučar the period of transition, just before the accession to the European Union in 2004.

1. Ideas and backgrounds in 20th Century

The interwar period is vital for the conceptualisation of Europe because a new reality emerged during that time. The dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy and the emergence of new states fundamentally altered the situation in Central Europe, as well as in Europe as a whole. The apparent stability of the period before World War I had vanished. The war completely changed the contemporary horizons of thought. While it upset the previous balances in Europe (political, social, and economic), it also failed to resolve the accumulated contradictions or provide a new, undisputedly functional European system. At the international politics level, the peace treaties established the framework for international cooperation, but the new geopolitical order did not function well. With the Great Depression, the instability of the 1920s extended into the 1930s.

However, instability was not only experienced in the European area, but was felt by Slovenians the Yugoslav state as well. This new state, created in 1918 out of the idealism of some (the Slovenian and Croatian elites) and the triumph of others (the Serbian elite), had only been gradually consolidated. It attempted to find its footing in the international arena, oscillating between the new circumstances and traditional international political patterns. The Yugoslav space was narrower than that of the Habsburg Monarchy, which is why the European (global) world appeared bigger. As a new situation was emerging, it intertwined with the old one; we can speak of continuity in a time of discontinuity. While the former state – the Habsburg Monarchy – was gone, it was still very much alive in the regulation of everyday private, social and economic life. In many ways, it still defined people's ways of thinking. The socialisation of the elites in the intellectual environment of the Habsburg Monarchy could not be ignored in the context of the Yugoslav state.

The momentous nature of the times was also reflected in the people's perceptions, and as a result, Europe was given somewhat more thought. Ivan Šušteršič – one of the most important Slovenian politicians, who could not perceive the end of the Habsburg Monarchy – devised a backup plan. In October 1918, he imagined that a new state formation, the Danubian Union (a confederation), would be created in the Danube region by transforming the Monarchy. This Union would encompass the territories of Austria, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Ukraine and Romania.

The loose federation would be governed by a Federal Council, based on the organisation of the Swiss model, while its members would enjoy extensive competences. The Union would function as a single market, with the customs and monetary union as the cornerstone of cooperation. Šušteršič also allowed for a common foreign policy. The Union would have a common symbolic representative/president, originating from the House of Habsburg but whose powers would be predominantly ceremonial. Later, the idea of a Danube confederation was further developed by others – without any connection to the Habsburgs but with a clear intention. In the territory between Germany and the Soviet Union, a strong state would need to be created, in order to neutralise both threats to the stability of Central Europe.⁴

Šušteršič's idea was, in fact, not overly bold: it was predictable, considering that he desired to preserve the Habsburg Monarchy in some form. His deliberations adhered to the old patterns. While most people were still oriented towards the national sphere, and some also towards the European one, rare exceptions viewed the world through a global perspective. Vinko Šarabon, a grammar school geography teacher,⁵ began to imagine an 'imperial' Yugoslavia with colonies in the Middle East. This, however, was not some humorous scheme but a rather serious argumentation, which also gained weight because of its publication in three parts on the front page of the most widely circulated newspaper. Šarabon's deliberation confirms how difficult it is to change the thought patterns – how people continue to think according to the established patterns even during and after ruptures. They think in patterns where the future is merely supposed to be an extension of the present rather than an independent and separate temporal entity. From a kinder point of view, Šarabon's idea can also be seen as an attempt to imagine the world beyond the more or less impenetrable fences of Slovenia –and even beyond Central Europe, in the context of the entire world. Alternatively, we can simply take it as a bad joke, which is precisely what his contemporaries did.

Šarabon built on the premise that before World War I, Syria had been promised to Austria, had the European powers divided the territory of the Ottoman Empire among themselves. As a successor state, Yugoslavia would therefore have to follow the Habsburg Monarchy in its colonial ambitions, thereby showing its will to power. This was supposed to separate great nations from others. Yugoslavia was a medium-sized country and thus on the threshold that determined whether it would find itself among the rulers or the ruled:

The great countries will decide the fate of the independent nations, and why should Yugoslavia not take part in that decision? This is not imperialism – it is only a natural demand of a nation that has risen from the narrow confines of continentalism to the threshold of world politics.⁶

4 Rahten, 2009, pp. 23–24.

5 Kranjec, 2013.

6 Šarabon, 1919a, p. 1.

The country's coastal location was supposed to be a natural catalyst for the colonial mission. The sea offered a glance beyond the continent and encouraged an ambitious journey into the wide world. Colonies were the logical next step. *'The way over the sea – towards greater prosperity, cultural goods, and progress in general – imposes itself on us if we have to venture out there, if we have our own colonies.'*⁷

In the manner of a typical colonial and racist discourse, Šarabon had two compelling reasons to colonise Syria. The first was economic. In order to expand, the domestic industry urgently needed an additional market and, of course, raw materials. Syria would serve this purpose perfectly. The second reason was civilisational. Šarabon held that culture should be brought to the people of Syria 'because the Turks have destroyed everything'. As he writes: *'Wake up and do not miss this opportunity! For true colonisation is not conquest or oppression, but only a spread of culture, a fruitful accumulation of our mental and material capital, beneficial for us as well as for the inhabitants of the colonies.'*⁸

While this article did not prompt any reactions, it appears that privately voiced criticism reached the author, considering that he wrote two more sequels to vindicate his views. In these follow-up articles, he attempted to use a different approach to explain his original thesis on the necessity of colonies for Yugoslavia, but failed to find a sympathetic ear. He never really expected any understanding from the common people. However, as he only managed to provoke ridicule in political and intellectual circles, he wrote: *'This is not some silly joke, nor a grotesque parody.'*⁹ Šarabon was extremely serious, but the irony and mockery stopped any further reflections on colonial adventures.¹⁰

In terms of long-term characteristics, we can also point out Črtomir Nagode's way of thinking about Europe. His example shows that it is possible to think about reality and Europe entirely differently, if we shift the focus of observation. Once people had transcended the political level, new and different perspectives revealed themselves. The integration of transport was undoubtedly one such issue. Although Slovenian intellectuals ignored this topic in their discussions, Nagode was a construction expert and politician.¹¹ He was keenly interested in economic development issues, especially those related to transport and the subsequent economic integration. He studied traffic flows from both geopolitical and geographic perspectives. The centrality of the Slovenian territory as a crossroads of European transport routes was evident in his work. According to Nagode, it was precisely this intersection of transport routes that – due to the need for the central location's economisation – also dictated the Slovenian integration into the broader European area. Nagode's starting point was that *'Yugoslav territory, with its sea, rivers, and*

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.

9 Šarabon, 1919b, p. 1.

10 Lazarević, 2021, pp. 101–134.

11 Enciklopedija Slovenije, 1993, p. 270.

*open plains, is attached to its neighbourhood, both in Central Europe and the Balkans. Geographically, it forms a gateway between two worlds.*¹²

He based his arguments on national needs, which had to be balanced against ‘the interests of the wider world’, as he wrote, taking into account the region’s geographical features. From the geographical point of view, he noted the Slovenian openness towards the Pannonian world and thus to Eastern and Northern Europe, as well as, on the other end, the passage towards Italy and thus further west and along the Danube into the Black Sea territory. These natural features also determined the traffic flows, which Nagode studied from the perspective of freight and passenger traffic. Traffic flows also dictated economic cooperation and created a single economic space. From the Slovenian (Yugoslav) area standpoint, this space was primarily Central Europe as well as the broader European area due to its connectedness. Nagode’s argument was as follows:

The territory of our country and transport in its neighbourhood transcend the axes of small traffic resistance. The lines link areas with very different potentials, both in terms of natural conditions and the level of their economies. This difference, which is a condition for the exchange of economic goods, is also capable of generating strong economic flows along these lines.¹³

Other scholars reflected on the widespread thesis of Europe’s gradual decline or its crisis as such. Because of the instability, many had the impression that Europe, as a cultural-political or socio-economic entity, was crumbling or even facing collapse. The instability of democratic institutions and the emergence of extremes (fascism/Nazism or communism), which, (especially) in the 1930s, promised a quick and easy solution to all social problems at the national and international levels, raised numerous doubts about the vitality of the European spirit or ‘European soul’. In this context, Franc Terseglav defended the idea of Europe and its capacity for regeneration.¹⁴ During the interwar period, Terseglav also spent several years working as the editor of the most widely circulated newspaper in Slovenia, which had a Catholic background. He saw Europe as a place of conflicting interests, yet not in decline or even facing imminent collapse. According to him, the conflict of interests was not a path of destruction but rather of finding compromises, a new synthesis that would allow the crisis to be overcome.

The soul of Europe will be best understood if we consider it from the viewpoint of the principle that it is, in the true sense, a *complexio oppositorum* – i.e., that all European history from its earliest beginnings as far

12 Nagode, 1938, pp. 306–323.

13 Nagode, 1938, pp. 306–323.

14 Vodnik, 2013.

back as we can trace them has been a constant struggle between the most extreme opposites of thinking, feeling, and acting in such a way that it never, in any age, reaches a permanent state of peace between its various polar aspirations. Instead, each period when Europe seemingly calms down in some ultimate ideal of culture and social order, in which Europeans seem to have settled down in at least some modicum of synthesis and to have found the final solutions for their existence and the meaning of their actions, is once again only an embryo of a new development into its opposite. Such periods are comparatively very short, so that each century usually represents, in a certain sense, a greater or lesser break with the previous one and simultaneously a new and more fruitful era. Therefore, the Enlightenment hypothesis, which saw European cultural history as continuously developing from a lower level to ever higher ones, is just as wrong as the opposite hypothesis of decay ending in total disintegration, which is nowadays justified by many with various scientific devices, while in reality, it only represents a scholarly reflection of the apocalyptic popular mood in the face of the upsetting, incomprehensible, and endless upheavals, expressed in the common people's 'premonitions' or prophecies of the imminent end of the world [...] This peculiarly consistent process of Europe's historical development would not, of course, in itself serve as proof that we could not (to use an example from the world of physics) eventually get stuck at some middle point from which we could no longer move forward, either to the right or to the left, and our culture would become petrified like, for example, the Chinese, or that we could not swing so far to one of the two opposite poles that our civilisation would dissolve into the chaos of complete lawlessness in the spiritual, moral, political, and economical sense. Although we cannot categorically deny this possibility, we can nevertheless conclude, with a very high degree of probability, that the European cultural development in all its diversity, elaborate drama, and positive creation of a myriad of values will not come to an end so soon. Our European cultural history, with its Christian background, is still young, comparatively – we know of epochs of human civilisations like the Egyptian, Sumerian-Babylonian, Chinese, or Toltec-Aztec, which lasted four, five thousand years or more. Compared to the crises that Europe has already gone through, the difficulties we face today are not as insurmountable as they naturally appear to those directly affected. In the past, we have seen even worse, and people behaved in a similar way as today. One need only to think of the spiritual divisions, the political struggles between the Church and the state, and the bloody disputes between European countries at the end of the early Middle Ages; the extremely tense social relations of that period, culminating in revolutions and total anarchy; the time of the Papal Schism; the extreme contradictions of philosophical schools, moral outlooks and trends from the crudest materialism and pantheism to the

most destructive spiritualism; and finally the terrible woes of the Thirty Years' War, especially the period from the 14th to the middle of the 17th century, when it often looked as if the life of Christian Europe would end in blood and fire, and yet we would only see an even greater improvement in every sphere of life after that.¹⁵

2. Pan-European idea

During the interwar period, support for the pan-European movement was widespread. The pan-European idea could be understood as a synthesis of European extremes, as defined by Terseglav. Slovenia's geopolitical position after World War I, which dictated the deliberations about Europe, must also be considered. Following the dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy, the Slovenian ethnic territory was divided among four states. Most of it was incorporated into Yugoslavia, with parts in the west going to Italy, those the north to Austria, and a small part in the east to Hungary. However, Yugoslavia was the only state that did not deny Slovenians their own identity. The division of the ethnic territory between four states spread the impression of geopolitical disorder among the elites, triggering elements of the victimhood nationalism phenomenon.¹⁶ The realisation was more than clear. The solution to the Slovenian national question could only be reached through regional or European integration, which should necessarily take into account Slovenians' independent identity. Unsurprisingly, integration initiatives were generally well received by the public. However, the question of whether to integrate within Yugoslavia or beyond it in the form of an independent Slovenia remained crucial. For decades, the issue had been more hypothetical than practical. However, during the crisis and disintegration of the Yugoslav state in the 1980s, when the scales tipped in favour of Slovenia's independent access to international integrations without the Yugoslav burden, this issue gained topicality. During the interwar period, these dilemmas did not exist, and the belief in the Yugoslav idea and state was strong. There was also a clear view that integrations made sense and had legitimacy as long as they allowed the Slovenian identity to develop without obstacles.

The pan-European concept satisfied these fundamental aspirations. The idea of Pan-Europa was general enough to address the problems of small nations, and was thus widely supported. In Slovenia, the concept of Pan-Europa was given the necessary public legitimacy by Anton Korošec when he attended the Pan-European Congress in 1926. As the most important Slovenian politician in the interwar period, Korošec was also influential in the central government bodies in

15 Terseglav, 1936, pp. 85–88.

16 Lim, 2010, pp. 138–162.

Belgrade. A pan-European committee was established that operated in Slovenia and, after initial reluctance, at the state level as well.¹⁷ The pan-European concept could represent a framework that would allow for the unification of Slovenians within a single entity, while simultaneously ensuring enough autonomy for the development of Slovenians as an ethnic community. The concept of Pan-Europa was acceptable because it allowed Slovenia to transcend its division between four states. Simply put, its supporters were convinced that the (re)integration of the Slovenian ethnic territory was only possible through the integration of Europe. *'For us, Pan-Europa is the definitive solution to the minority question'*, wrote Andrej Gosar.¹⁸ Gosar was a Christian Socialist by political orientation, active in politics in the interwar period; after World War II, he focused on his academic career.¹⁹ He wholeheartedly welcomed the pan-European initiative and was also a member of its national committee. He adopted the idea of Pan-Europa, advocated for it publicly, and wrote a series of articles popularising the idea. However, Gosar was not always in tune with the initiator of the Pan-Europa concept: he was not entirely convinced by Kalergi's attitude towards Russia. Instead, he sought more flexibility, especially for the Slavic nations. Gosar saw Europe as 'the child of the Paris Peace Treaties'. He believed that certain borders were meant to be permanent and considered any attempts to alter them as extremely dangerous and a threat to peace. The immutability of borders was supposed to encourage European cooperation.²⁰

3. Central Europe as utopia

In addition to the pan-European concept, the idea of Central Europe was also notable during the interwar period. The concept of Central Europe was not a new one. In fact, from the Slovenian point of view, it had been, equated with the territory of the Habsburg Monarchy during the period prior to World War I. There was no sympathy for Germany as a part of Central Europe.²¹ The world of the Habsburg Monarchy was a space, both geographical and spiritual, which the intellectual gaze from Slovenia could easily master and identify with. Discussions about Central Europe had already been taking place in the years leading up to World War I. The Central European territory was perceived as an assortment of various nations strongly influenced by the German cultural heritage, and simultaneously, a place of conflict due to the region's considerable diversity and Germany's political and economic expansion. With the collapse of the Habsburg Monarchy, this single area disintegrated, and the economic and cultural ties were severed. While a lot changed

17 Rahten, 2009, pp. 23–26.

18 Gosar, 1926, p. 2.

19 Enciklopedija Slovenije, 1989, p. 320.

20 Kaučič, 2019, pp. 36–56.

21 Pančur, 2006, pp. 23–35.

following the end of the war, not many changes occurred in the short term, as the connections were still maintained for quite some time due to inertia. Meanwhile, the effect of the Great Depression was divisive. On the one hand, it involved the severance of economic ties, retreat to the barriers of protectionism, and tendency to isolate oneself within one's borders. On the other hand, during the second half of the 1930s, Central Europe was once again confronted with Germany's political and economic expansion.²²

The idea of Central Europe was a constant on the Slovenian intellectual horizon. During the post-World War II era, the focus shifted away from Europe (somewhat) due to the non-alignment policy. However, in the 1980s, the Slovenian gaze was once again fixed on Europe, more precisely on Central Europe, Slovenia's natural hinterland. Milan Kundera's famous essay on the tragedy of Central Europe²³ also resonated in Slovenia, especially among culture professionals and historians. As a concept, Central Europe involved a common historical heritage, a link between the European East and West. Another aspect, particularly vital during the 1980s, was also present: this was the time of the failing communist regime. It was time for the transformation of the Slovenian identity. The concept of Central Europe as the eastern part of Western Europe was highly convenient because it allowed a new identity to be anchored in the historical context at the end of the communist regime.

In 1987, Drago Jančar, a leading Slovenian writer, wrote:

For small Central European nations like Slovenians as well as for various minorities, the vision of Central Europe has also revealed itself as an opportunity to break out of the isolation that we pursue just as stubbornly as others are forcing us into it. In the ideological, national, and even creative sense, Central Europe has become synonymous with empowerment, potential, and hope – in short: a utopia.²⁴

A few years later, Jančar went on to question whether the concept of Central Europe could be idealised. In response, he once again presented the national and international moments of the Central European status.

As long as this topic was pushed from our consciousness and almost forbidden, idealisations were probably normal. The politically, economically, militarily, and culturally divided Europe was not a natural state of affairs: it had not emerged due to the will of the people who had lived and still live here. Instead, it resulted from voluntarist ideas and utopian social beliefs:

22 Teichova, 1988.

23 Kundera, 1984, pp. 33–38.

24 Jančar, 1999, p. 34.

its division was caused by the situation established by the interest and ideological centres outside it.²⁵

As the Central European countries embarked on the path of transition following the end of the communist regime, the idealism of the conceptions concerning Central Europe confronted reality. Jančar pointed out that heritage was twofold. Central Europe could be a place of harmonious diversity and creativity as well as intolerance, exclusion, and even violence. These two sides of the same geographical area would need to be reckoned with, even in the European future.

After the violent changes in Eastern Europe – at the very moment when we are facing a different Europe, one where the walls and borders have been torn down – it seems that the realisation of the utopia is close at hand. This is why now is also the right time to recognise the imminent utopia as a reality. Naturally, Central Europe as a reality rather than a fictional utopia envisioned by writers is something other than an ideal world of cultural differences that respect each other and establish an old-new unity on such ideal foundations. It is merely reality, and in it, life is as it is, even with its mutually exclusive interests and all the problems and questions that were already familiar once and which made life anything other than a state of ideal harmony.²⁶

If, according to Jančar, writers attained their utopia with the conceptualisation of Central Europe, historians remained much more realistic. Considering the numerous discussions about Central Europe that took place in 1990, the eminent historian Bogo Grafenauer simply asked why Slovenians kept deliberating on Central Europe instead of Europe as a whole. Grafenauer had a long memory, and had already written about European problems as a young historian and committed intellectual, even before World War II. In light of the European common cultural foundations, he drew attention to Europe's various definitions– to the diversity of the processes and realities that had placed individual nations in different positions in the past. He expected that the situation could not be any different in the future, concluding:

For this reason, only Europe – a Europe of nations, humanism and freedom – can be our true, well-founded vision. Of course, this is why Europe must also mature, as a Europe divided into blocs is only capable of establishing partial connections rather than ensuring an integral Europe of nations.²⁷

25 Ibid. p. 43.

26 Ibid. p. 44.

27 Grafenauer, 1991, pp. 15–26.

Peter Vodopivec was among the historians who confronted the writers' utopia with historical reality. He closely examined Central Europe's origins and historical conceptual manifestations as geopolitical conceptions. He simultaneously followed the cultural concepts of Central Europe as a single intellectual space. Vodopivec convincingly underlined the diversity of the perceptions of Central Europe, pointing out that it was difficult to talk about Europe in the categorical terms of its Western, Central, and Eastern parts. However, based on an analysis of the extensive relevant materials, he established that Central Europe was not just an *'idea or an ideological construct'* but also a concrete historical reality with its own dynamics and specific path towards modernity, which was characteristic of most Central European nations and countries. He concluded his deliberations with the encouraging thought that

despite these extremely negative experiences of nationalistic intolerance, anti-Semitism, and political authoritarianism, Central Europe and its nations are also entering the 21st century with a positive legacy of federalism, noble cultural creativity, and persistent tendency to recognise multiculturalism and multinationality as a quality and a value, which clearly shows that Central Europe was not just a dead end and a place of recurrent tragedies, as Milan Kundera believed.²⁸

By problematising the cultural conception of Central Europe during the 1980s, historians also considered broader issues – not only pertaining to the past, but also the future. They raised the question of how Europe could be perceived as an idea, and the territory of the European Union, which they desired Slovenia to join. Bogomir Novak thus ambitiously defined the Slovenian position and notion of Europe as a place of diversity and unity, presenting an opportunity for Slovenia in unambiguous words:

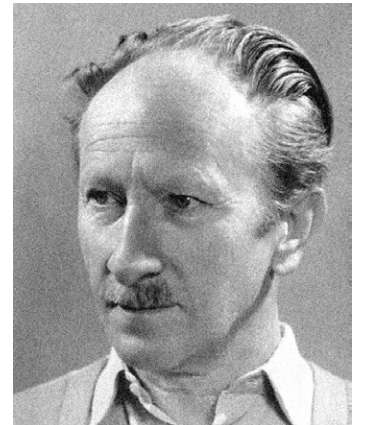
The question is to what extent Europe needs an independent Slovenia, as there is no doubt that Slovenia needs Europe. We contemplate Europe in terms of our independence while simultaneously considering the possibility of our inclusion in it. We think about Europe from the viewpoint of cultural and civilisational pluralism rather than in terms of the monopoly interests of either military bloc. Our non-alignment policy predominantly steered us towards cooperation with non-European developing countries. It seemed that we had thus overcome the spirit of Europe's bloc division as well as whatever shaped it. However, our supposed advantage has turned out to be a shortcoming. It has become apparent that in this manner, we are getting increasingly isolated and starting to lag behind the developed world. We only became aware of this

28 Vodopivec, 2003, pp. 7–18.

fact once Europe ceased to be a place of the closed Cold War ideologies. Nowadays, Europe is a synthesis of several paradigms: Greco-Roman, Judeo-Christian, industrial-mechanistic, eco-entropic, or postmodern-informational. Based on its history, we can imagine Europe's future as a continuous discontinuity of historical possibilities. Europe has evolved through various metamorphoses, and thus its identity is not above these metamorphoses but rather within them. Europe can understand its history to the limits of its own contradictions between war and peace, development and underdevelopment, subordination and domination, nation-states and stateless nations, enforcement and violation of human rights, monopolism, and pluralism of interests, etc.²⁹

4. Edvard Kocbek (1904–1981)³⁰ and the concept of Central Europe

In 1940, when the war had already engulfed the European continent, and questions were being raised about the state of the world following the end of the war, Edvard Kocbek offered a modest outline of a possible answer. Kocbek was a highly educated young philosopher, thinker and poet. He had studied the French language, culture and literature, and was a young, socially oriented Catholic. He became known and respected in the intellectual community through his article on the Spanish Civil War, in which he critically questioned the role of the Spanish Catholic Church. During World War II he played a leading role in the resistance movement, but was completely ousted by the new communist rulers after the war.³¹



According to Kocbek, Central Europe was a special and original area between the European East and West, where at least fifteen different nations lived. It was precisely this territory's ethnic and cultural diversity that had been the misfortune of the Central European nations, and their inability and failure to assert this

²⁹ Novak, 1991, pp. 1114–1117.

³⁰ Edvard Kocbek, Slovenian poet, writer, essayist, translator, This image is available from the Digital Library of Slovenia under the reference number C7J5MK5K, public domain, source of the picture: https://hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edvard_Kocbek#/media/F%C3%A1jl:Kocbek.jpg.

³¹ Enciklopedija Slovenije, 1991, pp. 172–174.

diversity as a value in the broader European context. On the contrary, due to their fragmentation, they had become *'the sphere of various imperialisms and a constant focus of international tensions and conflicts'*, as *'major international conflicts'* were allegedly triggered precisely on Central European soil.³²

Kocbek perceived the fundamental problem of Central Europe in two contradictory principles: the opposing principles of unconditional national sovereignty and; the internationalisation of economic cooperation. Unconditional national sovereignty led to a *'partial withdrawal'* of the countries from the (Central European) world, towards protectionism and, in the 1930s, even towards aspirations for autarky. This aspiration was opposed by the tendency to increase the economies of scale, which could only be achieved through the intense internationalisation of the national economies. In the manner of a synthesis, which Terseglav emphasised as a fundamental agent of European history, Kocbek attempted to bridge the two principles – the two tendencies of the Central European development in interwar period – and bring them closer together. He deliberated on the manner in which to overcome the economic disintegration of the Central European area, while preserving the principles of national sovereignty in each nation's cultural development. He saw a solution in a kind of Central European federation that would permit the synergy of economic activities through the free movement of goods and capital. Furthermore, such a federation would ensure that its constituents enjoyed the necessary autonomy to preserve their own culture and identity. It would depend on a partial relinquishment or transfer of the participating nations' sovereignty in the economic and political spheres to the federation.

The Central European question nevertheless needs to be solved by establishing a federation in this territory. [...] The German – that is to say, European – issue must be resolved first so that a proper path towards economic equilibrium can be opened up for Germany. However, we would be very mistaken if we thought that the question of Central Europe could be solved by the mere cessation of imperialist influences over its nations. Quite the opposite: the cultural, political, and economic reality of Central Europe has, under negative influences, developed such an incoherent nature that it strives, already of its own accord, for an original, unique solution to an entire series of questions – above all, for a balance between the cultural-political nature of its individual nations and its overall economic organisation. The Central European problem cannot be solved by keeping a lid on it as Austria-Hungary tried to do, nor by giving it a sophisticated form of political sovereignty as Versailles did, but by reducing all of the political problems to a separate resolution of the cultural and economic questions.

32 Vodopivec, 2003, p. 8.

Central Europe's strongest disparity originates from the friction between cultural and economic fulfilment. In terms of its basic functioning, the economy cannot be restricted by the national and state borders but must follow its own rules, which are spreading ever more outward. On the other hand, neither cultural creativity nor national consciousness can depend on economic power and form. Instead, their fulfilment must be legally protected. Thus, on the one hand, we are talking about a transport, customs, and financial union of the entire Central European territory, while on the other hand, we must keep in mind the precisely defined national autonomies. Thus, we can imagine two sorts of collective hierarchies: one summarising the economic life and the other the national communities. Both are only possible after a prior restriction of state sovereignties because it is clear that the principle of absolute territorial sovereignty is the most dangerous expression of today's purely political international outlook. Such a synthesis of economic and cultural freedom, secured by law, will also be the best guarantee for the creation of a new social structure.³³

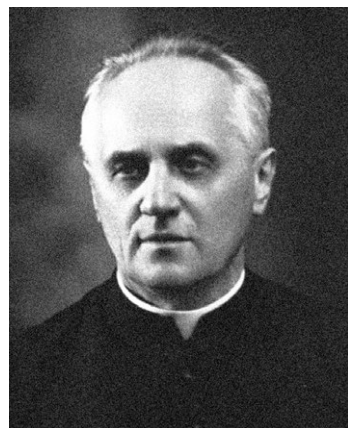
Kocbek's idea was still in its rudimentary form, and had not been fully thought out; it was more of an outline than a realistic plan. However, such an idea does attest to the author's ability to visualise the broader context and think beyond the limitations of his own nation and the Yugoslav state. It was a product of the current and past times, of was influenced by the ideas of Pan-Europa as well as the United States of Europe. Peter Vodopivec stated that Kocbek's idea resembled the principles of the former Austro-Marxists.³⁴ Kocbek restricted his deliberations to Central Europe, an area close to his heart, where the disintegration processes were strongly felt. He formulated the basic principle of the Slovenian outlook on the European integration processes: to ensure smooth national development by relinquishing or transferring a part of one's sovereignty to a supranational community, while enabling the internationalisation of the economy in order to achieve a greater scale through an open economy. A small national space implementing protectionist policies would be unable to deliver such results. With this emphasis, Kocbek was far ahead of his contemporaries, who paid more attention to the political and cultural aspects while neglecting, if not outright ignoring, the significance of the economic sphere for the national community's harmonious development.

33 Kocbek, 1940, pp. 89–92.

34 Vodopivec, 2003, p. 8.

5. Lambert Ehrlich (1878–1942)³⁵ and a nation in the middle of Europe

The outbreak of World War II severely disrupted everyday life in Slovenia. It radically changed the situation of a nation divided between four countries. With the onset of the war, the central part of the country was also occupied and divided further. Italy, Germany, Hungary, and even the Independent State of Croatia occupied the territory that had previously been a part of Yugoslavia. The territory was annexed, and population was subjected to a violent assimilation policy. The occupiers refused to recognise the Slovenian identity, implementing brutal measures to suppress the same. The tools employed to eliminate the Slovenian



ethnic identity included territorial annexations, forced emigration or expulsion of undesirables, internment in concentration camps, and extreme repression (military-police and racist-administrative). The occupiers only differed in terms of their dynamics. While the German and Hungarian occupiers wished to eliminate Slovenian subjectivity as quickly as possible, the Italians were somewhat more restrained. They shared the same goals, but intended to achieve them in a somewhat longer term.

In such circumstances, when the very existence of the Slovenian nation was uncertain, the question was where Slovenia belonged and what would happen to it after the war. What sort of state organisation mechanisms could be implemented to protect and enable the development of the Slovenian ethnic identity? The Communist Party, which was at the forefront of the resistance movement, offered the concept of proletarian revolution and a Yugoslav state-legal framework closely associated with the Soviet Union. However, because of the proletarian revolution, such a concept was difficult to accept if it was not outright rejected by political and public majority.

Therefore, other ways to achieve this were sought. Several rough ideas were presented, but none were sufficiently developed.³⁶ They shared the lack of the proper momentum to assert themselves in the international public. However, one of these concepts stood out, and was considered possible to introduce to the

35 Lambert Ehrlich, Slovenian Roman Catholic priest, political figure, and ethnologist, Unknown author – This image is available from the Digital Library of Slovenia under the reference number 1U1TTJEG, public domain, source of the picture: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lambert_Ehrlich#/media/File:Lambert_Ehrlich_by_1942.jpg.

36 Godeša, 2004, pp. 335–354.

international community. This was a project that placed the Slovenian territory at the centre of Europe, and was outlined by Lambert Ehrlich, a priest and university professor who was also a member of the Yugoslav delegation at the Paris Peace Conference. Ehrlich was very influential in the Catholic Church network, and among the students at the University of Ljubljana. He was accused by the communists of organising military collaboration in the part of Slovenia occupied by the Italians and liquidated in 1942.³⁷ His way of thinking was more ambitious. As early as 1941, in a special study titled *The Slovenian Question*, Ehrlich had conceived of a framework for the post-war regime in Central Europe. He managed to deliver his plan to the Western countries – the United Kingdom and the United States – as an example. The concept was ambitious, but in fact unrealistic, as it interfered too radically with the European geostrategic order. It featured two main intentions. First, it would protect Slovenians as a national community through international integration. Second, it strived to achieve the desired stability of the international environment of Central Europe, which had not been possible prior to World War II. Thus, Ehrlich wished to draw attention to the position of Slovenians and Central Europe as a geographical and geopolitical concept. The idea was simple: to transform the Central European territory in such a manner that it could withstand the pressure of German expansionism as well as the looming danger of the communist Soviet Union. The territory between Germany and the Soviet Union would be transformed or united into a confederation. In this regard, Ehrlich believed in the importance of establishing territorial contact between the South and North Slavs, as this was the only way to establish a functioning confederation. The concept partly excluded the existing state organisation. In some variants, it ignored the existence of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. The new state would include Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, Ukrainians, Slovenians, Croats, Serbs, and Hungarians. Optionally, it could also include Bulgarians, Romanians, and Greeks. In his plan, Ehrlich took into account the problem of Austria, as it would need to be included in the confederation in order to ensure territorial contact between the northern and southern Slavic territories. His answer was clear: Austria should indeed exist, albeit weakened and without any hegemonic ambitions, especially not based on German nationalism. Each entity would enjoy a guaranteed statehood status and clearly demarcated jurisdictions within the Confederation. The envisaged state union's centre of gravity would be located in the Slavic part of Central Europe, which would cover the entire area between the Baltic, Adriatic, Aegean, and Black Seas. Therefore, a territorial connection between the northern and southern Slavic lands was envisioned. Territorial integration would supposedly separate Slovenians from the German territory, thereby ensuring the desired security. As the initiative covered a wide area bordered by the European seas, the name *Intermarium* was adopted. Ehrlich assumed this would be an economically complementary area that would ensure the optimum development of all individual

| 37 Juhant, 2022, pp. 346–355. |

members. He suggested that the seat of such a confederation should be located in Slovenia, because of its central role. However, Ehrlich's hopes that the Western Allies would consider his plan in their discussions on the post-war organisation of Europe were in vain. His proposal – a curiosity among many – remained on paper.³⁸

The plan was based on the Slovenian situation. Therefore, Ehrlich began by outlining the genesis of the 'Slovenian question'. He clearly emphasised Slovenia's central role in the European and Central European context: as a contact point for European transport corridors, flows of goods, and, consequently, economic cooperation. This also explained the purpose of German and Italian expansionism in the Slovenian territory. Ehrlich defined Yugoslavia as the only realistic option at the time of the Habsburg Monarchy's collapse, which had ensured the conditions for the development of the Slovenian identity. However, due to Serbian hegemonic tendencies, that country was unstable in the long term, and the meaningfulness of its continued existence was questionable. Nevertheless, Ehrlich did not rule out the continuation of Yugoslav statehood in advance. He merely proposed to extend it to Bulgaria, thus, in a way, easing the Serbo-Croatian tensions that he believed had prevented the stabilisation of Yugoslavia before World War II. For him, a confederation of the Central European Slavic countries was the optimal solution. If none of the proposed options were acceptable to the international community, Ehrlich also envisioned an independent Slovenian state. Such an independent state would be founded on a democratic basis and would thus have the opportunity to become '*a true Switzerland of Eastern Europe as a cultural, economic, and transport link between Western, Central, and Eastern Europe and the Balkans with internationally guaranteed neutrality and inviolability*'.³⁹

Ehrlich's plan was written from the viewpoint of Slovenians, their historical experience and need to secure their own identity in the broader international environment. The proposal was a kind of a synthesis of the various ideas that circulated in the European space, as well as among the Slovenian intellectual community. It was also in contradiction with the prevailing view that Slovenia's place was in the post-World War II Yugoslav federal state. From its very outset, Ehrlich's plan called for a major reorganisation of the international order in Central Europe and was certainly utopian in this regard. Unsurprisingly, it failed to garner much response and did not resonate strongly at home, either – despite the fact that in 1943, Ciril Žebot prepared a summary of Ehrlich's proposal, and titled it *Narod sredi Evrope* (A Nation in the Middle of Europe).⁴⁰

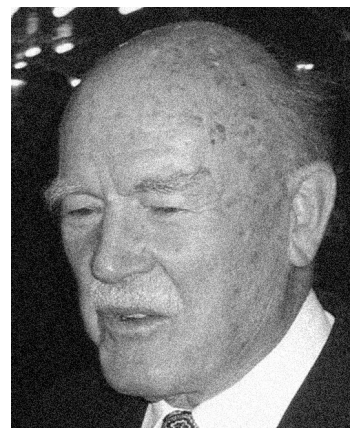
38 Godeša, 2004, p. 48.

39 Godeša, 2002, pp. 279–308.

40 Bober, 1943.

6. France Bučar (1923–2015)⁴¹ and the challenges of the European Union

In 2003, Slovenia's accession to the European Union was already a fact, with only the date to be determined. At that moment, France Bučar was already thinking about developments after the May 2004 accession ceremonies. He was pre-occupied with his deliberations on the European challenges that Slovenian society and politics would need to face after joining the European Union. Bučar was a university professor at the Faculty of Law of the University of Ljubljana and a dissident during the communist regime. He was highly critical of economic and political developments in socialist Slovenia. In 1975, he was removed from the university and only



allowed to publish in Catholic media. During the transition period, he became one of the prominent politicians leading Slovenia to independence.⁴² For him Slovenia's future challenges as well those of the European Union were already present at the schematic level in 2003. During the Slovenian accession to the new integration, Bučar wanted to have a good grasp of the new situation that Slovenia would face as a part of the European Union. He felt that such reflection was necessary, especially due to the recent Yugoslav experience. Bučar's memories of the paralysis, and inability to address the crucial social issues in former Yugoslavia, had not faded. Thus, he deliberated on the problems of economic regulation (the functioning of capitalism!), globalisation, and the changing role of the nation-state. According to Bučar, Europe – and with it Slovenia as a future member of the European Union – faced two crucial challenges, and the future and functioning of the European Union depended on their solution. Bučar considered the economic question, which went far beyond the mere organisation of the common market, to be first challenge. The main purpose of the common market was to create suitable conditions to level the playing field between Europe, America, and the Far East. However, that was not enough: a political mechanism also needed to be added to this common market. A European political mechanism was necessary to dictate the observance of the various social criteria (regarding social welfare, nature conservation, social protection, etc.) by the common capitalist market – a criteria that capitalism could

⁴¹ France Bučar, Slovenian politician, photo: Ziga 20:13, 15 January 2007 (UTC), source of the picture: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:BucarFrance.JPG#/media/File:BucarFrance.JPG>.

⁴² Ratej, 2018.

not satisfy on its own and which, due to the rapid globalisation, could no longer be regulated by the nation-states.

He further elaborated on the economic issue, claiming that the European Economic Community or the European Union had erected a barrier to the direct influence of global capitalism. However, within its framework, the capitalist logic continued as the logic of a natural system, which would equally discriminate in favour of the more powerful, especially against the weaker national economies, individual companies, and directly against smaller consumers. As the introduction of non-economic correctives – those contributing to social welfare, nature conservation, or protection of national interests – into the functioning of this capitalist mechanism was contrary to the pure economic logic, it reduced the European Union's effectiveness. Therefore, the decision was twofold: whether the European Union should merely be a European economic fortress, or protect its members' other social interests as well. To what extent was it able or willing to sacrifice the immediate economic benefits for other social needs if it protected its members' interests? As long as it only followed the economic logic and its demands, the European Union would in fact only be an economic community because it encompassed only one dimension – that is, the economy.

The national question was directly associated with the economic one, with the two being characterised by an inseparable link– an interdependence. As Bučar wrote, this was why the role of the nation-state needed to be completely reconsidered and redefined. The classic nation-state, as it had emerged in the course of economic development until that time, could no longer fulfil its previous role. Therefore, nation-states needed to be brought together into a community through which the participating nations would be able to achieve the goals that were only possible to accomplish together and which transcended the capacity of any individual nation-state. In this regard, the crucial issue was finding a balance between the interests of the larger and smaller member states. It was a question of coexistence or domination of the large countries within the European Union and therefore a question of democracy and peace. At the same time, the European Union had to establish mechanisms that would not only protect the nations but rather also enable their preservation and development as distinct entities within the European Union. Bučar was convinced that Europe's long-term survival depended on this.⁴³

Naturally, Bučar's thematisation of the European challenges was based on the Slovenian situation and the nation's Yugoslav experience. Simultaneously, he reflected on the Slovenian interests at a broader systemic level as well, taking into account globalisation, the fundamental postulates of the capitalist economy, and mechanisms of the functioning of multiple national communities.

43 Bučar, 2003, pp. 183–193.

Conclusion

In her study on political thought and national programmes, Cirila Toplak stated that it was difficult to theorise on Slovenians having elaborate concepts of Europe prior to the last quarter of the 20th century. She argued, quite convincingly, that most of the ideas defined as ‘European’ had only been given this label ‘post festum’. Thus, it is impossible to present any convincing arguments regarding the concepts of Europe as political projects. As a rule, the concepts were summaries or imitations of other ideas that circulated within the European territory – with the exception of France Bučar, whose deliberations were systemic and global. Toplak concluded that *‘even if Slovenians did not actively contribute to the development of European political concepts, they nevertheless learned about them and recognised themselves in them (or not). Perhaps they did not conceive Europe as an idea, but they certainly lived it’*.⁴⁴

They reflected upon Europe during a period of profound turning points and withing a geostrategic vacuum. This was the time for reflection and contextualisation of Slovenia’s position in the European frameworks. After World War I, during World War II, and at the end of the communist regime, a certain reflection about Europe began to take place, albeit, first and foremost, from the perspective of the Slovenian national question. In the post-World War I era, the division of the Slovenian ethnic territory between four states led to a positive reception of the concepts of Pan-Europa or a Central European Confederation. The Central European concept, as a reorganisation of the status of countries between Germany and the Soviet Union, re-emerged during World War II – of course, with the function of solving the Slovenian national question. Central Europe as a cultural phenomenon became popular at the end of the communist regime, tendering ‘proof’ of European adherence and identity. As Bučar’s text suggests, it was not until the end of the 20th century that clearer concepts of Europe or the European Union took shape. Nevertheless, as early as 1940, Edvard Kocbek had formulated the basic principle of the Slovenian outlook on the European integration processes: to ensure smooth national development through integration into a supranational community as well as internationalise the economy to achieve a greater scale through an open economy. Small national spaces (with protectionist policies) simply could not deliver comparable promises. As such, Kocbek’s perspective was far ahead of that of his contemporaries as well as successors, who paid much more attention to the political and cultural aspects. If not completely ignoring it, they at least neglected the significance of the economic sphere for the harmonious development of the national community. Using different words but conveying the same message, France Bučar, following Edvard Kocbek, argued in favour of urgent European integration in the years before the Slovenian accession to the European Union.

44 Toplak, 2002, pp. 579–587.

Thus, he confirmed the historically established principle that any transfer of a part of the national sovereignty to a broader (state) community was legitimate, if it ensured not only the preservation but also development of the Slovenian national identity.

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Great Theorists of Central European Integration in the Czech Republic

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ABSTRACT

The chapter examines five prominent Czech thinkers whose works contributed to the issue of Central European integration. These key figures are discussed chronologically. First, the life and work of František Palacký (1798–1876) is presented. A politician, writer and the founder of modern Czech history, Palacký contributed significantly to the political life of the nineteenth century through the question of cooperation between the Slavic peoples of the Habsburg Monarchy; the relationship of the Czech lands to German integration; and later to the Compromise of 1867. Another important figure is the politician and Czechoslovak Prime Minister Karel Kramář (1860–1937), who based his ideas on close cooperation with Russia and developed the concept of the Slavic Empire. Although the Czechoslovak President Edvard Beneš (1884–1948) is often mentioned primarily in connection with the events of 1938 (Munich Agreement), the expulsion of Germans from Czechoslovakia and 1948 (Communist putsch), Beneš had advocated the unification of the European area as a barrier against the hardships of war. These concepts were manifested not only in the Paris Peace Conference and proposals within the League of Nations, but also in the formation of the Little Entente during the interwar period and negotiations for the Czechoslovak–Polish Confederation during the Second World War. However, Beneš’s ideas ultimately failed thanks to France’s incompetence and the expansionism of the Soviet Union, which he underestimated. Another prominent integrationist theorist was the politician and national economist Jaromír Nečas (1888–1945), who developed the United States of Europe thesis and whose efforts at a peaceful solution to the Sudeten crisis are often overlooked. Czechoslovak and Czech president, playwright, and dissident Václav Havel (1936–2011) provided a philosophical dimension to the integration issue. Havel actively sought the early integration of Eastern Europe into Western European structures and was also the main initiator of close cooperation with Hungary and Poland, understanding the Euro-Atlantic orientation of the former socialist countries as a necessity. He simultaneously pointed out the mistakes that were gaining negative assessments, especially for the European Union. This chapter presents the aforementioned thinkers’ life stories and summarises their crucial works and speeches, illustrating their contribution to Central European integration.

KEYWORDS

Integration, Czech Republic, Czechoslovakia, František Palacký, Karel Kramář, Edvard Beneš, Jaromír Nečas, Václav Havel

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Introduction

The Czech lands are in the Central European area, where clashes of different civilizational circles, cultures, opinions, and spheres of influence have occurred. Since the 18th century, the period has been marked by a national self-consciousness, based on defining oneself against others. Over the centuries, however, it has become clear that many Czech opinionmakers, in their political or literary work, have considered the need to form broader units for cooperation and development within the region. The focus of such interest was primarily Central European cooperation.

The five most significant thinkers who dedicated their entire efforts to cooperation have been examined below. They include: the historian and politician František Palacký; politician Karel Kramář; sociologist, diplomat, and President Edvard Beneš; politician Jaromír Nečas; and the playwright, writer and President Václav Havel. Their biographies summarise the cardinal events in their lives, focusing on the scrutinised issue of integration. Their key works and related significant publications are discussed.

1. František Palacký (1798–1876)¹

František Palacký was born on 14 June 1798 in Hodslavice near Nový Jičín in Moravia. The Palacký family followed the Czech Brethren religion and during the Counter-Reformation, Palacký's ancestors kept old Czech Brethren books in front of the Jesuits. When Emperor Joseph II's Patent of Toleration permitted religions other than Catholicism, Palacký's father Jiří (1768–1836) subscribed to the Augsburg Confession. Palacký's father was one of the founders of the evangelical community in Hodslavice and following the founding of the school, became its teacher. Prior to that, he was a tailor by profession.²



¹ František Palacký, Czech philosopher, historian, publicist and writer, lithographie von Adolf Dauthage, source of the picture: https://hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Franti%C5%A1ek_Palack%C3%BD#/media/F%C3%A1jl:PalackyLitho.jpg.

² Dozens of books and hundreds of articles have been published about František Palacký in the last 150 years. For a detailed account of his life, we can refer to the following biographies: Rieger, 1867; Riegrová-Červinková, 1885; Pekař, Tošner, 1902. Palacký's life is best monographically treated by Jiří Kořalka in his book (Kořalka, 1998). In German, see Kořalka, Rumpler and Urbanitsch, 2007.

In 1807, František Palacký entered a private school in Kunín to learn German. Palacký inherited his father's diligence, which manifested itself, among other things, in the fact that he had read the entire Bible at the age of five. Between 1809 and 1812, Palacký attended the Evangelical Latin School in Trenčín, Slovakia. His father wanted him to become a Protestant preacher.³ However, Palacký dreamed of becoming a missionary in distant lands and converting pagans to the faith. In 1812–1818, Palacký studied at the Higher Evangelical Lyceum in Bratislava, the best evangelical school in Hungary for the education of evangelical priests. In addition to German and Latin, which he already knew perfectly, he learned several other languages there: English, French, Italian and Spanish. He also learned to understand South Slavic languages and Russian. During his studies in Bratislava, Palacký's personality took a nationally conscious turn. He also met the Slovak-Czech writer, Slavist, literary historian, ethnographer, and linguist Pavel Josef Šafárik (1795–1861), who greatly influenced him. In fact, Palacký maintained lifelong friendship with Šafárik.

Following his studies, Palacký did not assume the career of a priest, as his father wished, but became a tutor to several Hungarian noble families. This introduced him to higher society, giving him access to culture and opportunity for further self-education (in philosophy and aesthetics or the study of other foreign languages). He also gained a good overview of Austrian politics and political events.

In 1823, Palacký moved to Prague, where he wished to become a Czech historian and devote himself primarily to the history of the Hussite movement, a religiously – and in some respects also ethnically, socially and politically – motivated action in the Czech lands during the first half of the 15th century, which emerged from the Czech Reformation and sought a far-reaching reform of the Church. The Hussite movement matter followed Palacký throughout his life.

In Prague, Palacký found himself in the company of Czech national revivalists who, during the first half of the nineteenth century, attempted to raise the Czech language to the language of the educated and motivate Czech inhabitants to become nationally aware. The national revival took place simultaneously with the process of transformation of the state into civil society. Josef Jungmann (1773–1847) and Josef Dobrovský (1753–1829) were primarily responsible for teaching Palacký how to approach historical sources. With Dobrovský's help, Palacký also managed to permeate the circle of Czech patriotic nobility. The Sternberg noble family appointed Palacký as the family archivist. In 1827, he became editor of the newly established *Časopis společnosti Vlasteneckého muzea* [Journal of the Patriotic Museum in Prague].⁴

The same year, Palacký married Terezie Měchurová (1807–1860), the daughter of a wealthy Prague lawyer and landowner. The marriage assured financial security for Palacký for the rest of his life, allowing him to devote himself to historical

3 Rieger, 1867, pp. 24–25.

4 Kosatík, 2010, p. 11.

science and politics. However, as his wife hailed from a strict Catholic family, Palacký was required to commit, in writing, that his children would be raised as Catholics. Palacký had two children: Jan (1830–1908), who was a professor of geography at the University of Prague; and Marie (1833–1891), who was married to the prominent Czech politician František Ladislav Rieger (1818–1903). Rieger was one of the founders of the National (Old Czech) Party after 1848 and one of František Palacký's closest collaborators.

At the end of the 1820s, Palacký was appointed as a provincial historian, whose task was to prepare the history of the Czech lands. He began to travel to the Czech and Moravian archives and those in Austria, Germany, and Italy to collect source material for his book. This book was published successively between 1836 and 1867, first in German as *'Geschichte von Böhmen'* [History of Bohemia] and later between 1848 and 1872 in Czech as *'Dějiny národu českého v Čechách a v Moravě'* [History of the Czech Nation in Bohemia and Moravia], and described Czech history from the beginnings of the Czech state until 1526 when the Habsburgs ascended the throne. Palacký's publications introduced the concept of national history and thus the idea of the Czech nation. The fundamental postulate of Palacký's history, and therefore Czech history, was the 'encounter and struggle' of the Czech nation with the Germans and the attempt to distinguish itself from Germanism. For Palacký, Slavicity symbolised democracy, whereas he associated Germans with the authoritarian principle. Palacký considered the Hussite period to be the peak of Czech history. Therefore, Palacký's history became the foundational work of modern Czech history and the ideological underpinning of the national revival and later Czech statehood demands.

Prior to 1848, the concept of Austro-Slavism began to gain ground among Czech liberals.⁵ This programme aimed to solve the problems of the Slavs living in the Austrian monarchy. Among its first promoters was the writer and journalist Karel Havlíček Borovský (1821–1856), who introduced it in 1846 as a counterproposal to Pan-Slavism. Palacký later developed it into a coherent political programme. Austro-Slavism was not only a question considered by Czech politicians but was also partially supported by other Slavic nations within the Austrian monarchy.

Austro-Slavism assumed peaceful cooperation between the smaller Slavic peoples of Central Europe living in the Habsburg Monarchy territory, which German-speaking elites would not dominate. It was about overcoming the traditional notions of pan-Slavic reciprocity and, on the contrary, promoting a pragmatic alliance based on standard criteria and shared interests. For Bohemia, it meant a beneficial partnership with the southern Slavs living within the Austrian monarchy. Czech intellectuals thus defended the existence of Austria and its statehood in the period immediately preceding the Revolution. They began with the idea of the Austrian Empire as an ideal state framework under the Habsburgs for the coexistence of different peoples. The peoples living in the Austrian monarchy were

5 On the concept of Austro-Slavism, see Moritsch, 1996; Šimeček, 2001; Hahn, 2008; Žáček, 1968 and Šesták, 2009.

to be given sufficient space for their autonomous development. If all nations were equal, the Slavic peoples would stand out against the hitherto socio-economically and politically better-equipped Germans and Hungarians. Within a strongly federalised Austria, where the Slavs constituted the majority of the population, the Czechs were to assert themselves.⁶

In the spring of 1848, when the Frankfurt Diet was being prepared to unify the German lands, Palacký was invited to become a member of the preparatory committee of the parliament, on behalf of the Czech lands. However, on behalf of the Czech political nation, Palacký refused the notion that the Czech lands should become part of a constitutionally rebuilt and united Germany. He outlined this refusal in a public letter (the so-called '*Psaní do Frankfurtu*' [Writing to Frankfurt]),⁷ published in the newspaper 'Národní noviny' [National Newspaper] on 11 April 1848. He justified his refusal, stating that the Czechs would play a subordinate role within a united Germany. On the contrary, Palacký envisioned the protection of the Czech nation within a federalised Austria under the rule of an enlightened monarch, where all the smaller nations of Central and South-eastern Europe would live safely and together.⁸ He also rejected a republican form of government for mixed nationality. Palacký pointed out no legal obligations from the past (the Holy Roman Empire of the German nation) existed any more as to why the Czech lands should become part of a united Germany. Palacký saw Austria as the protector of the small Slavic nations against the expansionism of their powerful neighbours (Germans and Russians). With a united Germany, a federalised Austria could form a customs union and a military association. Palacký's 'Writing to Frankfurt' was the essential document of Czech Austro-Slavism.⁹

The cooperation of the Austrian Slavs was to be coordinated at the Slav Congress, which was convened in Prague in early June 1848. Palacký was the chairperson of the Slavic Congress, and promoted the programme of Austro-Slavism as a defence against Pan-Germanism (the political effort to unite all German lands into one state unit). However, considering that the Slavic Congress was prematurely terminated due to the outbreak of the revolution in Prague, Palacký failed to use it as an avenue to promote his Austro-Slavist conception. By refusing to attend the Frankfurt Diet, Palacký came into conflict with the interests of Czech and Austrian Germans, who, on the contrary, saw their future existence within a united Germany.

With the occurrence of the revolution in Vienna and other significant changes, Palacký was offered the position of Minister of Education. When elections for the constituent Reichstag were called under the new Octroi 'Pillersdorf Constitution', he was elected a deputy. This parliament met first in Vienna and later in Kroměříž (Kreims) in Moravia. Palacký was a member of its constitutional committee and

6 Doubek, 2019b.

7 Palacký's letter is reprinted in Schelle and Tauchen, 2013, pp. 208–211.

8 Kosatík, 2010, p. 12.

9 On Palacký's invitation to Frankfurt, see in detail Kořalka, 1990a.

actively participated in drafting the new Austrian constitution (the so-called ‘Kremsier (or Kroměříž) Draft’).

Palacký embodied his federalist ideas in two (internally contradictory) constitutional proposals¹⁰ that he subsequently presented to the Constituent Reichstag. The thrust of his constitutional proposal was how best and rationally to divide the Austrian Empire territory into smaller self-governing units, how to determine the relationship between the Empire and individual countries or groups of countries, and how to distribute legislative power among them. The fundamental innovation of Palacký’s proposal was that the federal organisation of the Austrian monarchy was not based on the land principle, but on its division into four groups of countries, according to the nationalities of the populations living in those countries. It was thus a federation of larger districts and territorial groups, based on the national or ethnographic principle.¹¹

Palacký’s first constitutional draft was dated September 1848.¹² Palacký’s draft distinguished four groups of provinces: the Polish (Cracow, Galicia, Bukovina), the Czech (Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia), the German-Austrian (Austria, Salzburg, Tyrol with Vorarlberg, Styria) and the Illyrian (Carinthia, Krajina, Littoral and Dalmatia). The constitutional division was based on ten larger Gubernia districts. Each district was the seat of the provincial government (Vienna, Prague, Brno, Lviv, Linz, Innsbruck, Graz, Ljubljana, Trieste, and Zadar). The districts were to be further subdivided into regions, counties, and municipalities.

Legislative power at the imperial level was vested in the Reichstag, convened by the emperor in Vienna each spring. The members of the Reichstag were not to be directly elected, but delegated by the provincial assembly (*Landtag*), in the ratio of one deputy per 150,000 citizens per Land. One-third of the Reichstag members were to be replaced at annual intervals. Legislative power in the individual provinces was vested in the Landtags, whose seats were the capitals of the province where the provincial governments were based. The members of the provincial assemblies were to be elected for three years. For every 15,000 inhabitants of the country, there was to be one member of the Landtag. However, Palacký did not set the conditions for exercising the right to vote in his constitutional proposal.¹³

He also sought to divide powers between the central government in Vienna and the individual provincial governments. Matters of provincial administration, provincial finance, education, justice, and industry were to fall under the authority of the provinces.

However, Palacký failed to get his ideas through the Kroměříž Diet (*Reichstag*), and encountered opposition from the majority, who demanded the most significant

10 On Palacký’s two constitutional proposals from 1848–1849, see in detail: Rieger, 1898; Šesták, 1998 and Kořalka, 1990b.

11 Adamová and Sýkora, 2016, p. 485.

12 Palacký’s proposal of September 1848 is reprinted in Schelle and Tauchen, 2013, pp. 219–223.

13 Schelle, 2020, p. 444.

possible powers for the central imperial authorities and opposed both, autonomy and federalisation, which Palacký had advocated. Under the pressure of the unfavourable situation in the Kroměříž Reichstag, Palacký decided to modify and refine his September 1848 proposal. In January 1849, he submitted his second proposal,¹⁴ in which he dealt with the power of the government and the executive, i.e. the position of the emperor and the government. It was newly stipulated that the administration of each province was to be headed by a responsible minister-governor. In the Kroměříž Diet Constitutional Committee, Palacký demanded that, in addition to the groups of Polish, Czech, German-Austrian, and Illyrian provinces, four more groups of provinces should be created: Hungarian, South Slavic, Wallachian and Romanian. These eight groups of provinces were to form a federation in which all entities would have equal status and the same inalienable rights. Thus, no nation would fear for its national existence.¹⁵

However, Palacký stumbled with his federalist proposals, and on 3 February 1849, attended the Constitutional Committee of the Kroměříž Diet for the last time, although he had been highly active in it before. He wanted to defend his proposal at the plenary parliamentary session, but was unable to do so.¹⁶ On 7 March 1849, the Diet was dissolved, and the emperor imposed a new 'March Constitution,' which was built on the principles of centralism and was in direct contradiction to the federalism that Palacký had advocated for until then.

In December 1849, Palacký presented his project for the federalisation of the Austrian monarchy to public in the press. However, this met with the disapproval of the Viennese government, leading to his retirement from public life. During the 1850s, also known as the period of neoabsolutism, when civil and political rights were suspended, Palacký devoted himself to historical research.

Palacký returned to public life in 1860 in connection with the abolition of neoabsolutism. He was revered by the public as the 'Father of the Fatherland', just like Emperor Charles IV, who had been immensely popular among the Czechs in the past. Following the restoration of constitutionalism, Palacký was elected a member of the Bohemian Provincial Assembly. In April 1861, the Emperor appointed him a life member of the House of Lords of the Austrian Parliament. However, Palacký had not been active in Viennese parliament for a long time. Dissatisfied with the constitutional conditions in the Habsburg Monarchy, which were introduced by the 'February Patent' of 1861, he criticised above all, the fact that federalist ideas were not implemented in the non-Hungarian countries. In September 1861, he declared passive resistance to the House of Lords and did not return to it until his death.

In 1865, Palacký published another of his seminal works – *'Idea státu rakouského'* [The Idea of the Austrian State],¹⁷ in which he presented the Czech nation with his

14 Palacký's proposal of January 1849 is reprinted in Schelle and Tauchen, 2013, pp. 214–227.

15 Adamová, 2016, p. 486.

16 On the activities of František Palacký in the Constitutional Committee of the Kroměříž Diet, see Kameníček, 1929.

17 For an analysis of Palacký's 1865 federalist conception, see in detail Šesták, 1976.

idea of the future organisation of the Austrian Empire. Through this book, he warned against the prevailing centralism and threat of dualism. He once again called for a federal system and equality of the individual nations, but in some respects, corrected the views that he had advocated for in his 1848/49 proposals. Thus, he adapted his submissions to the new circumstances.¹⁸

Palacký strongly opposed the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867 and the ‘December Constitution’. In August 1868, together with 80 other deputies of the Bohemian Provincial Assembly, he submitted a declaration of state law in which the Czech political representation opposed the constitutional direction of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and demanded respect for Czech state law.¹⁹ However, the policy of passive resistance proved to be ineffective and did not lead to the promotion of Czech interests. As such, Palacký failed to push through the programme of federalisation of the Habsburg Monarchy during his lifetime.

The ‘Father of the Fatherland’ František Palacký died on 26 May 1876.

2. Karel Kramář (1860–1937)²⁰



Karel Kramář was born on 27 December 1860 in Vysoké nad Jizerou in the Podkrkonoší region, to the family of the bricklayer Petr Kramář.²¹ Kramář liked the Giant Mountains and often returned to them. Later, he built a magnificent summer residence there. The foothill environment in which Kramář grew up also shaped him in many ways.²² Kramář had five siblings, but none lived to adulthood except him. Since Kramář’s family was financially well-off, he was provided with a good education. From the fifth grade he attended a German school in Liberec to improve his German. This benefited him during his many years as a member of the Viennese

18 Adamová, 1999, p. 237.

19 For an explanation of the concept of ‘Czech state law’ which was key to Czech politics in the second half of the 19th century, see Kwan, 2005.

20 Karel Kramář, Czech politician, source of the picture: Medek, Rudolf (ed.), *K vítězně svobodě 1914-1918-1928: (album fotografií z dějin zahraničního i domácího odboje československého: k oslavě prvního desetiletí ČSR)*. Prague: Pěčí a nákladem Památníku Odboje, 1928, p. 5., public domain, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karel_Kram%C3%A1%C5%99#/media/File:Karel_Kram%C3%A1%C5%99_1920s.jpg.

21 For the life and work of Karel Kramář, we can refer to the following books: Lustigová, 2007; Bílek and Velek, 2009; Sís, 1930. Kramář’s memoirs (Kramář, 1938) can also be used as a basis.

22 Lustigová, 2007, p. 11.

parliament, where he conversed in German. He received his secondary education at the 'Gymnasium' [secondary school that prepares for higher education] in Prague, where students were educated in the Czech national spirit and patriotism. His classmates included students from the Balkan states and Poland, thereby influencing his Slavic sentiments. Throughout this education, Kramář performed well, earning distinction and soon became politically involved. He participated in political rallies and followed the political press.

Kramář successfully passed his matriculation in 1879 and took his next steps towards legal study. However, he was not admitted to the Prague or Vienna law faculties, but due to his favourable financial situation, could afford to study at the University of Berlin. Here he attended the lectures of the economist Adolph Wagner (1835–1917), who enthused him about the national economy and financial science fields. Kramář spent a summer semester at the University of Strasbourg, where he enrolled in lectures by another national economist, Gustav Schmoller (1838–1917). He graduated in law in 1884 at the Prague Law Faculty and received his doctorate. However, although Kramář influenced the law in a significant way, having authored several bills and passed laws as a member of several legislatures over several decades, he never actually practised law.

After graduating from the Prague Law Faculty, he went abroad, to Berlin, Paris, London, and Vienna, as he was thinking of habilitation in the national economy and financial science. While this intention was never ultimately realised, Kramář's first book was published in Leipzig in 1886, entitled '*Das Papiergeld in Österreich seit 1848*' [The Paper Money in Austria since 1848] and based on his studies in the Viennese archives and in which Kramář dealt with paper money, dates from this period.

In Prague, Kramář became close to the Czech economist Josef Kaizl (1854–1901), who introduced him to the university professor and politician Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk (1850–1937). Along with the latter, Kramář formed the political circle of the so-called Realists. This group sought to modernise cultural life, overcome Czech provincialism, and formulate a new Czech politics. The Realists rejected the existing nationalism based on romantic notions of a 'glorious Czech past' as a programmatic opposition to everything German. They knew that a successful Czech policy had to set primarily positive goals in order to reach the level of the more advanced European nations. They demanded Austrian decentralisation and national equalisation in the Czech lands.

In 1890, Kramář, Masaryk and Kaizl joined the Young Czech Party (the National Liberal Party) that ruled Czech politics then, marking Kramář's entry into active politics, where he remained for an incredible fifty years. Kramář became a professional politician and experienced difficulties during his political career. In the 1891 elections, at the age of 31, he was elected to the Chamber of Deputies, where he remained until the fall of the Habsburg Monarchy. In 1894, Kramář was also elected a member of the Bohemian Provincial Assembly. He held this position until 1913, when the Bohemian legislature was dissolved. In 1897, he became the second and, a few years later, the first deputy chairperson of the Chamber of Deputies of the *Reichsrat*.

As an expert on finance and the national economy, he was a member of several parliamentary committees within the Austrian Parliament. Additionally, Kramář was regarded as an expert on the Austrian state's constitutional issues. Due to his knowledge of several world languages (German, French and English), he also addressed and commented on foreign policy issues. Kramář was an excellent speaker, whose speeches in Parliament were widely reported in the Czech and German press.²³ He spoke fluently without written preparation or any sign of anxiety.

Throughout the 1890s, Kramář worked in the Young Czech Party in the shadow of his teacher Josef Kaizl, becoming his closest collaborator. In 1897, Kramář was appointed the chairperson of the Young Czech Party, becoming its most influential personality. He belonged to a moderate movement within the party, which tried to assert 'Czech state demands' (Czech state law) through economic prosperity and political cooperation with the Germans as equals. Unlike the politicians of the previous decades, Kramář represented the so-called 'positive politics', that consisted of the Czech nation gradually regaining its economic and political power. Although he criticised numerous aspects of Austria-Hungary, he was reconciled to its existence. In the case of good projects, he supported the Austrian government, but at the cost of benefits and concessions for the Czech lands.²⁴ Kramář also advocated that the Czech element should be more assertive in towns and cities in the German borderlands, thus expanding Czech autonomy. However, his efforts to decentralise the Austrian monarchy were met with considerable resistance from the Bohemian Germans.

Initially, the Young Czechs were embarrassed by the idea of universal suffrage, as it was evident that the workers and rural political parties (the Social Democrats and Agrarian Party) would benefit much more than them.²⁵ Under Kramář's influence, the Young Czechs eventually supported a proposal to reform the electoral system (Badeni's electoral reform). In 1897, Kramář was involved in a momentous change in the official status of the Czech language (Badeni's language regulations). At that time, the Young Czech Party functioned as openly pro-government. However, with the fall of the Badeni government, the Party's demands remained unfulfilled. The 1907 elections were held under universal, equal, direct, and secret suffrage (among men) for the first time in Austria-Hungary. The elections spelled defeat for the Young Bohemian Party, which was in crisis.

From the 1890s (over the next 40 years), Kramář had become a tireless promoter of Russophilism and cooperation with Russia. He visited Russia for the first time in 1890, and on his repeated trips, made countless contacts with Russian intellectuals and elaborated with them the idea of Slavic reciprocity. On his first visit to Moscow, Kramář met the manufacturer Alexei Alexeyevich Abrikosov and his wife Nadezhda Nikolayevna (1862–1936), with whom Kramář fell in love. He subsequently invited her to Vienna, where Nadezhda underwent gynaecological surgery. With her four

23 Kvaček, 2011, p. 12.

24 Lustigová, 2011, p. 36.

25 Kosatík, 2010, p. 107.

children, Nadezhda left her husband and began to live with Kramář in Vienna. Considering that Nadezhda's divorce was not finalised until 1898, Kramář maintained an intimate relationship with her that was scandalous for the time. The wedding did not take place until 17 September 1900 in Crimea according to the Orthodox rite. In Crimea, the newlyweds built their summer residence, the sumptuous 'Villa Barbo', where they spent every parliamentary holiday until the outbreak of the First World War. Following the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, this villa was confiscated from the Kramář family.

After losing the 1907 elections, Kramář began to support the policy of Neo-Slavism, which consisted of economic and cultural rapprochement with Tsarist Russia. To some extent, he revived the old concept of the so-called Austro-Slavism of František Palacký. According to Kramář, Austria was a strong state that relied on the Slavic nations and represented the second largest Slavic power cooperating with Russia, i.e. it was the most considerable Slavic power. To fulfil his idea of bringing Austria-Hungary and Russia together through the cooperation of Slavic nations, he tried to influence Austrian foreign policy, heading parliamentary delegations, and organising and chairing congresses of Slavic nations (in Prague in 1908 and in Sofia, Bulgaria, in 1910). This Neo-Slav Movement was most active in 1907–1908. However, in his texts, Kramář demanded only economic and cultural rapprochement with Russia and did not proclaim political or state-law goals.²⁶ Thus, Kramář's Neo-Slavism was not directed against the Monarchy and the Austrian state.

However, international developments in the 1900s took a completely different direction, as Austria-Hungary's annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria-Hungary in 1908 marked the breakdown in ties between the Danube Monarchy and Tsarist Russia. In line with his 'positive politics', Kramář defended the Austrian annexation, envisioning an increase in the share of the Slavic element within the Monarchy.²⁷

Immediately preceding the outbreak of the First World War, Kramář developed an extremely ambitious project for the Slavic Empire, drawing up its constitution.²⁸ However, the constitution could not be publicly published or discussed at that time, as it would have been considered treason. In May 1914, Kramář managed to present his constitutional draft to the Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Dmitryevich Sazonov (1860–1927).

Kramář was based on the ideas of Pan-Slavism and Russophilism, which had comprised a prominent place in the Czech lands since the national revival. According to the proposal, an all-Slavic federation was to be created, which included the Russian Empire, Tsardom (Kingdom) of Poland, Tsardom (Kingdom) of Bohemia, Tsardom of Bulgaria, Kingdom of Serbia, and Kingdom of Montenegro.²⁹ In his

26 Doubek, 2019, p. 661.

27 On Kramář's Slavic politics, see Herman and Sládek, 1971; Herman and Sládek, 1970; Lustigová, 2004 and Lustigová, 2006.

28 For Kramář's constitution draft, see Schelle and Tauchen, 2013, pp. 354–358.

29 Schelle and Tauchen, 2013, p. 342.

proposal, Kramář detailed the territories that would belong to the various parts of the Slavic Empire. In doing so, however, he proposed the boundaries without regard to the political situation at the time, with the assumption that all Slavic nations would want to join the empire. This revealed Kramář's political naivety and unwillingness to work with facts.³⁰

The Slavic Empire was intended to be a constitutional monarchy. However, in his proposal, Kramář assumed a federal (*federative*) arrangement of the state on the German model (*Deutsche Bundesakte*). The position of the individual member states within the federation was also like the role of the federal states in the German Empire, i.e. the member states had only minimal autonomy and all decisive power belonged to the federation. The elements of federalism were only formal, and the association could be regarded as a unitary centralised state rather than a union of autonomous states.

The Slavic Empire was to be headed by the Russian Tsar, who was also the King of Bohemia and Poland, while the Balkan countries would be ruled by their local monarchs. The function of the government was to be exercised by an Imperial Council of 42 members, hailing from the member states. The Tsar appointed 25 members from Russia, four from the Czech lands and five from Poland. The Balkan monarchs appointed the members of the Imperial Council from the Balkan states in the following order: four from Serbia, three from Bulgaria, and one from Montenegro.

Kramář's proposal differentiated between the imperial and provincial legislatures. The imperial parliament should have authority over fundamental matters such as trade contracts and tariffs, the army, post office, railways and imperial budget. The legislature was to be the Reichstag, and approve the imperial laws. However, it was not given any legislative initiative and could only submit draft laws to the Imperial Council. The parliament comprised 300 deputies, the highest number of which Kramář attributed to Russia (175). The other states had a disproportionately smaller number of representatives in this legislature: Poland (40), the Czech Lands (35), Serbia (30), Bulgaria (20) and Montenegro (5). As such, Russia occupied a privileged position in both bodies of the association, and could easily assert its interests at any time. Thus, Kramář's constitutional proposal assigned the Russian nation with strong position at the expense of the other Slavic nations.

Russian was to become the official language in all parts of the Slavic Empire, be taught compulsorily in schools, and be the language of command in the army. The individual states could be compelled to execute and conduct the decisions of the imperial authorities, with the execution of the compulsion being the right and duty of the Tsar.

The Slavic Empire was to be a single trade and customs territory, i.e. the transport of goods from one federal state to another would not be subject to customs duty.

| 30 Lustigová, 2007, pp. 116–117. |

Kramář's project was evidently unfeasible for many reasons. First was the de facto semi-absolutist form of government, given that most of the crucial powers were concentrated in the hands of the Tsar. Considering the Balkan peoples' recently hard-won independence after centuries of Ottoman occupation, it was not easy to imagine them giving up their freedom. In his proposal, Kramář also did not specify the manner in which he intended to bring about the change that would lead to the creation of the Slavic Empire.³¹ He also did not consider the historically tense Polish–Russian relations. As such, the Slavic Empire project was based on Kramář's completely unrealistic ideas, although he never admitted its impossibility.³²

Over time, Kramář became one of the most symbolic leaders of the Czech nation. He abandoned many of his previous views and loyalty to Austria–Hungary at the beginning of the First World War and joined the anti-Austrian resistance. From the beginning of the war, Kramář was followed by the Austrian police because, as a supporter of Russia, he was considered an enemy of the Austrian state. Kramář was arrested in May 1915 and, together with another prominent Czech politician Alois Rašín (1867–1923), was charged with treason. The investigative detention lasted half a year. A formal accusation was drawn up, based on analyses of the Czech press, Kramář's speeches and appearances, and police reports, as well as Austrian intelligence and counter-intelligence information.³³ The trial began on 6 December 1915, before Vienna's military Divisional Court, and the proceedings were held in Vienna in secret. As such, the news of the trial did not reach the press. The verdict was handed down on 3 June 1916, and Kramář and Rašín were sentenced to death. In the judgment, Kramář was described as

the leader of the Pan-Slavist propaganda in Bohemia and of the Czech Russophile movement, who consciously sought to fragment the monarchy before and after the outbreak of war and worked against his state. As a result, organised revolutionary propaganda was to begin both in hostile foreign countries and in neutral states, to fragment the monarchy, of tearing Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia and Hungarian Slovakia and other territories inhabited by Slavs away from the monarchy.³⁴

Kramář's appeal against the verdict was rejected, but the death sentence was not carried out, as Emperor Franz Joseph I did not sign it. The new Emperor Charles I commuted Kramář's death sentence to 20 years in prison. In July 1917, Kramář was released on grounds of amnesty.³⁵

31 Doubek, 2019, p. 662.

32 On Kramář's proposal for the constitution of the Slavic Empire, see more at Schelle et al., 2013, pp. 55–60.

33 Kosatík, 2010, p. 111.

34 Slušný, 2016, pp. 204–205.

35 The court records of the trial of Karel Kramář were published in print after the end of the First World War see Tobolka, 1918–1920.

In early 1918, Kramář laid out another unrealistic goal: he sought to build a national party that would overthrow the Austrian monarchy and rule the country under his leadership. This became the Czech State Democracy. In the summer of 1918, Kramář was elected head of the National Committee, the central body of Czech politics. Shortly before the establishment of Czechoslovakia, Kramář and a delegation of other Czech politicians went to Geneva to meet with Edvard Beneš (1884–1948) as the representative of the Czechoslovak government-in-exile, in order to discuss the future state system and the establishment of an independent Czechoslovak state.

On 14 November 1918, the first Czechoslovak parliament elected Kramář as the chairperson of the government of national unity. In early January the following year, Kramář survived an assassination attempt by a young communist. When the Paris Peace Conference negotiations began at the Chateau of Versailles in January 1919, Kramář, as Prime Minister, left Czechoslovakia, which was in virtual chaos in the first months after its creation, to influence the outcome of the Peace Conference as head of the Czechoslovak delegation. Here, he promoted the view that the victorious powers should intervene against the Bolshevik government in Russia. In Paris, however, Kramář was overshadowed by Edvard Beneš, who had considerable previous foreign policy experience. Considering that the representatives of the victorious powers primarily took decisions at the Paris Peace Conference, Kramář's ideas for a new order in Europe could not be implemented.³⁶

In the summer of 1919, when Kramář's party lost the local elections, it had consequences at the government level; Kramář's government fell on 8 July 1919. Kramář remained a member of the Czechoslovak parliament during the First Czechoslovak Republic until his death. At this time, he held conservative and nationalist views and supported the idea of a nation, not a nation-state. He actively criticised the Soviet Bolshevik state and supported Russian emigrants who fled to Czechoslovakia to escape the Bolshevik regime. Kramář was critical of Edvard Beneš's foreign policy as well as the policies of President Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk. For example, Kramář explicitly rejected the establishment of diplomatic relations between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union in the first half of the 1930s.

During his lifetime Karel Kramář authored several books, among which are *‘České státní právo’* [Czech State Law] (1896), *‘Česká politika. Dějiny české politiky nové doby’* [Czech Politics. A History of Czech Politics in the New Era] (1909) a *‘Ruská krise’* [The Russian Crisis] (1921).

During the First Republic, Kramář lived in a magnificent villa in Prague, which he had built prior to the First World War. This villa now serves as the residence of Czech Prime Ministers. Karel Kramář died on 26 May 1937 in Prague and is buried in the crypt of the Orthodox Church in Prague's Olšany Cemetery.

| 36 Dejmek, 2011, p. 58. |

3. Edvard Beneš (1884–1948)³⁷



Eduard Beneš was born on 28 May 1884 in Kožlany near Pilsen. From 1904, he studied at the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Prague. From 1905 he continued his studies at the Sorbonne in Paris, at the *École libre des sciences politiques* and at the Faculty of Law in Dijon, where he graduated as a Doctor of Law in 1908. Two years prior to this, he changed his name to Edvard. Following his graduation, he spent a year studying in Berlin. In 1909, he became a Doctor of Philosophy, after graduating the University of Prague. Following his return home, Beneš married Hana Vlčková (1885–1974) in Prague on 10 December 1909; their marriage was childless.³⁸

In 1911 he lived in in Paris and London, and in 1912 published his habilitation thesis '*Stranictví*' [Partyism], in which he dealt with the action and functioning of political parties in modern society according to German and French sociological findings. Ideologically, during this period, Beneš subscribed to social democracy and was critical of Marxism's class struggle and underestimation of individualism.³⁹ He regarded class hatred as senseless and absurd.⁴⁰

In 1912, he was appointed associate professor of sociology at the University of Prague and a year later at the Technical University as well. He was active as a journalist (focusing on the political conditions of Western Europe), translator (Zola's '*L'Assommoir*', Volney's '*Les ruines ou Méditation sur les révolutions des Empires*') and scholar ('*Le problème autrichien et la question tchèque*' [The Austrian Problem and the Czech Question], 1908; '*Stručný nástin vývoje moderního socialismu*' [A Brief Outline of the Development of Modern Socialism], 1910).⁴¹

While still at the 'gymnasium' [grammar school], Beneš met Charlotte Masaryk (1850–1923) through a newspaper friend. She took a liking to Beneš and mentioned him to her husband, who later provided Beneš with translations for the periodical

37 Eduard Beneš, Czech politician and statesman, Unknown author. Transfer; United States. Office of War Information. Overseas Picture Division. Washington Division; 1944, public domain, source of the picture: https://hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edvard_Bene%C5%A1#/media/F%C3%A1jl:Edvard_Bene%C5%A1.jpg.

38 An extensive library of resources on Edvard Beneš is currently available, e. g. Werstadt, 1924; Papoušek, 1934; Eisenmann, 1934; Jakovenko, 1935; Hartl, 1937; Hitchcock, 1946; Mackenzie, 1947; Táborický, 1981; Havlíček, 1991; Klimek, 1992; Hanzal, 1994; Čapek, 2000; Dejmek, 2006; Dejmek, 2008; Zeman, 2009; Dvořák, 2021.

39 Beneš, 1924a, pp. 43–47.

40 Hník, 1946, p. 156.

41 Jakovenko, 1936, pp. 2, 72, 75.

'*Naše doba*' [Our Times] and noticed Beneš in his lectures on philosophy and sociology. Beneš was a student of Masaryk and eventually engaged with him politically as well. He was active in the Realist Party. Their joint activity in Czechoslovak Action indicates the closeness, as well as the fact that Masaryk appointed Beneš as executor of his will in 1917.⁴²

From the beginning of the First World War, Beneš was Masaryk's confidant. After the latter's departure abroad, Beneš became his deputy in the leadership of the revolutionary group (so-called '*Maffie*'). During this time, Beneš was in constant contact with Masaryk and provided funds for underground activities, while also acting as Masaryk's deputy in the editorial office of '*Naše doba*'. During this period, he also focused on the sociological study of war (*War and Culture*, 1915), and made several trips abroad. On 1 September 1915, he continued to live abroad following his last journey, that is, after a short stay in Switzerland, he settled in Paris. The beginnings of his foreign action were complicated; Beneš was arrested three times in England and twice in France during this time for suspicion of espionage.

From 1916 he was the chief secretary of the Foreign Committee, later the National Council, and conducted most diplomatic negotiations in Paris, London, and Rome. The result of these negotiations was the involvement of Czech patriot organisations from China to Argentina and the recognition of the National Council as the future Czechoslovak government. It was Beneš who, after a fortnight of negotiations in the summer of 1918, managed to persuade the vigilant British government to explicitly recognise the National Council as the Czechoslovak government, and through the Japanese ambassador in London, obtain a similar act from Tokyo. At the end of the First World War, Beneš remained in Paris, preparing for the Declaration of Independence, sending instructions to Prague, and declaring that final recognition of the government would only occur at home. After the conclusion of the agreement with France, he went to Italy as Foreign Minister to discuss recognition by Italy as well. However, he broke off his journey at Verona and went to the Alps to join the legionaries instead. However, he was recalled to Paris on 13 October 1918 by a telegram stating that the French Prime Minister had decided to make a deal with Austria-Hungary at the expense of the independent nations. On 26 October 1918, Beneš discussed with Marshal Foch the use of Czechoslovak troops for the Allied offensive. Two days later, he met in Geneva with representatives of the National Committee, with whom he discussed the constitution, foreign policy, economy, and administration of the future state.⁴³

During the First War, Beneš authored several political essays (for the review '*La Nation Tcheque*' [Czech Nation], which he had edited for two years) and a book '*Détruisez l'Autriche Hongrie!*' [Destroy Austria-Hungary!] (1916; Italian 1917, with a preface by Italian politician Andrea Torre) containing the main arguments of the Czechoslovak liberation programme. His activities during the First World War

42 Olivová, 1994, p. 53.

43 Czechoslovak Republic, 1928, pp. 50–101.

were described in his book '*Světová válka a naše revoluce*' [The World War and Our Revolution] (1927).

From October 1918, he was appointed as Minister of Foreign Affairs in both the Provisional Government, and the first government of Karel Kramář. However, he did not return to Prague until September 1919. In the meantime, he represented Czechoslovakia at the Paris Peace Conference. Beneš's image as a great political leader and diplomat and respect as one of the most outstanding personalities of his time began to develop in connection with this conference. For example, the politician Václav Klobučák (1868–1942) introduced Beneš as 'a great and directly world-historical personality'.⁴⁴ We can read in this a symbolic attempt by a small and undeveloped state to place itself, through its representative, alongside the tremendous developed countries of Europe and the world. If Beneš is accepted, so is Czechoslovakia.

Beneš asserted the establishment of a favourable southern border with Hungary and managed to resolve the problematic situation in connection with Těšín, where a military clash with Poland had provoked criticism from the Agreed Powers. Beneš based the peace negotiations on the concept of a balance of power, which would allow for the development of European friendship. Beneš's contribution thereby made it possible to recognise Czechoslovakia within its historical borders, defend southern Slovakia, and make Ruthenia a part of the new republic. These achievements, were significant tasks and challenges for the new state; however Beneš's success was a Pyrrhic victory, considering the developments of the late 1930s.

The individual participants admitted that Beneš's positions at the peace conference were not based on the national demands of the new state but on international reasons. Beneš understood the balance of power as a scientifically justified necessity, which would allow for the development of European friendship. Beneš's diplomatic skills were demonstrated in the context of the resolution of the Těšín crisis, when Czechoslovakia's actions raised criticism from the Principal Allied Powers.

The interwar Czechoslovak Republic was a unitary state of a fictional Czechoslovak nation, but Beneš considered himself as Czechoslovak and never sought the national subjugation or exploitation of Slovakia. Beneš was aware of the need for peaceful development throughout Europe in connection with the Czechoslovakia's peaceful development. He actively participated in the building of the League of Nations. He is particularly remembered for his role in the negotiations for Austrian financial rehabilitation in 1922.⁴⁵ It was Beneš who, within the League of Nations, sought in 1924 the adoption of the Geneva Protocol, which was intended to prevent wartime conflicts by an obligation to settle disputes through arbitration, disarmament, a commitment to mutual assistance and possible joint action against the aggressor. However, the Geneva Protocol, failed in Britain's position.⁴⁶ From

44 Urban, 1936, pp. 19–21.

45 Beneš and Krofta, 1934, pp. 242, 474.

46 Malypetr et al., 1938, pp. 303–304.

Beneš's perspective, the Little Entente with Romania and Yugoslavia was intended to prevent military conflicts. It was also Beneš who first formulated the principles of collective European security.⁴⁷

Beneš served as the Foreign Minister in other governments, and from 26 September 1921 to 7 October 1922, was even appointed as the Czechoslovak Prime Minister. This built the foundations and traditions of Czechoslovak foreign policy and ensured its stability. Beneš's foreign policy was based on a close interdependence with France. Its main principles were set out in the parliamentary speeches, forming the basis of the collection *'Problémy nové Evropy a zahraniční politika československá'* [Problems of New Europe and Czechoslovak Foreign Policy] (1924). In this collection's preface, Beneš emphasised the European character of his speeches, always trying to place Czechoslovak foreign policy in its European framework and abandon Czech provincialism. A certain irony because of the subsequent developments is Beneš's mention of his meeting with Italian Prime Minister Mussolini, who *'was engaged in our affairs before the war and helped our national cause during the war, so it was easy to agree on the general lines of our mutual policy'*, i.e. a policy of *'cooperation and loyal collaboration for peace and tranquillity'*.⁴⁸ The rift with Italy dates back to the aggression against Abyssinia, which Beneš resolutely condemned.

The representation of the Czechoslovak state was therefore oriented towards establishing good relations with Germany and supporting democracy there. However, an essential line of conflict was the question of the Sudeten Germans, who, at the end of 1918, attempted to create areas that would remain part of (German) Austria and be merged with Germany. In the 1920s, Czechoslovakia's positive development, compared to that of Germany meant a substantial improvement in the Czechoslovak-Sudeten-German relationship, illustrated by the entry of Sudeten Germans into the Czechoslovak government; later, the Great Depression impeded these relations.

In the 1920s, Beneš outlined the concept of a new organisation of wider Central Europe, which would lead to close political cooperation from confederation to federation. The Regional Central European community was then to be the basis for pan-European integration. The projection of Beneš's plans appeared to be a narrower model of the Little Entente. In 1929, Beneš once again advocated European rapprochement and cooperation, which was inevitable if Europe wished to avoid crises and conflicts. A system of civil liberties and democratic mechanisms, which had its origins in the French Revolution, was to be the essential condition for European integration, ensuring individual participants' political and national security. The 1930s was to be a phase of genuine reflection on European integration.⁴⁹

47 Goněc, 2000, pp. 164–165.

48 Beneš, 1924b, p. 264.

49 Goněc, 2000, pp. 164–165.

Beneš was elected President of the Czechoslovak Republic on 18 December 1935. He thus became head of state at a time of growing tensions in Europe, but believed in Czechoslovakia's alliance with France, the Soviet Union, and the Little Entente. A turning point came in 1938 with the unfolding of the Sudeten-German crisis. Hitler's instruction to make demands unacceptable to the Czechoslovak government was overcome by Czechoslovakia's decision to accept all German requests (the Fourth Plan). The Sudeten Germans, orchestrated from Berlin, used the clash in Ostrava to end the negotiations. Franco-British pressure led to the adoption of a plan to resolve the situation. This adoption was preceded by a shameless night visit by the French and British ambassadors, the impropriety of which was later explained by the so-called ordered ultimatum, i.e., that the Czechoslovak representatives called for the night visit, in order to make the adoption of the plan defensible to the public. Beneš referred to the ordered ultimatum as a perfidious lie. Recent research indicates that Prime Minister Milan Hodža intimated the necessity of such pressure on several occasions in 1938. Beneš sought to resolve the Sudeten-German crisis at the cost of territorial concessions. The so-called 'Fifth Plan' was represented in Paris and London by Jaromír Nečas (1888–1945). However, the acceptance of the Anglo-French plan did not satisfy the Nazis' demands. France and Britain indicated the advisability of mobilisation, with the British representative attempting to resolve the situation through Italian mediation— a pre-arranged course of action by the German Nazis and the Italian Fascists. In this context, Mussolini successfully pushed most German demands at the Munich Conference, while Czechoslovak representatives were not even invited to the negotiations. The Munich Agreement itself had many significant legal shortcomings, and its participants declared it null and void; as such, it could never be legally binding on Czechoslovakia. France presented its position at the conference itself. The Soviet Union held back its support until Czechoslovakia had already submitted to the Munich dictate under the threat of war, and the small-agreement allies assessed that if France had taken such a stance towards Czechoslovakia, they too were absolved of their obligations. Poland and Hungary also came forward with their demands against Czechoslovakia.⁵⁰

For Beneš, however, Munich was a shock, representing a lifelong disaster and a betrayal of his closest allies. On 5 October 1938, he abdicated as President under German pressure. In March 1939, the German Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia was established. Beneš then became the most important person in the Czechoslovak exile movement. However, his role was quite tangled. First was the disapproval of Britain and France and conflict with the Slovak representatives. In the autumn of 1939, Beneš played a crucial role in the formation of the Czechoslovak National Committee, where disputes were also manifested. The Czechoslovak ambassador to France (of Slovak origin), Štefan Osuský, based the theory of continuity derived from the existence of Czechoslovak diplomatic representations.

50 Kolumber, 2022, pp. 361–369.

However, Beneš advocated a theory in which continuity was primarily derived from the president, i.e. Beneš (where the effects of his abdication in October 1938 were not recognised). Further developments were then aided by the military defeat of France, where, with the existence of Czechoslovak troops, Britain was willing to accept a Czechoslovak provisional establishment. This acceptance, however, was extremely reserved and conditional, often associated with questioning Beneš's constitutional position itself, and the position of the entire exile representation. The turnaround is associated with the German attack on the Soviet Union. Then, in July 1941, the Soviets unconditionally accepted Beneš's position and the provisional state system, and thus, Beneš's continuity theory. On the same day, the British authorities did likewise (albeit still with reservations in the context of the validity of the Munich Agreement).⁵¹

In 1941, Beneš concluded that the existence of supranational mechanisms would guarantee peace in Europe. The basis of the new Europe was to be larger political units. The Western European bloc should consist of Britain, France, Benelux and a transformed Germany, with a separate Prussia, and a strengthened role for the democratic (federal) German countries. The core of the Central European bloc was the Czechoslovak–Polish Federation (alliance). The Balkan bloc consisted of Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Greece, and Albania. Austria, Romania, and (also transformed following the example of Germany) Hungary were not resolved. Scandinavian and Iberian cooperation was to be appropriate, and Russia was not to be excluded. The new European organisation's goal was to be a pan-European *community*. No local confederation was to be conceivable without a European framework. Beneš envisaged a gradual integration of the sub-blocs, and later, a pan-European organisation. However, success could also lead to setbacks, as with the League of Nations. Beneš assumed the necessity of guaranteeing citizen's human rights by a supranational power, with the duty of the pan-European authorities to stop any anti-democratic regime before it became a danger. Beneš then saw national centralisation as a precursor to dictatorship. His ideas were therefore pragmatic and sober.⁵²

The intensive mentioned cooperation with Poland was to be a means of a more lasting order in Central Europe.⁵³ The intended Czechoslovak-Polish federation had long been seriously discussed with the Polish exile representation. Beneš negotiations with Edward Bernard Raczyński (1891–1993) also advocated the involvement of Austria, Hungary and Romania, but excluded the coerced participation of Lithuania and Ukraine.⁵⁴ Ultimately, the Soviets terminated this project because they envisioned the existence of Slavic states on their border only as satellites.⁵⁵

51 The position of Beneš for Czechoslovak action during the Second World War was crucial, but at the same time, legally deeply complicated, see in detail Schelle et al., 2022, pp. 11–151.

52 Goněc, 2001, pp. 211–213.

53 Beneš, 1946a, p. 230.

54 Táborský, 1993, p. 104.

55 Brod, 1992, p. 123.

Beneš was the key representative of the exile and the bearer of Czechoslovak continuity. The 1920 constitution was not designed for such a situation. Therefore in exile, Beneš stipulated, in the form of a special decree, that during the absence of a parliament, he would issue decrees with the participation of the government and the so-called State Council (quasi-parliament). The exile representation realised its constitutional deficit. As the end of the war approached, they conceived the thesis of a ratification of these decrees, which was carried out in the Czechoslovak Provisional National Assembly in January 1946. In the Czech Republic, the decrees issued between the summer of 1940 and October 1945, when the parliament was summoned, are associated with the person of Beneš. These decrees dealt with a wide range of issues, with large number of them being issued even after May 1945. These include decrees of retribution, decrees coping with economic problems of the state, and decrees against Germans and Hungarians who were considered traitors (constitutional rights were not returned to Germans and Hungarians until 1968 in Czechoslovakia).⁵⁶

Beneš had already outlined most of his ideas on Europe's development with regard to the war and the new order after it in the late 1930s and early 1940s in his book *'Democracy Today and Tomorrow'* (1940 in English), which was based on a series of lectures he gave at the University of Chicago in 1939. This book introduced the concept of post-war development and made a strong impression on the ideological image of the reborn state. Beneš outlined the manner in which society should function politically, economically, socially, nationally, and rightly. Moreover, the old concept of Czechoslovakia as a bridge between the East and the West was presented in a revived form. Later, Beneš's vision of the new Czechoslovakia became more precise. He lost internal confidence in the Western powers and their willingness and ability to assist Czechoslovakia in future problem-solving. This was the background of Beneš's definitive geopolitical leaning towards the Soviet Union, supported by the notion of the need for the ultimate political liberation of Slavic nations. In his *'Nová slovanská politika'* [New Slavic Politics] (1946), he coped with 'new Slavism' as an expression of two great ideas, namely that of peoplehood (all-round political and social democracy) and the concept of humanity.⁵⁷ The main aim was the need to protect Czechoslovakia from Germany. Beneš had not positively assessed Germany's development and was deeply (but mistakenly) convinced about democratisation in the Soviet Union.⁵⁸

56 On the other hand, the Czech Constitutional Court (e. g. decisions of the Constitutional Court of 26 March 1996, Case No I. ÚS 29/94, or of 8 March 1995, Case No. Pl. ÚS 14/94) as well as European Court of Human Rights (Prince Hans-Adam II of Liechtenstein v. Germany, Application no. 42527/98) have not expressed a negative opinion on those decrees in recent years.

57 Beneš, 1946b, p. 59.

58 Dvořák, 2021, p. 102.

Beneš's presidential term was due to end in 1942; the Constitution of 1920 provided some guidance in this context. Beneš was to remain in his office until a new president was elected, which presupposed the involvement of parliament. Beneš remained president until June 1946, when the Constituent National Assembly re-elected him.⁵⁹

Since the spring of 1945, the Communists had been the dominant force in Czechoslovakia. They liquidated all components of pre-monarchy Czechoslovakia (especially the local government) and the exile representation, of which only Beneš remained. Klement Gottwald (1896–1953) then confessed that this had enabled the communists to seize power.⁶⁰ The communists were also the authors of the political programme of post-war development of the first post-war government (the Kosice Government Programme). Sophisticated communist manipulation led to this programme receiving mass support and was espoused by Beneš, who underestimated the communists. The political life of post-war Czechoslovakia was conceived within the framework of the National Front, which until 1948 was viewed as a platform of permitted political parties. Only these political parties stood for election; the 1946 election was won by the Communist Party. Representatives of the other National Front parties also participated in the activities of the constitutional institutions, but over time, the Communists began to usurp power. Non-Communist ministers, therefore, left the government, in order to bring about fresh elections. However, Gottwald merely reconstructed the government in which most of the ministers remained. Beneš accepted the government's reconstruction after a meeting with Gottwald, during which he was informed of Soviet troops on the border. With this coup of 25 February 1948, the Communists seized power. Under their direction, work was completed on a new constitution, which was adopted on 9 May 1948; Beneš refused to sign this constitution, and abdicated instead.

The Communists justified his abdication on the grounds of ill health. The totalitarian state authorities feared Beneš's emigration, but his health deteriorated in August, and he died on 3 September 1948 in his villa in Sezimovo Ústí. In the evening, the Communists adopted a directive for the press and propaganda to positively highlight all that Beneš had done for the state.⁶¹ The reason for this was simple: Beneš had remained silent since his abdication and had not spoken out against the regime.

59 Schelle at al., 2022, pp. 48–54, 65–97, 137–138.

60 Bouček, Vartíková and Klimeš, 1975, p. 278.

61 Kaplan, 1994, pp. 71–73.

4. Jaromír Nečas (1888–1945)⁶²

Jaromír Nečas was born on 17 November 1888 in Nové Město na Moravě into the family of František Nečas, who was a clerk. Nečas had five siblings. He completed elementary school in his hometown and continued his studies at the Zemská 'Realschule' (a general secondary school focused more on natural sciences, technical subjects and living languages). Subsequently, he passed the school leaving exam at this school in 1905. After graduation, he moved to Brno, where he began to study civil engineering at the Imperial Czech Technical University of Franz Joseph. He simultaneously attended lectures at the 'École des Ponts et Chaussées' in Paris, which was a French civil engineering school.



In the spring of 1912, Nečas passed the state examination and received his academic engineering degree. The following year he began work as an assistant in the Department of general mechanics, conducting exercises. In 1913, he left Brno and became an employee of the State Construction Service in Bukovina and Ruthenia.

After the outbreak of World War I, Nečas joined the army. As an official of the State Construction Service, he constructed bridges and roads in the Ukrainian parts of Bessarabia, Bukovina, and Galicia, as well as military fortifications near the front lines.

During his time in these countries, Nečas became aware of the bleak social conditions of the local population, which awakened his social sensitivity and later led him to join the Social Democratic Party. The people of Ruthenia also grew remarkably close to his heart.⁶³ He became an active journalist during the First World War, his articles drew attention to the poor conditions prevailing in Ruthenia.

In 1919, when Ruthenia was integrated into the newly established Czechoslovak state, Nečas became a building commissioner there. As an expert on local conditions, he also served as a correspondent for the Czechoslovak government. His role involved ascertaining the mood of the Rusyns, informing them about the political situation and providing informative articles for the Czech press. However, Nečas did not devote himself to civil engineering for a long time. At the beginning of 1920, he was approached by the governor of Ruthenia, Gregory Zhatkovich (1886–1967),

62 Jaromír Nečas, Czechoslovak politician, Unknown author – čs. zvukový týdeník, public domain, source of the picture: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jarom%C3%ADr_Ne%C4%8Das#/media/File:Jarom%C3%ADr_Ne%C4%8Das.jpg.

Mikulka, 2000a, p. 203.

63 Ibid. p. 203.

who appointed Nečas as his secretary in Uzhhorod, because of his expertise in local conditions.⁶⁴

During his stay in Ruthenia, Nečas closely followed the Ukrainian struggle for independence, which many Czechs, given the deeply rooted Russophilia in the Czech nation at the time, viewed with suspicion as a product of German work and Austrian diplomacy (given the friendliness of the Galician Ukrainians towards Vienna during the Monarchy). Nečas attempted to break down the barriers between the Czechs and Ukrainians with a series of short manuals, in which he addressed the Ukrainian question. In July 1918, in the booklet *‘Ukrajinská otázka’* [The Ukrainian Question], he had already attempted to prove to the Czech reader the uniqueness of the Ukrainian nation, which was still commonly referred to as ‘Malorussian’, by describing the Ukrainian language, literature and culture. Nečas became an advocate for the Ukrainian nation in its struggle for independence.⁶⁵

Nečas was extremely gifted with languages. In addition to his knowledge of German, English and Serbo-Croatian, he also learned Russian and Ukrainian during his stays abroad and had a basic understanding of Italian and Romanian. This skill, among other things, was responsible for him being sent to Moscow and Kharkiv in May 1920. Here, he accompanied Volodymyr Vynnychenko (1880–1951), a leftist politician and chairperson of the five-member directorate of the defunct Ukrainian People’s Republic, which was in existence from March 1917 (or January 1918) until February 1919. Vynnychenko had been in exile and was to be assisted by the leadership of the Czechoslovak state in his return to his homeland. The Czechoslovak Foreign Ministry issued Vynnychenko a diplomatic passport. In Kharkiv, Vynnychenko was briefly appointed deputy chairperson of the Council of People’s Commissars and the Department of Foreign Affairs in August 1920. However, as the conditions in Soviet Russia disappointed him, he decided to emigrate again. During his visit to Russia, Nečas was shocked by the local conditions and summarised his observations on the economic situation and the position of the workers in Soviet Russia in his 1920 publication *‘Skutečná pravda o sovětském Rusku’* [Real Truth about Soviet Russia]. The mission to Moscow demonstrated President Masaryk and Foreign Minister Beneš’s confidence in Nečas. While in Soviet Russia, Nečas was able to gauge the nature of the Bolshevik power and its attitude towards resolving national issues.⁶⁶

In the spring of 1921, Zhatkovich left his post as governor of Ruthenia early and returned to the United States because of the failure of the Czechoslovak state to meet Rusyns’ demands for autonomy. Nečas quit as his secretary, and sought a new job in which he could use his previous experiences. After returning from his mission in Soviet Russia, it was even believed that Nečas would become Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; however, this appointment did not materialise.

64 Švec, 2014a, p. 11.

65 Švec, 2014b, pp. 18–20.

66 Ibid. p. 20.

Nečas had already been involved in the Jewish question during his studies in Brno, when he published several articles in the press devoted to this issue. In 1921, President Masaryk chose Nečas as his collaborator in the Office of the President of the Republic, where Nečas oversaw the Department of Ruthenia and Jewish Affairs. As part of his work in the President's Office, Nečas produced reports and analyses, travelled to Ruthenia and continued to be highly active in publishing.⁶⁷

Due to his social sentiments and left-wing orientation, Nečas participated in the activities of the Social Democratic Party. In Ruthenia, he ran for the party in the 1924 by-elections and the 1925 elections, and was elected to the Chamber of Deputies of the National Assembly. In his first speech in the Chamber of Deputies, Nečas outlined his view of Czechoslovak politics in Ruthenia, and analysed the problems that prevailed in this easternmost part of the Czechoslovak Republic. Nečas defended his seat in the 1929 elections, this time for the Mladá Boleslav constituency. Following his election, Nečas did not return to the Office of the President of the Republic but remained in contact with Masaryk.

In 1922, Nečas married Dr Marie Poubová (1888–1942), who was a professor of geography and history at secondary school, and later worked in the field of social welfare for young people. They had a daughter name Věra (1924–1943).

In the 1920s, Nečas became a respected functionary of the Czechoslovak Social Democratic Party and, from 1936, was appointed as its vice-chairman.⁶⁸ The focus of his publications shifted from the issues of Ruthenia to economic and social problems. Nečas saw the gradual introduction of a planned economy as one of the tools for economic recovery. During the Great Depression, he advocated for the implementation of state investment construction projects in order to reduce unemployment and build public utility buildings and infrastructure. Nečas thus sought to overcome the effects of the economic crisis and alleviate unemployment by providing new jobs through large-scale public investment.

In 1926, Nečas published the book *‘Spojené státy evropské’* [The United States of Europe]. From his reflections, it was evident that he was undoubtedly influenced by the President of the Republic, Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk. Masaryk was aware that small and medium-sized European states could only function in a system that respected the right of nations to self-determination, with an organisational structure and instruments capable of effectively defending that right. Masaryk thus envisioned the future of the European order in a federation of democratic states. He supported Czechoslovakia's active participation in the League of Nations and proposals for its inclusion in regional international organisations. Masaryk developed his ideas in his book published in Czech in 1920 under the title *Nová Evropa, stanovisko slovanské* [The New Europe, the Slavic Opinion], in which he called for a peace congress and the formation of a Union of Nations. All the nations of Europe were to be represented in this international organisation, which would be based

67 Švec, 2014a, p. 18.

68 Mikulka, 2000b, p. 2.

on the principles of international reciprocity. Nečas built on Masaryk's ideas and developed them further. This was during the period in which the League of Nations that had existed since 1920, was suffering from its first major crisis. Nečas's book was 230 pages long and promoted close cooperation between European states. It was not a detailed proposal for a constitution or statute for an international organisation that would regulate its structure, but rather, an analysis of the conditions from which a new European order was to emerge. The new European community would be based on the League of Nations, which, according to Nečas, was to be open to the Soviet Union and Germany as well. These two states were, at the time of the publication of his book (1926), excluded from the international community.

Nečas devoted a part of his book to the differences between Europe and the United States, which was to serve as a model for a new European order. He also critically analysed Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi's (1894–1972) Pan-Europe project, criticising the same for attempting to exclude Great Britain and the Soviet Union from Europe. He also presented a social-democratic attitude towards the United States of Europe and the League of Nations.⁶⁹

Nečas pointed out that critics in Czechoslovakia attacked the fact that Czechoslovakia was engaging world politics. However, Nečas was a supporter of the same. In his view, Czechoslovakia could benefit from such a world policy because it would be able to bring the interests and needs of the republic in line with world interests. Such a policy should also have paved the way for a sound trade policy, gaining the republic enormous sales opportunities, which was a matter of prime importance for interwar Czechoslovakia.

Nečas supported the League of Nations, distinguishing himself from many interwar Czechoslovak politicians who often ignored the ideas on which this international organisation was based. According to Nečas, it was the League of Nations that, for all its shortcomings, worked on a global scale to ensure political, national, and economic peace.

According to Nečas, a significant step towards realising the idea of a United States of Europe was to be taken as soon as Germany and the Soviet Union were admitted into the League of Nations. He also pointed out that it was necessary to avoid overemphasising continental interests, by some Europeans who could not spare the primacy that Europe had lost.

Nečas considered the League of Nations, which in 1926 consisted of 55 states from all continents of the world, as the world parliament. The world economy could not be efficiently regulated if the egoistic interests of the various continents were to be overly asserted and crossed within the framework of the League of Nations. However, a specific – not excessive – application of continental interests in the League of Nations and an appropriate reorganisation of the League of Nations could, according to Nečas, further the cause.

69 Schelle, Veselá and Vojáček, 2007, pp. 75–76.

Nečas regarded the United States of Europe as a stage towards the next higher goal, namely the unified organisation of the world. However, according to him, it is also necessary to remember that creating a new Europe requires not only an economic renewal and change in the political and state system, but also the building of a cultural foundation and re-education of entire nations. From 1935–1938, Nečas served as the Minister of Social Affairs in the Czechoslovak government. He also functioned as Czechoslovakia's representative to the International Labour Office in Geneva. This organisation was established under the Versailles Peace Treaty to develop labour legislation, introduce workers' rights, and increase their social protection. During this time, Nečas published professional articles on social issues and the fight against unemployment. He called for the introduction of a modern social welfare system. He also undertook numerous foreign trips, and during his visit to the USA in 1937, he met US President Franklin D. Roosevelt (1882–1945).⁷⁰

Nečas had extensive contacts a social democratic politicians in Western Europe, whom he tried to enlist to support Czechoslovakia in the crisis year of 1938. At the beginning of 1938, the German Nazis used the more than 3 million Germans living in Czechoslovakia for their aggressive policy. The Czech Germans increasingly escalated their autonomist demands against the Czechoslovak state, which the government could not meet, as fulfilling the same would be tantamount to breaking-up the state. The so-called Sudeten crisis culminated in September 1938, when Czechoslovakia's allies, France and Great Britain, held several negotiations with Adolf Hitler to resolve the German question in Czechoslovakia. According to the Allied treaties concluded between France and Great Britain, these countries were to enter the war alongside Czechoslovakia in case of an attack by Germany—an outcome that both countries were intent on avoiding.

Since Nečas already had diplomatic experience, he was commissioned by President Edvard Beneš in September 1938 to carry out a secret diplomatic mission.⁷¹ Nečas was sent to France to meet with the chairman of the French Socialist Party, Leon Blum, and to present him with a document in which the Czechoslovak party expressed its willingness to cede certain German-populated Czechoslovak territories to Nazi Germany. Nečas was not allowed to disclose that the proposal had come from Beneš, who later concealed this mission as well as its real purpose.⁷²

Following the occupation of Czechoslovakia by Germans on 15 March 1939, a group of Czech fascists attempted to seize power and paralyse the activities of the legal government. Nečas infiltrated the Czech National Committee set up by the fascists and slowed its activities. During the period of the newly established Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, Nečas was offered the position of chairperson of the newly established Supreme Price Office, whose task was to supervise the level of prices of goods and services. Nečas accepted the post, believing that he would

70 Švec, 2014a, p. 31.

71 On the secret Paris mission of Jaromír Nečas and its background see in detail Cholínský, 2009.

72 Mikulka, 2000a, p. 204.

be able to keep costs at a level that would not jeopardise the interests of workers. Considering that the chairperson of the Supreme Price Office was effectively of the Protectorate ministerial level, Nečas he made several successful interventions with the German authorities from his position.

Nečas joined the resistance and was threatened with arrest. Therefore, he decided to leave the Protectorate and reached France via Belgrade at the end of January 1940. In July 1940, when the first Czechoslovak government-in-exile was established in Great Britain, Nečas was appointed Minister of State. After the reconstruction of the government-in-exile, he was then appointed Minister for Economic Reconstruction. Following this, he prepared plans for the economic reconstruction of the war-torn Czechoslovak economy by introducing a centrally controlled economy and expropriating large enterprises, mines, banks, and insurance companies.⁷³

During his stay in Great Britain, Nečas was afflicted by severe health problems and was involved in political disputes with some crucial politicians of the government-in-exile. In November 1942, he asked President Beneš for his release from office. Nečas lived in rural Wales, where he died on 30 January 1945.

The Gestapo arrested Nečas's wife and daughter after he escaped from the Protectorate, and sent them to concentration camps, where they later perished.

5. Václav Havel (1936–2011)⁷⁴



Václav Havel was born on 5 October 1936 in Prague into the well-known business family of Václav M. Havel (1897–1979) and his wife, Božena, née Vavrečková (1913–1970).⁷⁵

Božena's father was Hugo Vavrečka (1880–1952), who worked as a journalist, writer, diplomat and later a high-rank Bata Concern manager and a minister during the 1938 Sudeten crisis. It was Vavrečka who shaped and influenced Havel. Havel's grandfather was one of Masaryk's students. Vavrečka himself, in his role as Czechoslovak ambassador in Vienna

⁷³ Ibid. pp. 207–208.

⁷⁴ Václav Havel, Czech statesman, author, poet, playwright and dissident, the International Monetary Fund, public domain source of the picture: https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/V%C3%A1clav_Havel#/media/File:Vaclav_Havel_IMF.jpg.

⁷⁵ The Václav Havel Library, where the texts of all of Havel's speeches are publicly available, currently (2023) records a total of more than 15.000 contributions dedicated to the former president. The following can be mentioned in particular: Kriseová, 1991; 2014; Ramadan, 1991; Simmons, 1991; Ronfard, 1994; Symynkywicz, 1995; Keane, 1999; Sire, 2001; Kaiser, 2009; Putna, 2011; Kaiser, 2014; Žantovský, 2014; Kaczorowski, 2014; Wohlmut Markupová, 2017; Marcelić and Lipovac, 2018 and Barton, 2020.

after WWI, promoted the concept of a united Europe. While his proposal for a Danube Union did not gain support in government circles, but his Europeanism certainly shaped Václav and his younger brother Ivan (1938–2021).⁷⁶

In 1942, Václav Havel entered municipal school and, due to family stays at his family residence in Havlovy, attended school alternately in Prague, and in Žďárec during spring and autumn. Havel, his brother, and his mother remained at Havlovy until the autumn of 1947, where they were accompanied by their grandfather Hugo Vavrečka, who took care of his grandchildren and taught them German. In 1947, Václav Havel entered the 'Jiří of Poděbrady College' in Poděbrady. It was a specific educational institution modelled on English boys' boarding schools. In 1950, Václav and Ivan Havel had to leave the school in Poděbrady. The reason for this was most likely an unsuccessful attempt by their uncle Miloš Havel to cross the border illegally. Because of their bourgeois origins, the brothers could not continue their studies at secondary school. Václav Havel was offered an apprenticeship as a carpenter, which he later changed to that of a chemical laboratory technician. He graduated in 1954 at least at the evening General Education Secondary School in Prague, Štěpánská Street. Because his mother wished for her sons to receive a university education, Havel entered the Czech Technical University (transport economics), which did not interest him much. After two years, he dropped out and hoped to enrol in the Film and Television Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague (FAMU). However, he was unsuccessful, because of his family background.⁷⁷

From 1957 to 1959, Havel was enlisted in the army. During these years, he focused on literature and the theatre company, which kept his attention even after his service. In 1952, Havel began publishing. In 1956, he made his first public appearance at an activist meeting of young authors in Dobříš,⁷⁸ where he criticised the then-unfavourable conditions of young authors. During his military service, Havel also participated in cultural activities, and at the end of his service, applied to the Academy of Performing Arts, albeit unsuccessfully. He was not admitted until 1962, and even then, to a distance learning programme. After returning from the army, he worked as a stage technician at the ABC Theatre in Prague at the intercession of Jan Werich (1905–1980). In 1959, Havel wrote his first play. From 1960, he worked as a stage technician and then a dramaturg and assistant director at the Na Zábřehu Theatre. He simultaneously worked at the Municipal Theatres of Prague as an assistant to Alfréd Radok (1914–1976), one of the most important Czech theatre directors.

Havel's play *Zahradní slavnost* [The Garden Party] (premiered on 3 December 1963) made him one of the most prominent figures of the Czechoslovak cultural

76 Wohlmuth Markupová, 2017, pp. 22–44.

77 Ibid. pp. 42–48.

78 Havel's key speeches were published, see in detail Havel, 1999a; Havel, 1999b; Havel, 1999c; Havel, 1999d; Havel, 1999e; Havel, 1999f; Havel, 1999g; Havel, 2007.

scene. On 9 July 1964, he married Olga Šplíchalová in Prague;⁷⁹ their marriage was childless. In October 1964, his play premiered in West Germany. In 1966, Havel completed a distance study of dramaturgy at the Theatre Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts.

In June 1967, he gave a critical speech at the Fourth Congress of the Union of Czechoslovak Writers, in which he also expressed his views on political issues, especially censorship. Following an order of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, he was removed from the list of candidates for the presidency of the Union. In the spring of 1968, he stayed in the US, where he met with exile representatives. Then, in the summer of 1968, he voluntarily left the theatre to work as a freelance writer. He reacted to the occupation of Czechoslovakia by preparing statements for Czechoslovak Radio.

In the autumn of 1968, the era of dissent was underway. Havel joined the students' strikes and was gradually excluded from official culture (he had been a banned author since 1971). He was interrogated and accused of the crime of subversion of the republic, because of his role in the Ten Points statement, which rejected the policy of the so-called normalisation. The criminal proceedings were postponed. Havel, however, became a dissident living in Prague at his cottage Hrádeček near Trutnov. His works were banned in Czechoslovakia but were published and performed abroad. Havel became an internationally respected author and Hrádeček became a centre of culture and the struggle for civil rights. Between 1974 and 1975, he worked as a labourer at the brewery in Trutnov; his play *'Audience'* (1975) starring Ferdinand Vaněk is a reflection of this period of his life.⁸⁰

In the autumn of 1975, Havel founded the samizdat edition *'Expedice'* [Expedition]. The next year, he became close to the underground music community. When a criminal trial was brought against the music group *'Plastic People of the Universe'*, he organised protests supporting the accused. During this period, the personal circle of the future *'Charta 77'* [Charter 77] was born.

The *'Charta 77'* was published on 6 January 1977 as a manifesto for the observance of human rights in Czechoslovakia, to which the totalitarian state power formally pledged. Havel co-authored the text and one of its first spokespersons. From January to May 1977, he was detained in custody, and, in October 1977, was suspended for damaging the republic's interests abroad. In April 1978, along with other signatories of Charter 77, he founded the Committee for the Defence of the Unjustly Prosecuted (VONS). The committee's task was to monitor and publicise cases of persecution in violation of effective Czechoslovak law, in cooperation with its Polish counterpart-, Committee of Social Self-Defence (KOR).

79 Kriseová, 1991, p. 44.

80 In October 1989, the Saturday supplement of the official newspaper of the Czechoslovak Communists, *Rudé právo*, published a birthday greeting to Ferdinand Vaněk, which included a photograph of Václav Havel (see *Rudé právo*, 237(69–70), p. 13).

In October 1978, in his essay *Moc bezmocných* [The Power of the Powerless], Havel analysed the situation and possibilities of political dissent. From December 1978, he was under the surveillance of State Security and in May 1979, was arrested along with eleven other members of VONS. During Havel's detention, the communist authorities offered him the opportunity to study in the US (forced emigration). In October 1979, he was sentenced to 54 months in prison for subversion of the republic; once again, the totalitarian regime again offered him the option of emigrating.⁸¹ Artists from various other countries opposed Havel's detention; intercessions came from Western politicians as well. At the time, Havel received honorary doctorates from universities of Toronto and Toulouse-Le Mirail. In prison, he worked as a labourer in ironworks and laundry. In February 1983, his sentence was suspended due to severe pneumonia and pleurisy, and in the ensuing period, he was followed and harassed by the secret police.

During the 1980s, Havel became the most prominent figure of dissent. In the subsequent period, he developed a concept of 'non-political politics' that required the communist state to respect formally enshrined civil rights and freedoms. Throughout 1988, he actively met with foreign politicians and diplomats. In December 1988, the French President François Mitterrand visited Prague, and shared breakfast with representatives of Czechoslovak dissent, led by Havel, at the French Embassy on 9 December 1988. The breakfast with the dissidents was instrumental in the first-ever official authorisation of an opposition demonstration on Human Rights Day on 10 December 1988 at Škroup Square in Žižkov, where Havel spoke.

During the January 1989 protests on the anniversary of Jan Palach's self-immolation (the so-called Palach Week), Havel was interned once again. On 21 February 1989, he was sentenced to nine months in prison for publicly inciting disrespect of the ban on public gatherings, in connection with the commemoration of Jan Palach and for taking part in the 16 February 1989 memorial. On 16 January, he participated in an unauthorised assembly, and illegally remained in the place even after the intervening riot police units of the Czech Armed Forces called for the area to be cleared. In March 1989, the Court of Appeal reduced his sentence to eight months. However, the communist regime gave in to international and domestic pressure and released Havel on parole on 17 May 1989.⁸² In June 1989, he participated in the petition *Několik vět* [Several Sentences], which called for the democratisation of Czechoslovakia. He was re-arrested in October 1989, but was released soon after, owing to health reasons.

The events of November 1989 caused the disintegration of communist rule in Czechoslovakia. Havel became the leading figure of the '*Občanské fórum*' [Civic Forum], for which he was elected President of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic by an unchanged parliament on 29 December 1989. Among his first acts in office was tendering an apology to the Sudeten Germans for their post-war expulsion,

81 Wohlmut Markupová, 2017, pp. 115–116.

82 Ibid. pp. 176.

and a large-scale amnesty,⁸³ for which he was criticised. Many released prisoners soon returned to prison, crime increased massively, and non-amnestied prisoners organised mass protests and riots (Brno, Leopoldov).

In February 1990, Havel appeared before both houses of the United States Congress.⁸⁴ Havel's speech mentioned the American security architecture that had encouraged Czechoslovak existence, characterised by its passivity. Czechoslovakia's symbolic return to Europe (what means the Euro-Atlantic structure) was to be coordinated with the Poles and Hungarians, so that Eastern European involvement would synergistically affect Western Europe.

In April 1990, Havel initiated a meeting of representatives of Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland in Bratislava, which became the nucleus of the Visegrád Troika (after the division of Czechoslovakia, the Visegrád Four). In July 1990, after the first free elections, he was elected as President of the Czech and Slovak Federative Republic. In November 1990, at the OSCE conference in Paris, he discussed the ideal of a European confederation of French President Mitterrand. According to Havel, the confederation's institutional basis could serve as the Council of Europe. Havel then advocated for faster European integration and multipolarity. He also recalled the unprecedented unity of the world community in its attitude towards the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait.

In March 1991, as the first president of a state of the former socialist block, he delivered a speech at the NATO headquarters in Brussels. Havel mentioned the self-liquidation of the Warsaw Pact and the French initiative for a pan-European confederation.⁸⁵ Havel pointed out that the old and imposed political, economic and security ties had collapsed, and warned that slow integration could create a dangerous political, economic and security vacuum. The absence of near integration could jeopardise existence of these young democracies. The Visegrád Group was then supposed to facilitate the return to a democratic Europe significantly.⁸⁶ In July 1991, Havel announced the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact during its summit in Prague.

However, the national situation in Czechoslovakia was complicated, especially with regard to the Slovak desire for independence. Havel's visits to Bratislava in 1991 were in a hostile spirit. Part of the Slovak public glorified the wartime Slovak state and considered Havel's attempts at contact as a provocation. The July 1992 parliamentary elections eventually marked the rise of forces seeking to split Czechoslovakia. Therefore, in July 1992, after adopting the Declaration of the Slovak

83 Kaiser, 2014, pp. 17–18.

84 Ibid. pp. 21–23.

85 Ibid. p. 179.

86 Havel encapsulated support for Eastern European integration into the European Union through a metaphor likening the feeling of some Western Europeans that two Europes, the old EU and periphery (without the right to join the EU), can coexist side by side, to the idea that a heated and an unheated half can permanently coexist in the same room (Havel, 2007, p. 58).

National Council on the sovereignty of the Slovak Republic, Havel announced his resignation. On the last day of 1992, Czechoslovakia ceased to exist.

On 26 January 1993, Havel was elected the first President of the independent Czech Republic. Although he was an internationally recognised authority, his domestic influence had waned. He strove to adhere to Euro-Atlantic structures and build the rule of law in the office, supporting the establishment of the Senate, the Constitutional Court, and the Office of the Ombudsman. In March 1994, in the European Parliament, Havel laid out the reasons for the Czech Republic seeking membership to the European Union and argued for the Europe-wide interest in seeing the European Union expanded. Havel understood the European Union as a systematically created space that would allow the various distinctive parts of Europe to develop freely and in their way, in an environment of permanent security and win-win cooperation, based on the principles of democracy, respect for human rights, civil society, and an open market economy. Havel called for a new and clear reflection on European identity and European responsibility, lamenting that the spirit of the European Union appeared to be hidden behind mountains of all necessary measures, which leads to a distorted understanding of the role of the European Union.

Since April 1994, Havel held meetings with representatives of Central and Eastern European and Balkan countries. As President, he sought good neighbourliness and reconciliation with the Germans and co-founded the Forum 2000 in 1996. His wife Olga was also a significant authority, but she died on 27 January 1996, following a severe illness.

Havel considered Europe not only from geograph point of view but also as a collection of politically stable countries (most of them were EU members) and as a shared destiny, a complicated common history, shared values, a common culture of life, space of sure will, specific behaviour, and particular responsibility. Europe was therefore supposed to be a space of values.

In December 1996, Havel underwent surgery to remove a malignant lung tumour. On 4 January 1997, he married Dagmar Veškrnová (* 1953). On 20 January 1998, he was re-elected President of the Republic, and in March 1999 his efforts bore fruit with the inclusion of the Czech Republic into NATO. Havel pushed for the further eastward expansion of NATO, as confirmed by the Prague NATO Summit in November 2002.

In February 2003, Havel returned to his profession of playwright and writer. Havel considered the Czech Republic's accession to the European Union in May 2004 to be one of the most significant moments in Czech history, when the Czech Republic became part of a sizeable supranational entity that was not the result of wars, and not based on the violent subjugation of one another. European integration was supposed to curb sour ideologies masquerading as supreme national interests.

Václav Havel died on 18 December 2011 at his cottage in Hrádeček. His services to freedom and democracy were recognised by a special law passed by the Czech Parliament in 2012.

Conclusion

The contribution of Czech theoreticians to (Central) European integration has been presented through their biographies, speeches and publications and political efforts. František Palacký attempted to push his projects politically but encountered difficulties in the real politics of the second half of the nineteenth century. However, his contribution to Austro-Slavism was responsible for shaping Czech (Slavs) attitudes towards Austria. While Karel Kramář's concept of the Slavic Empire failed to reflect Russia's actual situation and condition, his work served as a significant contribution to promoting the Slavic Brotherhood. More complicated is the approach to Edvard Beneš, which reflects the turbulent twentieth century. Finding a period in his life that allows for a straightforward interpretation is difficult. Beneš, who was the architect and guardian of European democracy after WWI, ultimately became a victim of his own peace efforts: first, by unsuccessful bonds with France, whose attitudes led to the Munich Agreement; and then the Soviet Union, which deprived the Eastern European states of their independence for decades. Jaromír Nečas brought forth a sophisticated concept of a United States of Europe, and pointed out the shortcomings of Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi's pan-European plan. Finally, Václav Havel's work, speeches and policy placed emphasis on the philosophical dimension and revealed his ability to call things out as they are.

As such, the great Czech theorists of Central European integration have shown, through their work, the need for peaceful and economic cooperation to aid the overall development of all concerned.

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The Slovak Theorists of Central European Integration

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ABSTRACT

The study focuses on four Slovak thinkers and politicians who were involved in various forms of Central European cooperation during the 19th and 20th centuries. Most of the Slovak concepts of integration, which did not start from Slavic solidarity alone and had a broader European context, focused on Central Europe. Therefore, the ideas of Central European and European cooperation have traditionally coincided in Slovakia. The theorists considered were either practising politicians who held high governmental or ministerial positions (Milan Hodža, Milan Rastislav Štefánik), professional diplomats (Štefan Osuský), and those who were active only in the field of political journalism and national movement organisation (Ján Palárik). The majority of these thinkers also had emigrational experiences during the two world wars. The paper first describes their familial, social and religious backgrounds, before discussing their political views and specific actions. It concludes by outlining their common and divergent features, as well as their practical achievements and impact on Slovak public life.

KEYWORDS

Central Europe, confession, cooperation, integration, nation, politics

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the Slovak thinkers of the 19th and 20th centuries who developed political concepts that sought to consistently place the Slovaks and Slovakia on the European map. The concept of Europe was mainly understood in the broad sense of its western and central parts. Therefore, these thinkers wished to link the fate of Slovaks to this entity, because they envisioned it as the only alternative for Slovakia's political future and modernisation. However, this aspiration was not always dominant in Slovak public thinking.

Although the Slovaks are essentially a Central European nation, whose everyday image was shaped by factors such as Rome-centred Christianity, German-inspired Reformation and later French-born Enlightenment, strong alternative ideas also

influenced the birth of modern Slovak nationalism in the early 19th century. In the first half of the 19th century, the Slovak national ideology of the was deeply rooted in Slavic ideology that had a strong Eastern vector. Although pan-Slavism was born under the influence of German pan-Germanism and its first pioneers were Slovak Lutheran students at German universities, it succeeded in turning the gaze of Slovak thinkers towards Orthodox Eastern Europe.

This turn simultaneously led to a kind of precocious Western scepticism and anti-western criticism. The traditional Slovak conservatism also played an important role in this process, despite its Western Christian origins. Many Slovak thinkers in the old Hungarian Kingdom, fearing national death, developed an idealisation of Russia and a strong love of Serbia. Rationalist and Western ideas had less emotional appeal. These events occurred in a context wherein Slovaks had always lived within the Central European framework, prior to 1945.

The present chapter deals with the portraits of Slovak thinkers who opposed this Eastern vector of thought, and theoretically preferred a Western or Central European orientation for the Slovaks. These two orientations often coincided. For Slovaks, presently, but in the past as well, the path to a Western orientation led through Central Europe. Moreover, the Slovak geographical self-image includes not only mountains but also the Danube. For them, the idea of Central Europe has therefore often coincided with their identity along the Danube.

The activities of the four historical figures considered in this chapter span around a hundred years. They are united not only by their Central European characteristics and Western ideals, but also by their commitment to democratic ones. Yet they were all fundamentally realistic. This is important to emphasise, considering that most of them were also practical politicians. True, in different circumstances. The Catholic priest Ján Palárik, who was perhaps the first to attempt to establish the theoretical foundations of realist Slovak liberalism, operated in very different circumstances from the cosmopolitan and adventurer Milan Rastislav Štefánik. Štefan Osuský was a classical elite diplomat – a role that required from him a completely different set of skills than intellectualism and visionary thinking. Milan Hodža managed to stay active at the top for the longest time. He proved to be a true homo politicus, despite his failures at the end of his life, which were essentially not due to his faults. He was perhaps the person who best combined the qualities of a realistic politician, thinking intellectual, high public office, and the time available to implement his ideas.

Of course, the chosen personalities were also socially and mentally different in many respects. Hodža, Osuský and Štefánik were Protestants, while Palárik remained a disciplined Catholic priest his entire life. The families of Hodža and Štefánik were more intellectual than the other two. Their language skills, education, travel opportunities and even health conditions were different. However, they were united by their open minds, sense of realism and commitment to the future of their nation. For the most part, they were integrative rather than divisive individuals. At the same time, they lived in an era when intellectuals played

an important role in shaping events and building states and nations. Despite their many problems, achievements, successes and failures, they enjoyed the era in which they worked, because it provided them greater opportunities, both personally and for their nation. Many of their ideas are still worth considering today.

As mentioned above, the period covered in this chapter spans a hundred years. It is framed by two main events: the 1848 revolution and the communist takeover of 1948, which was partly the result of the Second World War. During these decades, of course, other important Slovak political and social thinkers emerged who sought to place their nation on a broader regional, European or universal map (e.g. Ján Lajčiak, Ján Maliarik, Dušan Makovický etc.). However, their concepts were either not fully developed, had a weaker political dimension or did not have a major impact later on. The concepts of other Slovak politicians with bigger political impact did not have a strong Central-European dimension (e.g. those of Jozef Miloslav Hurban, Svetozár Hurban Vajanský, Andrej Hlinka, Vavro Šrobár etc.) The study also does not consider ideas that focused only on Slavic solidarity, Czechoslovak orientation and internal Slovak discussions.

The end of the Second World War and the communist take-over are selected as the boundaries of the period, because Slovakia then became part of the Soviet bloc for many decades (1948–1989). As such, the various alternative integration ideas and concepts became dangerous for their authors. The best way to develop them was in emigration or in samizdat. However, the Slovak exile was divided along authoritarian (the protagonists of former Hlinka Slovak People's Party) and democratic (pro-Czechoslovak) lines. Discourse at home in the academic circles focused mainly on literary and historical issues. Dominik Tatarka, Ľubomír Lipták and Vladimír Mináč were the important participants in the intellectual discussions on the Slovaks' place in history and Europe. However, these authors did not clearly conceptualise regional or European integration. The situation changed after 1989, when Slovakia had to redefine itself as an independent country. During these years, several ambitious authors— Ján Čarnogurský, Rudolf Chmel, Milan Zemko, Pavol Lukáč, Svetozár Bombík, Boris Zala etc—engaged in this process, of which the discussions are ongoing. Therefore, the period of the last three decades does not yet represent a history, but a present time.

1. Ján Palárik – the integrative Catholic priest and Slovak liberal politician (1822–1870)¹

Ján Palárik had several important identities in his life that complemented each other well. He always remained, first and foremost, a Catholic priest, but was also intensively involved in Slovak politics as a representative of its liberal wing. For many years he worked as an editor of various Slovak Catholic press organs in Hungary, but later devoted himself to political journalism. In his mature age, he also began to devote himself to fiction and especially drama. In the 19th century Palárik was one of the most active Slovak dramatists. He spent most of his life trying to unite people rather than divide them, which also led him to promote ecumenism within the Christian churches; he also formulated the democratic concept of Pan-Slavism.



Palárik was born in the Slovak north of the old Hungarian Kingdom into a teacher-peasant family, which was able to provide him with a grammar school education.² He first studied at the grammar school (gymnasium) in Žilina, and then improved his Hungarian language in Kecskemét in the central Hungary. Later, he trained as a Catholic priest in Ostrihom (Esztergom), Bratislava and Trnava. Along with his friends,³ he established here the Slovak student circle.

Following his ordination as a parish priest (1847), he began his work as a priest first in Starý Tekov, and then in the villages around Banská Štiavnica (Vindšacht), where he later became an assistant priest (chaplain). From 1851 to 1862 he lived and worked as a Catholic priest in Budapest. Although he was a German Catholic priest, he also maintained good contacts with local Croats, Serbs, Rusyns, and soon became one of the main figures in local Slovak social and political life. At that time Budapest was still a multiethnic city with several thousand Slovaks living there. It was one of the most politically and literary active periods of Palárik's life.⁴

1 Ján Palárik, Slovak Catholic priest, writer, playwright and publicist, Josef Rupert Maria Přecechtěl (1821–1897). Lithography probably by Roland Weibezahl (1817–1871), signed on sheet 2 of the same series, bottom left. – *Výtečníci slovenskí*, digitized by National Library in Prague, source of the picture: https://www.wikidata.org/wiki/Q1102385#/media/File:Jan_Palarik_1863.jpg.

2 Vavrovič, 1993, p. 7.

3 Zlatý fond SME: Jozef Viktorin, Martin Hattala, count Rudolf Nyáry [Online]. See: <https://zlatyfond.sme.sk/autor/1/Jan-Palarik> (Accessed: 12 May 2023).

4 Demmel, 2016, pp. 35–36.

In 1948/49, young Palárik had not yet exposed himself politically, although this does not mean that he had no political opinions at all. There is an interesting reference in his autobiography to these years. In his memoirs, he is said to have been accused by Slovak renegade and Hungarian circles before General Arthur Görgey, for which he was threatened with prosecution. He was eventually rescued through the intercession of General Józef Wysocki, who commanded the Polish Legion. There is no other written record of this incident,⁵ but Palárik always sympathised with the Poles in later years, and proved them to be right against the Russians. This was not common in the Slovak nationalist movement, which traditionally had a strong Russophile streak.

In the 1850s, he was preoccupied with his struggles within the church and with playwriting. Palárik's political career therefore took off mainly in the freer 1860s. These years also marked the peak of Slovak constitutional thinking and long-term conceptualisation before 1918. In both respects, Palárik was also a pioneer. In the early 1860s, the Slovak national movement was also trying to rethink its aims and define the basis of its politics. The general assembly held on 6–7 June 1861 in Turčiansky sv. Martin. One of the key elements of the Memorandum adopted there was the idea of the Slovak District of Upper Hungary. This was a plan for territorial autonomy on a national basis.⁶

Although Palárik lived in the country's dynamically developing capital, he nevertheless felt separated from the Slovak regions of the country. In 1862, with the help of a prominent Russian-origin aristocrat (Helena Eszterházy-Bezobrazova), he made his way to the village of Majcichov near Trnava, where he lived out the rest of his relatively short life. Palárik was always an active and original personality who tried to overcome stereotypes and integrate people of different backgrounds. His organisational talent was already evident in the first period of his work in the Slovak regions. For instance, he founded an anti-alcohol association in his first workplace. Later he actively engaged in Slovak journalism.

He was also one of the founders of the first Slovak Catholic magazines. Particularly important was the magazine *Cyrill and Method*, which followed an ecumenical approach; however, this Slovak journal came at a difficult time. Central Europe was emerging from the defeated revolution of 1848/1849, sometimes referred to as the 'Spring of Nations'. As a result, the Slovak national movement formulated its concrete demands. In fact, 1848 saw the first independent armed uprising, with the support of Czechs, Croats and Serbs, which focused only on Slovak national goals.⁷ However, the uprising that broke out in September did not really mobilise large crowds and was mainly concentrated in the region near the Hungarian-Moravian border; it ended in failure. In the civil war that was beginning, Slovak national activists, who had liberal-democratic demands but

5 Ibid. pp. 26–28.

6 Podrimavský, 1988, pp. 36–37.

7 Butvin, 1971, pp. 85–87.

feared Hungarian national dominance, finally decided in favour of the Habsburg dynasty, hoping this would protect them from the Hungarians. From then on, Slovak volunteers fought under the banner of the dynasty. It was hoped that Slovaks would be given an independent crown province, directly subordinate to the Emperor.⁸

Although this plan did not materialise, the young Emperor and King Franz Joseph issued an octroi constitution in March 1849, of which Slovaks also had high hopes. However, it only came into effect in 1851, when neo-abolitionism began and lasted until 1859. At this time Slovak activists fighting on the side of the Habsburgs were given certain posts in the reorganised administration, where Slovak was allowed to be used in some places.

The Slovak language was also given a better status in some grammar schools, and it was possible to found an independent Slovak newspaper. It is therefore no coincidence that the first independent Catholic magazine in Slovak was published at this time. The journal, founded by Andrej Radlinský and edited by Ján Palárik, only existed until 1851.⁹ During its publication, it provided a forum for the young Palárik to express his views. The politically more liberal Palárik accepted the favourable situation for the Slovaks, which he wanted to use to further strengthen them. He was aware of how important it was for the Slovak movement to support the other Slavic nations within Austria. However, the Czechs, Croats, Serbs, Rusyns and Slovaks were often divided by religious and confessional issues. Resolving these would have been beneficial. The idea of reconciliation and Christian-based reunification was close to the heart of the young editor who was familiar with the work of Jacques-Benigne Bossuet (Bishop of Meaux) (1627–1704) and Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646–1716) 150 years earlier.¹⁰

Palárik, like many Slovak thinkers of his time who were influenced by Johann G. Herder's prophecy of the future role of the Slavs, wished for the Slavs to play a role in ecumenism. Palárik was mainly concerned with Catholic–Protestant reconciliation, but also looked at the Orthodox world from a longer-term perspective. Naturally, he had the interests of the organisationally strong Catholic Church at heart, but his views did not always please church leaders. In fact, Palárik also had concrete proposals for church reform, which exceeded his authority as a young priest. One of these plans was to create a Slovak archbishopric in Nitra, under which the three bishoprics (bishops) covering the Slovak ethnic areas would be assigned. This structure was to be an independent unit inside of the Hungarian ecclesiastical hierarchy.¹¹ With this ecclesiastical administrative structure, Palárik wanted to supplement the secular Slovak administrative framework, which he believed had been established early in the 1850s.¹²

8 Ibid. pp. 95–97.

9 Vavrovič, 1993, pp. 27–29.

10 Ibid. p. 47.

11 Ibid. p. 36, 74–76.

12 Ibid. p. 36.

At that time, Palárik was not radically anti-Hungarian. In his articles he wrote about the 1848 rebellion against the ruler, but he saw its cause not in the intolerance of the Hungarian extremists and their plans for supremacy, but mainly in the weakening of Christian faith among the population, the spread of irreligion and moral corruption.

The Protestant and Catholic reception of his ecumenical plans was interesting. Some Slovak Lutherans at the time were more afraid of union with Hungarian Calvinists, and were therefore more inclined to consider Palárik's proposals. Others, however, rejected them for fear of a realistic Catholic predominance.¹³ However, the response of the lower Catholic clergy of Slovak origin was more positive.

The situation with the church hierarchy was more complicated. The journal featured some critical articles that were not received well by the bishops. Several articles also touched on the economic and property situation within the Church. The Church authorities finally took legal action against Palárik, who was forced to retire to a monastery for three weeks and was given special ecclesiastical orders. The young Slovak priest, who had always sought to integrate opposites, was finally at a crossroads. One option was to stand his ground and enter into open conflict with his church, which could have resulted in his excommunication. The other was to retreat, exercise self-criticism and remain within the church he loved. Palárik chose the latter.¹⁴

A consequence of the proceedings against him was that in 1852 he was transferred to Pest, then a German-majority city. He served as a parish priest to the German Catholics in Pest. At the same time, other nationalities were represented in the capital, including Slovaks and Serbs who were close to them. Palárik maintained active relations with both communities, and was very close to the Slovak Lutheran intellectuals there.

Traditionally, Slovak Catholics and Lutherans were suspicious of each other and were not usually on good terms. However, Palárik's acceptance by Slovak protestants was facilitated by his adoption, in the early 1850s, of a literary language codified by young Slovak Lutherans, based on the Central Slovak dialect. Therefore, he did not insist on the Slovakised Czech language, or the Catholic Slovak literary language based on the West Slovak dialect, which had been established by Anton Bernolák in the end of 18th century.¹⁵

This, despite the fact that his favourite classicist Slovak poet Ján Hollý also used this language. The title of his newspaper, which had been discontinued in the meantime, referred to the two Slavic missionaries, and was also popular among Protestants. In fact, when Slovak activists set up a journal called *Sokol (Falcon)* in 1862, Palárik argued with several Catholic priests that the choice of editor-in-chief should not take denominational considerations into account. Taking his

13 Ibid. pp. 69–71.

14 Ibid. pp. 71–79.

15 Demmel, 2016, pp. 33–37.

own example, he saw that Protestant clergymen had more leeway than priests of Catholics in a strict hierarchy.¹⁶

Palárik's stint in Pest saw two important changes in his life. He became more active in literature and gradually became one of the most famous Slovak playwrights. The second change was linked to the freer socio-cultural climate after 1859. Palárik could also begin to engage in open politics. A realist-minded Catholic priest, who always sought to unite people rather than divide them for selfish ends, he thought through the political situation and possibilities of Slovaks during this time, and then became politically active.

The Slovak national movement, which was reactivated after 1859, coincided with the most active years of the Paláriks' political life. It was the hopeful decade of the 1860s during which most of Palárik's constitutional and geopolitical concepts were born. Palárik, like other active Slovaks, was disappointed by the promises of Vienna, but preferred to endeavour for a Hungarian-Slovak reconciliation and compromise. He was not alone in his thinking at the time; the *New Slovak School* (*Nová škola slovenská*) was born in this decade of 19th century as an alternative liberal movement. This wing of Slovak political movement in the Hungarian Kingdom organised the alternative network for Slovak cooperation in the form of Slovak National Democratic Society. Budapest was a centrum of this movement, but it had also a basis in Liptov and in several other northern regions. Under Palárik's intellectual impact, the Slovak liberals preferred the compromise with Hungarian liberals and democrats instead Vienna. Catholics had a predominant position inside this wing of Slovak political life. The achievement of Slovak territorial autonomy in Hungary was also important goal of their program, but only as a long-time ambitions. First, the effective using of municipal autonomous framework in Hungary was an important goal for this wing. They believed in the gradual development and moderate policy, realised step-by-step. Their attitude towards the Russian Empire was a more critical that of conservative Slovak protestants. For a long time, Palárik was one of the most important publicists and leaders of this national liberal Slovak movement, directly and indirectly influencing its programme and concrete policies.¹⁷

His position was made easier by his acceptance of the Hungarian constitutional platform of 1848, embodied in the so-called April Laws. (These liberal reform laws were adopted by the Hungarian parliament in March 1848 and were signed by the King in April. Hungarian historians used the term April Laws, whereas the Slovak historians called them March Laws.) For the Hungarian liberal elites, these laws formed the basis on which they could imagine an Austro-Hungarian compromise. Palárik's sensitivity to modern constitutional ideas and the Hungarian public law framework stemmed from three sources. While still a deacon at the seminary, he became secretly acquainted with the constitutional ideas of the

16 Vavrovič, 1993, p. 112.

17 Martinkovič, 2013.

French Enlightenment, and was particularly attracted by the ideas of Charles Montesquieu.¹⁸ As a nationally active Slovak Catholic priest, he was strongly attached to the spiritual heritage of the Slovak language reformer Anton Bernolák. Bernolák thought was born in the late 18th century under the influence of the enlightened ideas of Joseph II. The third factor was Palárik's recognition the importance of the Hungarian liberal reform laws adopted in 1848, which he considered a good starting point.¹⁹

This mainly concerned the idea of territorial autonomy. It was one of the most important elements of the Slovak Memorandum of 1861, which was intended by its authors to be a long-term conceptual document. Its main author was the Slovak jurist Štefan Marko Daxner, who argued that long-term concepts should not take into account the reality of individual claims.²⁰

Daxner's opinion was accepted by the majority of Lutheran leaders of the Slovak movement of 1848/1849, who formed the national-conservative wing of Slovak politics at the time. In contrast, Palárik stressed the need to set realistic goals that would not provoke the Hungarian liberal elites. He did not reject territorial autonomy in principle, but considered it too radical a goal in the short term. Instead, he called for the strengthening of municipal autonomy. He wanted to strengthen the Slovak position there first, in order to formulate larger goals later. During the Memorandum-meeting in the Turčiansky sv. Martin, he remained in the minority; the only achievement of the meeting was that the Memorandum was first addressed not to the King but to the Hungarian Parliament. The lawyer Daxner, who was the legal professional in the Hungarian constitutional law and politics, was of the same opinion.²¹

Palárik's attitude came under fire from Slovak critics. Paralelly, he became the main conceptional leader of the Slovak liberal oppositional politics during this time. The bipolar Slovak political life with two main wings (the dominant national conservative and reform-liberal) was first born in this time. The national democrat circles (clubs) and *Slovenské noviny* newspaper became the main organs of opposition. Palárik actively participated in the process of organisation of these institutions.

At this time, he formulated his own concept of democratic Slavic cooperation. For Slovaks, cooperation with other Slavic nations, both within Hungary and the Habsburg Empire as a whole, was always important. They also received considerable support from both of these nations. In June 1848, Slovak politicians attended the Slavic congress in Prague, which was convened by Czech liberals in the spirit of Austro-Slavic concepts. The Slovaks had a special relationship with the Czechs. In fact, during these years they tried to reach a decision on whether Slovaks were to

18 Pichler, 1998, p. 78.

19 Demmel, 2016, pp. 41–42.

20 Mésároš, 1988, pp. 44–45.

21 Memorandum národa slovenského, 1988, pp. 257–262.

belong to a separate nation or be part of the united Czechoslovak nation. The pan-Slavic poet Ján Kollár was still advocating the latter alternative, but the younger Romantic generation was already thinking in terms of an independent Slovak nation. Palárik was one of them.

Slovaks living in Northern Hungary sought cooperation with the Ruthenians. For example, during his stay in Pest, Palárik was also thinking of a joint Slovak-Russian *Matica* with scientific and cultural aims (like the academic institutions). Eventually, in 1863, a separate *Matica slovenská* was created, but it was open to cooperation with other Slavonic nations. Incidentally, Slovaks had stood together with Rusyns, represented by Adolf Dobriansky in the 1861 parliamentary elections.²²

Finally, it should not be forgotten that Slovak Lutheran students at German universities had been among the main advocates of Slav solidarity and pan-Slavism for several decades. This ideology was partly born under the influence of and in reaction to pan-Germanism. These concepts were already being considered in a broader framework, i.e. they also took into account Russia and the Balkan Slavs. Among them, the Serbs still living in the Ottoman Empire, were particularly popular. In 1848/1849, most Slovak politicians were on the Austro-Slavic platform. They did not want to or dare disturb the existing external imperial framework. The most Slavic leaders eventually ended up in the Habsburg camp. However, Vienna did not reward pro-Austrian Slovak politicians much later on, as no independent Slovak province was created, and only small concessions and official positions were granted to them in the new regime. This was a disappointment to the Slovaks after 1849.

As a result, their main leader, Ľudovít Štúr, took on a Russophile orientation. Before his death in 1856, he wrote *Slavism and the World of the Future* in German language (*Das Slawenthum und die Welt der Zukunft*, 1851). In this book Štúr rejected Austro-Slavism and democratic-federal pan-Slavism. He saw defending Russia and uniting with it as the real solution. To this end, he was prepared to make great concessions in the area of language and religion. He could imagine, for example, accepting the Orthodox religion and Russian language as a common literarian language and state religion. In return, all he really expected from Tsarist Russia was some democratisation, greater self-government and a solution to the agrarian (peasant) question.²³ This work was firstly published in Russia in the Russian language. It was published in full, in Slovak, only after 1990. Autor included some anti-communist sentences in his book.

By writing this book, Štúr reoriented the Slovak national movement from its Austro-Slavian orientation towards a more pro-Russian direction. The leading figures of the Slovak movement (e.g. Jozef Miloslav Hurban, Viliam Paulíny-Tóth etc.) were politicians and writers, most of them evangelicals, who after 1860 had been members of the so-called Old Slovak School. Later on this platform was born

22 Vavrovič, 1993, p. 130.

23 Štúr, 1993, pp. 90–91.

the Slovak National Party, which was the dominant political party among active Slovaks before the First World War.

However, the new Slovak Russophilism did not mean a complete turn away from Vienna. Despite all their disappointments, the Slovak leaders of the time still had more faith in the Emperor than in the Hungarian-Slovak reconciliation. Palárik was not only the main proponent of the Hungarian-Slavic dialogue, but also outlined an alternative Slavic concept in his 1862 paper on Slavic reciprocity. Its key elements were democratism and federalism. In this article, he wanted to go beyond the older Slavic concept of Ján Kollár, which was based on a total of four Slavic nations (Russians, Poles, Czechoslovaks, Southern Slavs) and limited cooperation to the field of literature.

According to Palárik, this division is both outdated and such minimalist goals are not accepted by other nations (e.g. Germans, Hungarians or Western Europeans). Instead, he believes, it should be recognised that the aim of broad cooperation among Slavic nations is to gradually strengthen these nations and improve their position in the multi-ethnic states in which they live. It is the duty of all Slavic nations to take advantage of the existing legal framework and achieve the maximum possible benefits for themselves, and must help each other to do the same. In the longer term, he did not rule out the eventual creation of a federation of free and independent Slavic states, but this would have to be based on consent. In contrast, Palárik rejected the creation of a centralised Slavic empire.²⁴ Paralelly he was also sceptical of Austro-Slavism, because this concept later served as an instrument in the hands of Habsburg dynasty.²⁵

The largest and most powerful Slavonic state (Russia) was considered an absolutist and despotic state. Palárik always separated the Russian state and nation. He did not wish to place the undemocratic Russian state – which was therefore distant from the other Slavs – in an integrative role, but felt a great solidarity with the Russian nation and culture.²⁶ According to him, it should also be remembered that the Slavic nations were characterised by many internal tensions and conflicts. He saw the reasons for this partly in religious differences, in the different languages, and in the centrifugal character and separatism that characterised the Slavs in general. He also regretted the Polish-Russian conflict, in which he himself had sided with the Poles. He did not view them as blameless either, but ascribed greater responsibility to the side of Russian tsarism, which also suppressed the legitimate demands of the Poles. In Slovak public life at the time, this was a strongly minority view. The majority of the leaders of the Slovak national movement sympathised with the Russians, from whom they expected both the liberation of the Balkan Slavs and pressure on the Habsburgs. Without Poles sceptical of Slavic ideas, it was difficult to envision a serious Slavic coalition. Moreover, anti-Polish and

24 Vavrovič, 1993, p. 142.

25 Demmel, 2016, p. 40.

26 Ibid. p. 148.

anti-Russian sentiment frightened democratic public opinion in Western Europe, which turned against pan-Slavic ideas. Furthermore, it is not good politics to go against the opinion of civilised Europe. The Russians tended to believe that they are 'gens electa'.²⁷ Rather than this supremacy, Palarik preferred the national equality of Slavonic nations and free cooperations inside the Slavonic framework.

Palárik considered a Polish–Russian reconciliation important for a better Slavic future, and propagated the same in his plays. In his drama *Self-proclaimed Dimitri*, he drew inspiration from the early 17th century Russian history. The play centres on the Polish intervention of the time and the disguised tsars. Unconventionally, he saw in the Polish-backed False Dimitry an opportunity for reconciliation. He saw the common enemy of the Slavic nations rather in the Turks, against whom Christians should unite. In Palarik's case, ecumenism was once again brought up here, alongside pan-Slavism. This 'political' drama, however, did not appeal to the Slovak public in 1865, as the public opinion, at that time, was divided by the issue of the forthcoming anti-Russian Polish uprising (1863/1864).²⁸

Palárik wanted to assert equality not only among the Slavic nations through the principle of free association and democratism, but also within the then-multi-ethnic Hungary. As mentioned earlier, he accepted Hungary as a common homeland and the 1848 constitutional platform as a starting point. He regarded the Slovak nation as a constituent part of the Hungarian state, but demanded equal status for it and the other nationalities.²⁹

As a realist, Palárik knew that no solution could be expected only from the great powers and their capitals. This applied equally to St Petersburg, Vienna and Budapest. He was also aware that the Slovak nation had to be strengthened first, before it could be taken seriously. He knew that in politics, everyone is only as strong as they are. Therefore, he supported the idea that the Slovak literary language should be based on a living dialect (here Central Slovak), as well as the idea that Slovaks should be active in politics, first at the municipal level, and then at the national level. At these levels, they should be united with the other nationalities in Hungary. Instead of national strengthening, he did not want to immediately set unrealistic goals that might prevent him from seeking alliances with the more open-minded politicians of the dominant Hungarian nation. He also had a more federalist and autonomist outlook, but as a constitutional democrat, he first considered it important to make use of the framework already provided by law. Palárik wanted to fight alongside the Hungarians and for the ideals of a Hungarian nationality against German centralism; however, he also rejected centralism within Hungary. In his view, the idea of a Hungarian nation-state was contrary to the ancient Hungarian constitution and the legacy of St. Stephen. The Hungarian elites' opposition to this heritage led to their defeat in 1849.

27 Ibid. pp. 146–147.

28 Ibid. p. 156.

29 Ibid. pp. 160–161.

Palárik did not consider the Austro-Hungarian dualism of 1867 to be a good solution. A better solution, in his opinion, was the federalisation of the Habsburg Empire and within it the Kingdom of Hungary. In such a case, he would have preferred a personal union to Austro-Hungarian dualism.³⁰ The Slovenes would remain in the German part, but Galicia, Lodomeria and Bukovina would be annexed to the Kingdom of Hungary, while retaining Polish-Rusyn (Ukrainian) national autonomy.³¹

Palárik was not satisfied with the Hungarian Nationality Act of 1868. According to him, this law and the debate surrounding it further deepened the differences between Hungarians and national minorities. He dismissed Hungarian accusations that Slavic politicians were attempting to tear Hungary apart and then sell the country to Russia. In his view, Hungarian patriotism aimed at assimilating non-Hungarians did not serve Hungary's interests.³² Towards the end of his life, Palárik also took an increasingly dim view of Hungarian-Slovak relations. He saw the national selfishness of the Hungarian elites as the main problem, and the fact that anyone accused of pan-Slavism was considered existentially impossible. The situation is similar with the membership of the *Matica slovenská*, in which he observed very strong tendencies. In one of his last serious newspaper articles, which dealt comprehensively with these issues a year before his death, he once again formulated the minimalist Slovak demands. These included Slovak-language grammar schools, cathedrals and county school inspectors of Slovak nationality, Slovak ministerial departments in the ministries of justice and education, and the acceptance of Slovak criteria for church appointments.³³ It revealed much about future trends. The national conservative camp, which had traditionally been critical of Palárik's willingness to compromise, justified its own, more radical attitude.

Palárik had always warned the leaders of contemporary Hungary against trying to turn a multi-ethnic country into a Hungarian nation-state. In his view, this could only lead to tragedy in the long run. He expected Hungarian leaders not to repeat the mistakes of the centralist Austrians. He also wanted to dispel their fears of pan-Slavism, a threat he believed to be greatly exaggerated. At the same time, he felt that Slav solidarity was important, especially in the case of the weaker Slav nations without independent public law frameworks. The Slovak nation was one of these. He saw the Czechs as a very close nation, but was unwilling to sacrifice Slovak independence on the altar of Czechoslovak unity, even if the same promised short-term benefits.

Palárik, who died relatively early, was an integrative personality, but he always saw the fate of his nation in a broader context and framework, preferring cooperative solutions to violence. His integrative tendencies were manifested in Christian

30 Palárik, 1868, p. 1.

31 Palárik, 1956, pp. 134–135.

32 Vavrovič, 1993, pp. 160–161.

33 Demmel, 2016, p. 199.

ecumenism, democratic pan-Slavism and Hungarian constitutional patriotism. It was not his fault that these ideals progressed in a different direction. He spent the rest of his life trying to propagate his own ideas and find political allies to put them into practice. His life was marked by more failures than successes. However, his intellectual legacy always reinforced the democratic and humanist dimension of the Slovak political tradition of the 19th century.

2. Milan Rastislav Štefánik (1880–1919)³⁴ – dreamer scientist, globetrotter adventurer and diplomat with real political results

Milan Rastislav Štefánik is one of the three founding politicians of Czechoslovakia. His statues, which are symbolic of the new statehood have remained in the many cities and towns in Slovakia. Along with the Czech Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk and Edvard Beneš, he was a Slovak member of the emigrant Czechoslovak National Council, which worked very effectively as state-building triumvirate during the First World War. Later, following his tragic death, the new Czechoslovak Republic built his memorial on Bradlo Hill. Sometimes officially celebrated his birthday in the interwar period.³⁵ At present, the Slovak Military Academy and Bratislava airport are named after him. The Czechoslovak and Slovak parliament also adopted special laws in his memory.³⁶



As a Slovak Lutheran Protestant, Štefánik was always close to the idea of Czechoslovak national unity, but did not give up his independent Slovak identity. In the founding triumvirate, he was responsible for military affairs and at the end of the war became first Minister of War in the provisional Czechoslovak government. Less well known is his role in laying the diplomatic foundations for Czechoslovak

34 Milan Rastislav Štefánik, Slovak politician, diplomat, aviator and astronomer, unknown author, in: Medek, Rudolf and Bonnaud, R. K. *vítězné svobodě 1914– 1918–1928. V Praze: Péčí a nákladem Památníku Odboje*, 1928. S. 3, source of the picture: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Milan_Rastislav_%C5%A0tef%C3%A1nik#/media/File:Milan_Rastislav_%C5%A0tef%C3%A1nik.jpg.

35 Hájková, Horák, Kessler and Michela, 2018, pp. 34–36, 114.

36 The Czechoslovak federal parliament adopted the first memorial law in 1990. The independent Slovak parliament adopted his law (Lex Štefánik) in 2000.

independence and promoting the idea of a new state internationally.³⁷ Štefánik is also permanent symbol of democratic Czechoslovak statehood in the Slovak context.³⁸

Although Edvard Beneš is regarded as the first Czechoslovak foreign minister in posterity, it was Štefánik who did much to push the cause of Czechoslovak independence in Paris and then Rome, during the heavy months of emigration. Štefánik greatly benefited by the fact that he had been living in France since 1904 and had started the First World War as a French air force officer. For a long time, he acted as a link between France at the time and nascent Czechoslovakia.³⁹ Within the Czechoslovak foreign mission, he was the ‘diplomatic connecting man’.⁴⁰ Beneš worked rather than talented administrator with huge work-capacity.

Štefánik was born into a Slovak Protestant clergy family. His father as well as grandfather were Lutheran pastors. His family traditionally lived in the Western Slovak region near the old Hungarian-Moravian border, where the first independent Slovak uprising broke out in 1848. The main aim of this uprising was to achieve Slovak autonomy within the Hungarian Kingdom. The tradition of the Slovak anti-Hungarian uprising of 1848 was strong in Štefánik family. Two brothers of his grandmother were officers in the pro-Habsburg Slovak Volunteers Corps of the time, and one of her relatives was executed by the Hungarian authorities during the revolution 1848/1849.⁴¹

Slovak Lutheran Protestantism was quite conservative, with strong German religious and cultural ties. Many of its representatives in the 19th century identified with Slovak romantic and realist literature. In many respects, this literature created modern Slovak nationalism, which defined itself fundamentally against the Kingdom of Hungary changing to the Hungarian nation-state. In nation-building, the main allies were the Czechs and the non-Hungarian nationalities in Hungary (i.e. Croats, Serbs, Romanians and Ruthenians). Czech-Slovak cultural relations were very important for this group. Against this background, it was not surprising that young Štefánik decided to study in Prague after graduation.

The Štefánik family was not well-off and faced serious financial difficulties, which was one of Štefánik’s constant problems.⁴² The young Štefánik completed his secondary school education in Hungary, but then, like many Slovaks with nationalist sentiments, began his university studies in Prague.⁴³ At first, he was an engineer, but soon gained admission to the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Prague, where he studied astronomy. His father was unhappy with this change,

37 Michálek, 2018a, p. 518.

38 Macho, 2004, pp. 1-3.

39 Lajčák, 2018, p. 12.

40 Musil, 2010, pp. 151-162.

41 Kšiňan, 2021, pp. 257-260.

42 Ibid. pp. 20-21.

43 Demmel, 2021, pp. 1-2.

because engineering provided a more secure career.⁴⁴ However, astronomy was a more international profession, which appealed to an ambitious pastor's son from a small Slovak village.⁴⁵

Slovak student life was bustling in Prague at the time. Štefánik also became a member of the famous *Detvan Student Association*, which brought together Slovak university youth studying in the Czech lands. During this period, he attended lectures by Professor Masaryk, and was influenced by the then-professor and later-President of the Republic.⁴⁶ His relationship with Masaryk was severed for many years, and was revived during the years of the First World War, now within the Czechoslovak independence emigration. Štefánik had a deep respect for his old teacher, whom he sometimes called 'daddy', but the elderly professor did not return his admiration. Štefánik was well aware of the importance of his French and Italian political connections for the Czechoslovak cause, but his fellow fighter's overly sensationalist, romantic and sometimes dreamy nature was far removed from the Czech Realist Party founder's habitus. Masaryk remained, until the end, rather reserved about Štefánik.⁴⁷

Štefánik also made his way to France thanks to his astronomy contacts. Through this science he made his first important French contacts. Traditionally, political, cultural and political life in France were closely intertwined. The educated and ambitious Štefánik benefited from this, all the more so because the astronomical profession had become rather small.⁴⁸ He recognised the advantages of this early on.

Young Štefánik had a surprisingly successful career in France. His rather elitist profession and engaging manner brought him into contact, relatively early on, with some of the most influential families of the French academic elite, who supported his ambitions. The ladies who usually admired him also played an important role in his success. Some of his technical inventions, his interest in meteorology and radio communications introduced him to French naval, military and diplomatic circles.⁴⁹

He arrived in Paris in 1904, applied for a permanent residence permit in 1910, and became a French citizen through naturalisation in 1912. Prior to this, he had been part of several exotic scientific expeditions where, in addition to his scientific duties, he served French diplomatic, commercial and communication interests. This was particularly true of his mission to the Galapagos Islands, during which he also came into close contact with Ecuadorian government circles. His efficiency,

44 Kuzmíková, 2010, pp. 87–88.

45 Kšiňan, 2021, pp. 20–21.

46 Ibid. pp. 260–263.

47 Ibid. pp. 303–304.

48 Kuzmíková, 2010, pp. 88–89.

49 Kšiňan, 2021, pp. 44–50, 59–61.

communication skills and discretion were highly appreciated by French diplomats active in the region.⁵⁰

At the beginning of the First World War, Štefaník enlisted in the French army, where his social connections quickly led him to join the nascent air force. His career here also progressed very quickly. Within three years he went from enlisted man to brigadier general. His subsequent promotion was often pushed by the French Foreign Ministry, which wanted to increase his rank.⁵¹ As a pilot, Štefaník also took part in combat missions and tried to organise a military meteorological service. At the same time, he toyed with the idea of a separate Slovak and then Czechoslovak flying unit, which he hoped would raise the profile of the Czechoslovak cause in France.⁵² Later, he was one of the main authors of the idea of Czechoslovak legions abroad. This idea held parallel practical and symbolic importance during the war.⁵³

Štefaník had always excelled in propaganda and communication. This applied as much to the causes he championed as to his own career and image-building. In fact, he had already built up his own cult during his lifetime – which was confirmed by his tragic death. In 1918, Štefaník was appointed Minister of War in the Czechoslovak provisional government. He asked the French authorities for permission to take up this position, since, unlike the other founding fathers, he was a French citizen. He regarded France as his second homeland and stated, repeatedly and pathetically, that he was as ready to die for it as for his Czechoslovak homeland. In his political activities and during official trips abroad, he sought to harmonise French and Czechoslovak interests. He was convinced that he could best serve the Czechoslovak cause by closely linking it to the ideas of the Entente powers (especially France).

During the last period of his life, Štefaník began to move closer to Italy. His last fiancée was the Marquise Giuliana Benzoni, through whom he became close to members of the Italian royal family and some of the political elite in Rome. At one point, he even acted as a virtual intermediary in Franco-Italian relations, on certain issues and at his own level. He considered his mission to Italy, during which he succeeded in establishing Czechoslovak legions in Italy and in gaining recognition for his nascent homeland, to be one of his most successful ventures. He certainly did not (and could not) forget his French connections.⁵⁴ However, at the end of the First World War, he would have preferred for Czechoslovakia to become a monarchy, rather than a republic, with a monarch from the House of Savoy at its head.⁵⁵ This was a new element in his concept.

50 Ibid. pp. 128–132.

51 Ibid. pp. 145–147.

52 Ibid. p. 162.

53 Ragač-Paniš, 2018, pp. 1–3.

54 Kšíňan, 2021, pp. 243–251.

55 Ibid. p. 312.

Although, like most Slovak nationalist Protestant intellectuals of the time, he was influenced by the ideas of Slavic solidarity, he was not particularly attracted to Russia and his 1918 trip to Siberia was not one of his most successful ventures. However, it should also be noted that he had arrived in a Russia that was already in the throes of civil war, where violence was rampant and Bolshevism was on the rise; Štefánik was extremely disgusted by this. The power of the Romanov dynasty was a thing of the past.⁵⁶ But ‘westernized’ Štefánik always recognised the importance and role of Russia in the European context.

Štefánik had a stronger sympathy for the southern Slavs, which was also characteristic of the Czech and Slovak intelligentsia of the time. However, he never placed Serb and Yugoslav interests before those of the French and Italians. On the contrary, as a man well acquainted with the political situation in Rome, his advice tended to dampen tensions between the South Slavs and Italians.⁵⁷

Štefánik was Slovak, was able to accept the idea of Czechoslovak national unity, which was never far from Slovak Protestants. This is not to say that he did not treat Slovaks as a separate entity, but as someone well-acquainted with the political salons of the West, he was aware of how little they knew about Czechs, and did not want to complicate Czechoslovak independence propaganda. When he put his contacts in service of the Czechoslovak cause, he was not bothered by his associates’ talk regarding the Czech cause and National Committee. The Czechoslovak epithet was preferred by the Slovak Americans, and the Czech émigré politicians eventually complied with this preference.⁵⁸

Apparently Štefánik was not against this either. He also had an interesting policy for the large Siberian legions.⁵⁹ For practical reasons, he insisted that the language of command should be Czech, but he also made sure that more Slovak officers were given positions and that a separate Slovak regiment of Slovak prisoners of war was organised. Although he was not particularly autonomist, he could see himself as vice-president in charge of Slovakia once the new state was in place.⁶⁰

Štefánik never questioned Masaryk’s authority, but his relationship with Beneš deteriorated over time. While they cooperated well during the earlier period of emigration (1915–1916), but the situation worsened later on.⁶¹ He was disturbed about not being appointed head of the Czechoslovak Peace Delegation in Paris. Even more disturbing to him was that in 1919 his two companions did not count on him as a functionary at home, but wanted to appoint him as ambassador to London or Paris, which was not in keeping with his ambitions.⁶²

56 Harbuľová, 2010, pp. 179–180.

57 Kšiňan, 2021, pp. 206–210.

58 Ibid. pp. 271–276.

59 Harbuľová, 2010, pp. 178–180.

60 Kšiňan, 2021, pp. 274–276.

61 Ragač and Panis, 2018, pp. 1–3.

62 Kšiňan, 2021, pp. 238–239.

An independent Czechoslovakia was not Štefánik's idea. On the one hand, the idea of Czechoslovak unity had already existed, and on the other, the most conceptual politician of the independence emigration was Professor Masaryk, whose authority was clearly accepted by the two remaining members of the founding triumvirate. In both cases, the politicians were in their thirties and had different responsibilities. Beneš gradually became a main Czechoslovak expert in foreign affairs, while Štefánik chose the military field. At the same time, he was just as capable at foreign affairs as Beneš, but possessed greater stamina and administrative skills. Štefánik was more of a visionary intellectual, with an instinctive flair for subtle diplomacy and for winning over partners. His diplomatic work ethic was not less than administrative-organisational capacity of Beneš.⁶³

This does not mean that Štefánik did not have his own political views and ideas. However, he fully linked them to the aspirations of the Western Entente powers. Paris, and later Rome, was a milieu he knew well, and where he felt at home.⁶⁴ The Slavic ideology was not far away, but as a worldly man of vision, he realised that the really big issues would not be decided at the level of small and medium-sized nations. He did, however, link the Czechoslovak cause as closely as possible with the aspirations of the French and, in part, the Italians, while remaining hostile to the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy.

Štefánik also viewed the future of the Slovaks in secession from the Hungarians. In a conversation with a Slovak politician in 1916, he outlined four alternatives to the Slovak question, of which he believed only one to be realistic. Remaining in the old Hungary would have meant national death for the Slovaks. Joining Russia would not have been permitted by the Western powers. He did not see a small independent Slovak state as a viable alternative, because the world of international relations does not like states that are too small. For this reason, he also believed that the Czechoslovak option was the most favourable for Slovaks. However, it was not only Slovaks who needed more developed Czechs, but vice versa as well, because without the Slovak territories, the Czech lands would have been weak and could not have served as an eastern barrier against the Germans; this was exactly the Western powers' expectation of the new state.⁶⁵

Thinking in terms of the Danube basin was not entirely alien to Štefánik. He was also aware of the long-term prospects for economic integration in the region.⁶⁶ In particular, he considered the port of Trieste to be important, because through it Czechoslovak products could also reach world markets. Germany was another possibility, but he had little confidence in it. He would have preferred to see the important port in Italian hands and would have preferred a Czechoslovak-Italian rail link that avoided Yugoslav territory altogether.⁶⁷

63 Ibid. pp. 238–240.

64 Musil, 2010, pp. 153–155.

65 Kšiňan, 2021, pp. 272–273.

66 Musil, 2010, pp. 152–153.

67 Kšiňan, 2021, pp. 243–245.

Štefánik considered it vital for Yugoslav–Italian tensions to not escalate. In such an eventuality, he proposed neutrality for Czechoslovakia. In 1918, he perceived the need to establish a network of trade treaties between Austria, Czechoslovakia, Italy and possibly Hungary. He would also have remedied Franco-Italian tensions with a treaty in order to jointly guarantee the interests of the Czechoslovak and South Slav states. This was to avoid a frustrated Italy getting too close to the revisionist states (i.e. Bulgaria and Hungary) and Poland.⁶⁸

Štefánik also recognised that the Czechoslovak-Polish relationship, which had become strained as a result of territorial disputes, should also be put right as soon as possible. He saw much potential in the newly formed League of Nations. The main aim of the treaties and bilateral reconciliations he had just outlined was to create a viable alternative to German hegemony in this intermediate region of Europe, and a barrier to the chaos emanating from revolutionary Russia.⁶⁹ However, this would have required a real reconciliation with France and Italy, which Štefánik believed was in the interests of Czechoslovakia above all else. However, Beneš, who was in charge of foreign affairs, clearly viewed the French as the key to Czechoslovakia's future.

Štefánik was more conservative on domestic issues. He claimed that French political realities had cured him of his republican illusions, and that he preferred to place his trust in aristocratic monarchism.⁷⁰ Although he hailed from a poor Protestant clergyman's family, he possessed an aristocratic air. In fact, one of his French bosses, General Maurice Janin described Štefánik as one of the most aristocratic men he had ever met. Štefánik's aristocratic behaviour probably came not from the fact that his family had noble roots, but from his own nature and life experience. He was generous not only in his ideas and visions, but also in his poetry. In this respect he was mentally quite different from the thrifty teachers Masaryk and Beneš. He himself attributed this partly to his upbringing in Hungary, which he was otherwise generally critical of. Indeed, his contemporaries thought that his thinking and behaviour had many Hungarian aristocratic traits.⁷¹

Štefánik's attitude towards the Masonic movement of his time is still unclear. As mentioned earlier, for a foreigner, his career progressed very quickly in France, where Freemasonry was very strong at that time. One of the very first French patron families was also Masonic. The *Internationales Freimaurerlexikon*, published in Germany in 1932, also listed the first Czechoslovak Minister of War as a Freemason. Indeed, one of the current lodges in Slovakia bears his name. However, his most thorough biographer (Michal Kšiňan) has found no other evidence of this. Nor have the French lodges he interviewed confirmed any such links to Štefánik. However, no written record of this is present, and when he died the Masonic press remained silent. His rapid rise in France could ultimately have been linked to other

68 Ibid. pp. 244–245.

69 Ibid. pp. 244–246.

70 Ibid. pp. 312–313.

71 Ibid. p. 268.

affiliations – mostly to the services he had already rendered to the French state prior to the outbreak of the Great War.⁷²

Štefánik's political and social views were not really French Masonic either. He had never been an atheist, and rejected the separation of church and state on principle, viewing an aristocratic monarchy as a better solution to a democratic republic. Despite being a great admirer of women, he rejected their right to vote. He also did not consider revolutions to a good solution; he believed not so much in the masses as in strong personalities.⁷³

His indignation at the Washington Declaration from October 1918, drafted by Professor Masaryk, is evidence of this. This declaration was the very first founding document of the new republic. It was drafted by Masaryk and designed to win the approval of American political opinion and that of President Woodrow Wilson. Štefánik was outraged both by the fact that his name was included in the document without his consent, and by the content of the declaration itself. The General, who was in Japan at the time, sent a telegram protesting against the document, albeit only among the inner circle. According to him, the form of government of the new state should be decided by the citizens at home. For this reason he rejected the republican form of government. He also feared that his associates were much too influenced by socialist ideas. This was not particularly true, although two members of the Czech triumvirate that founded the state were to the left of Štefánik.⁷⁴

In many respects, Štefánik was already considered a legend during his lifetime, at least among his own national community. He became an even greater one after his death on 4 May 1919, which was caused by what was an air disaster. Štefánik, always a stickler for style, wanted to return to his homeland by airplane. He flew home in a plane with the Italian flag, which was fired upon by Czechoslovak units stationed near Bratislava. To this day, the events that occurred and reason for the plane crash remain unclear. This has led to many conspiracy theories about his death, often attributed by Slovak nationalists to Czech intrigue, and by others to French or Italian intrigue. Others also suspected suicide.⁷⁵

However, the possibility of a genuine accidental misfortune and bad weather cannot be ruled out. In any case, the circumstances of his death only added to the legend. It is also true that he had a considerable cult following in the new Czechoslovakia. Even though he was not given a serious state position, at least many public statues have been erected in his memory. For the last hundred years, apart from the foreign invaders, only the communist regime has been unable to do anything about his memory. Following the 1989 regime change, Štefánik became one of the most popular Slovak historical figures, along with Alexander Dubček. In many ways, he became one of the main symbols of Slovakia's ties with the West and democracy.

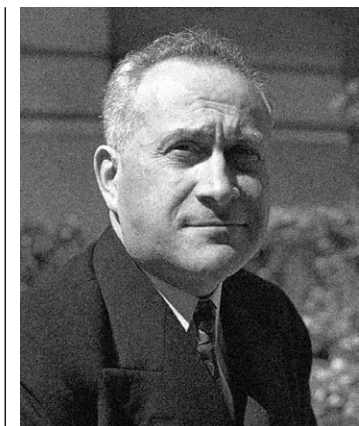
72 Ibid. pp. 309–311.

73 Ibid. pp. 312–314.

74 Ibid. pp. 302–303.

75 Ibid. pp. 291–307.

3. Štefan Osuský (1889–1973)⁷⁶ – professional diplomat and double political emigrant



Štefan Osuský was the highest-ranking Czechoslovak diplomat with Slovak origins between the two world wars. His professional career was at once eventful and impressive, although his plebeian origins did not exactly predispose him to this career. Not only was he a good diplomat in technical terms, but was also able to formulate foreign policy concepts on his own. All this at a time when very few Slovaks were able to assert themselves in Czechoslovak diplomacy, which was characterised by a clear Czech dominance. He also made his mark in the history of the League of Nations, where he also represented his country. His portrait in

the Palace of Nations bears witness to this.⁷⁷

Osuský was born into a Slovak Lutheran family. Like many of his peers, he began his secondary education at the famous Lutheran Lyceum in Bratislava. At that time, Slovakia was still part of the Kingdom of Hungary, where the Slovak nation of over two million people did not have a single secondary grammar school. Young active Slovaks therefore either went to Czech grammar schools or stayed at home and continued their studies in Hungarian language. At this time, the Hungarian secondary grammar schools with good educational quality served as factories for assimilation. However, a declaration of Slovak national commitment could quickly arouse suspicion among students. This was the case with Osuský, who, during a school discussion, came into conflict with the Hungarian Minister of Education and Religion, Count Albert Apponyi.

In spring of 1905 the minister of education, Count Apponyi, came to the lyceum to pay an inspection visit. He came to our class when we had Latin. Latin was my favorite subject and I was very good in it. [...] After the exam Count Apponyi called me and asked me in Hungarian, ‘What is your name, young lad?’ I answered, ‘My name is Osuský.’ ‘Where are you from?’ ‘From Brezová.’ He replied: ‘Brezová, isn’t it the nest that breeds all the revolts against Hungarians? You, however, are going to be a good Hungarian!’ He

76 Štefan Osuský, Slovak diplomat, politician, Willem van de Poll – Nationaal Archief, public domain, Creative Commons 0 1.0, source of the picture: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C5%A0tefan_Osusk%C3%BD#/media/File:Stefan_Osusk%C3%BD_\(1939\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C5%A0tefan_Osusk%C3%BD#/media/File:Stefan_Osusk%C3%BD_(1939).jpg).

Králik, 2003, pp. 229–230.

77 Ibid. pp. 229–230.

didn't ask me whether I'd be a good Hungarian citizen, but simply if I'd be a good Hungarian. I remembered the words of my father's not to mix into politics. [...] I paused a little to think about the best answer. Obviously, I could not agree to be a good Hungarian, I could not even force myself to say anything like that, so I remained silent.⁷⁸

The case ended with the young student being expelled from all schools in Hungary. Young Osuský then decided to emigrate to the US, where one of his sisters was already living. He had already finished his secondary grammar school studies and he continued his university studies in theology, natural science (geology) and law in America. First, he studied theology at Concordia College in Springfield (Illinois), and later focused on the natural sciences (geology). Finally, he received a law degree from the University of Chicago. He graduated in 1915, but was already an active publicist for the Slovak press in the United States. On receiving his law degree, Osuský became a co-owner of the company Sinden, Hassal, and Osuský Law Firm in Chicago. He was also active in many Slovak causes. This time he founded and edited the newspapers *Slovenské slovo* and *Slovenský týždenník* in America.⁷⁹

Since Slovak Lutherans were close to the Czechs, he first began his American public activities through Czech associations, but soon joined the main organisation of Slovak diaspora – the Slovak League. The First World War meant a large challenge for Slovak diaspora in USA. The American Slovaks hoped for a better position for their nation in Europe, after the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. A pro-Hungarian orientation was extremely limited among the Slovak diaspora in America. However, the position of the Slovak League regarding the orientation in future was not very clear. One part of organisation supported the pro-Russian orientation, whereas the majority of the Slovak League supported a Czechoslovak (pro-Western) one. Osuský belonged to this latter camp.

In 1916, as a young lawyer with good connections in the protestant social circles, Osuský was elected vice-president of the Slovak League and sent to Europe to join Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk in the fight against Austria-Hungary for the liberation of Czechs and Slovaks. He first lived in London, and then Paris. Later, in Protestant Geneva, he founded and ran a small but active Czechoslovak Press Agency, which worked for the emigrant Czechoslovak National Council based in Paris, and closely cooperated with George D. Herron – a confidant of American president Woodrow Wilson, who favoured self-determination for the peoples of Central Europe.⁸⁰

Osuský's knowledge of German and Hungarian proved significant in the collection of information and organisation of pro-Czechoslovak propaganda in the

78 Biography, pp. 1–2.

79 Ibid.

80 Olach, 2020, p. 41; Musil, 2011, p. 86.

diplomatically very important (and neutral) Geneva. He informed also the American diplomats about the Czechoslovak ambitions and political goals. Paralelly, he organised very effective anti-Austro-Hungarian press-propaganda. At the beginning of 1918 Osuský also helped organize the Czechoslovak legions in Italy. In 1918 he participated together with general Milan Rastislav Štefánik on the Congress of Nations of Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in Rome.⁸¹

After the proclamation of independent Czechoslovak Republic in 28 October 1918, Osuský was appointed Czechoslovak envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. This was one of the first leading diplomatic positions inside the borning Czechoslovak regular diplomacy. Here, Osuský met his future wife, Pavlína Vachková.⁸²

At the same time, as secretary general of the Czechoslovak peace delegation, he attended the Paris Peace Conference, but was not active in the negotiation of the peace treaties with Austria and Germany. His main task was the negotiation of the treaty from Trianon, because Karel Kramář prime-minister had resigned during this time, and as minister of foreign affairs, Beneš returned to Prague. President Masaryk appointed Osuský as plenipotentiary delegate for negotiation with Hungary. On 4 June 1920, Edvard Beneš and Štefan Osuský signed the Treaty of Trianon with Hungary. This development was very important in Osuský's political life in Czechoslovakia.⁸³

He also played an important role in creating the Little Entente, a protectionist alliance of Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Romania with anti-Hungarian goals. Previously, he was active in the field of cooperation between these countries in Geneva. Beginning 1919, he represented Czechoslovakia in the Reparations Commission of the League of Nations, which decided postwar reparations to be made by Germany and its allies. For four years he also represented Yugoslavia, Poland, Romania, and Greece at the commission. The Assembly of the League of Nations elected him chair of the Control Commission– a position he held for 14 years (1922–1937).⁸⁴

In January 1921, Osuský was appointed as the Czechoslovak envoy and minister plenipotentiary to France, where he remained until France fell in 1940. This position was extremely important for a young Czechoslovak diplomacy. The Paris Legation was important for the Czechoslovak foreign policy as well. France guaranteed the Czechoslovak international security and the French armee had strong influence in the new Czechoslovak armed forces. The economic relationship was also strong. The post of Czechoslovak envoy in Paris had key importance. Personal privilege of Osuský in Paris was his good relationship with Aristid Briand and Philipe Berthelot. This position meant a special role in the Czechoslovak foreign

81 Olach, 2020, pp. 45–46.

82 Musil, 2011, p. 87.

83 Michálek, 2018, pp. 110–114.

84 Ibid. p. 114.

policy. However, then-minister, and later President Beneš, who played crucial role in the dipomacy of new republic, took a dislike to Osuský, attributed to jealousy. The personal relationship of these two important men in the Czechoslovak diplo-macy was traditionally complicated, and was, more or less, common knowledge in the diplomatic circles.⁸⁵

Paralell to his role in Paris, Osuský was also very active in Geneva as the main delegate of new democratic republic in this international organisation (1921–1937). During his diplomatic mission, Osuský participated in a number of international conferences, becoming an experienced and well-informed Czechoslovak diplomat who maintained close personal contacts with political leaders at home and abroad. Osuský's real field was multilateral diplomacy. It could be said that he was the first multilateral diplomat of Slovak origin.⁸⁶

Within the League of Nations, Osuský represented the Czechoslovakia in dif-ferent comissions, such as the influential Deliminatory Comission and Budgetory Comission. These positions served as a good instrument for the realization of Czechoslovak foreign policy and to arrive at compromises. As chairman, Osuský participated personally in the peace mission between Bolivia and Paraguay. The border conflict between these states regarding Gran Chaco began in 1932 and con-tinued until 1935. This mission drew prestige for Osuský as peacemaker. He had always good relations with Sir Eric Drummond, the Secretary-General of League of Nations.⁸⁷

Osuský was predestined for these two important diplomatic posts. In the period between the two world wars, Paris and Geneva were considered diplomatic powerhouses. Osuský was good at combining his diplomatic identities. He used the fact that he represented Romania and the Kingdom of Serbo-Croatian-Slovenia, in addition to his own country, on the above-mentioned League of Nations reparations committee, for example, to support the creation of the Little Entente. It is not surprising, therefore, that Czechoslovak diplomacy sought to institutionalise this form of cooperation. In 1933, an organisational pact was signed, which provided not only for a joint secretariat, but also for a permanent council and an economic council of economic experts. Once again, Osuský was one of the driving forces behind this forward-looking initiative.⁸⁸ However, this project was ultimately not succesfull. The situation in 1930s was not optimal for Czechoslovak ideas of inter-national institu-building.

Osuský was always aware that the fate of the newly formed Czechoslovakia depended heavily on the great powers. Nevertheless, he tried to link Czechoslovak political and diplomatic aspirations to larger European trends and influential movements. He supported the idea of European unity, but only across the building

85 Musil, 2011, pp. 93–94.

86 Králík, 2003, pp. 230–231.

87 Musil, 2011, pp. 89–90.

88 Ibid. pp. 91–92.

of regional partnerships, alliances (like Little Entente) or regional cooperations or federation (mainly in Central Europe and Danube Basin).⁸⁹

In 1937, Osuský published an interesting essay about Europe and Central Europe on this subject, in the American journal *Foreign Affairs*. Here, he also expressed his views on the Czechoslovak question, European national movements and League of Nations. At this time, he still had great feelings for the Little Entente:

Until February 16, 1933, the Little Entente was simply a dike raised against the recrudescence of an evil past which had been definitely condemned by the World War. Its transformation step by step into something more positive and general was due solely to the fact that the League of Nations did not take the position which the New Europe had expected. The League's failure has had more immediate political consequences for Central Europe than for most other parts of Europe. Czechoslovakia, for example, knows as a result of the experience I have already described how painful it is to choose or not to choose between the West and the East. For her the League of Nations offered the ideal solution. By choosing the League, she politically chose the West without thereby – as had been necessary in the tenth century – surrendering to her powerful western neighbor, Germany. On the contrary, she could collaborate with Germany to the full extent that her geography and her economic interests dictated. But since the League has not yet proved itself a decisive force in the affairs of Europe, the Little Entente is trying with all its soul to organize joint forces in order that its component states may not become again an instrument of national and imperialist policy in the hands of some Great Power. Due to their geographical position, the Little Entente states simply cannot side with one Great Power without siding against others.⁹⁰

The Slovak diplomat was most interested in the future of Central Europe and the Danube basin, where the majority of his nation's population was located:

Now that the Danubian nations no longer felt threatened politically from without, they quickly forgot the deep-rooted and remote cause of their past difficulties and misfortunes. They lived in a state of beatitude, believing that the victory which had crowned their efforts in the World War would suffice for everything, that it had removed forever their political misfortunes – misfortunes due in fact to something quite different, namely their geographical situation. The creation of the League of Nations confirmed this state of mind. They regarded the League both as a product of the New Europe and as something less than a necessity for Central Europe in view

89 Ibid. pp. 92–93.

90 Osuský, 1937, pp. 466–467.

of the fact that the World War had settled once and for all the historic conflicts which formerly had troubled them. In reality, of course, the League was a vital necessity for Central Europe. [...] The League of Nations was there precisely for the purpose of clearing the atmosphere – morally, and in personal and political terms. It was neither humiliating nor dishonorable for either side to meet the other on the neutral territory of Geneva. Unfortunately, few statesmen were found at Geneva, just as there had been few at the Peace Conference, who believed that the organization of Central Europe presented a major task and a major opportunity. The accepted idea was that the problem had been settled by the mere fact that the various national states had come into being. [...] In the case of Central Europe there are three sorts of ideas. There are ideas which history has proved a failure. There are others which can be practised only if one is resigned to living dangerously. Finally, as far as we are concerned, there are healthy ideas. The great healthy idea for us Czechoslovaks is that a country like ours should identify its interests with the general interests of Europe. Mr. Baldwin, the British Prime Minister, has stated that the Rhine is the frontier of England – that is to say, that England cannot be defended at all unless she defends herself on the Rhine. History would indicate that as a result of her geographical situation Czechoslovakia runs great risks if she does not choose between the East and the West, and that, whichever she chooses, she must resign herself to living dangerously. But, fortunately, there is an escape from this dilemma, which is simply for Czechoslovakia to take the over-riding choice of identifying her interest with the general European interest. She must cling unshakably to the interests, the ideas, and the general aspirations of Europe. To these ideas, these interests, these aspirations, she must help attract all those who love Europe sufficiently to accept the sacrifices necessary in order that the Continent shall continue to breathe and live.⁹¹

The period between 1920 and 1938 was the star period in the Osuský's life, but the most complicated diplomatic aims only followed. The Munich Agreement of 1938 – negotiated between Neville Chamberlain, Eduard Daladier, Benito Mussolini and Adolf Hitler – and the occupation of Czechoslovakia by the Hitler's Nazis in March 1939, resulted in the collapse of the first Czechoslovak Republic. In 1928, Edvard Beneš abdicated and emigrated to UK and then USA.

Osuský, however, refused to surrender the Czechoslovak Legation in Paris to the Nazi Germany and, having maintained his position as Czechoslovak envoy and minister, began organising the Czechoslovak diplomatic resistance movement. Osuský represented the position, according that the Czechoslovak diplomatic and consular missions abroad embodied the continuity of democratic Czechoslovak

| 91 Ibid. pp. 470–471. |

statehood also after the occupation of country. His main goal was the organisation of the autonomous Czechoslovak armed force in France (under the French military command) from emigrants and members of diaspora. The idea was similar to the concept of Czechoslovak legions during the First World War. However, before September 1939 the French government was careful and sceptical.⁹² The tensions between Beneš and Osuský further complicated this situation. The former president preferred the own person as symbol of Czechoslovak resistance abroad. Osuský preferred as symbol of Czechoslovak continuity the network of diplomatic missions and later the government in emigré.⁹³

In October 1939 (after the German attack against Poland) Osuský signed a treaty with the French government regarding the formation (officially: reconstruction) of the Czechoslovak army in France (Daladier-Osuský Agreement). This treaty was the first bilateral agreement signed by Czechoslovakia with a great anti-fascist power.⁹⁴ In November 1939 Osuský mobilized Czechoslovak expatriates into a national army in France. After the fall of France to the Germans in June 1940, he arranged for the troops to be transferred to the United Kingdom.⁹⁵

With the support of the French government, Osuský hoped to act as the leader of the Czechoslovak exile movement, but his ambitions clashed with those of Edvard Beneš, who considered himself the leader of the liberation struggle in London. In November 1939, Beneš appointed Osuský as a member of the Czechoslovak National Committee in Paris and, in July 1940, minister to the Czechoslovak government in exile and member of the State Council in London; however, their relationship was slowly deteriorating.

They disagreed completely regarding the organisation and management of the Czechoslovak exile movement, the position of the Slovaks in the future democratic Czechoslovakia, and Beneš's pro-Soviet political orientation.⁹⁶ Consequently, Osuský represented the pro-Western orientation of Czechoslovakia, whereas Beneš preferred a compromise between the Western and Soviet orientation.

These tensions culminated in March 1942, when Beneš stripped Osuský of his official posts and excluded him from the Czechoslovak resistance. Osuský wrote a series of articles on Beneš and the Provisional Government; however, he ended up in political isolation ('dirigent without orchestra').⁹⁷ Before the end of Second World War Osuský lived in England, but as a private person. He worked as contractual lecturer at the universities in Cambridge and Oxford. He maintained a good connect with Milan Hodža, but the expremier lived in USA. His relationship with Czechoslovak government in emigré was poor.

92 Michálek, 2018b, pp. 114–117.

93 Ibid. pp. 118–121.

94 Musil, 2011 p. 94.

95 Michálek, 2018b, pp. 129–130.

96 Ibid. p. 132.

97 Ibid.

The Slovak question gradually became more important to Osuský. As a Slovak Lutheran, he sincerely accepted and supported the idea of a Czechoslovak state. He was at odds with the autonomism of Hlinka's Slovak People's Party, as he had always been a member of the central administration in Prague. At the same time, he saw the two nations as separate entities. This position represented also very early during the First World War as a representant of Slovak League in USA. In the Treaty of Trnionon, which he practically drafted, the official name of the new country was Czecho-Slovakia (not Czechoslovakia). However, this term later disappeared from official use. Osuský also observed how Slovaks were under-represented in diplomacy and central administration. These issues further complicated his relations with Beneš, who was never willing to accept Slovak national autonomy and was resentful of all Slovak politicians. During the years of emigration, Osuský was therefore not coincidentally close to Slovak circles critical of Beneš, which meant no sympathy for the pro-Nazi regime of Jozef Tiso. He preferred a democratic Czechoslovakia, as a country of two equal Slavic nations.

Thus, after almost 30 years, Osuský returned to the United States in 1945 to become a professor of modern European history at Colgate University in Hamilton, New York. Not until the communist putsch in February 1948, however, did he join the political activities of his fellow Slovaks. In 1949 he co-founded and later served on the Executive Board of the *Council of Free Czechoslovakia* in the USA and held important posts in the *Association of Captive European Nations*. He supported the Radio Free Europe, where his son was employed.⁹⁸

However, the so-called third (anti-Communist) Czechoslovak resistance⁹⁹ was not succesful. Although Osuský never returned to Czechoslovakia, he followed its development closely. Besides his educational work, he studied and taught Czechoslovak politics and international relations. He wrote many articles, essays, and studies. His study of the ideological and spiritual conflict between the East and West, titled *The Way of the Free*, was published in New York, London, Hong Kong and Milan. Osuský died in Washington, in 1973.¹⁰⁰

98 Musil, 2011, p. 96.

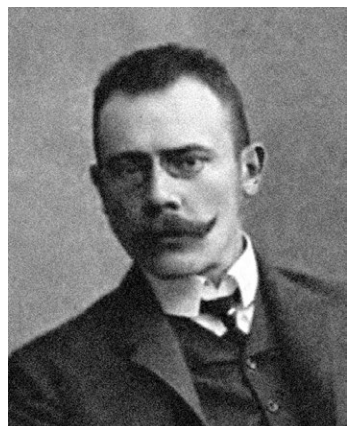
99 The first resistance had an anti-monarchist character. The main enemy of the second resistance was Hitler.

100 Hoover Institution Archives, 2007.

4. Milan Hodža (1878–1944) – the realistic prime-minister with fantastic concepts¹⁰¹

Milan Hodža was one of the most original and conceptual Slovak politicians of the 20th century. He was also the first politician of Slovak descent to reach one of the highest positions possible for a democratic politician, and become Prime Minister of Czechoslovakia (1935–1938). During his life he theorised many important political concepts about Slovak nation and its place in Europe.

Hodža was born into a typical Slovak intellectual family. His father Ondrej Hodža was an evangelical pastor. His father's brother was Michal Miloslav Hodža, who, together with



and Ľudovít Štúr and Jozef Miloslav Hurban, were key figures in the Slovak national movement of the 19th century. Hodža was thus brought up in a family where Slovak national commitment and strictly puritan (conservative) Protestantism were extremely important.¹⁰²

The consequences of this upbringing were also felt relatively early in his life. His letters in Slovak had already brought him into conflict with one of his teachers during his secondary school years in Banská Bystrica. For two years during his secondary school years in Sopron, he refused to sing the Hungarian national anthem on the occasion of 15 March, which forced him to leave the institution. The young Hodža continued his studies at the Faculty of Law in Budapest, despite never being attracted to classical legal careers. Rather, he was more interested in public law, political science, sociology and economics. He began his studies in Budapest in 1896, but took his first state examination at the Law Faculty in Cluj-Napoca. He later continued his studies in Vienna, where he studied philosophy.¹⁰³

Hodža became one of the most linguistically skilled Slovak politicians. In addition to his mother tongue, he spoke Hungarian and German and learned English, French, Romanian and Russian. The other Slavic languages were not far behind. From a young age, Hodža displayed an affinity for journalism, which also became a very important asset at the dawn of the age of mass society. The first

101 Milan Hodža, Slovak politician and journalist, Seton-Watson, R. W. - Scanned from Seton-Watson, R. W. "Racial problems in Hungary" (1908), public domain, source of the picture: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Milan_Hod%C5%BEa#/media/File:Mil%C3%A1n_Hod%C5%BEa.jpg.

102 Horná, 2002, p. 24.

103 Ibid. pp. 24–25.

Slovak-language newspaper he edited was the *Slovenský denník* from 1900 to 1901. In 1903, he was able to launch a much more successful weekly, *Slovenský týždenník*.¹⁰⁴

Young, ambitious, talented and not particularly interested in practical law, Hodža was never in any doubt that he would make his mark as a Slovak. This was evident from his background, education and character. At the same time, he was quite sceptical about the state and potential of Slovak national conservative politics of the time. The passivity of the Slovak national conservatives of the time, their expectation of miracles and openness to Russian messianism were completely alien to Hodža. He was much closer to the modernist, reformist and progressive Slovak intellectuals grouped around the Slovak journal *Hlas* (Voice), which had formed under the influence of the Czech professor and realist politician Tomáš G. Masaryk in the last two decades of the 19th century. The ideas of Marx and Lassalle influenced him during his youth.¹⁰⁵

Hodža was looking for the social stratum on which the Slovak national movement could really rely. He had little faith in the salutary power of conservatism, liberalism or socialism. His starting point was that conservatism, with its aristocratic roots, had nothing to preserve in a Slovak society without an aristocracy.¹⁰⁶ Hodža did not believe in political liberalism because he considered it to be the antithesis of conservatism, which, once in power, behaved in the same way as its original opponent. Furthermore, economic liberalism, based on serving and enforcing commercial and industrial interests, had no basis in the Slovak milieu at the beginning of the 20th century. As far as socialism was concerned, Hodža felt that Slovakia was not yet at the stage of national development to enter the world of internationalism identified with socialism.¹⁰⁷

As such, Hodža found the political tendency best suited to Slovak circumstances in democratic agrarianism or, to put it another way, agrarian democracy. He was obviously not the inventor of this ideology, as various small peasant movements had already begun to emerge in various places. However, it was Hodža who localised it among Slovaks and then, for almost forty years, represented its values to a high standard. A realist and pragmatist, he did not believe in revolutions and other grand gestures, but that the so-called 'small work', which aimed at the gradual enrichment of the nation and society, was all the more important.¹⁰⁸

Hodža also wanted to reform dualist Hungary, mainly by democratising the electoral law. He first won a parliamentary seat in 1905, when he was only twenty-seven. In 1906, he had to stand for elections again. Both times, he was a candidate in the mixed Serbian-Slovak electoral district (Kulpín) in the Southern Hungary.¹⁰⁹ Here, the Serbian and Slovak community lived together peacefully. The members

104 Machala, 2002, p. 41.

105 Pavlů, 1930, p. 36.

106 Machala, 2002, p. 41.

107 Kollár, 2002, p. 48.

108 Ibid. p. 50–51.

109 Kopčok, 2002, pp. 80–81.

of these communities were critical towards the Hungarian minority policy, and cooperated in the electoral process for a long time. Concretely, they supported common candidates (e. g. a Slovak-origin candidate during one election, and then Serbian-origin one in the next). This policy was relatively successful for Slovak movement in Southern Hungary (currently Voivodina in Serbia).

Hodža was elected to the Hungarian parliament in Budapest at the height of the political and social crisis; there was a chance that sooner or later serious political changes would take place. Crown Prince Franz Ferdinand was already preparing for the task. One of his main aims was to reform dualism in a centralist direction, but to do so he would have had to weaken the political weight of the Hungarians. To achieve this, he needed the support of the nationalities in Hungary. Ferdinand was the first to contact Romanian politicians in Transylvania, above all the Budapest deputy Alexander Vaida-Voevoda, who in a speech in parliament spoke out against the division and partial Hungarianisation of the common army. Through him, the Crown Prince's military office also contacted Milan Hodža. All these events took place in 1907.¹¹⁰

Milan Hodža thus became a member of the group of experts and politicians that later became known as the Belvederian circle, and in time became increasingly close to the Crown Prince. This was probably not only due to his education and training, but also to the fact that he did not usually communicate with the Crown Prince by exposing the Slovak aspects, but always put the 'Austrian' aspects of the Empire first in his arguments, which pleased Franz Ferdinand. During this period, they had several personal conversations and Hodža sent at least 30 letters and analyses to the Crown Prince. Eventually, Hodža, who was mostly Slovak in his thinking but argued in Austrian terms, was inducted into the Crown Prince's inner circle of trust, no mean feat for a politician of his background.

Together with the Romanian Iuliu Maniu, Hodža drafted a memorandum for the Crown Prince, in which they argued that small states had no real future and that the Monarchy's position as a great power should be strengthened. To ensure this, Austro-Hungarian dualism needed to be abolished either by means of a change of state (through the new king's overturn) or gradually (constitutionally), and universal suffrage would have had to be introduced in Hungary. This would put the nationalities in a position. Furthermore, the autonomy of the counties should have been broken. This would have been supplemented by extending the powers of the joint delegations. As mentioned above, Hodža was ultimately included in the Crown Prince's narrowest circle of trust. It was no coincidence that the Slovak politician was very disappointed when Franz Ferdinand was assassinated in Sarajevo, considering him the last man in the entire Monarchy who could have kept the empire together, albeit at the cost of very serious reforms.¹¹¹

110 Galandauer, 2002, p. 89.

111 Ibid. pp. 90–92.

Hodža spent most of the First World War in Vienna. Before that, he had been a military officer in Veszprém and Trenčín, but in 1915 he became first a member of the staff of the military censorship office for Croatian affairs, and then its head. This office was based in Vienna. In 1916, Hodža became one of the editors of the Austrian Press Office in Vienna. The aforementioned posts in Vienna were probably due to his good military and political connections there, dating back to the 'Belvedere' period. However, by the end of the war Hodža became active in Slovak national politics once again.¹¹²

Before the First World War, Hodža had already established his profile as an agrarian politician, but had not yet organised a separate party. Instead, he politicised on the platform of the Slovak National Party. At the beginning of the war, he had to be careful in Hungary, partly because of his Slovak activism as well as his 'Belvedrian' past. Hodža was very reluctant to go to war because he was very sceptical about the chances of victory for the ailing Monarchy. However, after the outbreak of war, his newspaper also called on its readers to loyalty and obedience. The Slovak National Party reacted in a similar way, but then voluntarily suspended its political activities instead.¹¹³

At the beginning of the war, Hodža believed that *'the best way to demonstrate our silence is to remain silent.'*¹¹⁴ He actually became more active in 1915. He arrived in Vienna, where an informal group of Slovak politicians, led by Kornel Stodola, was operating, and who, because of the passivity of the National Party and its many contacts in the capital, began to play an increasingly important role in Slovak politics.

The active period in his Hodža's began in early 1918. By then, Czech-Slovak cooperation, which at first was not a generally accepted alternative, had taken on more realistic contours. Hodža did not shy away from the idea, but was cautious and did not want to rush into anything.¹¹⁵ He soon recognised that Vavro Šrobár was one of the most actionable Slovak politicians, and became Slovakia's full competent minister at the end of 1918. Hodža had already relaunched the weekly newspaper *Slovenský týždenník* in the spring of 1918. In its pages on 31 May 1918, he called for the creation of a representative Slovak National Council, based mainly on cooperation between Slovak nationalists and social democrats.¹¹⁶

This Council was not formed until 30 October 1918, two days after the proclamation of the Czechoslovak state in Prague (28th October 1918). Its most important declaration was that the Slovaks also wanted to join the new state. Hodža was not present at the crucial meeting, having arrived in Túrócszentmárton only at night. A few amendments to his proposal were carried over in the text awaiting publication. Two weeks later, however, he travelled to Prague, where he became a member

112 Horá, 2002, p. 26.

113 Pekník, 2002, p. 143.

114 Ibid. p. 145.

115 Hronský, 2002, p. 159.

116 Ibid. p. 161.

of the Provisional Czechoslovak National Assembly and was appointed chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Slovak Deputies' Club. His stay in Prague was short, as he was appointed Czechoslovakia's representative in Budapest at the suggestion of the Slovak Club. There, he had to negotiate with the Entente mission and the government of count Mihály Károlyi.¹¹⁷

His mission in Budapest has long been considered controversial in Czechoslovak political circles, and there were several attempts to use it to discredit him. Hodža was sent to Budapest by the Prague government without the agreement of the official foreign minister of the Czechoslovak government, Edvard Beneš, who was in Paris. At that time, the newly-formed Czechoslovakia did not have much of an army to occupy the Slovak parts of the new state. Hodža was well aware of this. His absolute priority, therefore, was to stall and buy time until the Czechoslovak legions in Italy could appear in Central Europe, or even to achieve a temporary demarcation line behind which the consolidation of at least part of Slovakia (which was descending into chaos) could begin under Czechoslovak colours. This motivation, together with the confused circumstances and his personal political habits, led him to act independently in his negotiations on more than one occasion, and to merely inform Prague of his moves. On 6 December 1919, Hodža did indeed agree with the Budapest government's Minister of War on a temporary demarcation line north of the present Hungarian-Slovak border,¹¹⁸ mainly in Slovak-majority areas.¹¹⁹ He remained in Budapest until early January 1919, when he returned to Czechoslovakia. Although the demarcation line he had negotiated included less territory than the leadership of the nascent state wanted, it allowed the Hungarian military to evacuate most of nascent Slovakia and occupy it without a fight by Czechoslovak legionnaires.

When Czechoslovakia came into being, Milan Hodža, just 40 years old, was already one of the most prepared and experienced Slovak politicians, and as such, was destined for a great career in the new state. However, he had to adapt quickly to the new circumstances. The first Czechoslovak Republic was a modern state based on competition between large and organised mass political parties. Such Slovak parties, however, did not really exist. Hodža had already realised before the First World War that the Slovak National Party was an excessively outdated and ossified political institution. The Slovak public lacked an adequate number of organised workers to make social democracy a resounding success. Hlinka Slovak Popular Party initiatives were distant from it because of their Catholic character. Nor did he see much chance for Slovak economic and social liberalism. Rationally, he saw the main potential base for Slovak democratic politics in the peasantry and in agrarian movement.

As early as January 1919 he began to organise a network of Slovak peasant professional associations. And in August he led the creation of the National Republican

117 Ibid. pp. 161–162.

118 Ibid. pp. 174.

119 Szarka, 1995, pp. 216–219.

Peasant Party. Just before the 1920 National Assembly elections, the party managed to unite with the National Party, resulting in the formation of the Slovak National and Peasant Party. However, the coexistence did not last long, as the autonomist nationalists became independent again in the spring of 1921. The Peasant Party, in turn, began to disintegrate. The complete crisis of Slovak agrarianism was finally averted by the intervention of the much more organised Czech agrarians in 1922, who integrated the Slovak agrarian initiatives into the national Agrarian Party.¹²⁰

This was the most important and influential party in interwar Czechoslovakia, giving the state several prime ministers, numerous ministers and even more officials. Its chairman was the always-ready-to-ompromise Antonín Švehla and its vice-president for many years was Milan Hodža. With this move, Hodža secured himself a stable place in Czechoslovak national politics. For 20 years the agrarians were members of every Czechoslovak government.

Hodža thus entered national politics for good and gained considerable influence in public administration. In 1919 he was first State Secretary in the Ministry of the Interior, then Minister of Legal Unification twice (1919–1920 and 1926–1927), Minister of Agriculture twice (1922–1926, 1932–1935), Minister of Education once (1926–1929) and Minister of Foreign Affairs once (1935). He also served once as Prime Minister of Czechoslovakia (1935–1938). He was the first Slovak to hold this high post.¹²¹

At that time, Slovak politics was tripartite. The largest bloc was made up of the Catholic People's Party autonomists. The Communists were in perpetual opposition. The state positions and orders, however, were mostly given to those who, as Slovaks, were politically active in parties of a national (i.e. Czechoslovak) nature. Typical of such parties were the Agrarian Party and Czechoslovak Social Democracy.

For this reason, Hodža had to clarify his relationship with the increasingly sensitive Czechoslovak question, including the ideology of Slovak autonomy and Czechoslovakism (i.e. Czech and Slovak national unity). Although he did not advocate immediate Slovak autonomy at the end of 1918; he did, however, propose an administration that would have been based on the idea of a limited Slovak administrative autonomy. Later as a leading politician of Agrarian Party he preposed the regionalism for Slovakia.¹²²

After 1919, Hodža tried to tie his own political fate to the parties of national importance. This meant that he practically joined the Czechoslovak Centralists. He was never a centralist in principle, however, and in the 1930s, as tensions between Czechs and Slovaks increased, he tried to find a particular regionalist compromise between centralism and autonomism. Hodža did not accept the ideology of official Czechoslovakism on ethnic grounds, but only as a means to modernise Slovaks. For

120 Krajčovičová, 2002, pp. 219–220.

121 Horná, 2002, p. 26.

122 Hronský, 2002, p. 161.

this reason, he saw the Czechoslovak nation more as a political entity.¹²³ But he also opposed the idea of autonomy propagated by the Slovak People's Party. According to Slovak historian Pavol Lukáč, he did so because a strong autonomy would have given Slovaks no influence over the politics of the Czechoslovak state as a whole. Instead, Hodža sought to maximise the representation of Slovaks in Prague, and his well-known slogan in political circles was 'All good Slovaks have a place in government'.¹²⁴

Hodža followed this strategy and it paid off – in 1935 he became the first prime minister of Slovak origin in Czechoslovakia, and held this post until the Munich Dictate in 1938. In his centrist politics, he did not follow the right wing of the Agrarian Party, which wanted to gradually adapt to the ideas and interests of Germany. Instead, he sought solutions in Central Europe and the Danube Basin.¹²⁵

Hodža was an early observer of the dangers arising from the extreme division of the Central and Eastern European region after 1918. In the 1920s, the region split into two major political blocs – the Little Entente, which comprised the regional winners, as well as Poland, and the Roma Protocol countries, which comprised the war losers and had begun to move closer to fascist Italy and later to revisionist Germany. Hodža was traditionally well-connected among South Slav and Romanian agrarian politicians. Most of them socialised with him in the Budapest parliament or in the Belvedere circle in Vienna. He was obviously not opposed to cooperation within the Little Entente, but quickly recognised its inadequacy and the dangers of a policy of winners marginalising or blocking losers. He held these beliefs in the 1930s as well.¹²⁶

At that time, the Czechoslovak state faced two major challenges – the consequences of the Great Depression, and threat of Nazi Germany. Although the management of Czechoslovak foreign policy was clearly the domain of Edvard Beneš, the conceptual Hodža, who spoke seven languages, was not about to be sidelined. In 1935, he briefly became foreign minister, before quickly serving his country as prime minister. It was then that his Danube Plan was born, mainly concerning quotas, tariffs on agricultural products, and regulation of production and credit. He also wanted to better coordinate the region's technical and administrative infrastructure, as well as make gestures to the large number of national minorities living in the region in order to improve cooperation and build trust. His plan's long-term goal was to create a single Central European economic area. The region could even form a customs union in the future. However, this famous plan did not have real support among the states of two blocs ('winners of war and revisionists'). Germany attacked these plans and built its own economical and political contacts in region.¹²⁷

123 Lukáč, 2004, p. 28.

124 Ibid. p. 31.

125 Zemko, 2002, pp. 328–329.

126 Čurda, 2002, pp. 293–295.

127 Zemko, 2002, pp. 328–329.

This plan was based on the agenda of the various interstate negotiations until 1937, but was never implemented. As Germany also began to increase its economic presence and political pressure in the region, Czechoslovakia was isolated. Hodža was prime minister until September 1938. During the Munich Crisis he was replaced by General Syrový. The former prime minister retired and went to Switzerland. Hodža became particularly active in émigré politics after the German invasion of Poland, when Britain and France officially entered the war. He became active in emigrant politics in 1939 in Paris, which was then a meeting place for various European emigrants and center for international policy in Europe.

Hodža was critical of the earlier unilateral foreign and centralist domestic policies of the resigned and also exiled former president Edvard Beneš. These two leading Czechoslovak politicians' personal relationship was not good. At the time, Hodža already viewed Slovakia as in real need of public autonomy; It was therefore logical that he accepted the autonomy proclaimed by the Slovak autonomists on 6 October 1938. Not only the majority of Slovak democratic politicians, but also the Czechoslovak government in Prague at the time took note of this. He with other Slovak politicians-emigrants organised the Slovak National Council in Paris (November 1939).¹²⁸ It included, among others (democrats), some moderate autonomist People's Party émigrés. According to the former Czechoslovak Prime Minister, this wing could not be left out of the organisation of the democratic Slovak emigration. It did not take a position against Czechoslovak statehood, but it saw the place of Slovaks in a future reorganised state in a very different way from the group around Beneš. Later on, Czechoslovak groups that were dissatisfied with Beneš's political orientation joined the organisation. The entire effort thus began to take on a Czechoslovak face and dimension.¹²⁹

This led to a serious struggle between the two leading politicians in emigré. At first there was a geographical distance between them, but when Hodža arrived in London the situation became even more complicated. Although Beneš could not completely ignore Hodža, who was the second most important former public figure in the emigration, he only appointed him vice-president of the parliamentary representative body in the emigration (the State Council). However, this body was very lightweight. Hodža accepted this post but did not actually participate in the work of the State Council.¹³⁰

Nevertheless, he remained in Britain until 1941, when he first attempted to promote his foreign policy concepts. However, with the stabilisation of the Czechoslovak émigré groups under Beneš and their recognition by the anti-fascist allies, he gradually lost his room for manoeuvre. Eventually he left for the USA, where he lived until his death in 1944. He was not politically passive, but here, he was no longer backed by an influential and representative political group. In the US State

128 Jablonický, 2002, p. 351.

129 Ibid. pp. 352-353.

130 Ibid. p. 352.

Department, he was supported mainly by more conservative diplomats distrustful of pro-Soviet policies. He also maintained good relations with politicians interested in Central European cooperation and integration, for instance, Richard Nicolas Coudenhove-Kalergie, who became Czechoslovakia's representative on the Pan-European Commission that organised the Fifth Pan-European Congress in New York.¹³¹

Hodža considered an integrated Central Europe to be an intermediate step on the road to European integration. He remained concerned with three main issues: a just solution to the Czech-Slovak relationship that was better for Slovaks (e.g. a federal type); fear of Nazi Germany and the increasingly influential Soviet Union encroaching on Central Europe; and finally, the development of plans for federalist unification of Central Europe to counteract this. In Paris in 1939, his inaugural address argued for the preservation of democratic principles in crisis and warned against fascist and Bolshevik-based anti-democratic threats.¹³²

Hodža also rejected the theory of class struggle and notion of 'democracy' that was being projected from Moscow. Meanwhile, his main emigration rival, Edvard Beneš, again sought strong allies for Czechoslovakia outside Central Europe. In practice, this meant courting Western democratic states and the Soviet Union. The President was increasingly willing to base Czechoslovak security on Soviet support.¹³³ Hodža, however, drawing from Munich's negative experience and counting on the vacillations of the great powers, was sceptical that the newborn republic should base its security policy solely on the support of the great power allies.¹³⁴

Hodža's concept was based on the solidarity of the Central European nations and a federative type of cooperation. This idea initially made him popular in like-minded Central European émigré circles, as well as in the more conservative American, British and French diplomatic circles fearful of the Soviet Union's growing influence in Europe. However, the German attack on the Soviet Union led to many cracks in such concepts.¹³⁵

Hodža's marginalisation after 1941 was therefore probably not just the result of the intrigues in Beneš, but the same was not a coincidence either. The Czechoslovak emigration in London led by Beneš constantly attacked Hodža.¹³⁶ This did not change during his stay in the USA. Among other things, he was accused of collaborating with Otto Habsburg and preparing the reorganisation and restoration of Habsburg-led Central Europe. This was of course not true.¹³⁷ The confusion here was because of the plans for Central Europe of the former Czechoslovak Prime Minister and the heir to the Habsburg throne. Obviously, the Soviet Union did not

131 Lukáč, 2002b, p. 340.

132 Ibid. pp. 340–342.

133 Zemko, 2002, pp. 322–327.

134 Lukáč, 2002b, pp. 338–339.

135 Ibid. pp. 341–342.

136 Zemko, 2002, pp. 319–321.

137 Lukáč, 2002a.

like the actions of Hodža, who, even in the last year of his life, wrote a Memorandum to the US State Department entitled *Europe at the Crossroads*. In it, he warned American diplomats against Stalin's growing influence in Europe. Meanwhile, he continued his second major work, *Federation in Central Europe. Reflections and Reminiscences*.¹³⁸ It was here that he published (1942) the bulk of his views on the past and future of cooperation between the peoples of Central Europe.

This book provided a bulwark not only against a predominantly Germany but also the Soviet Union. Hodža saw Central Europe as a distinct cultural entity within European civilisation. He also drew up a draft constitution for a Central European Commonwealth, which would have achieved deeper integration than the British model. The federation he envisioned be headed by a federal president elected by a conference of national prime ministers and a federal congress. He would appoint the federal chancellor and members of the government, as well as the army commander. The federation of eight member states (Austria, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Greece, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Poland, and Romania) would form a customs union, have a common currency, and federal laws. It would cover only defense and foreign policy, but also finance and trade policy. A common postal and telecommunications system would be important, as well as a justice minister. In his vision, each member state would have been represented in government by a minister without portfolio. The federal congress would control the common budget and legislation. Its members would be elected by national parliaments with a two-thirds majority, with at least one representative per million inhabitants. The mandate of the members would be linked to the terms of national parliaments. The common language would be decided by a two-thirds majority, but each member would be able to use their own language, which would be interpreted. The federation, which would only be dissolved in the event of a constitutional amendment, would have its own Supreme Court and a superstructure citizenship. Every citizen of the federation would have to learn at least one world language, preferably one on which the federation would agree.¹³⁹ This concept was the most intellectual and concrete plan of Central European cooperation in the history of Slovak political thinking. Hodža's impact was relatively great, but only after 1989.

Milan Hodža died on 27 June 1944 in Clearwater, USA. He was buried with official honours in Chicago as a state funeral, but his remains were repatriated in 2004, when Slovakia was already independent and democratic. Here, he was reburied in the presence of the state's most important leaders. The second government of Mikuláš Dzurinda saw in Hodža the symbol of pro-Western and democratic politician. They needed this symbol in the process of Euro-Atlantic integration of Slovak Republic.

138 In English see: Hodža, 2004.

139 Hodža, 1997, pp. 231–239. Cited also in Halász, 2022, p. 190.

Conclusion

The Slovak political thinkers analysed in this chapter represented the more liberal and relatively realistic wing of the Slovak national policy during its formation, in the period between the 1848 civic revolution and end of second world war. They represented, at several times, a minority position within Slovak ideological and political life. Their sentiment towards Slavic solidarity was more limited than the pan-Slavic sentiment of dominant conservative political groups in 19th century. They also looked for alternative solutions for Slovaks in Central and Eastern Europe, who were observed by these thinkers from a more or less European perspective.

Despite of their minority position, their personal intellectual and political achievements had a strong impact on Slovak public life. This is especially true for Štefánik, who helped establish the new Czechoslovak state framework, which was very fruitful for Slovaks after the intensive assimilation and discrimination during the period of Hungarian monarchy. The political careers of Hodža and Osuský represented the new possibilities for Slovaks within the framework of Czechoslovak Republic. The positions of prime-minister in Prague and envoy in Paris provide different perspectives than those of the Catholic priest in the province or journalist in the capital.

Every presented thinker had deep contact with the Slovak national movement and a strong national identity. For a long time, the general attitude of the Slovak movement was protective and reactive. This was especially true for the old Hungarian period, as well as for a modern Czechoslovakia. Slovakia firstly achieved an independent state status only in 1939 under Nazi-German patronage, which relativized this fact. During this time the Slovaks lived as minorities in multi-ethnic countries. This fact strongly impacted their point of view and plans for a future.

Palárik, Štefánik, Osuský and Hodža supported rather the existence of Slovaks inside the bigger state frameworks, but with a constitutional and democratic political system (e. g. liberal and federalised Hungary, later the democratic Czechoslovakia). This form of political systems is usually better for a minority groups and smaller nations, than autocracy and dictatorships. A majority of analysed figures also experiences from their emigration abroad. This fact is important for the understanding of their positions and more open opinions. Despite these facts (mainly the moderate position in the issue of independency), they played very important roles in the process of Slovak national and political emancipation in the last two centuries. They helped to prepare Slovakia for an independent and democratic existence several decades later. This is a reason for their popularity after 1989.

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Polish Precursors of United Europe

Grzegorz SMYK

ABSTRACT

The idea of a supra-state and transnational political unions in Europe has been present in Polish political thought since the beginning of modern times. It became the foundation for the creation of a common Polish-Lithuanian state in 1569 – the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, based on the principle of voluntary political union, equality of the constituent states, and respect for national differences and religious tolerance. Despite the fall of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth at the end of the 18th century, these ideas were adapted to the political programmes of Polish representatives of European political thought in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Even at the beginning of the 19th century, visionaries such as Prince Adam Jerzy Czartoryski proposed a supranational and pan-European agreement between superpowers and smaller European states, based on the principles of equality, political balance, peaceful coexistence and cooperation, as well as respect for national aspirations. Others, such as Walerian Krasiński or Franciszek Smolka, linked their hopes for a new, just European order and the preservation of Polish national identity with the idea of autonomy within the Slavic community (pan-Slavism) or the multinational Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. The visions of a united Europe remained alive in the Polish political doctrine of the interwar period. The traditions of the multicultural pre-partition Republic of Poland constituted the basis for the federal concepts offered to its former nations, on the grounds of equality and respect for their separateness (the Jagiellonian idea). In the views of political thinkers such as Witold Kamieniecki or Stefan Gużkowski, the Republic of Poland shaped in this way, was to serve as a bridge connecting the European nations in their opposition of German or Soviet expansion, and to build mutual relations between states based on common political and economic interests (Intermarium, Three Seas). The distinguishing features of the views of the Polish precursors of the idea of a united Europe were the beliefs that, in international relations, it is possible to reconcile national egoism with the desire to build supranational and pan-European structures, and that European nations, treated equally, are able to develop universally accepted principles of cooperation and peaceful coexistence.

KEYWORDS

Federalism, Panslawism, Jagiellonian Idea, Intermarium, Threeseas

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Introduction

The partitions and liquidation of the multinational Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth at the end of the 18th century opened a period of over one hundred years of struggle by Polish society and its political elites, for the independence of their state and rightful place for Poles among European nations. These aspirations, regardless of the political views of the theorists examined on individual concepts of the struggle for independence, were united by their determination to pursue the assumed goal and vision of a new, just political order in Europe and the place of the reborn Polish state within this order. Visionaries such as Prince Adam Jerzy Czartoryski, already at the beginning of the 19th century, proposed a supranational and pan-European agreement between superpowers and smaller European states, based on the principles of equality, political balance, peaceful coexistence and cooperation, as well as respect for national aspirations. Others, such as Walerian Krasiński or Franciszek Smolka, linked their hopes for a new, just European order and the preservation of Polish national identity with the idea of autonomy within the Slavic community (pan-Slavism) or the multinational Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Visions of a united Europe also remained alive in the Polish political doctrine of the interwar period. The traditions of the multicultural pre-partition Republic of Poland constituted the basis for federal concepts offered to its former nations, on the basis of equality and respect for their separateness (the Jagiellonian idea). In the views of political thinkers such as Witold Kamieniecki and Stefan Gużkowski, the Republic of Poland shaped in this way, was to serve as a bridge connecting European nations in their opposition of German or Soviet expansion and to build mutual relations between states based on common political and economic interests (Intermarium, Three Seas). The distinguishing features of the views of the Polish precursors of the idea of a united Europe were the beliefs that, in international relations, it is possible to reconcile national egoism with the desire to build supranational and pan-European structures, and that European nations, treated equally, are able to develop universally accepted principles of cooperation and peaceful coexistence.

1. Prince Adam Jerzy Czartoryski (1770–1861)¹

‘For several decades his name was repeated with admiration, reverence, dislike or hatred. He was one of the most famous Poles of his era; his name meant something not only to his compatriots, but also to the educated French, English and Russians’²



1.1. Life and achievements

Prince Adam Jerzy Czartoryski was one of the most prominent representatives of the Polish political elite at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries. He went down in the history of post-partition Poland as a statesman, patriot and founder of the political conservative-liberal camp in exile in France, the so-called Hotel Lambert.

In his activities, he combined political actions with the patronage of Polish culture and art. Through his life and dedication to the national cause, he gained a prominent place in the Polish national pantheon.³

Prince Adam Jerzy Czartoryski was born on 14 January 1770 to Prince Adam Kazimierz Czartoryski and Princess Izabela Czartoryska née Fleming in Warsaw. He received a thorough home education during his childhood and early youth, and his tutors were Gotfryd Ernest Groddeck and Grzegorz Piramowicz. As a result of their efforts and his own work, Prince Adam acquired a great knowledge of history, Polish and foreign political arrangements, classical languages, basic mathematics and the natural sciences. Apart from Polish, he was fluent in French, English, German, Russian and Italian. He was extremely hardworking and conscientious, and throughout his life, never stopped improving his mind and moral principles. In the years 1786–1791 he made many trips to European countries such as: Germany, France, the Netherlands, England and Scotland. Of particular importance to Prince Adam was his stay in Scotland and his studies at the University of Edinburgh. It was here that he became acquainted with British self-government institutions, the parliamentary and cabinet system, economic system and political life, on the basis of which he formulated his programme of liberal Toryism, to which he remained faithful throughout his life.⁴

1 Prince Adam Jerzy Czartoryski, Polish politician, unknown author, in: National Library of Poland, source of the picture: <https://polona.pl/item/ksiazka-adam-czartoryski-prezes-rzadu-narodowego-w-roku-1831,NTY5Mzg0Nw/>.

2 Szwarc, 2002, p. 45.

3 Skowronek, 1994, p. 6.

4 Handelsman, 1938, p. 257.

He returned to Poland in the spring of 1791. He was present at the adoption of the Constitution of May 3, of which he became an ardent advocate. He was also a member of the Assembly of Friends of the Constitution. In 1792, he joined the Polish army as a volunteer in its defence against the aggression of Russia and took part in military operations. He was awarded the highest Polish military order, the *Virtuti Militari* Cross, for his participation in the Battle of Granne. After with the loss against Russia, he left the army and travelled to Vienna, London and Brussels, where he stayed during the Kościuszko Uprising of 1794.⁵

After the final partition of Poland in 1795, Prince Adam returned to Poland and a year later, together with his brother Konstanty, went to St. Petersburg to seek the abolition of the sequestration of the Czartoryski family estate. He obtained this in exchange for joining the Russian service— which he did without enthusiasm and with a sense of humiliation. His time in Petersburg greatly influenced his political future. In 1796, he became friends with the heir to the Russian throne, Grand Duke Alexander, and became not only his adjutant but also an advocate of the Polish cause. After a short period of service as the Russian ambassador to the Kingdom of Sardinia in 1799–1801, Prince Adam returned to St. Petersburg where, together with the young heir to the Russian throne who was brought up in the spirit of liberalism, and with Pavel Stroganov and Nikolai Novosiltsov, formed an unofficial committee to prepare and carry out reforms of the Russian state. The effect was the reform of ministries and the Governing Senate in 1802 – both prepared by Czartoryski. Among the new authorities, Prince Adam took the position of Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and a member of the School Affairs Council. In 1803, he became the curator of the Vilnius scientific district covering the Polish lands that had been taken by Russia, where he preserved the Polish school system and expanded the network of primary schools with Polish as an official language. He also played a key role in the renewal of the Polish University in Vilnius. In 1824, he resigned from these functions in protest against the arrests of members of the secret society of students with Adam Mickiewicz at the head of the so-called *'philomaths and philarets'*.⁶

As the foreign minister of the Russian Empire in 1804–1806, Prince Adam Czartoryski was a strong supporter of the reconstruction of independent Poland in close connection with Russia. He presented his views on this matter to Emperor Alexander I in 1805 in Puławy, urging the Russian ruler to war not against France, but Prussia – this was the so-called *'Puławski Plan'* or *'Tschartoryskis Mordplan gegen Preussen'*. However, the emperor chose an alliance with Prussia against Napoleonic France, which ended with his defeat at Austerlitz and Czartoryski's. Despite the creation of a substitute for the Polish state under the name of the Duchy of Warsaw, Prince Adam remained loyal to the pro-Russian orientation. After Napoleon's attack on Russia in 1812, he resigned from the Russian service and went abroad.⁷

5 Ibid. 1938, p. 258.

6 Ibid.

7 Skowronek, 1994, p. 88.

Following the defeat of Napoleonic France in 1814, Czartoryski returned to active politics. During the Congress of Vienna, he became an official adviser to Tsar Alexander I. During the negotiations, he advocated for the preservation of the principle of European balance and respect for the distinctiveness of individual nations. In Poland's case, he proposed that Russian emperor take over the territory of the Duchy of Warsaw and to take part in the so-called '*taken governorates*', i.e., eight eastern Lithuanian-Belarusian governorates of the former Republic of Poland. He also proposed giving these lands the form of a constitutional monarchy, connected by a personal union with Russia (the so-called '*Chaumont plan*'). The result of these efforts was the creation of a constitutional Kingdom of Poland from the central Polish lands, connected by a personal union with the Russian Empire. Prince Adam himself participated in the development of the liberal constitution of the Kingdom, and became the president of its Provisional Government, and then a member of the Senate and Administrative Council of the Kingdom of Poland. He also contributed to the creation of the Free City of Kraków and the autonomous Grand Duchy of Poznań in the Prussian monarchy. However, he did not play a major role in the political life of the Kingdom of Poland. Thanks to Grand Duke Konstanty and Senator Nikolai Nowosiltcow – former friends from his youth – he was removed from political functions in the government of the Kingdom of Poland, and after the death of Tsar Alexander I in 1825, he joined the conservative opposition, which was critical of the violation of the constitution and combating all manifestations of freedom in the Kingdom. Prince Adam then focused on family matters – in 1817 he married Princess Anna Zofia née Sapieha – and the development of Polish education in the western governorates of the Russian Empire.⁸

He returned to active politics during the November Uprising. Following its outbreak on 29 November 1830, he accepted the position of the President of the Provisional Government, and then the head of the National Government, which he held until August 1831. Although as a realist, he was a strong opponent of the armed uprising against Russia, and as an ardent patriot, was involved in its continuation. In the first months of the uprising, he hoped for a settlement with Tsar Nicholas I and for a diplomatic intervention of the Western powers. He supported the dethronement of Tsar Nicholas I from the throne of the Kingdom of Poland, even though he was fully aware of the political consequences that he and his family would face. For his participation in the uprising, Tsar Nicholas I sentenced him to death in absentia, and ruled in favour of the confiscation of his property.⁹

After the fall of the uprising in September 1831, Prince Adam emigrated to Western Europe. He originally came to Great Britain, where, through old acquaintances, founded an association encouraging British public opinion to support the Polish cause – this was the Literary Association of the Friends of Poland. In 1833, he moved to France, where in Paris, he purchased the Hotel Lambert residence

8 Ibid. p. 92.

9 Handelsman, 1938, p. 259.

on Saint Louis Island, which became the center of activity of the conservative-liberal wing of the Polish emigration, known under the same name. As the leader of this camp, Prince Adam developed a lively diplomatic activity, envisioning the possibility of rebuilding independent Poland, in connection with the anti-Russian policy of the Western powers – mainly England and France. In anticipation of a European armed conflict against Russia, Prince Czartoryski tried to win over French and English politicians to the Polish cause and was involved in anti-Russian military actions of the Circassians in the Caucasus and Balkans, in an attempt to prevent the spread of the Russian idea of Pan-Slavism in those regions. In 1841, he established a permanent diplomatic agency in Istanbul, and in 1844, the same in Rome, seeking to win the favour of the Holy See for the Polish cause. The peak of Prince Adam Czartoryski's political activity and that of the political party of Hotel Lambert occurred the period of the Spring of Nations and Crimean War. In 1848, during the Spring of Nations, Prince Czartoryski hoped for the disintegration of the multinational Austrian monarchy. It was on his recommendation that General Wojciech Chrzanowski became the commander-in-chief of the Sardinian army, and General Józef Bem and General Henryk Dembiński took command positions during the Hungarian revolution. After the collapse of the Spring of Nations' revolutionary movement, the political camp led by Prince Adam Czartoryski continued to engage in anti-Russian actions. During the Crimean War 1853–1856, on his initiative, Polish military formations were created in Turkey to support the war effort of France, England, Turkey and Sardinia. After the Peace of Paris of 1856, which thwarted hopes of reviving the Polish cause in the international arena, Prince Adam Czartoryski gradually resigned from managing his political camp, handing over the leadership to his son Władysław. The final period of his political activity preceded the outbreak of the January Uprising against Russia in the Kingdom of Poland. During this period, Prince Czartoryski engaged in close cooperation with the leader of the 'white' camp, Count Andrzej Zamoyski, who represented the conservative and landed gentry elites of Polish society in the Kingdom of Poland. Their political programme was to fight for the restoration of constitutional freedoms to the citizens of the Kingdom, and in social matters – for the enfranchisement of peasants and the liquidation of feudal remnants, while maintaining the economic and political advantage of large landowners. Despite this programme being opposed by left-wing and centrist political groups in the country and abroad, Prince Adam Czartoryski enjoyed universal authority and respect until his death on 15 July 1861, in Montfermeil. With his death, his ideas were forgotten and his political camp – Hotel Lambert lost its importance.¹⁰

In addition to the political activities described above, Prince Adam Jerzy Czartoryski was also a patron of literature and science. From 1829 he was an active member of the Royal Society of Friends of Science in Warsaw. While in exile, he organised numerous literary, scientific, pedagogical and charitable associations. He was a

10 Ibid. p. 260.

co-founder of the Historical and Literary Society in 1832, president of the Society for Scientific Aid and the Polish Library in Paris (1838). His guests were outstanding representatives of Polish literature and music, such as Adam Mickiewicz, Juliusz Słowacki and Fryderyk Chopin. Prince Adam Czartoryski was also the author of poems *Bard Polski* from 1814 (published in Paris in 1840)¹¹ and, *Powązki* from 1818¹², translations Horace, Sophocles and Pindar from 1819¹³, historical dissertations *Królowa Jadwiga* from 1818¹⁴ and works in the field of politics *Thoughts striving to improve the living conditions of Polish peasants*, Poznań 1814¹⁵ and *Essai sur la diplomatie ou manuscrit d'un Philhellene. Publie par M. Toulouzan*, from 1827¹⁶. He also left behind two volumes of his memoirs that were published in French in Paris, in 1887.¹⁷ These were translated into Polish and published in Kraków in 1904–1905.¹⁸

1.2. Towards balance in European policy

Prince Adam Jerzy Czartoryski's political views and his visions of the European political order were influenced by many factors. These included: the nature of the young prince's upbringing and education, travels around Europe, political activity and deep Polish patriotism. The young prince's European profile began to emerge in his early youth thanks to a thorough education, the direction of which was set by his father Prince Adam Kazimierz Czartoryski – one of the most enlightened people of his era. The young prince, imbued with the ideas of the European Enlightenment, was able to quickly confront them with the political events of the period of the reforms of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the era of the Great Sejm 1788–1792. The observation of the first sessions of the Great Sejm, convened to carry out thorough political and social reforms of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, left a deep impression on Prince Adam. It was a time of great hope, heated political discussions and a lively patriotic atmosphere, which the young statesman personally absorbed while living in Warsaw. Prince Adam Czartoryski's European nature was shaped by his travels abroad, during which he not only got acquainted with the political institutions of the leading countries of Western Europe – from France's Ancien Régime to the parliamentary monarchy in Great Britain – but also absorbed new intellectual and political trends that heralded profound political changes in Europe of that time. Thanks to these trips and contacts with representatives of the political and intellectual elites of these countries, Czartoryski became a part of the same. His fluency in foreign languages, social position and charming manner allowed him to easily break through the facade of strangeness, and quickly find

11 Czartoryski, 1814a, passim.

12 Czartoryski, 1818b, passim.

13 Czartoryski, Translations, 1818.

14 Czartoryski, 1818a, passim.

15 Czartoryski, 1814b, passim.

16 Czartoryski, 1830, passim.

17 Czartoryski, 1887, passim.

18 Czartoryski, 1904–1905, passim.

common ground for discussion and exchange of views. His excellent education also allowed him to contextualise his accumulated knowledge and impressions. As his biographer wrote, *'Europe ceased to be a 'abroad' for him, it began to appear to him as a specific civilizational whole, the components of which showed many differences, but even more common features'*.¹⁹ These common features are: Hellenic, Roman and Christian tradition. He was to build his vision of the future united Europe on them. The paradox was that he could not implement them in his own country, which had disappeared from the map of Europe, but only in cooperation with foreign courts.²⁰

Two periods can be distinguished in the formation of Prince Adam Czartoryski's views on the political future of Europe. The first is the period of Tsar Alexander I's cooperation with Russia and hopes for building a European order based on the anti-Napoleonic and anti-Prussian alliance of Russia and Great Britain, reformed in the spirit of the Enlightenment. The second is the period after the death of Alexander I, the defeat of the Polish November Uprising, and his and the prince's emigration to France, where he created a conservative-liberal political camp and saw the future of the European order in the Franco-British alliance directed against the despotic Russia of Nicholas I.²¹

Prince Czartoryski's views on European relations in the *'Russian'* period coincided with the hegemony of Napoleonic France, whose monarch, having proclaimed himself emperor in 1804, aimed to unite Europe within the so-called Grand Empire. In this empire, drawing clear reference to the time of Charlemagne, there was no room for other powers, and smaller states were to submit to French military and political domination. Czartoryski was a strong opponent of this *'Napoleonic system'*, which was based on the principle of subordination of states and nations. In 1803, he expressed his views in two memoranda addressed to Emperor Alexander I: *'Sur le système politique que devrait suivre la Russie'*²² and *'On national self-determination as the basis of an independent existence'*.²³ He saw Europe as a voluntary union of states – a federation, based on the principles of respecting the sovereignty of courts and nations. The principle of nationality should be regarded as a particularly important element of Czartoryski's views. Speaking of the nation, Czartoryski meant not an ethnic community but a community of culture, language, historical experiences and folk traditions, one often unnaturally divided by the borders of dynastic states, oppressed and deprived of the possibility of free development within its own political organisation, just like the Polish, German or Italian communities. Consequently, he argued that ensuring lasting peace in Europe or achieving international cooperation within the framework of a voluntary and permanent association of states was impossible, if the independence or unification aspirations of individual European nations were not met. The second element distinguishing Czartoryski's

19 Łukaszewski, 2002, pp. 51–52.

20 Ibid. p. 53.

21 Kukiel, 1955, pp. 3–12.

22 Czartoryski, 1986b, pp. 504–560.

23 Czartoryski, 1986a, *passim*.

pro-European views was the principle of balance. According to him, the eternal aspirations for hegemony, tensions and armed conflicts between European states were the result of too great disproportions between individual states. Therefore, he proposed that the great powers should be counterbalanced by voluntary federations of smaller states. Czartoryski considered to the creation of a German federation but without Prussia and Austria, and an Italian and Balkan federation necessary. According to him, an important element of the future European order was the adoption by states of liberal institutions and a representative form of government. Finally, the durability of supra-state unions of European states needed to be based on an agreement, that is, a kind of European constitution that obliged its signatories to maintain peace, observe the rules and norms of international law, and respect state sovereignty. In order to ensure the sense of security of the signatories of such a union and to maintain universal peace in Europe, Czartoryski allowed for the possibility of intervention in the event of a violation of the accepted norms in international relations. As the foreign minister of Russia in 1804–1806, Czartoryski attempted to implement these views, seeking an anti-French agreement between Russia and England, at the expense of Prussia and Austria. Despite Tsar Alexander I's initial enthusiasm for this idea, in 1805 Russia chose an alliance with Prussia and Prince Adam was dismissed; as a result, he left active politics.²⁴

Czartoryski returned to the idea of creating a pan-European political order and creating a system of European security and balance in 1814 during the Congress of Vienna, as a special plenipotentiary of Tsar Alexander I. As a result of the final acts of this summit of rulers and representatives of European powers, the political principles and institutions that were the foundation of Prince Adam Czartoryski's European doctrine of were established. The decisions of the Congress of Vienna in the years 1814–1815 were based on the principle of European balance, preventing excessive territorial growth and hegemony of any of the superpowers. The principle of nationality was implemented by creating a supra-state confederated German Union, the Kingdom of Poland, with the right of Poles living in the Polish territories belonging to Russia, Prussia and Austria to freely develop their culture and national identity. After 1815, out of 83 European countries, as many as 57 adopted constitutions. Finally, the Holy Alliance, established in 1815, despite all its shortcomings, was the first supra-state, international organisation to guard the observance of the provisions and principles of the Congress of Vienna and the foundations of international law created there.²⁵

The Congress of Vienna marked the peak of the success of Prince Adam Czartoryski's political doctrine in the international arena. Most of his ideas were implemented in the final act of the Congress and remained mostly unchanged until the beginning of the 20th century. Czartoryski remained faithful to these ideas until the end of his life. However, his attitude towards Russia and its role in Europe under

24 Dupuis, 1929, *passim*.

25 Wandycz, 1953, p. 17.

the rule of Tsar Nicholas I changed. Czartoryski presented his views on this subject in *'Essai sur la diplomatie'* – written in 1827 and published in Marseilles in 1830. In the essay, he emphasised the risk in maintaining balance and European security from despotic Russia and its aspirations for expansion in the Balkans and breaking the autonomy of the Kingdom of Poland. In this situation, he saw the preservation of general peace and the political unity of Europe through a close political alliance between France and England, as able to oppose the despotism of imperial Russia.²⁶

Throughout his life, Prince Adam Czartoryski remained an ardent Polish patriot. However, he always combined his patriotism with concern for the future and unity of Europe. As a realist, he always associated the Polish cause with current international politics, always looking for an opportunity for Poland to regain independence. However, he did not forget about other nations either. In the name of historical justice, preservation of peace and European balance, he supported the national aspirations of the Hungarians and the Balkan nations. Therefore, it should be recognised that Prince Adam Czartoryski's ideas and principles served as the precursor on which the modern system of balance, European security and the supranational union of nation states within the European Union is based.²⁷

2. Walerian Krasiński (1795–1855)²⁸

*'Poles will not lose more by becoming Slavs than Scots by becoming British.'*²⁹

2.1. Life and achievements

Walerian Krasiński Skorobohaty was a political activist during the November Uprising and the Great Emigration. He was also a historian, publicist, translator and publisher. He was born in 1795 in Lithuania to Zygmunt Krasiński, a nobleman impoverished after the partitions of Poland. His family descended from the Calvinist line of the Krasiński family – Skorobohaty (Borzobahaty) from Krasne.³⁰ Wincenty received his initial education in Kiejdany, and then studied history and philosophy at the Vilnius University from 1818 to 1822, which was the best period of its activity. His teacher was the outstanding Polish historian Joachim Lelewel, and his colleagues were Tomasz Zan and Adam Mickiewicz. After graduation, he moved to Warsaw, the capital of the, then Kingdom of Poland, where he took up a job in the Government Commission (ministry) of Religious Denominations and Public Enlightenment in the Department of Religious Affairs. He was active in the Warsaw community of the Evangelical-Reformed Church. As an official administering the affairs of non-Christian confession, he contributed to the revival of the Jewish rabbinic school.

26 Czartoryski, 1830, passim.

27 Henning, 1992, pp. 3–25.

28 Picture not found.

29 Krasiński, 1848, p. 87.

30 Górczyk, 2019, pp. 37–56.

He quickly became a well-known person in Warsaw's intellectual circles. In 1826 in Warsaw, Krasieński founded the first *stereotypowa* printing house in Poland, where he published Franciszek Karpiński's *'Psalterz Dawidowy'*, translations of numerous novels by Walter Scott, and *'The Polish Encyclopedia'*.³¹ In 1829, in recognition of his merits, he was honored by Tsar Nicholas I with the title of Cameroon.³²

After the beginning of the November Uprising in 1830, Krasieński, like his former teacher and now the leader of the democratic party, Joachim Lelewel, became an ardent advocate of extending the Polish uprising to Lithuania and Russia, hoping for the creation of a pan-Slavic monarchy. In 1831, he was sent to England by the insurgent National Government, in order to support Margrave Aleksander Wielopolski, Aleksander Walewski and Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz, who were actively working there for the Polish cause. After the uprising's failure, he remained in England, residing in London and then Edinburgh. While in exile, Krasieński took up academic work, publishing works on the history of the Reformation, Polish history, politics and religion. He knew several Slavic and Western European languages, and was fluent in English, German and French. He maintained an animated correspondence with booksellers and publishers from various countries, successfully soliciting the translation and editing of his works in their countries.³³ The work that brought him scientific fame was a two-volume history of the Reformation in Poland, published in English in the years 1838–1840 under the title: *'Historical Sketch of the Rise, Progress and Decline of Reformation in Poland and of the Influence which the Spiritual Doctrines Have Exercised on that Country in Literary, Moral and Political Respects.'*³⁴ This work aroused interest in Polish affairs in the Anglican Church circles in Great Britain, and the French and German translations brought Krasieński political and scientific recognition in Germany, France and Switzerland. As a result, Krasieński became a scientist known throughout Europe. In 1845 and in the following years he was a lecturer at the University of Cambridge.³⁵

Krasieński's scientific fame helped him establish scientific, political and social contacts. In 1844, in London, he met the Prussian ambassador Christian Karl von Bunsen, who was fascinated by his work on the Reformation. Quickly, a bond of friendship was formed between them, based on common faith, philosophy of life and political views. Through Bunsen, Krasieński's work reached the King of Prussia, from whom he received a personal letter of praise, gold medal and offer to take a chair at the University of Berlin (an honour he politely declined).³⁶ Krasieński used his close acquaintance with Bunsen to convey to the Berlin court the political suggestions of Prince Adam Czartoryski's Hotel Lambert regarding the Prussian policy towards Poles in the Prussian partition. Krasieński's pro-Prussian position

31 Okopień, 2002, pp. 23–35.

32 Paszkiewicz, 1970, p. 192.

33 Ibid. pp. 193–194.

34 Krasieński, 1838–1840, passim.

35 Paszkiewicz, 1970, p. 194.

36 Ibid.

reached its apogee during the Spring of Nations. In March 1848, Krasiński sent the ‘*Memorial of March 27, 1848*’ to the King of Prussia, Frederick William IV, regarding Prussian support for the Polish cause.³⁷ This document, drafted with the participation and approval of Bunsen, assumed the reconstruction of independent Poland in alliance with Prussia and Great Britain, thereby forming a bloc of countries that would inhibit Russia’s and Austria’s hegemony in Eastern and Southern Europe. He proposed the proclamation of the Kingdom of Poland headed by Prince Wilhelm Waldemar Hohenzolern, the announcement of a Polish levy and Prussia’s declaration of war on Russia. In an equally utopian manner, Krasiński outlined the prospects and benefits of a future Polish–Prussian union. Its foundation was to be a political and economic union, modeled on the structure of the German Confederation (political union) and Customs Union (economic union). For Prussia, the connection with the future Poland united at the expense of Russia and Austria – according to Krasiński, clearly inspired by Bunsen – the benefits were obvious. Poland, rich in raw materials and labor, could become the driving force of the Prussian economy and its natural market. Its vast, sparsely populated in the eastern provinces would serve the overpopulated German countries, and the population influx would contribute to the economic and cultural development of this part of Poland. It is evident that in such an alliance, Poland would be a weaker partner and would only constitute an economic base for Prussia and, in the future, a united Germany. The course of the Spring of Nations thwarted these hopes and plans. As a result of the anti-Polish actions of the Prussian government and army against Poles in the Poznań province (regular warfare with Polish military units), Krasiński departed from the pro-Prussian orientation in his views. Krasiński’s (Bunsen’s) memorial was not supported by any of the Polish emigration groups, and went unnoticed; today, it is known only to historians.³⁸

2.2. From Pangermism to Pan Slavism

Krasiński expressed his disappointment with Prussia’s attitude on the Polish matter in his book ‘*Panslavism and Germanism*’, published in London in 1848, outlining the future of Poland’s reconstruction within the Slavic federation under Russia’s leadership.³⁹ Thus, rejecting the pro-Prussian orientation, Krasiński became a spokesperson for the pan-Slavic idea. Pan-Slavism is an ideological and political movement developed during the Habsburg Monarchy in the mid-1820s. The first person to use this expression was the Slovak publicist Jan Herkel (1786–1853) in his work entitled ‘*Elementa universalis linguae Slavicae e vivis dialectis eruta et sanis logicae principiis suffulta*’, published in Buda in 1826, to mark the cultural and linguistic unity of the Slavic people.⁴⁰ The political interpretation of the term ‘*Pan-Slavism*’ gained

37 Knapowska, 1948, pp. 169–186.

38 Ibid. pp. 178–185.

39 Krasiński, 1848, passim.

40 Herkel, 1826, passim.

significance during the Spring of Nations, and was promoted mainly by Czech and Slovak activists (Frantisek Palacky, Pavel Safarik, Jan Dvoracek). On their initiative, the Slavic Congress was held in Prague from 2 June 1848 to 14 June 1848. The programme manifesto adopted at this Congress announced the creation of an all-Slavic federation within which there should be no borders other than those set by the will of individual Slavic nations in the spirit of justice and respect for sovereignty and democracy. The Congress also adopted the design of the Slavic flag and the anthem ('*Hey Slavs*'). The implementation of this programme was thwarted by the restoration of absolute rule in the Habsburg Monarchy (the so-called '*Bach era*') and the Russian intervention in Hungary. Nevertheless, the idea of Pan-Slavism remained alive in the intellectual life of many Slavic nations in Europe, leading to the introduction of political concepts such as Illyrianism, Yugoslavism and Austroslavism.⁴¹ For Poles, the attractiveness of pan-Slavic ideas was weakened by the expected participation of Russia – the main opponent of Polish ideas of independence. This was in stark contrast to the anti-Russian political programmes of the Polish émigré groups, such as the liberal Polish Democratic Society or Prince Adam Jerzy Czartoryski's conservative Hotel Lambert camp. As a result, pan-Slavic ideas did not influence the political views of representatives of the Polish Great Emigration, and they did not gain – apart from a few – recognition. Among those few was Walerian Krasiński, for whom '*Pan-Slavism*' became the antithesis of '*Pan-Germanism*'.

According to the findings of Alexander Maxwel, who researched '*Pan-Slavism*' ideas and movements, Krasiński was most probably introduced to the idea of Pan-Slavism through Slovak Lutheran pastor Jan Kollar's book titled '*Ueber die literarische Wechselseitigkeit zwischen den verschiedenen Stämmen und Mundarten der slavischen Nation*' (*Reciprocity between different tribes and dialects of the Slavic nation*), which published in Pest in 1837.⁴² This work indicated the common origin of the Slavic peoples, their linguistic and cultural impendence. According to Kollar, this '*Slavic reciprocity*' is so deep that one can speak of one Slavic nation, although under the rule of different powers.⁴³ When publishing his work, Kollar had no political ambitions. He called on related Slavic peoples to engage in mutual respect and cooperation in the cultural field, regardless of their nationality. Kollar's Pan-Slavism was therefore not political, but only cultural.⁴⁴

Krasiński combined Kollar's vision of a single Slavic nation with purely Polish political goals, thereby giving the '*Pan-Slavic*' idea a political character. He understood '*Pan-Slavism*' as the unification of the Slavic nations into a supranational federation under the aegis of Russia. At the same time, he emphasised the voluntary nature of such a union and respect for the linguistic, cultural and religious distinctiveness of the united Slavic peoples. Unlike Kollar, who intended the principle

41 Moraczewski, 1848, pp. 2–56.

42 Kollar, 1837, passim.

43 Maxwel, 2008, pp. 101–120.

44 Pynsent, 1994, pp. 83–100.

of '*Slavic reciprocity*' to transform every Czech, Slovak or Pole into a Slavo-Czech, Slavo-Slovak or Slavo-Pole, Krasiński believed that this idea can be reconciled with the preservation of national identity, thereby creating not a Slavo-Pole, but Pole-Slav. He stated, '*Poles will not lose more by becoming Slavs than Scots by becoming British*'.⁴⁵ Through this process, Krasiński tried to reconcile Polish patriotism with the political necessity of cooperation with the strongest Slavic country – Russia, which he saw as a force capable not only of the territorial reconstruction of Poland, but also creating a Slavic empire to oppose German expansion in Europe. According to Krasiński, in the near future, Russia, joined by an alliance and interests with France, would expand into German countries and take over all Slavic lands, including the Polish ones, extending as far as the Oder River. France at this time would shift its borders, at the expense of Germany, to the river Rhine. In this way, the German countries caught between the Oder and Rhine would be unable to continue their current political role in Europe, and their place would be taken by the Slavic federation. This federation would include all Slavic peoples, although at different times. Its membership would be voluntary. All Slavic nations and their states would be connected by the bond of an equal personal union with the Tsar of Russia as its president, rather than a self-serving ruler. The foundation of such a union was supposed to be the Polish–Russian agreement, which would form the core of its power and importance in Europe.⁴⁶

According to Krasiński, in such a vision of the future of Europe, the Russian-Polish alliance could mutually benefit both parties. Thanks to the unification of lands at the expense of Prussia and Austria, Russia would become the most powerful force in continental Europe, capable of stopping German expansion, and leading to the liberation of the Balkan Slavs from Turkish authority. A territorially united Poland, connected by a voluntary and equal personal union with Russia, would become an area of freedom and social equality, as well as religious tolerance (diversity in unity). Its system and social reforms (e.g., abolition of serfdom and enfranchisement of peasants) would spread to Russia, influencing similar internal reforms. In other words, Krasiński saw '*Pan-Slavism*' as an opportunity for a tactical Polish-Russian alliance, in order to unite Polish lands and rebuild Polish statehood.⁴⁷ However, the proposal of a Polish–Russian union within the Slavic federation did not find supporters either in Russia or in Polish emigration circles. Krasiński himself abandoned this idea before the end of the decade, on seeing Russia sinking into the despotism of Nicholas I and his fight against all freedom movements in Europe.⁴⁸

In the last years of his life, Krasiński dealt with issues of current politics. The outbreak of the Crimean War in 1853 prompted him to publish a series of essays

45 Krasiński, 1848, p. 87.

46 Ibid. pp. 87–144.

47 Ibid. p. 226.

48 Maxwell, 2008, pp. 117–119.

on the importance of the Polish cause in international politics, and its significance for the new European order expected after the war. In 1854, *'Russia and Europe, or the Probable Consequences of the Present War'*⁴⁹, *'Russia, Poland and Europe; or the Inevitable Consequences of the Present War.'*⁵⁰ and in 1855 – *'Is the Power of Russia to be Reduced or Increased by the Present War?'*⁵¹ and *'Opinions of Napoleon the First on Russia and Poland Expressed at St. Helena, With their Adaptation to the Present War'*⁵². Through these publications, he presented to British politicians as well as the British public, the need to rebuild independent Poland as a necessary barrier to protect Europe from the despotism and imperialism of Russia, and a guarantor of European balance and universal peace. These views were inspired by the political goals of Prince Adam Czartoryski's Hotel Lambert camp, with whom Krasiński sympathised.⁵³

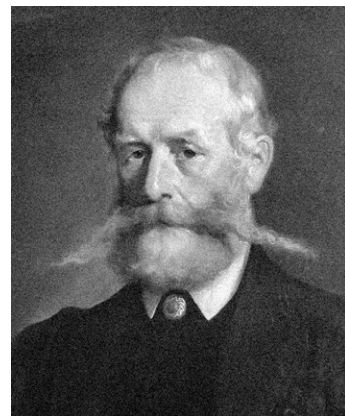
Walerian Krasiński devoted the last year of his life to developing and editing a monumental work on the history of Poland, titled *'Poland, its History, Constitution, Literature, Morals, Customs'*, which he was unable to complete. He died childless on 22 December 1855 in Edinburgh and was buried there.⁵⁴

3. Franciszek Smolka (1810–1899)⁵⁵

*'Give the peoples united under the scepter of Austria liberties adapted to their separate needs [...] and you will build a free, strong and powerful Austria.'*⁵⁶

3.1. Life and achievements

Franciszek Jan Smolka, a Polish attorney, independence conspirator, Galician and Austrian politician, was born on 5 November 1810 in Kałusz. He was the son of Wincenty Smolka, an officer of the Austrian Lancers, and Anna Nemetha, a Polish woman of Hungarian descent. He received his initial education in middle schools in Drohobych, Sambor and Lvov. Franciszek Smolka then took up law studies at



49 Krasiński, 1854a, passim.

50 Krasiński, 1854b, passim.

51 Krasiński, 1855a, passim.

52 Krasiński, 1855b, passim.

53 Nowak, 1994, p. 347.

54 Paszkiewicz, 1970, p. 195.

55 Franciszek Jan Smolka, Polish-Austrian politician, painting of Sigmund Nadel, in: Historian Museum Lemberg, Creative Commons CC0 1.0 Universal Public Domain Dedication, source of the picture: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Franciszek_Smolka_1810-1899.jpg.

56 Smolka, 1861, p. 78.

the, then-Germanised, University of Lvov, graduating in 1831. However, due to his family's difficult financial situation, he did not open a lawyer's practice, but took a job with the Austrian tax administration in Lvov. In 1834, he joined a secret Polish independence organisation, the Association of People's Friends, ideologically associated with the Polish Democratic Society in exile. In 1836, he received a doctorate in law at the University of Lvov, and four years later opened his own law firm in the city. In 1840 he married the daughter of a high Austrian official – Leokadia Becker von Salzheim, and had three sons: Władysław, Karol and Stanisław, and a daughter, Jadwiga.⁵⁷

Franciszek Smolka's underground activity came to an end with his arrest in 1841. He spent over three and a half years in prison, including over a year in a single cell. In 1845, he was sentenced to death for treason. The sentence was announced to him along with the emperor's pardon. Smolka was able to retain his life and freedom, but was deprived of his doctorate and attorney's rights. Following his release from prison, he gave up political activity. He did not participate in the '*Cracow Uprising*' in February and March 1846, which he considered devoid of military chances.⁵⁸

The year 1848 was decisive in Franciszek Smolka's political career. Upon learning about the events of the '*Springtime of Nations*' in Paris, Berlin and Vienna, a Citizens' Committee was established in Lvov on 18 March 1848. The leading roles in this committee were played by lawyers: Franciszek Smolka and Florian Ziemiałkowski – Smolka's friend from during his conspiracy and arrest, and his greatest future adversary. They were co-authors of the petition of the inhabitants of the Kingdoms of Galicia and Lodomeria to Emperor Ferdinand I, in which they demanded: the abolition of serfdom and the enfranchisement of peasants; convening of a national parliament; establishment of municipal government; establishment of juries; organisation of folk education; national guard; and freedom of printing and an amnesty for those persecuted for their political beliefs. In May and June 1848, Smolka took part in the Slavic Congress in Prague as an envoy of the Lvov National Council. He assessed the congress negatively, pointing out that the majority of delegates were in favour of Pan-Slavism based on '*wild and despotic Russia*', which, in his opinion, was incompatible with Polish democratism and patriotism. In June 1848, Smolka was elected as deputy to the Sejm of Vienna (Reichstag). At the same time, his attorney's rights were revoked, and a year later his doctoral degree was reinstated. In the Chamber of Deputies, Smolka became known as an active politician and an excellent speaker, gaining recognition not only in the Polish circle, but also from representatives of other nationalities and deputies, who elected him vice-chairman of the Chamber. During the September 1848 Viennese Revolution, 1848, Smolka exhibited extraordinary firmness and personal courage. Being in the minority, he voted for the admission of the deputies

57 Kieniewicz, 1999, pp. 314–315.

58 Pol, 2000, pp. 200–201.

of the Hungarian Sejm, and tried mediate between the revolutionaries on the barricades and the army; he also organised the Viennese National Guard. Following Antonin Strobach's resignation, Smolka became the president of the Chamber of Deputies. He also maintained this function after the Sejm sessions were moved from Vienna to Kromeryž. On 8 January 1849, Franciszek Smolka gave one of his most important speeches in the Sejm, in defense of the federalist principles of the draft constitution, a concept to which he would remain faithful for the rest of his political activity:

[...] Give the peoples united under the scepter of Austria liberties adapted to their separate needs and to the requirements of the spirit of the times – respect their national independence as far as it is compatible with the interests of the state as a whole – do not hinder their free development along the routes marked out by their past – leave intact their historical memories and treat those memories as they deserve – and you will build a free, strong and powerful Austria.⁵⁹

However, Smolka's pleas was not heeded to. By a 7 March 1849 decree, the emperor dissolved the Sem of Kromeryž. Smolka considered this decree illegal and withdrew from political life. He returned to Lvov, where he began practicing as an attorney.⁶⁰

Smolka returned to active politics after ten years – during the period of structural reconstruction of the Habsburg Monarchy. In 1860, he supported Count Agenor Gołuchowski's efforts to transform the multinational Monarchy into a federation of autonomous crown countries. These efforts resulted in the famous '*October Diploma*' issued by Emperor Franz Joseph I on 20 October 1860, which aimed at implementing the federalist concept.⁶¹ Following Gołuchowski's resignation and the return of Austrian policy to centralist rule, embodied by Prime Minister Anton Schmerling, Smolka began to defend the autonomous rights of Galician society. In April 1861, he was elected a councilor of the Lvov City Council, member of the Galician National Parliament. and member of the Viennese State Council. In the National Sejm, he represented the democratic left, and in the Viennese State Council – the conservative right, because such a political position was occupied by the Polish Circle. In the State Council, Smolka quickly became known as an outstanding orator. He received particular recognition for his parliamentary speeches on respecting the personal inviolability of deputies, and his defense of individual nationalities of the Habsburg Monarchy, particularly Hungary. As an unwavering supporter of a federation of nations under the Habsburg Monarchy, he worked on extending the scope of autonomy of individual Crown countries, outlined for

59 Smolka, 1861, p. 78.

60 Wildman, 1883, pp. 21–43.

61 Grodziski, 1976, pp. 12–23.

them in the imperial '*February Patent*' of 26 February 1861. As efforts to transform the Habsburg Monarchy into a federal state met with strong opposition from the '*centrists*' and the emperor himself, Smolka resigned from his role in the Viennese State Council.⁶²

He returned to Lvov, where, as a member of the National Department of the National Sejm, he devoted himself to the work to extend the scope of autonomy within Galicia. To achieve this, together with Florian Ziemiałkowski, he founded '*Dziennik Polski*', edited by Karol d'Abancourt. Immediately preceding the outbreak of the January Uprising in the Kingdom of Poland, he joined the secret Committee of Eastern Galicia, where he tried to support the uprising, albeit not militarily – which he was against – but only diplomatically.⁶³

In 1865, Smolka returned to the Viennese political scene on the Austrian Prime Minister Richard Belcredi's request to compile a memorial on the condition and political aspirations of Galicia. In this memorial, Smolka pointed to the changes expected by the Galician society, emphasising the need to extend the scope of autonomy granted to it. Simultaneously, he persistently forced his idea of rebuilding the multinational Habsburg Monarchy into a federation, which gained him recognition in Hungary and the Czech Republic.⁶⁴ After the conclusion of the Austro-Hungarian agreement ('*Ausgleich*' of 1867) and the transformation of the Danube Monarchy into a dualistic Austro-Hungarian state, Smolka began making efforts to grant Poles and Czechs such distinction as achieved by the Hungarians. For this purpose, in 1868–1869, he published '*Political Letters*', in which he warned Austrian politicians against the Russian Tsardom's possessiveness, pointing out that the Habsburg Monarchy could only survive if it fairly resolved the problems of the Slavic nations inhabiting it.⁶⁵ At the same time, in 1868, Smolka founded the National-Democratic Society, which, referring to the Polish Democratic Society in exile, proclaimed the following postulates: equality of citizens, democratisation of the electoral system and political system of the state, improvement of social relations, extension of self-government, and national autonomy of Galicia under the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, who cultivated national traditions and strived to regain independence by Poland.⁶⁶ He was against the excessive – in his opinion – conciliatory attitude of the members of the Polish Circle in Vienna. However, his demands not gain significant support. He actively participated in the sessions of the Viennese State Council, holding the office of its president, from which he resigned in 1893 at the age of 83. He became famous for his ability to resolve procedural issues and curb the chauvinistic excesses of radical German and Czech members of parliament. He died on 4 December 1899 in Lvov and was buried there at the Łyczakowski Cemetery.

62 Pol, 2000, p. 207.

63 Ibid. p. 207.

64 Dziadzio, 1998, pp. 91–92.

65 Smolka, 1868–1869, passim.

66 Panenkowa, 1918, pp. 197–213.

In 1913, the city's grateful society funded the construction of a monument dedicated to him. Franciszek Smolka's literary legacy includes: *'The Peoples of Austria'* Vienna 1848⁶⁷, *'Speeches'*, Lvov 1861⁶⁸ and *'Political Letters about Russia and Poland'*, Lvov 1868–1869.⁶⁹

3.2. Federalism and autonomy of the nations of the Habsburg Monarchy

Franciszek Smolka was one of the most outstanding representatives of the Polish political elite of the 19th century. He represented the democratic trend, which not only aimed to win Poland's independence, but also to democratize its system and ensure just social relations. However, he had to act in political circumstances that ruled out an effective fight for independence, which he experienced when he was repressed for his conspiracy activities. The only option was to work legitimately, under the legal and systemic conditions of the Habsburg Monarchy, which included the Polish lands of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, now called the Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria. Smolka was presented the opportunity to actively participate in the turbulent political transformations of the Danubian Monarchy during the Spring of Nations, as well as during the political transformations of the 1860s. As a representative of Galician society, he was involved with almost all the Austrian representative bodies of that period, with the ability to influence the direction of their agenda. For over half a century, he presented his views with unwavering consistency, seeking support for them in real politics. His contemporary, Kazimierz Chłędowski, wrote about him the following:

[...] Smolka had his *idée fixe* in politics, certain, so to speak, unearthly faith in the rightness of his views, and he considered himself a providential man of Austria. This faith allowed him to persevere on the principles and political goals adopted during the Spring of Nations.⁷⁰

Franciszek Smolka was primarily a democrat. He recognised the right of every citizen to participate in public life. He considered universal suffrage to be the foundation of this right, for which he fought unsuccessfully throughout his political career. He demanded equality for all citizens before the law, abolition of serfdom, and enfranchisement of peasants. He considered the existence of self-government institutions, freedom of speech, printing, religious and political beliefs, and the creation of independent juries to protect them as guarantees of individual public rights of citizens. Franciszek Smolka understood political freedom as the right of every citizen to participate directly in the institutions of parliamentary democracy.

67 Smolka, 1848, *passim*.

68 Smolka, 1861, *passim*.

69 Smolka, 1868–1869, *passim*.

70 Chłędowski, 1957, p. 271.

He expected state authorities to act on the basis and within the limits of the law (*Rechtsstaat*). As a legalist and thoroughly honest man, he ruled out behind-the-scenes activities in politics, as well as failure to honour concluded agreements and promises. He understood political struggle as a clash of arguments and rights presented openly in the parliamentary forum, while observing legal procedures. He was a politician with unshakable moral principles, and unchanging views and political goals. He rejected political corruption, as he repeatedly proved by his refusal to accept high state positions in exchange for resigning from defending his political views.⁷¹

Smolka was also an ardent Polish patriot. This was evident not only by his engagement with underground pro-independence activities, but also all his subsequent public actions. He understood patriotism as respect for national values and traditions combined with work for his country. He never gave up on the overarching goal of regaining Polish independence. He expressed this sentiment directly, at the State Council on May 29, 1861: *'We always consider Poland, although torn, to be one and uniform whole, and we believe that it has not perished yet.'*⁷² He considered Russia to be the greatest threat to the Polish cause and European order. In *Political Letters about Russia and Poland*, published in 1868–1869, he warned against Russian despotism and expansionism and pointed out that the Austrian Monarchy would only be able to resist it if it managed to solve the basic problems of its own Slavic nations in a just manner.⁷³ Smolka was a realist in his championing of Polish causes. He rejected armed struggle, focusing on goals that could be achieved legally within the political system of the Habsburg Monarchy. As mentioned earlier, he considered such a goal to be the transformation of the Habsburg Monarchy into a federal state, respecting the identity and rights of the nations inhabiting it, including Poles in Galicia.⁷⁴

As a supporter of federalism, Smolka believed that the multinational character of the Habsburg Monarchy required equality of rights of the nations inhabiting it, and respect for their political autonomy. In order to achieve this goal and simultaneously maintain the Monarchy's political unity, its existing centralist system should be transformed into a federation of crown countries with equal rights, giving their inhabitants autonomous rights and freedom to appoint their own political representation, self-government and cultural and educational institutions, while preserving foreign policy and military as affairs of the central government. Smolka's federalist concept meant not only decentralisation but, above all, far-reaching political autonomy of the Crown countries. The federal character of the Habsburg state was to determine its strength and firmness, and prevent internal tensions and secessionist aspirations of individual nations.

71 Kieniewicz, 1999, pp. 315–316.

72 Smolka, 1861, p. 112.

73 Smolka, 1868–1869, pp. 37–43.

74 Ibid. pp. 39–40.

Through federalism interpreted in this manner, Smolka became a spokesperson for understanding and cooperation between the nations of the Habsburg state. Remembering his Galician mandate, he guarded the inviolability of the interests of all crown countries of the Habsburg Monarchy, represented in the Chamber of Deputies of the Council of State.⁷⁵

The idea of a federation of nations under the Habsburg Monarchy, in the form presented by Franciszek Smolka to Polish political parties, forced them to go beyond their own particular interests and encouraged them to broad international cooperation. Unfortunately, the idea was not accepted by the noble deputies of the Polish Circle in the Viennese Council of State, to which, nolens volens, Smolka was also a part of. For Smolka, the ultimate goal was the creation of the federation, whereas the nobility was content with autonomy. In the existing social and economic relations, the federation in Galicia meant the unlimited power of the Polish nobility in Galicia. Yet, they did not believe in the feasibility of the federalist concept and could not agree with Smolka's strategy to achieve this goal – i.e., following the example of the Czechs, through permanent opposition to the central government and cooperation with all nationalities of the Habsburg Monarchy. Thus, Smolka's political activities related to the entire Monarchy, unlike the Polish deputies from Galicia, for whom involvement in domestic affairs made them hostages of Viennese politics. Smolka's powerlessness and helplessness in the activities of the Viennese parliament testified to the weakness of Galician democracy. While in the National Sejm, the deputies – democrats could pursue their own policy, in Vienna they were at the mercy of noble politicians.⁷⁶

However, despite numerous disappointments and setbacks, Smolka remained a consistent federalist. Hence his positive attitude towards *'the Hungarian settlement'*, which he saw as an introduction to the federalization of the entire Monarchy. For this reason, he made efforts to cooperate with the Czechs and autonomists from other Austrian provinces and Crown countries. Due to his consistency and uncompromising character in the fight for the rights of nations, Smolka gained universal respect and was held in high esteem in the country. At the end of his life, he resigned himself to the impossibility of achieving his federalist dreams. He enjoyed the fame of a great politician whose concepts were not implemented, to the detriment of Austria-Hungary; It was to turn out several years after his death.

75 Pol, 2000, p. 197.

76 Fras, 1980, pp. 113–117.

4. Witold Kamieniecki (1883–1964)⁷⁷

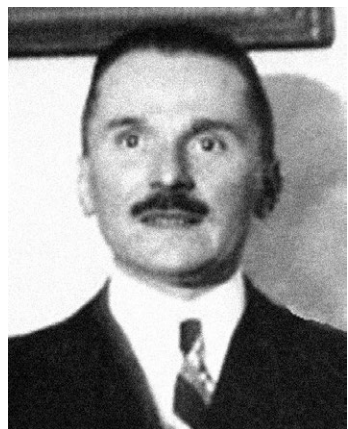
*'The Jagiellonian idea is a political system based on attracting territories between the Carpathians and the Baltic Sea to the Polish State by means of voluntary unions.'*⁷⁸

4.1. Life and achievements

Witold Kamieniecki, a Polish historian, academic teacher, diplomat, political activist, member of parliament and senator of the Republic of Poland in the interwar period, was born on 9 March 1883 in Warsaw. He was the son of Feliks and Maria née Raczyńska. He attended a middle school in Warsaw and then in Baku, where in 1902, he received his secondary school certificate.

From 1902 to 1907 he studied history, philosophy and history of literature at the universities in Warsaw, Krakow and Vienna. In 1906, he received his doctorate from the Jagiellonian University in Kraków. In 1909 to 1910 he worked as an assistant at the Historical Seminar at the Jagiellonian University, and was the head of the Geographical and Historical Cabinet of the Academy of Arts and Sciences in Kraków. From 1910 to 1914 he held the position of deputy director of the Krasieński Estate Library in Warsaw. He was also a member of the Society of History Enthusiasts, Warsaw Scientific Society, Society for International Research, Institute of National Minorities Affairs, and Historical and Geographical Commission. He specialised in Lithuanian affairs, in particular in the history of the Lithuanian political system. In 1915, he was offered a chair at the renewed University of Warsaw, which he rejected, choosing instead to stay in Lithuania at that time. However, from 1915 to 1917 he taught classes in the history of the Polish political system at the Warsaw University of Technology. In May 1911, he married Jadwiga Stempkowska, with whom he had two daughters: Krystyna and Anna, and a son, Andrzej.⁷⁹

Kamieniecki began his political activities during the First World War. He was one of the signatories of the 'Declaration of One Hundred' of 22 February 1916, supporting the reconstruction of an independent Polish state. In the 1917–1918 period he held many functions in the structures of the Provisional Council of State and the Regency Council of the Kingdom of Poland. He was the deputy director of the



⁷⁷ Witold Kamieniecki, Polish politician, unknown photographer, in: Archiwa Państwowe, public domain, source of the picture: <https://www.wikidata.org/wiki/Q9375698#/media/File:Kamieniecki.jpg>.

⁷⁸ Kamieniecki, 1929, p. 2.

⁷⁹ Tatarkiewicz, 1964–1965, pp. 520–521.

Department of Political Affairs of the Provisional Council of State and, together with Prince Eustachy Sapieha, headed the Lithuanian Committee, representing the federalist programme towards the lands and nations of the pre-partition Poland. For half a year in 1917, he was a member of the Archival Committee of the Provisional Council of State. He was also the deputy director of the State Department of the Regency Council. During the political crisis caused by the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk of 3 March 1918 and the resignation of Jan Kucharzewski's government, Kamieniecki resigned from the position of deputy director of the State Department. However, despite his resignation, he remained politically active. In February 1918, he became involved in the work of the State Building Association, wherein he represented a group of political supporters of activism and building Polish statehood, based on the Central Powers.⁸⁰

After Poland regained its independence, in 1919, Kamieniecki was elected as a member of the Legislative Sejm on behalf of the People's National Union. He actively participated in its deliberations as a member of the constitutional, legal, foreign affairs and petition committees, making himself known as a supporter of federative concepts towards the Republic of Poland's neighbouring nations. In July 1919, he was elected a member of a commission to investigate the activities of the administration in the east. In April 1919, as a recognised expert on Lithuanian affairs, Kamieniecki took part in Polish-Lithuanian negotiations aimed at stabilising mutual diplomatic relations and the course of borders. He was also a member of the Polish delegation during the Polish-Bolshevik peace negotiations, which ended with the signing of the Treaty of Riga in 1921. From 1 February 1920 to 1 September 1921, he was the *charge d'affaires* in Latvia. For his merits in strengthening good neighbourly relations between Poland and Latvia, Kamieniecki was awarded the Latvian Order of Three Stars, 1st class.⁸¹

In the 1920s, Kamieniecki left politics in favour of teaching and research. He was socially active, founding the Polish Pan European Union. From 1925, he was a member of the board of the Institute for the Study of Nationalities, and also contributed to the development of the 'National Matters' magazine. He was a freemason – a member of the Grand National Lodge of Poland in Warsaw. In 1928 he obtained his postdoctoral degree at the University of Lvov.⁸²

He returned to politics after the May 1926 *coupe d'état*, supporting the Piłsudski camp. In 1928, he obtained the mandate of a senator on behalf of the Nonpartisan Bloc for Cooperation with the Government, which he held until 1935. In the Senate of the 2nd term, he participated in the work of the following committees: education and culture, foreign affairs and military, and during the 3rd term in the constitutional committee and the foreign affairs committee as a secretary. In 1929, he published the well-known brochure '*The Jagiellonian Idea*', which was a synthesis

80 Winnicki, 2017, p. 56.

81 Tatarkiewicz, 1964–1965, p. 521.

82 Ibid.

of his views on Polish foreign policy towards the countries of Central and Eastern Europe.⁸³ From 1932 to 1937, he worked as a lecturer at the Diplomatic College in Lvov. In 1938, he was appointed as director of the Krasiński Estate Library in Warsaw, where he had worked 27 years earlier. During World War II, he stayed in his estate in Barchów. After the end of the war, he worked as a lecturer in medieval history at the University of Warsaw. He died on 9 March 1964 in Łódź.⁸⁴

4.2. Federation of nations and states of the former Polish – Lithuanian Commonwealth

In the history of Polish political doctrine, Witold Kamieniecki is remembered as a supporter of the reconstruction of an independent Polish state after World War I in the form of a multinational federation, with a vision of a supranational union of Central and Eastern European countries – understood as a kind of bulwark of Europe against the Soviet threat and – and, economic, military and cultural cooperation.

The federalist concepts of the Polish political elites were derived from the tradition of the Polish-Lithuanian Union of 1569 and the so-called '*Hadzia settlement*' of 1658, which was an (unsuccessful) attempt to transform the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth of the Two Nations into a union of Poland, Lithuania and Ruthenia. The concepts were firmly rooted in the Polish national consciousness and constituted the political programme of the 19th century Polish uprisings. They assumed the reconstruction of an independent Polish state as a voluntary and equal federation of nations that were part of the pre-partition Republic within the borders of 1772. The idea of a federation of nations of the former Republic of Poland became valid after the fall of Tsarist Russia in 1917, and the defeat of the Central Powers after World War I. Its supporters were representatives of Polish independence groups associated with socialist parties, and Józef Piłsudski. They recognised the right of nations to self-determination and also the national aspirations of Lithuanians, Belarusians and Ukrainians. They viewed the idea of a federation as an opportunity to reconcile their national interests with the Polish *raison d'état*. They also hoped to build a strong state that would resist the Bolshevik or Great Russian threat from the east. The federalist concept was also supposed to function as an 'antidote' to the ethnic differentiation of the former Republic of Poland's eastern territories, which precluded drawing a fair border line according to the nationality criterion. The right-wing parties with their leader Roman Dmowski strongly opposed the idea of rebuilding the Polish state as a federation of nations. Their opposition was towards the idea of a federation with the concept of a unitary state with a predominance of the Polish element. In relation to the eastern lands, they pushed through the incorporation policy, assuming their division between the Polish and Russian states.⁸⁵

83 Kamieniecki, 1929, *passim*.

84 Zawadzki, 2012, pp. 325–326.

85 Grygajtis, 2001, *passim*.

In November 1918, the Committee for Eastern Affairs was established in Warsaw, which, apart from Leon Abramowicz, Tytus Filipowicz, Marcei Handelman, Mieczysław Niedziałkowski, also included Witold Kamieniecki, who was considered an expert on Lithuanian matters. The Committee's task was to prepare the Polish position on the issue of Poland's eastern borders, for the Polish government in Warsaw and Polish delegation to the Paris peace conference. In December 1918, Witold Kamieniecki published a book titled '*Lithuanian State*' in a series of publications under the common title '*Free with the Free, Equal to Equal*'.⁸⁶ In it, he postulated the reconstruction of Lithuanian statehood within its historical borders as a federation of autonomous lands: Samogitia, Aukštaitija, Podlasie, Belarus and Polesie, or – alternatively – a federation consisting of three cantons: Kaunas, Vilnius and Minsk. They were to have extensive internal autonomy, separate national parliaments with powers similar to those of the Galician National Parliament from the autonomous times, and a central government in Vilnius. These cantonal solutions proposed by Kamieniecki for the lands of the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania were to be similar for the system of the Swiss Confederation.⁸⁷ Kamieniecki's federalist concept was developed by an outstanding Polish socialist activist, Mieczysław Niedziałkowski. He proposed a cantonal-federal concept, consisting of a larger number of federation components than that proposed by Kamieniecki. They were supposed to be more ethnically and religiously homogeneous. He demanded the separation of ethnographic Lithuania (Kaunas region) with the capital in Kaunas; the Catholic Polish-Belarusian zone (Grodno region) with the capital in Grodno; the Vilnius region with the capital in Vilnius; and the Orthodox-Belarusian district (Minsk region and Polesie) with the capital in Minsk. The borders between the cantons would be determined by voting. Each canton would have at least two official languages and would form the United States of Lithuania and Belarus with a common parliament. Political organisms organised in this way in the east would join a voluntary and equal interstate union with Poland.⁸⁸

Witold Kamieniecki's federalist concept was based on the belief that the nations comprising the eastern territories of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth would see that Bolshevik Russia was the greatest threat to their freedom and national existence. Therefore, their natural political choice, justified by rationally understood national egoism, would be to join the Polish state. According to Kamieniecki, only the Polish state in this region of Europe could serve as a guarantor of the preservation of these nations' national identity, civil liberties, religious freedoms and unhindered development. Therefore, it can be expected that, guided by their own political interest, they would voluntarily join a state union with Poland on equal terms. The national aspirations of individual nations in such a federation will be guaranteed and implemented by a separate law, national representation

86 Kamieniecki, 1918, passim.

87 Pisuliński, 2002, pp. 103–108.

88 Niedziałkowski, 1920, p. 4.

and autonomous administration, thereby insulating Poland from accusations of dominance and partition plans.⁸⁹ In order to avoid suspicions of a hidden annexation policy towards the nations in the East, Kamieniecki wrote:

[...] Recognizing all the benefits of the above solution, let us not delude ourselves that it may take place immediately. We anticipate difficulties on the part of those national activists who, not believing in the strength of their nations, will be afraid of a closer relationship with a stronger nation. These concerns must be respected; no nationality can be forced into unpleasant political unions, and the right or wrong need for their particularism must be satisfied.⁹⁰

Polish federalist concepts aimed at rebuilding the political unity of the nations of the former Republic of Poland dissipated in the 1919 to 1920. The seizure of the Vilnius region, unsuccessful 'Kiev expedition', and 1921 Treaty of Riga, eliminated the possibility of Polish-Lithuanian and Polish-Ukrainian understanding. The reborn Republic of Poland became – apart from the autonomy of Silesia – a unitary state striving to create a nationally homogeneous society. Nevertheless, the idea of a federation remained valid in the intellectual spheres that Witold Kamieniecki was a part of. In the 1920s and 1930s, it took the form of the so-called '*Jagiellonian idea*', which was on the one hand a historical reflection on the power and importance of the multinational Republic of Poland in the past, and on the other hand a vision of the future union of Central and Eastern European countries, directed against the Soviet threat and German reclaims in this part of Europe.⁹¹

One of the more comprehensive definitions of the Jagiellonian idea was presented by Witold Kamieniecki in his 1929 book entitled '*The Jagiellonian Idea*'.⁹² It read:

[...] The Jagiellonian idea is a political system based on attracting to the Polish State, by way of voluntary accessions, unions, neighboring territories filling the geographical area between the Carpathians and the Baltic Sea. The Jagiellonian Republic, created by way of union, was based on the following principles: union system (Crown-Lithuania), autonomy of individual components within it, administration composed of local citizens, linguistic equality, religious tolerance, development of democratic civil liberties, reconciliation of the state patriotism of the Republic of Poland with local and local-national patriotisms, apostolate of civilization west.⁹³

89 Lewandowski, 1962, pp. 88–93.

90 Kamieniecki, 1918, p. 7.

91 Pisuliński, 2002, pp. 114–117.

92 Kamieniecki, 1929, passim.

93 Ibid. p. 6.

In Kamieniecki's opinion, the '*Jagiellonian idea*' was the most important product of Polish political doctrine that became part of the Polish collective awareness. In his opinion, a well-thought-out and firm organisation of coexistence within one state of several nations created an excellent formula, manifesting the Polish political doctrine's strength and unity. Kamieniecki also emphasised that all accusations of deliberate and thoughtful Polonisation and denationalisation of Lithuanian, Belarusian or Ukrainian elements, addressed to Polish creators of the EU project, had no factual basis. In his opinion, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was a unique political union of '*free with free and equal with equal*', based on voluntariness and mutual respect for national and religious differences. The absence of any legislative acts or ordinances concerning Polonization or denationalisation was to prove national tolerance. According to Kamieniecki, such a union can serve as a model in contemporary times, connecting countries and nations with a community of political interests, countering external threats (Soviet and German) and influencing cooperation and approximation between nations sharing a common history and geopolitical location.⁹⁴ In his '*Jagiellonian idea*', Kamieniecki also expressed a kind of '*Prometheism*' towards the nations of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth incorporated into the Soviet Union, counting on their 'awakening' and emancipation.⁹⁵

5. Stefan Gużkowski (1884–1959)

*'Five hundred years ago, the Jagiellonian dynasty took the protection of the foundations of Europeanness against the deluge of the East. How they understood and fulfilled their historical mission is evidenced by Horodło, Lublin, Varna and Mohacz.'*⁹⁶

5.1. Life and achievements

Stefan, Marcei, Jan Gużkowski, was a Polish lawyer and political writer of the inter-war period. He was born on 21 October 1884 in Saint Petersburg. He was the son of Bronisław Gużkowski, a Russian administration official. In 1904, he graduated from the Mikołajów Middle School in Tsarskoye Selo, and in the same year enrolled at the Faculty of Law at the University of St. Petersburg. He graduated from law studies in 1910–1912 from the University of Dorpat (Russian Yuriev, Estonian Tartu).⁹⁷

During the First World War, Gużkowski was active in the Polish Society for Aid to War Victims.⁹⁸ After the 1917 Russian Revolution, he returned to Poland. He went down in the history of Polish political doctrine as the author of a study entitled '*Imperium Jagellonicum. About the Eastern European Union*'. This study, published in

94 Mackiewicz, 2014, pp. 14–24.

95 Kornat, 2008, pp. 76–86.

96 Gużkowski, 1931, p. 37.

97 Gużkowskij, 1912, pp. 2–11.

98 Korzeniowski et al., 2018, p. 95.

Poznań in 1931, proposed an original concept of Polish federative ideas, linking the *'Jagiellonian idea'* with the concept of *'Intermarium'*.⁹⁹

'Intermarium' (*'Międzymorze'*) is a Polish foreign policy doctrine of the interwar period, referring to the tradition of the multicultural and multinational Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The rise of this doctrine can be dated to the years 1920–1921, although its sources date back to the period of the Jagiellonian dynasty in Poland, Lithuania, Hungary and the Czech Republic at the turn of the 15th and 16th centuries (the so-called *'Jagiellonian lands'*). The *'Intermarium'* doctrine assumed the creation of a voluntary and equal political, economic and military alliance of Central and Eastern European countries located in the area between three seas: the Adriatic, Baltic and Black seas (the so-called *'ABC Seas'*). It was to include Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia and Finland, and in the future also Belarus, Ukraine and Georgia. This union of the states was to be defensive by nature against the threat posed by Germany and Soviet Russia. It was to be based on solidarity and cooperation of member states in the pursuit of common political and economic interests, while respecting their sovereignty and subjectivity in the international arena.¹⁰⁰

The first attempt to implement this unique idea of an alliance between Central and Eastern European countries, linked by a common history and threats, was through Józef Piłsudski's federalist concepts in the years 1918–1920. They concerned the lands and nations of the former Republic of Poland, i.e. Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine, served as an attempt to reconcile the national distinctiveness of these regions, while maintaining political unity within a strong political union that was capable of opposing the domination of Germany or Russia. However, these plans failed. Opposition to this idea came not only from Russia, but also from most Western powers (with the exception of France) that were afraid of Poland's growing importance on the international arena. Also, the nations of the former Republic of Poland, which sought independence: Lithuanians, Ukrainians and Belarusians, did not express any interest in joining the union. Border conflicts between Poland and its neighbours – Soviet Russia, Ukraine, Lithuania and Czechoslovakia also reduced the chances of implementing Piłsudski's concept. Ultimately, the implementation of the project of a federation of Central and Eastern European countries was thwarted by the war with Russia (1919–1921). The failure of the project prompted Piłsudski to reinterpret the eastward-oriented idea of the Jagiellonian federation, and to create the concept of an alliance of the Baltic and Balkan states. In view of Piłsudski's departure from active politics after 1921, these ideas ceased to be valid.¹⁰¹

The return to the federal concept in Polish foreign policy occurred at the beginning of the 1930s, with the publication of Stefan Gużkowski's book. In it, Gużkowski proposed a confederation of Central and Eastern states – from Finland in the north

99 Gużkowskoi, 1931, passim.

100 Lasecki, 2020, pp. 14–15.

101 Okulewiocz, 2001, pp. 342–343.

to Greece in the south – as an antidote to the economic crisis that was consuming them and the threat of growing German revisionism and Soviet expansionism. The idea of creating a defense bloc connecting Poland, Romania and Hungary grew in the Polish government spheres. The next step was the creation of the *‘Intermarium’*, i.e. a counterbalance to Western countries, Soviet Russia and fascist countries, which led to the idea of *‘Third Europe’*. According to the creators of this concept, Central European countries were too politically and economically weak to count on the international arena. Therefore, they should unite to create a significant defense and economic capability together. In order to achieve this, the initial plan was extended to include Italy and Yugoslavia.¹⁰² However, the concept of the *‘Third Europe’* collapsed due to territorial disputes between Poland and Czechoslovakia and between Hungary and Romania. Additionally, the fall and partition of Czechoslovakia in 1938 led to the creation of a different geopolitical situation in Europe, in which the particular interests and threats of Central European countries forced them to political egoism in international relations.¹⁰³

5.2. The Eastern – European Idea (*Pansarmatia*)

The starting point for Stefan Gużkowski’s deliberations on the possibilities and need for a union of the *‘Jagiellonian countries’* was his analysis of the nature of the ‘Great Economic Crisis’ of 1929. He opined that the crisis revealed, with all its force, the division of European countries into industrialised countries in the West, and agricultural countries in the East and Center. This division also supposedly coincided with the division of Europe into countries that were active in granting loans and foreign investments – the so-called *‘creditor countries’*, and those passive in this aspect, that is recipients of loans and foreign investments – the *‘debtor countries’*. The economy of the former was characterised by discounting profits from capital turnover, loans and foreign investments, the latter – which included the *‘Jagiellonian states’* – was marked by overpopulation, chronic unemployment and the economy of raw materials. Thus, the *‘Jagiellonian countries’* poor economic conditions, Gużkowski concluded, was the inhibition of the inflow of the capital and foreign investment to them, caused by their economic weakness and political uncertainty of these countries.¹⁰⁴

However, the situation could be altered. The ten *‘Jagiellonian states’* had considerable combined economic and demographic potential. The territory they occupied was three times the size of Germany, and together they had four times the population and one and a half times the birth rate per year. It was only possible to develop these ever-growing masses of people by creating a large-scale industry that would provide them with employment and sustenance. To achieve this, capital was necessary. Summing up, Gużkowski put forward a thesis, in which he stated that:

102 Gedeon and Halász, 2022, pp. 197–224.

103 Morawiec, 2012, pp. 409–427.

104 Gużkowski, 1931, pp. 7–12.

[...] The economic crisis affecting the Jagiellonian countries, which have a predominantly agricultural structure of the economy and a huge birth rate and an equally great need to raise capital, results from these two constant factors and differs in its structure from the causes of the world crisis, which consists in an excess of free capital, which cannot find certain places of their placement. The connection between the two crisis cycles seems obvious, but restoring the investment circulation interrupted by the war can only be done by creating conditions for the allocation of capital in large investment areas – primarily in the territory occupied by the Jagiellonian states.¹⁰⁵

According to Gużkowski, this can be achieved by political and economic unification of relatively weak nations and states located between Germany and Russia into one Central European power – the Eastern European Union, capable of defending them against Germanic pressure and Soviet barbarism. Since none of the *'Jagiellonian states'* was clearly superior to the others, the only way for the emergence of such a power was the creation of a voluntary and equal federation, which Gużkowski termed *'Pansarmacja'*¹⁰⁶

The Eastern European Union (*'Pansarmacja'*) was to cover the territories of Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Yugoslavia, Austria, Hungary and Bulgaria. It would be created through voluntary agreements of individual members and remain open to accession to it by any *'Jagiellonian state'*. It was to take the form of a federation, granting maximum autonomy to its individual constituent states, which would, in turn, concede a minimum of their sovereignty and competences – only necessary to achieve common goals. These goals were: ensuring security and peace in the region, creating a military force to deter potential aggressors (Germany, Soviet Russia and possibly Turkey), and in the future a common foreign policy, customs and monetary union. The legal basis for the organisation and functioning of such a supra-state union as the Eastern European Union was to be its constitution. Its provisions were to include: 1. the principle of the inviolability and indissolubility of the Union, 2. guarantee of the territorial integrity and inviolability of the member states, 3. mutual guarantee of collective security in the event of war, 4. the principle of peaceful coexistence and settlement of disputes without the use of force, and 5. the principle of joint responsibility for the obligations of its members. Other issues, such as the organisational structure and scope of competences of the common central authorities of the Union as well as of their functioning, were to be defined in the future through a voluntary and generally accepted intra-EU agreement.¹⁰⁷ Gużkowski also recognised that all contradictions and antagonisms existing between the *'Jagiellonian states'* were possible

105 Ibid. pp. 17–18.

106 Ibid. p. 26.

107 Ibid. pp. 26–27.

to overcome, as seen in the *'Little Entente'* covering Czechoslovakia, Romania and Yugoslavia – i.e. the countries of the future Eastern European Union. According to Gużkowski, the exception was Hungary, which, humiliated by the Treaty of Trianon and limited in territory to neighboring countries, carried a sense of deep injustice and was reluctant to ally with its recent enemies. In order to break the Hungarian resistance, Gużkowski proposed economic arguments and Polish mediation.¹⁰⁸

Such a Eastern European Union would constitute a significant demographic and economic power. It would also be a counter-proposal to the pre-war German concepts of *'Mitteleuropa'* and the post-war idea of *'Paneurope'*. Populated by over 100 million citizens, of which more than half were professionally active, with a mixed agricultural and industrial economy, relatively low foreign debt and high gold reserves and national assets exceeding USD 50 billion, *'Pansarmatia'* would have to be a significant entity in international economic relations, and thus a significant subject of the European policy of balance and collective security. In addition to economics and foreign policy, the link between the countries forming this kind of *'Imperium Jagiellonicum'* was to be a civilisational community based on Christian values, individualistic elements of Roman law and the tradition of Greek philosophy and culture.¹⁰⁹

The protection of these foundations of Europeanness against the deluge of the East was taken over five hundred years ago by the Jagiellonian dynasty in their mighty and gracious hands. Horodło, Lublin, Varna and Mohacz testify to how they understood and fulfilled their historical mission. The idea of cooperation without violence, the idea of love of peace and understanding, the idea of perfecting the masses to the level of the elite and not vice versa, the idea of a union of salt and equal states and nations in these areas of Europe, today as once threatened by expansion from the East – this is the legacy of the Jagiellonian dynasty, still alive and multi-faceted and shining with the undying splendor of truly great things. May this indestructible light be for us, their contemporary heirs, a guiding star on the difficult path to liberation from the difficulties of today.¹¹⁰

108 Ibid. p. 27.

109 Ibid. pp. 35–36.

110 Ibid. p. 37.

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Great Theorists of Central European Integration in Ukraine

Csilla FEDINEC

ABSTRACT

'Central Europe' is a concept that varies in time and space. Ukraine is the second-largest country on the European continent, and is geographically located south-west of the Eastern European plain. The peculiarity of historical development and geographical location leads to the portrayal of Ukraine as a civilizational frontier area between the countries of the West and East. The nineteenth century was the period of birth of national histories, equally among non-historical (stateless) and historical (state) nations, while at the same time, at any historical moment, one can find the predecessor of the modern nation. The coherence of the Ukrainian narrative is ensured by proto-state and state forms: Kyivan Rus, the Principality of Galicia-Volhynia, Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, Cossack era, Ukrainian statehood in 1917–1921, Soviet era, Carpatho-Ukraine's autonomous existence in 1938–1939, and independent Ukraine since 1991. The Kyivan Rus was oriented towards Byzantium, and the Principality towards Western Europe. The Hetmanate's political structure recognised as a historical Cossack statehood. In the mid-17th century, the Cossack uprising led by Bohdan Khmelnytsky brought to the fore the dilemma of pro-Moscow or pro-Polish (in fact, pro-European) orientation. Since the late 18th century, Ukrainian territories have become the periphery of the empires, and ties with Europe have weakened. Europe almost forgot about Ukraine's existence. The central powers of the First World War attempted to tear Ukraine away from Russia and push it politically and civilizationally towards the West, albeit without any international interest in the question of Ukrainian statehood aspirations. Later, the Soviet Union created Ukrainian borders, but deprived the Ukrainians of any political activity. Pro-European Union tendencies were always present in independent Ukraine, but only took definite shape following the Revolution of Dignity in 2014. In 2014 Ukraine and the European Union signed the Association Agreement, came into effect in 2017. Russia's disastrous full-scale invasion against Ukraine accelerated Ukraine-EU rapprochement, and as a result Ukraine was granted EU candidate status in 2022. Europeanisation is not only a process of identity construction, but also a value-based supranational 'ways of doing things'. In this context, Ukraine's place in the buffer zone between Eastern and Western Europe has changed over the centuries. The study analyses the development of opinions on this topic, based on the works of some selected Ukrainian and Ukrainian-descent thinkers from the 19th century to the present day.

KEYWORDS

Ukraine, Central Europe, East and West dichotomy, nation, nationalism, historical development

Introduction

The concept of Central Europe has a long history and a extensive literature. Therefore, without going into detail, we will briefly review the historical period that has been the focus of the work of the theorists highlighted in this study, i.e. the period from the 19th century to the present, providing a framework for the work of these theorists.

Where 'Central Europe' is situated has always been a function of current political power relations. As Ferenc Mező put it

The location of Northern, Western and Southern Europe is not a problem [...] but the concept of Central Europe and the boundaries of its extent are. [...] No other concept of the division of Europe has provoked so many objections or been so intertwined with the political world, with the powers that be. [...] Central Europe as a term exists in the realm of feelings and identity, not in the realm of reason, and the concept is accordingly full of multiple levels of duality, of multilayering.¹

The American Slavic scholar Larry Wolff notes, in his inventive book (*Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment*, 1994), that in the 18th century, there were different points of view on the location of the border between Europe and Asia: sometimes it was drawn along the Don, sometimes along the Volga, and sometimes along the Ural Mountains. Before the Age of Reason, Europeans divided the Old World into the Baltic North and Mediterranean South; only with the emergence and evolution of the concept of Eastern Europe, created by Western European travellers (danish Isaac Massa, Cornelis de Bruijn, venezians Francesco Algarotti, Giacomo Casanova, etc.) and enlightened thinkers (for example Voltaire, Jean-Jacques Russo), began division into Eastern and Western Europe.

Central Europe in the 17th and 18th centuries, was aligned with the German-Roman imperial territory, and until the emergence of German unity, the approach to it varied, although its German-centricity remained unchanged. With the creation of Austria-Hungary in 1867, this virtual Central European space now extended to the Kingdom of Hungary and north-western Balkans. Eastern Europe was mostly identified with Russia – with underdevelopment. The German Empire perceived Russia as a rival to the spread of German influence to the East, while in Austria-Hungary, interest in Eastern European history intensified following the liberation of the Southern Slavs from the Ottoman Empire, as well as the attempts to preserve the integrity of the empire through loyal national policy.²

During the First World War, the emphasis shifted from economic and cultural interests to cultural arguments, and 'Central Europe' was considered covered the

1 Mező, 2001, p. 81.

2 Барвінська [Barvinska], 2014, p. 253.

area from the North and Baltic Seas to the Adriatic Sea, and the southern edge of the Danube plain, which allowed the core area to be joined by the countries on the periphery to the 'East', up to the border of the Russian-speaking area, i.e. including a large part of the Ukrainian plain. The eastward shift of political central Europe was, of course, largely due to the Great War. The term 'Central Europe' was introduced into the discourse about 'Intermediate Europe' as a regional offshoot of the Versailles system, which ended the war, and was used to denote the buffer zone between Soviet Union and Germany, where the Soviets expanded westwards and the Germans eastwards.

After the Second World War, the concept of 'Central Europe' lost its meaning, for a long time, within the context of 'Eastern Europe'. To the east of the Iron Curtain was 'Eastern Europe' and to the west 'Western Europe.' Since the 1970s, 'Central Europe' has re-emerged as a historical, cultural-geographical and socio-geographical entity – a 'symbolic reality' that does not wish to be identified with 'Eastern Europe'.³ The Czech novelist Milan Kundera, in his provocative essay 'The Tragedy of Central Europe' (first published in 1983), explained, *inter alia*

After 1945, the border between the two Europe's shifted several hundred kilometres to the west, and several nations that had always considered themselves to be Western woke up to discover that they now belonged to the East. [...] Indeed, nothing could be more foreign to Central Europe and its passion for variety than Russia: uniform, standardizing, centralizing, determined to transform every nation of its empire (the Ukrainians, the Belarusians, the Armenians, the Latvians, the Lithuanians and others) into a single Russian people (or, as is more commonly expressed in this age of generalized verbal mystification, into a 'single Soviet people'). [...] One of the great European nations (there are nearly forty million Ukrainians) is slowly disappearing. And this enormous, almost unbelievable event is occurring without the world realizing it.⁴

The 1989–1990 revolutions and regime changes, German reunification, break-up of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War have once again rearranged the mental map of Europe. Samuel P. Huntington asked the delicate question: '*Were the revolutions of 1989–1990 in eastern Europe primarily anticommunist democratic movements or anti-Soviet nationalist movements? If the latter, authoritarian nationalist regimes might return to some eastern European countries*'.⁵

To this day, nobody knows for sure, and there is only speculation, about the fact that during negotiations on German reunification in 1990, the Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev allegedly received assurances from his Western partners that NATO would not expand eastwards if East Germany was permitted to become a

3 Mező, 2001, pp. 81–103.

4 Kundera, 1984, p. 33.

5 Huntington, 1991, pp. 293–294.

NATO member.⁶ On 9 February 1990, James Baker told Mikhail Gorbachev, according to the surviving stenographic record, that if the United States maintained its presence in Germany within the NATO framework, not an inch of NATO's present military jurisdiction would spread in an eastern direction.⁷ However, this 'promise' was that the territory of the former German Democratic Republic (GDR) would not be covered by NATO's infrastructure, the Warsaw Pact was still in existence at the time. The Warsaw Pact, one of the two military blocs of the Cold War, has been dissolved, and NATO, which at its height had 16 members, will be enlarged to 31 by 2023. The post-Cold War NATO aspirants saw joining the alliance as crucial to achieving their goals of integration with the West, and ensuring protection from Russia, with which many had a troubled history. Those who called for NATO enlargement also believed it was essential to promote and consolidate democracy in post-Cold War Europe. The opponents of its, however, warned that the same would restore a Cold War atmosphere to East-West relations.⁸ On 27 May 1997, during the NATO summit in Paris, the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security was signed between NATO and the Russian Federation. At the time, both sides attempted to not view each other as opponents but as partners. In this cooperation a key role was accorded to the NATO-Russia Council. The first turning point was 2008 Russo-Georgian War, then the another breakdown represented the 2014 Ukraine crisis. It became clear that *'when NATO-Russia relations are in crisis, the work of the Council also becomes dysfunctional or is completely disrupted'*.⁹

With the enlargement of the European Union, part of 'Eastern Europe' was reunited with 'the West'. From the countries of the 'post-Soviet space', which emerged after the break-up of the Soviet Union, the Baltic states 'returned' to Europe in 2004, while the new 'Eastern Europe' was divided between the Eastern Partnership countries (Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine) and Russia.

Despite the absence of statehood, Ukrainian history has some periods during which the history of the population and the region they occupy can be distinguished from that of the state exercising sovereignty, and others when these merge with the history of the state. The presence of the state mentality and the question of political and cultural orientation can also be observed in the alternation between the move away from relative autonomy and the pre-total incorporation. Until the beginning of the 20th century, the eastern half Ukrainian regions had always been closer to the 'East', whereas the western half was closer to 'Central Europe' or the 'West' in general. However, as will be discussed later, some arguments favour the North-South division. In the next period the Soviet Union pulled its growing European territories towards the 'East'. This ideology has been adopted to a large extent by modern Russia, spreading the idea of a 'Russian world'.

6 Ghodsee, 2017, p. 53.

7 Savranskaya and Blanton, 2017.

8 Menon and Ruger, 2020, p. 371.

9 Douglas, 2017.

After its 1991 independence, Ukraine found that it was impossible to be a neutral state in the geopolitical space it occupied. First, During the 2004 Orange Revolution, the choice was between a more Europe-oriented and more Russia-integrated future. The possibility of a second choice was at the turn of 2013–2014, when a new revolution broke out in protest against the then-Ukrainian power’s disengagement to sign the Association Agreement with the European Union. The question of eastern or western orientation could no longer be decided at the negotiating table. According to Tatiana Zhurzhenko, with the annexation of Crimea and induced by Moscow, and the ‘Russian spring’ in two eastern regions, known collectively as the Donbas, the majority population opted for the Ukrainian state. However, there were also those who sympathize with the separatists and with Russia. *‘One of the difficult questions we will be confronted with after the war is how to live together again in one state.’*¹⁰ At the same time,

[...] the Russian aggression has done what previous Ukrainian presidents from Kravchuk to Yanukovych had failed to achieve – catalyse the creation of a political nation. Ukrainian identity, which for so long had been associated with ethnicity, language and historical memory, suddenly has become territorial and political [...].¹¹

The Russian–Ukrainian war a challenge not only for Ukraine, but also for the world order. The annexation of Ukrainian territories and covert hybrid warfare in the eastern regions of Ukraine in 2014 did not lead to immediate and unanimous condemnation of Russia, but rather, to analysis and discourse around the reasons for this situation. *‘Many Europeans and Americans found it easier to follow Russia’s propaganda phantoms than to defend a legal order.’*¹² However, this hesitation was promptly abandoned on 24 February 2022, when Russia launched a full-scale invasion against Ukraine. This time, the ‘collective West’ banded together.

The idea of relevance to the present ‘Jagiellonian heritage’ – a Polish historiographical construction of a Polish-Lithuanian-Ukrainian federation, an equal union of the three nations, idealisation of the monarchy of Jagiellon’s descendants –and the concept of the ‘civilisation mission of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the East’, created in the 19th century, among Ukrainian political analyst Yevhen Magda received a ‘second wind’ in the 21st century. Poland advocated for the former peoples of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, especially Ukraine, to integrate them into the European community.¹³ It is evident that Central and Eastern Europe appears to be a region serving as an internal frontier, where rules can be broken; and Russia is willing to do so.¹⁴ One of the most acclaimed contemporary Polish

10 Zhurzhenko, 2014.

11 Ibid.

12 Snyder, 2018, p. 9.

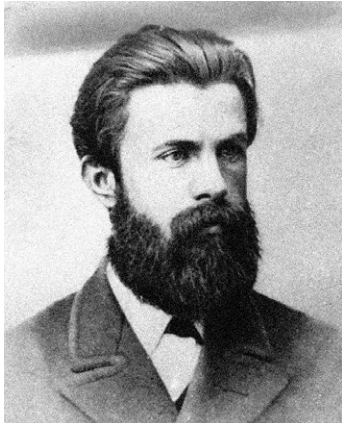
13 Marđa [Magda], 2015, pp. 109–110.

14 Ibid. p. 112.

writers, Andrzej Stasiuk, formulated what it means to be a Central European: it means to live between the East and the West, *‘to live ‘in the middle,’ if this middle is, in truth, the only real solid ground. Except that this solid is not stable. It resembles an island, maybe even a floating one.*¹⁵ This idea of East-West ‘transitivity’ has deep roots in Polish geopolitical thinking.¹⁶

*‘For Ukraine, it is better to be the borderland of democracy rather than of an authoritarian bloc. But a border is a border – an honourable but difficult fate.’*¹⁷ This is how the Ukrainian editor and journalist, Vitaly Portnikov, summed up the essence of Ukraine’s current, but in fact complete, history in the summer of 2022, going on to say that before the Russian-Ukrainian war, whether Ukraine (and Moldova) would be granted EU candidature was a question for the distant future (and appeared to be neither easy nor quick). Although we do not know how far away actual membership is for Ukraine now, such an achievement will in any case be a civilizational success. Before the war, Ukraine was considered a bridge between Russia and the EU; now, it could serve as a bridge between Poland and Romania. Ukraine will then no longer be an ‘Eastern-European country’, thereby leaving only Russia in the ‘East’. One can conclude that *‘Ukraine Is Coming Back to the Centre of Europe.’*¹⁸

1. Ukrainian autonomism – Mykhailo Drahomanov (1841–1895)¹⁹



Mykhailo Drahomanov (6 September 1841, Hadiach /Poltava province/, Russian Empire /now Ukraine/ – 20 July 1895, Sofia, Bulgaria) was an ethnographer, historian, and political theorist, and one of the most notable modern Ukrainian political thinkers. He was the uncle of the famous poet and playwright Lesya Ukrainka. His parents were petty nobles, descendants of Cossack officers. He studied at the Poltava Gymnasium and the Faculty of History and Philology at Kyiv University. Between 1864 and 1876 he taught at the Kyiv University, and then became a central figure of Ukrainian political emigrants

15 Стасюк and Андрухович [Stasjuk and Andruhovych], 2005, p. 63.

16 Mitrovits, 2023.

17 Portnikov, 2022.

18 Ibid.

19 Mykhailo Petrovych Drahomanov, Ukrainian intellectual and public figure, unknown author, public domain, source of the picture: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:00%94%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%B3%D0%BE%D0%BC%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%BE%D0%B2_%D0%9C%D0%B8%D1%85%D0%B0%D0%B9%D0%BB%D0%BE.2.gif?uselang=uk#filelinks.

in Geneva. In 1889, Drahomanov was invited to teach at the Department of General History at the Faculty of History and Philology of Sofia University, where he worked until his death. In 1991, the former Kyiv Pedagogical Instituted was renamed as the Kyiv Pedagogical Drahomanov Institute, and in 1997, the National Pedagogical Drahomanov University.

In 1863 Drahomanov became a member of the Hromada (meaning of the word: community) society, which was one of the Ukrainian intelligentsia secret society networks that worked to awaken the consciousness of the national intelligentsia to the knowledge of Ukrainian history and culture. His socio-political concept combined the ideas of social equality and justice with the ideas of constitutional law and the need for political struggle. His thinking had a great impact on the socialist movement in Galicia, and was also reflected in the Hromada programme, signed by Serhiy Podolynsky, Mykhailo Pavlyk and Drahomanov. All of them defended the autonomous-federalist position. As an advocate of European positivism and rationalism, Drahomanov developed the principle of federalism of state and non-state Slavic peoples as a means of transition from the imperial repressive-dictatorial, unitary-centric mode of government to democratic, European forms of statehood. According him Ukrainians had suffered a huge loss when most of the peoples of Europe were creating their own states, while Ukrainians had failed to do so.

On the basis of the Edict of Ems of 1876, which was a decree of the Russian Emperor Alexander II, directed against the Ukrainian language and Ukrainophiles, the Hromada were liquidated, and the need to expel Drahomanov and Pavlo Chubynsky (author of the Ukrainian anthem) as dangerous agitators was pointed out. Drahomanov was dismissed from the university for being politically unreliable. The onset of the reaction and introduction of harassment against the reviving manifestations of Ukrainian culture forced Drahomanov to go abroad and become a political emigrant. The emergence of the Edict of Ems was due to the revival of the Ukrainian movement in the early 70s of the 19th century, and it remained in force until 1905.

The 19th century was a one of gradual political maturation, and awakening to the conscious national existence of the Ukrainian nation. The Ukrainians in Galicia lived under the political rule of Austria-Hungary, but under cultural influence of the Poles. Since the Battle of Poltava (1709), which ended Sweden's status as a major power and marked the beginning of Russian supremacy in Eastern Europe, the Russian Empire has made enormous efforts to reduce Ukrainians to Little Russia, a perception of unity between Ukraine and Russia. The Ukrainian language was interpreted as a dialect, occupying the middle ground between Russian and Polish, or it was seen as actually Russian. Ukrainophilism entered the arena of cultural and political life in the Russian Empire at the turn of the 50s and 60s of the nineteenth century. The dominant view of Ukrainophilism was that of a national and cultural phenomenon. Drahomanov also argued that Ukrainophilism could not be perceived as a non-political movement, and

associated its emergence with the political interests of the Ukrainian nation.²⁰ Among the political ideas were that of uniting the nation, removing Ukrainians from the humiliating condition of living on the Russian outskirts and Polish Kresy, and creating their own statehood instead. The possibility of this statehood was imagined in two forms: autonomy and an independent state. Drahomanov were among those also worked on the development of a draft state system based on federalist principles, he was a prominent ideologist of the Ukrainian autonomists.²¹

The peculiarity of Drahomanov's vision of history was to look at everything with a 'cold scientific eye.' As a consequence of such aspirations, he was perhaps the least prone to mythologising history, seeking instead to explain the processes of political life through rational arguments. He also viewed Ukrainians and Russians in a European context.²² Drahomanov substantiated the separateness of Ukrainians and sought to refute the view of Ukraine as one of Russia's minor provinces.

For Drahomanov, the problem of relations between the Ukrainian and Russian nations as a problem of the need for linguistic, cultural, and state equality was a leading idea. In 'What is Ukrainophilism?' he criticised attempts to introduce Russian among Ukrainians as the language of the dominant nation. This would not lead to the formation of 'pure nationality,' but give rise to new 'national bastards.' Therefore, the homeland was not principally mountains, rivers, lakes, marshes, etc., but also as the nation that lives in it.²³

The erasure of national languages in favour of not world language, but state and estate languages would not only be contrary to the obviously democratic course of development of civilization in recent centuries, but would only produce new divisions between people, not justified even by the natural conditions that gave rise to existing nations. Taking the Ukraine as an example, we now see that in the territory from the upper Tisza in Hungary to the Kuban region in Russia there is language along with others, also similar national features, thanks to which 30 million individuals can very easily solidarize with each other.²⁴

According the 1897 all-Russian imperial census with a population of 125.6 million, only 44.3% (55.7 million people), excluding the Grand Duchy of Finland, declared themselves to be native Russian speakers; this proportion was less than 50%. Ukrainians were the second largest nationality: 17.8% (22.3 million people), although this figure was estimated to be even higher. However, the Russian

20 Кармазіна [Karmazina], 2015, pp. 9–12.

21 Ibid. pp. 13–14.

22 Ibid. pp. 18–19.

23 Драгоманов [Drahomanov], 1991, p. 448.

24 Ibid. pp. 442–443.

authorities labelled them as ‘Little Russian’ language speakers, and not as a separate nationality.²⁵

Drahomanov felt that the Ukrainian thinking had developed from European liberalism. Mentions that in the 1830’s and 1840’s there was still a certain tradition of statehood among the nobility of the Left Bank Ukraine descended from the Cossack elders, i.e. among the members of the class to which himself belonged.²⁶ However, memory of an independent Ukrainian State had died out. According to Drahomanov, only one solution remained for the Ukrainians: Ukrainian autonomy within an all-Russian federation.²⁷ While Drahomanov was content with the autonomy of regions, the Radicals demanded the unification of all the ethnically Ukrainian territory in the Russian Empire into one autonomous unit.²⁸ Drahomanov’s ideas worked in the legislation and policies of the independent Ukrainian People’s Republic. The 22 January 1918, which was adopted at the same time as the declaration of independence, introduced the principle of ‘national-personal autonomy.’ This meant that the Russians, Poles, Jews, and any other nationalities were permitted to form national autonomous bodies in public law, and have legislative powers in the cultural affairs; however, the Bolshevik invasion prevented its implementation.²⁹

For Drahomanov, federalism was a universal principle. According Ivan L. Rudnyczky, for a political thinker who takes the autonomy of the individual as his starting point, and rejects every form of authoritarianism, *‘federation – the adherence of persons with equal rights to groups and communities, and the cooperation of these in greater unions—is the only way to overcome the atomization of society.’*³⁰

The idea of Ukrainian unity was based on prominent figures such as Drahomanov. He left ambiguous memories of his relations with ‘Galicians and other Austrian Rusyns’ in ‘Austro-Ruthenian Memoirs (1867–1877)’. His memoirs in fifteen books was published in Lviv in 1889–1899, after his death, thanks to the efforts of famous Ukrainian poet and thinker Ivan Franko. The researcher raises the specific topic of relations the territories of eastern Ukraine, then part of Russia with Austrian Rusyns who lived in Galicia, Bukovina, and Hungary. (Slavic word Rusyns or latin Ruthenians oldest names used for several East Slavic peoples, modern-day Belarusians, Ukrainians, and Carpatho-Rusyns.)

In his ‘Letters to the Dnieper Ukraine,’ he praised the work of those who, although writing in Russian, explained Ukrainian language and Ukrainian history. Russian, or any other language, should serve as a meta-language in the development and education of the nation, because national independence without education would not produce democracy. The merit of Russia and the Russians to

25 Bauer, Kappeler and Roth, 1991.

26 Doroshenko, 1952, p. 26.

27 Ibid. p. 27.

28 Stakhiv, 1952, p. 60.

29 Ibid. p. 61.

30 L. Rudnitsky, 1952, p. 74.

Ukrainians is their liberation from Mongol-Tatar rule and Polish authority.³¹ The Cossack conception of the State was the monarchy, although way of their life led them to a republican political order. However, before and after the union with Moscow by Pereyaslav Agreement (1654), *'democracy was only to be found on the local level; above there was only monarchy.'*³² Drahomanov draws attention to the problem of different regions: the Left Bank Ukraine, Right Bank Ukraine, Galicia and Transcarpathia had very little contact, and were not completely informed about each other. He also stressed ethnic and linguistic homogeneity of the Ukrainian people from Transcarpathia to Kuban region. In his opinion *'Russian Ukrainians and Austrian Rusyns can only come together on the basis of interests demos and pan-European progressive ideas.'*³³

Drahomanov visited Transcarpathia twice – in 1875 and 1876, although he never lost sight this land even during his later years. He visited Mukachevo and Uzhhorod, met with representatives of the Transcarpathian intelligentsia, and was struck by the cultural backwardness. He drafted a special proclamation in which he requested that folklore materials be collected and sent to him. Soon, a number of his articles were published in Lviv, describing the situation in 'Hungarian Rus' and calling on the Galician intelligentsia to lend a helping hand to their brothers on the other side of the border.³⁴ Drahomanov had great hopes for Galicia, viewing it as a bridge for the spread of Western European values to Greater Ukraine.³⁵ In the work 'Drahomanov's Answer [to Greetings from Galicia]', not long before his death, he took the Hannibal oath to help the 'wounded brother' (Hungarian Rus), which was geographically closest to the Galicians:

I was the first Ukrainian to visit Hungarian Rus. I saw that spiritually it is farther separated even from Galicia than Australia is from Europe. I swore to myself an 'oath of Hannibal' to work for the integration of Hungarian Rus into our national democratic and progressive movement, for only thus can it find salvation [...] I have not been able to fulfill my oath, but today I lay it upon the heads of the whole Ukrainian people.³⁶

Drahomanov in 'A Preface [to the 'Hromada' in 1878]' argues that Transcarpathia is *'Ukrainian land [...] where the same men live as in former Cossack Ukraine along the Dnipro River.'*³⁷ Ukrainian lands were divided between separate states, but despite the long separation from each other,

31 Кармазіна [Karmazina], 2015, pp. 19–20.

32 Cf. Doroshenko, 1952, p. 32.

33 Драгоманов [Drahomanov], 1897, p. 177.

34 Мушинка [Mushynka], 1987, p. 29.

35 Гачковський [Gachkowskyi], 2018, p. 35.

36 Cf. L. Rudnitsky, 1952, p. 116.

37 Драгоманов [Drahomanov], 1991, p. 276.

[...] Our Ukrainians are almost exclusively peasants and urban labourers, and a few small merchants and priests, and there are also Moscow (mostly on the left side of the Dnipro and in the steppes), Polish (mostly from the Dnipro to the Beskydy), Hungarian (beyond the Beskydy), and Moldovan (in Bessarabia and Bukovina) priests, lords, bosses, and merchants in our Ukraine. All these people, strangers to our men's communities, are more united with each other than anywhere else, because in addition to doing the same thing, they are also of the same language, faith, and breed [...]³⁸

Philip E. Mosely referred to Drahomanov a '*a prophet of the Ukrainian and the European conscience.*' According to him:

Seeing the people of the Ukraine divided, Drahomanov sought to disclose and revivify the deepest source of its national unity. And, since true unity must develop from within, he devoted special efforts to recording, cultivating, and popularizing the treasures of Ukrainian folklore and folk-literature. [...] Turning to the history of the Ukraine, he rejected all attempts to 'monopolize' the national history for the benefit of any one tradition, region, or class. [...] His profound conviction that national unity cannot be imposed from without but must grow within the thought and feeling of living people is as true today as it was then. [...]. Drahomanov devoted the best of his life's effort to defining and clarifying the vital interaction between Ukrainian and European development, to making clear to informed European opinion the undeniable place of the Ukraine in Europe, and to assisting his own people to identify and grapple with those inner tasks of self-development which would enable it to occupy the place of its aspiration in the community of the European conscience.³⁹

An interesting aspect is that in 1941, Mykhailo Drahomanov's granddaughter and Lesya Ukrainka's great-niece, Natalia, met the Hungarian soldier Árpád Bartai in Kyiv, and married him following two years of correspondence. Overcoming considerable obstacles, the young Natalia Drahomanova arrived in Budapest in 1943, where she married her Hungarian fiancé. She was one of the founders and a permanent member of the Ukrainian Cultural Association in Hungary (UCAH) since 1991, co-founder of the UCAH's magazine 'Hromada' in 1996, and an active member of the editorial board until 2016. Natalia Drahomanova-Bartai died in 2018 in Budapest.⁴⁰

38 Ibid. p. 278.

39 Mosely, 1952, pp. 2-3, 5.

40 Плоскіна [Ploskina], 2018.

2. Cossack statehood on Balkan-Eastern European area – Ivan Krypyakevych (1886–1967)⁴¹

Ivan Krypyakevych (25 June 1886, Lviv, Austro-Hungarian Empire – 21 April 1967 Lviv, Soviet Union /now Ukraine/) was one of the most prominent and well-known Ukrainian historians of the twentieth century, as well as an academician, history textbook author, journalist and editor.

Krypyakevych was born in a family of the Greek Catholic priest and emigrant from the Polish Chełm Land, Father, Petro Franz Krypyakevych who was a doctor of theology and a professor at a gymnasium in Lviv. At home they spoke Polish, and he studied at a gymnasium with Polish as the language of instruction.

The only subject in Ukrainian, which were lessons of the Greek Catholic religion, was taught by his father. He also hired a Ukrainian language teacher for his son. At the Lviv University, Krypyakevych studied history under Mykhailo Hrushevsky, who was also heading the Shevchenko Scientific Society (a kind of academy of sciences founded in 1873). In 1911, Krypyakevych defended his doctoral dissertation on the topic 'The Cossacks and Bathory's Privileges,' written under the supervision of Hrushevsky. At this time, he was also elected a full member of the Shevchenko Scientific Society.

In the 1910s Krypyakevych taught in high schools. Following this, in the 1920s and 1930s, he was a professor at the Ukrainian Secret University (USU) in Lviv, the Theological Academy in Lviv, and from 1941, at Lviv University. During the German occupation, he remained in Lviv and worked as an editor of scientific publications at the Ukrainian Publishing House. In 1953–1962, he was director of the Institute of Social Sciences at the Lviv branch of the Academy of Sciences of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. In 1993, the Institute in Lviv was renamed the I. Krypyakevych Institute of Ukrainian Studies of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine. This is the only academic interdisciplinary research institution in Ukraine with departments of history, socio-cultural, linguistics and literature.

With the transfer of Galicia to Polish rule, Krypyakevych stopped engaging in politics and confined himself to scientific and educational work.⁴² During this



⁴¹ Ivan Krypyakevych, Ukrainian historian, unknown author, public domain, source of the picture: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ivan_Krypiakevych.jpg.

⁴² Клименко [Klymenko], 2012, p. 109.

period, his books were repeatedly confiscated and banned. Later, under the new Soviet power during World War II, he was first embraced, and later accused of standing not on Marxist, but on ‘nationalist positions;’ he viewed all these events from the perspective of the Ukrainian nation, and the Ukrainian national state.⁴³ The director was a ‘non-party specialist’ with an ‘unclear past’ and this made his position very difficult.⁴⁴ In 1939, when a historian from Lviv, Oleksandr Dombrowski (1914–2014) asked Krypyakevych why he was staying in Lviv, he replied that it was necessary to preserve the Ukrainian state of the settlement in the Galician capital.⁴⁵ Krypyakevych’s rehabilitation began in 1951, apparently in the system of preparations for the three-hundredth anniversary of the Pereyaslav Agreement—in view of he was a specialist on Ukrainian history of the Ukrainian Cossacks era, especially during the time of Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytsky.⁴⁶ In his early memoirs, Krypyakevych summarised the essence of his work, in the following statement: *‘I always considered science to be the main area of work. The main issue of my research was Bohdan Khmelnytsky’s state—the liberation struggle and the creation of a new state.’*⁴⁷

In Ukraine, the profession of a historian has always been regarded as risky, and this was especially true under communism. But even during the most cruel of times, historians’ choicer were generally quite limited. In this context, Lviv played a special role. Under the repression of the Stalin regime in the Soviet Union, the historical school of Mykhailo Hrushevsky, who is the father of modern Ukrainian history, was being brutally attacked. At the same time his students and followers were working calmly under Polish rule in the interwar Lviv.⁴⁸ Among them was Ivan Krypyakevych, who after World War II was in the Soviet Union, headed the academic Institute and taught at the University in Lviv. Krypyakevych applied the ‘50–50 principle’ at his institution: 50% of solid scientific work, and 50% of opportunistic articles at the request of the party leadership. At the Institute in the 1950s and 1960s, a new generation of the Ukrainian scientific-humanitarian elite emerged, led by Krypyakevych. Under conditions of political repressions and total censorship, this generation of scholars had to further the cause championed by the distinguished Ukrainian historiographers Volodymyr Antonovych and Mykhailo Hrushevsky in the second half of the 19th century and early 20th century.⁴⁹ The fundamental difference in their historical views was that Hrushevsky built the history of Ukraine around the idea of the Ukrainian people, while Krypyakevych followed the idea of Ukrainian statehood. According to Krypyakevych:

43 Заболотна [Zabolotna], 2007, p. 15.

44 Дашкевич [Dashkevych], 2007, p. 480.

45 Ibid. p. 11.

46 Прицак [Pritsak], 1968, p. 83.

47 Крип’якевич [Krypyakevych], 2001, p. 117.

48 Portnov, 2011, p. 147.

49 Kuhutiak, 2017, p. 42.

We can only achieve a full and proper understanding of the past if we set ourselves the goal of learning about the state. No matter how we approach any issue, no matter how we approach it, the ultimate measure should be statehood. Then we will be able to move the harmonious structure of Ukrainian history, in which the highest manifestation of human organisation – the state – will form the basis and centre.⁵⁰

Krypyakevych admired the research methodology of the French positivist historian Gabriel Monod (1844–1912), who pioneered the training of highly qualified source specialists and archivists in France, while simultaneously advocating for the neutrality of historical science in relation to politics.⁵¹ Krypyakevych tried to theoretically connect positivism – with its increased attention to sources – to the historiographical trend known as ‘cultural history’.⁵²

He believed that one of the most important issues of national revival was the issue of the Ukrainian history book. Knowledge of history makes it possible to discover who we are.⁵³ Among his disciples, he referred to himself a ‘Johannes de fabulis’.⁵⁴ In 1923 he wrote:

History is not only of theoretical importance as a science for science, but also of very great practical value when it is set the task of explaining the present. In Western Europe, this task of history has long been understood and textbooks are written accordingly.⁵⁵

In the 1930s, among his other pursuits, Krypyakevych was absorbed in the preparation of four fundamental books of the Historical Library series (‘Great History of Ukraine,’ ‘History of the Ukrainian Host,’ ‘History of Ukrainian Culture,’ ‘World History’). The first issue of volume of the ‘Great History of Ukraine’ was published in January 1934 with certain white spots. The Polish censors removed following content:

If all those parts of Ukraine could be politically united in this way, the Ukrainian tribe would stand up to the Moscow tribe, if not as equals, then as a politically strong tribe. The stones for that building are still lying ready. Maybe in time there will be a builder, a hero, who will put it together. Over the thousand years of the Ukrainian people’s life, many, many of these ‘stones’ have accumulated. Different sizes and shapes, different durability and quality. The future builder will have a lot to choose from when

50 Cf. Дашкевич [Dashkevych], 2007, p. 491.

51 Клименко [Klymenko], 2012, p. 105.

52 Дашкевич [Dashkevych], 2007, p. 489.

53 Ibid. p. 490.

54 Прицак [Prytsak], 1968, p. 86.

55 Cf. Клименко [Klymenko], 2011, p. 193.

tapping into the treasure trove of building materials that is the history of Ukraine.⁵⁶

The Ukrainian Cossacks were a unique military and political entity. In the revival of the Ukrainian state, Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytsky relied on the historical experience of the previous founders of Ukrainian statehood – Kyivan Rus, the Galicia-Volhynia Principality, and the Zaporozhzhian Sich. Krypyakevych was a supporter of the Norman theory. In his opinion, the Varangians of the Rus tribe liberated Kyiv from the Khazars, and formed the state of Kyivan Rus in the 9th century. Initially, Rus was called the Kyiv region, but later this name was transferred to the Muscovy conquered by Varangians princes. Krypyakevych's fundamental monograph 'Galicia-Volhynia Principality' was published only after his death in 1984. According to Krypyakevych, the Principality was the direct successor of Kyivan Rus, the continuer of its traditions, and considered an important state in Central and Eastern Europe.

The Khmelnytsky's uprising or war of independence in 1648–1654 was primarily aimed at liberation from the rule of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. In January 1654, Khmelnytsky convened a council of Cossack hosts in Pereyaslav, where he recalled the possible prospects for Ukraine's political development under the patronage of the Turkish sultan, Crimean khan, Polish king, or Muscovite tsar. As a result, he proclaimed the military and political alliance between the Cossack Hetmanate and the Muscovy. By the agreement of 1654, the Ukrainian territories on East of the Dnieper River came under the rule of the Muscovy. Note here that the Soviet and Russian history viewed this event as an expression of unity between the two peoples. However, for Ukraine, which aspired for an identity distinct from the Russians and was looking for a Central European identity, the Pereyaslav memory was considered disastrous for Ukraine's independent existence. In 2024 in Kyiv the sculptural composition in honor of the Pereiaslav Agreement was removed.⁵⁷

Krypyakevych's works occupy a special place among historical studies of Ukrainian statehood during his time. In his 'Studies on the State of Bohdan Khmelnytsky,' he noted that while old historians paid attention to the destructive side of the popular revolution, a new generation of researchers did not limit themselves to describing the breakdown of the old system, but complemented the picture of Khmelnytsky with the experience of this new state structure. Krypyakevych considered the era of the hetman as the initial period of the organisation of the Cossack state, namely, the military division of the territory. According to him, this was the main reason for both its strength and weakness.

The military organisation was the greatest success of the Cossack state and gained respect for Ukraine throughout Europe – for the Ukrainian state

⁵⁶ Ibid. pp. 205–206.

⁵⁷ Odey and Bassey, 2022, pp. 347–348.

itself, the army was the main force that allowed it to survive politically, despite all external difficulties and internal flaws.⁵⁸

From the very first steps of its independent existence, the Ukrainian state became a political factor in Eastern Europe.

Until now – under Polish rule, Ukraine had been drawn to the Baltic Sea and politically linked to Warsaw; the new Cossack state, severed from these ties, is looking for a new path and is nailing down the great Balkan-Eastern European artery.⁵⁹

Among other negative factors that comprised the young state's weakness were its limited territory, primitive state of the economy, lack of a strong state elite, growth of social conflicts, etc.

In peaceful world times, with a happy relationship with its neighbours, this country could have found a transitional zone, a link between the Balkans and northern Europe; but the Cossack state was created in a time of incessant wars, which exhausted its economic resources and did not and did not allow it to develop fully its productive forces—it was forced to seek support from one of its strong neighbours in order not to become a victim of others.⁶⁰

While all the states of the world were actually built on monarchical and feudal principles, the Cossack state was essentially a republic, as the entire host hierarchy had been elected, economy was based on farming with hired labour, and state formation existed in conditions of constant hostilities. The Cossacks established their 'republic of freedom' because the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was a militarily and politically decentralised state. This Cossack 'state' existed within the Polish-Lithuanian Rzeczpospolita. Khmelnytsky recognised the King of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth as his ruler, and after 1654, the Russian Tsar. The Polish-Lithuanian state offered the Cossacks the possibility of trialism, i.e. a Polish-Lithuanian-Ruthenian Commonwealth (Hadiach Union, 1658) much too late.⁶¹ Krypyakevych portrays Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytsky as a strong-willed politician who, for the sake of the cause, could go against the tradition and established order. The rarely convened general Cossack council, remained only a traditional ceremonial act. In the end, Cossack democracy was reduced to autocracy, and by the end of Khmelnytsky's life had become the autocratic lead. However,

58 Крип'якевич [Крып'якевич], 1931, p. 148.

59 Ibid. p. 141.

60 Ibid. pp. 148–149.

61 Snyder, 2003, p. 116.

Krypyakevych still representing the ideal of a united Ukraine, pursued the interests of the state rather than Cossack host elites. Cossack Ukraine, confined within a narrow framework, had to strive for territorial expansion, gathered of all Ukrainian lands of medieval Rus, up to the Vistula.

Interestingly, in all polls in independent Ukraine on ‘the most outstanding Ukrainians of all times,’ despite the variable perception of his persona, Khmelnytsky has always been among the top three. Only after the Russia’s full-scale invasion against Ukraine did he slip to fourth place, behind President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, and two 19th century poets, Taras Shevchenko (Kobzar /Ukrainian bard/, founder of modern Ukrainian literature and modern Ukrainian language) and Lesya Ukrainka (one of the most famous Ukrainian women public figures of all time).⁶²

3. Craving for a synthesis of East and West – Ivan Lysiak-Rudnytsky (1919–1984)

Ivan Lysiak-Rudnytsky (27 October 1919, Vienna, Austria – 25 April 1984, Edmonton, Canada) was a Ukrainian social and political thought historian, political scientist and publicist. He hailed from a mixed Ukrainian-Jewish family. His parents were political refugees from Galicia. In 1919, Vienna was one of Europe’s most cosmopolitan intellectual centres, and the leaders of the political emigration of the time would meet in his parents’ house.⁶³ Lysiak-Rudnytsky’s father, Pavlo Lysiak, was a Ukrainian lawyer, politician, editor and journalist. His mother, Milena Rudnytska, was also a politician, journalist and civic activist. She was born to Ivan Rudnytsky who was a Ukrainian and Ida Spiegel who was Jewish. Mixed marriages were not uncommon in interwar Galicia, but the Rudnytsky family’s case was exceptional because Ukrainian-Jewish marriages were very rare compared to Polish-Ukrainian or Polish-Jewish ones.⁶⁴ As can be seen from his surname, the fact that he belonged to this family was important to Ivan. His father insisted that he stop using the Rudnytsky surname and use only his father’s surname, but Ivan insisted on using Lysiak-Rudnytsky.⁶⁵

Although Lysiak-Rudnytsky was born in Vienna, he spent only the first two years of his life there. His parents divorced soon after. He lived with his mother and grew up in the house of Ida Spiegel in Lviv. In 1939, on the night of Catholic Christmas, along with his mother Milena, he secretly crossed the German-Soviet border across the San River and ended up in Krakow.⁶⁶ He graduated from the Law

62 People’s top, 2022.

63 Pritsak, 1987, pp. XV–XVI.

64 Грицак [Hrytsak], 2019, p. 89.

65 Ibid. p. 93.

66 Ibid. p. 88.

Faculty of the Lviv University and the Faculty of Foreign Relations of the University of Berlin. In 1945, he defended his doctoral thesis at the Charles University in Prague. In the early 1950s, he moved to the United States. After receiving his degree from Columbia University, he worked at the University of St. La Salle, then the American University of Washington, and since 1971, he has been a professor at the University of Alberta in Canada, where he co-founded the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies.

Most of the documents related to the life of Ivan Lysiak-Rudnytsky were transferred to the archives of the University of Alberta in Edmonton after his death. He kept a diary almost all his life. The diaries of his youth, between the twelfth and nineteenth years of his life (1931–1939), were kept by his widow, Oleksandra Chernenko. After her death in 2014, they became the property of Lysiak-Rudnytsky's son Petro. He handed over scanned copies of these diaries to the Institute of Historical Research at the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv. The publication of the diaries covers a wide range of events in his biography: life in Lviv in the 1930s, the Ukrainian community in Krakow in 1939–1940, life in Nazi Berlin and occupied Prague in 1940–1945, life in exile in Western Europe and the United States in 1945–1954, and life in Soviet Moscow and Soviet Kyiv in the 1970s.⁶⁷

The youth's diaries reflect details and episodes from his personal life, the life of his family, and the general situation in interwar Galicia.⁶⁸ The diary contains openly anti-Semitic entries, as well as critical characterisations of Ukrainians. The young Lysiak-Rudnytsky's goal was a free Ukraine, stating that *'we will take a place in world culture worthy of a 40-million people,'* i.e., to make Ukraine a full-fledged member of the European community. According to Yaroslav Hrytsak's assessment at the time, his Europe was not a political concept, but rather a *res publica artes liberales*.⁶⁹

According to a 1947 diary entry, in the Eastern European regions—regions occupied by the Bolsheviks.⁷⁰ In one 1948 entry, he placed European solidarity above neutrality: *'I understand the Swiss well – but it is an evil sign for European solidarity if each nation – like Switzerland – puts its own particular interest above the collective interest of the European community.'*⁷¹

In Lysiak-Rudnytsky's deep conviction, Hrushevsky was the first prominent eastern Ukrainian to settle in Galicia, appointed in 1894 to the newly created Ukrainian Chair of East European History at Lviv University. In 1913, his classic *'History of Ukraine-Rus'* comprised eight volumes. Elected as chairman of the reorganised Shevchenko Scientific Society, he elevated the Society to the level of an unofficial Ukrainian academy of sciences. Assessing Ukrainian historiography, Lysiak-Rudnytsky noted the achievement of Mykhailo Hrushevsky and his school in proving the continuity of the Ukrainian historical process from Kyivan Rus to the present,

67 Лисяк-Рудницький [Lysiak-Rudnytsky], 2019, p. III.

68 Грицак [Hrytsak], 2019, p. 87.

69 Ibid. pp. 91–92.

70 Лисяк-Рудницький [Lysiak-Rudnytsky], 2019, p. 357.

71 Ibid. p. 390.

which elevated the national feeling, since ancient Rus was a period of Kyiv's great power and its hegemony in all of Eastern Europe.⁷² *'Thanks to Hrushevsky's work, we have learnt to see Kyivan Rus as the initial period of our national history.'*⁷³

Lysiak-Rudnytsky clearly traced the evolution of Ukrainian political thought in general, and that of Hrushevsky in particular. He noted:

From the point of view of the historical evolution of Ukrainian political thought, the importance of the events in the fall and winter of 1917 lay in the tremendous shift from federalism to a program of state independence. The federalist concept had already been undermined by the insincere and ambiguous policy of the Provisional Government toward Ukraine. Now Bolshevik aggression delivered the death blow to this traditional Ukrainian ideology.⁷⁴

Hrushevsky termed this great revolution in Ukrainian political thought, that is, the rejection of the orientation towards Moscow and Russia, a 'purification by fire.' *'Hrushevsky's impassioned words illustrate the great change that had occurred in Ukrainian political thinking in the wake of the experiences of 1917.'*⁷⁵

However, Lysiak-Rudnytsky did not ignore the history of Transcarpathia. In particular, his first works on Carpatho-Ukraine appeared in 1939. The journal *Natsija v Pohodi* – Ukrainian language organ of Hetman Pavlo Skoropadsky, printed in Berlin (1939–1941), later moved to Prague – published his article 'Carpatho-Ukraine', 'Legitimacy and Ukrainian Youth', and 'The State Leadership of Ukraine'.⁷⁶ The essay 'Carpatho-Ukraine: a people in search of their identity' provides a brief overview of three national orientations in Transcarpathia (Rusynophile, Russo-ophile, Ukrainophile), focusing on their ideological background. The author noted:

The period of Carpatho-Ukrainian autonomy was to last but a few months, and it ended in mid-March 1939 with the final disintegration of Czechoslovakia and the re-annexation of Carpatho-Ukraine by Hungary. The brief period of autonomy, however, had one lasting and irreversible effect: the mass of Subcarpathia's population became permeated with a Ukrainian national consciousness. [...] It is no exaggeration to say that this 'baptism of fire' put the final seal on the Ukrainian national identity of the land.⁷⁷

In the early 1950s, he even considered writing a dissertation on the history of Transcarpathia, particularly *'the transition of Transcarpathia from Hungary to*

72 Вереш [Vehesh], 2005, p. 178.

73 Лисяк-Рудницький [Lysiak-Rudnytsky], 1994, p. 14.

74 L. Rudnytsky, 1987g, pp. 407–408.

75 Ibid.

76 Вереш, 2005, p. 178.

77 L. Rudnytsky, 1987f, p. 371.

*Czechoslovakia [...] on the basis of autonomous diplomatic and legislative acts.*⁷⁸ However, this endeavour did not come to fruition.⁷⁹

An important component of the historiography of the Ukrainian diaspora in the 1950s and 1980s was the attempt to find the future place for the Ukrainian national state within the geopolitical structure of the bipolar Cold War world order. The desire for a synthesis of West and East is best expressed in his famous essay 'Ukraine between East and West'.

Lysiak-Rudnytsky sets himself the task of defining Ukraine 'as a historical entity'. The concept of 'people' is defined through the categories of origin, language, way of life and social system, which gives the people a special 'national character'.⁸⁰ Similarly, nation is 'a phenomenon of the political sphere [...] a collective of people who want to be a state.'⁸¹ The national character formed in the process of historical formation of a nation crystallises at the stage of its political maturity and subsequently shows resistance to disruptive influences, the ability to reject or assimilate them.⁸² Belonging to Europe is not always geographically determined: the Muslim states of medieval Spain, the Ottoman Empire that for centuries occupied most of the European continent, and 'Muscovite Russia' in the 14th and 17th centuries were 'essentially non-European.' 'However, Ukraine's European outlook was strengthened through contacts with, and influences from, other European countries.'⁸³ In this context, Lysiak-Rudnytsky questioned: 'With what part of the European community did Ukraine entertain close relations?'⁸⁴ He went on to answer, stating:

Not with the Atlantic or West European zone. Relations with France and England existed since the times of the Kyivan realm, and can be traced in all other epochs of Ukrainian history, but they always remained rather sporadic. When modern Ukrainians speak of 'Western Europe', they usually refer to the area commonly known as Central Europe, i.e., to the German-speaking lands from the North and Baltic Seas to the Danubian valley. [...] Even closer were the ties with the countries to the east of the German ethnic territory, for which the term 'East-Central Europe' (Ostmitteleuropa) has been coined in scholarly literature: Bohemia, Hungary and especially Poland. Besides them, we must also mention Baltic and Scandinavian areas – Lithuania, with which a direct political tie existed for over two centuries (from the middle of the fourteenth to the middle of the sixteenth centuries), and Sweden, whence came the stimulus for the formation of the Kyivan State.⁸⁵

78 Лисяк-Рудницький [Lysiak-Rudnytsky], 2019, p. 589.

79 Ibid.

80 Лисяк-Рудницький [Lysiak-Rudnytsky], 1994, p. 11.

81 Ibid. p. 13.

82 L. Rudnytsky, 1987a, p. 1.

83 Ibid. p. 2.

84 Ibid.

85 Ibid. pp. 2–3.

The term ‘the East’ is commonly interpreted in two ways: on the one hand, it refers to the world of Eastern Christianity and the Byzantine cultural tradition, and on the other hand, it describes the world of the nomads of the Eurasian steppes. For Lysiak-Rudnytsky, these are different staircases. Each played a separate role in Ukraine’s development. The nomadic peoples of the Great Steppe played the role of a braking factor, causing the decline of the culture of medieval Rus. The centuries-long struggle ended only in the second half of the 18th century, when, after the decline of the Crimean Khanate, the Ukrainian peasantry settled the Black Sea steppes.⁸⁶ Another source of influence from the East is the Byzantine religious and cultural tradition. Being situated between the worlds of Greek-Byzantine and Western cultures and feeling part of both, Ukrainians have sought a synthesis between East and West. It almost achieved this synthesis in the great epochs of its history – during the times of Kyivan Rus and the Cossack period of the 17th century. The conclusion is that

Ukraine, located between the worlds of Greek Byzantine and Western cultures, and a legitimate member of both, attempted, in the course of its history, to unite the two traditions in a living synthesis. This was a great work, although it must be admitted that Ukraine has not fully succeeded in it. The synthesis has been approached in the great epochs of Ukrainian history, in the age of Kyivan Rus’ and in seventeenth-century Cossack Ukraine. In both cases, although these epochs were rich in promise and partial achievement, the final synthesis miscarried, and Ukraine succumbed to excessive pressure from the outside, as well as to internal disruptive tendencies. In this sense, it may be said that the great task, which appears to be the historical vocation of the Ukrainian people, remains unfulfilled, and still lies in the future.⁸⁷

In philosophy, Lysiak-Rudnytsky refers, among others, to the works of: German philosopher Georg Hegel, who originated the concept of ‘historical’ and ‘non-historical’ nations; Austrian-American historian Robert A. Kann, outstanding authority on nationality problems in the Habsburg Empire, who classifies the peoples of Austria-Hungary into ‘*the national groups with independent national history*’ and ‘*the national groups without independent national history*’;⁸⁸ British historian and political scientist Hugh Seaton-Watson, who distinguished between ‘the old continuous nations’ of Europe and the ‘new nations’; and Mykhailo Drahomanov, whose fundamental political thought is conflict between the ‘aristocratic’ and ‘plebeian’ nations of Eastern Europe.⁸⁹

86 Ibid. p. 3.

87 Ibid. p. 9.

88 L. Rudnytsky, 1987c, pp. 40–41.

89 Ibid.

The cornerstone of Lysiak-Rudnytsky's historiosophical concept is the interpretation of the Ukrainian nation as non-historical. The notion of a 'non-historical nation,' he notes in his essay 'Observations on the problem of "historical" and "non-historical" nations,' means only that such a nation has experienced deep and long interruptions in its historical development. Statehood is an important criterion, but not the decisive one for the division of historical and non-historical nations,

[...] the decisive factor in the existence of the so-called historical nations was the preservation, despite the loss of independence, of a representative upper class as the carrier of political consciousness and 'high' culture. [...] Conversely, the so-called non-historical nations had lost (or had never possessed) a representative class, and were reduced to an inarticulate popular mass, with little if any national consciousness and with a culture of predominantly folk character. This differentiation is not an arbitrary theoretical construct, for it is grounded in empirical historical reality.⁹⁰

The peculiarity of the Ukrainian situation is that its national existence was interrupted twice: after the Union of Lublin (in 1569 create single state of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, to which a large part territories of modern-day Ukraine belonged) and as a result of the liquidation of Cossack Ukraine. According to Lysiak-Rudnytsky, the Ukrainian nation has already died twice and been reborn twice.⁹¹ Each time, state projects had to be started from scratch.⁹² The essay 'The role of Ukraine in modern history' emphasises that: *'The character of modern Ukrainian history changes definitely after 1917. The making of the nation was basically completed during the revolutionary years 1917–1920.'*⁹³

The essay 'The Intellectual Origins of Modern Ukraine' describes the process of Ukrainian national revival as follows:

Though the destruction of the Cossack state and the Russification of the Cossack aristocracy had reduced Ukraine to the level of a politically amorphous ethnic mass, now, from this mass, the Ukrainian nation was beginning to re-emerge. [...] When the First World War started, the Ukrainian movement in Russia already presented a factor of real power, but it was still only a 'movement'. It was not as yet a crystallized nation, as were the Poles, Czechs, or Finns. It was during the Revolution that the modern Ukrainian nation was created.⁹⁴

90 Ibid. pp. 41–42.

91 Лисяк-Рудницький [Lysiak-Rudnytsky], 1994, p. 18.

92 Ibid. p. 21.

93 L. Rudnytsky, 1987b, p. 14.

94 L. Rudnytsky, 1987e, pp. 139–140.

Here it is worth making a small digression, so as not to be misunderstood, because today's Russian official policy, which launched a full-scale invasion against Ukraine in early 2022, is based, among other things, on the fact that the modern Ukrainian state was created thanks to the Bolsheviks. Rather, it was against the will of the Bolsheviks, as a direct reaction to the Bolshevik coup in Petrograd in October 1917 (November according to the Gregorian calendar), who tried to take control of Kiev but were defeated, thus starting the process of modern Ukrainian state-building. Our author also refers to this interpretation.

Lysiak-Rudnytsky concludes that it would be a mistake to think that there was no genetic connection between the three phases of the Ukrainian nation's existence. On the contrary, when we speak of breaks and revivals, we accept that these were the processes of one subject: the Ukrainian nation in its formation.⁹⁵

The concept of nationalism is also a mainstay in Lysiak-Rudnytsky's political studies. In the Ukrainian political terminology of the late 19th century, it was understood as active national consciousness and patriotism, and during the liberation struggle – independence. When an ideological current and a corresponding political movement emerged in the 1920s, the concept of nationalism acquired a party colouring. Therefore, Lysiak-Rudnytsky differentiates nationalism: in a broad interpretation (patriotism, independence); in a narrow interpretation (political movement – integral nationalism).⁹⁶ Nationalists often cherished myths and drew attention to the cult of struggle. Lysiak-Rudnytsky promoted a new type of Ukrainian: a strong man with an unbending character, fanatically devoted to the ideals of the movement, and ready to sacrifice himself and others for them, possessing nationalism subordinated traditional moral virtues to the requirements of political expediency ('the end sanctifies the means'), and rejecting political values beyond the national interest.⁹⁷ World War II was the period of the nationalist movement's greatest rise and, at the same time, its organisational and ideological crisis. According to Lysiak-Rudnytsky, the ideological evolution of any political camp requires an honest reckoning with its own past, which did not occur. Instead, a series of tragedies in the history of Ukrainians in 1941–1944 occurred. He blames the leaders of nationalist organisations for not condemning the genocide of Jews and warning Ukrainians against complicity in Nazi atrocities.⁹⁸

The end of World War II brought '*the consolidation of all lands of Ukrainian speech into one Ukrainian body politic*'.⁹⁹ In his vision of future trends in the development of Ukrainian society, Lysiak-Rudnytsky attributes a primary role to overcoming the dichotomy of Eastern and Western Ukraine, and consolidating Ukrainian lands into a single state body. He considers the Left-bank Ukraine [the left (east) bank of the Dnieper River], Sloboda Ukraine [region in the eastern part of Ukraine and

95 Лисяк-Рудницький [Lysiak-Rudnytsky], 1994, p. 21.

96 Діптан [Dyptan], 2020, p. 69.

97 Ibid. p. 70.

98 Ibid. pp. 71–72.

99 L. Rudnytsky, 1987b, p. 33.

the border regions of the Russian Federation], Southern Ukraine, the Right-bank Ukraine [the right (west) bank of the Dnieper River], Galicia and Bukovina to be the core of the Ukrainian world, and the Kuban, Chełm and Transcarpathia to comprise the peripheral lands. In his essay ‘Trends in Ukrainian political thought’ he emphasised:

In view of the country’s precarious geographical location, its political survival will depend on Ukrainians’ ability to resolve their internal differences amicably and to maintain a reasonable degree of solidarity against foreign threats and pressures. Civil wars are a luxury that Ukraine can ill afford.¹⁰⁰

Therefore Lysiak-Rudnytsky, in his historical analyses, essentially pointed at particular features of the historic development of Ukraine and the Ukrainians inhabiting the territories between the civilization influences of the East and the West. He concluded that the Ukrainians had always craved a synthesis of the East and West, and Ukraine had always been ‘a classical land of union freedom’.¹⁰¹

4. Ukraine than the (eternal) Gate of Europe – Serhii Ploky (1957–)¹⁰²

Serhii Ploky /Plokhii/ (23 May 1957, Nizhnii Novgorod, Soviet Union /now Russia/) is a Ukrainian and American Historian. He lives and works in the USA, and is considered one of the leading specialists in the early modern and modern history of Ukraine and Eastern Europe. According David Cutler, Ploky ‘*represents the frontier of contemporary studies in the history of Ukraine and its environs.*’¹⁰³ He has authored many historical and journalistic works that have been translated into numerous languages.

Ploky spent his childhood in Ukraine, attended school in Zaporizhzhya, and graduated from Dnipropetrovsk University (now



¹⁰⁰ L. Rudnytsky, 1987d, p. 88.

¹⁰¹ Zashkilnyak, 2015, pp. 48–49.

¹⁰² Historian Serhii Ploky during the presentation of his award-winning book “The Last Empire: The Final Days of the Soviet Union” on the Shevchenko Scientific Society (Toronto) in the KUMF Gallery on April 20, 2015. Author: Mykola Swarnyk, Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported, source of the picture: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ploky_NTSh_Toronto.JPG.

¹⁰³ Cf. Woloschuk, 2007, p. 10.

city named Dnipro). He defended his candidate degree at the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia in Moscow, and doctorate in history at the Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv. In 1983–1992 he taught at Dnipropetrovsk University, and in 1991 he came to Canada to work at the University of Alberta. Since 1996, he has been at the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies. In 2007, he was appointed of Ukrainian history at Department of History of the Harvard University, since 2013 director of the Ukrainian Research Institute of the Harvard University. The historian has also become a major media personality thanks to social networking, YouTube and other media platforms.

To develop a new perspective of Ukrainian history, Plokhy used a transnational approach based on its consideration as a civilizational and cultural frontier, a kind of contact zone between Central and Eastern Europe.¹⁰⁴ He believes that it is necessary to rethink Ukraine's history in order to overcome the limitations imposed on it by the imperial and then national paradigms. This will help integrate the Ukrainian past into the history of Eastern Europe and the entire continent. He notes that national minorities should be included in this new narrative of Ukrainian history as part of the collective 'we', an important element of Ukrainian history that distinguished it from the history of other lands. Writing a multi-ethnic history of Ukraine is one way to overcome the ganja of the national narrative.

After all, writing national history in today's context means reinforcing the isolationism and provincialism that Eastern European historiography has been subjected to during the decades of the Iron Curtain. The new nations of Eastern Europe want to be part of a united Europe, and their young historians are eager to find their place in the European and global historical community.¹⁰⁵

Plokhy also pointed out that today's world has brought new challenges. In particular, it is difficult to be heard amidst the barrage of information spam that prevails today. Plokhy noted the important role of social media and recommended that historians consider this aspect. He called on history experts to become a moral authority with tens of thousands of followers who will read them and listen to their opinions.¹⁰⁶

In his monograph 'The Last Empire: The Final Days of the Soviet Union'¹⁰⁷ Plokhy referred to declassified documents and original interviews with key participants. In his opinion, the collapse was part of the process of disintegration of multinational states or empires that began after the First World War.

104 Верменич [Vermenych], 2013, p. 5.

105 Плохий [Plokhy], 2013, p. 5.

106 Cf. Місія історика в сучасних умовах [Misija istoryka v suchasnyh umovah], 2019.

107 Plokhy, 2015a.

With the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989, German reunification under way, and Mikhail Gorbachev adopting the [jokingly named after Frank Sinatra popular song ‘May way’] ‘Sinatra doctrine,’ which allowed Moscow’s East European clients to ‘do it their way’ and eventually leave the Kremlin’s embrace, the conflict at the core of the Cold War was resolved.¹⁰⁸

The United States had a completely negative attitude to the idea of the Soviet Union’s collapse, mainly because of fears of ethnic conflicts, wars between republics with nuclear weapons, and the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Simultaneously, the Baltic and Ukrainian communities in the United States were mobilising, and pressuring the White House through the House of Representatives and the Senate. Finally, the US administration compromised: the Baltic republics could secede, but the Soviet Union must remain intact; the United States would not support – on the words of US President George Bush in Kyiv (known as ‘Chicken Kiev’ speech) – ‘suicidal nationalism based upon ethnic hatred.’¹⁰⁹

The changes came in the days of the Ukrainian independence referendum on 1 December 1991, ‘*the Ukrainian factor would dramatically change the balance of forces between the republics, their relations with Gorbachev, and Bush’s relations with the Soviet leader.*’¹¹⁰ From this point for the West, the question was ‘*not whether to recognize Ukraine, but how and when,*’¹¹¹ while Gorbachev still thought, that Ukraine and Russia ‘*[t]hese two nations are branches of the same tree. No one will be able to tear them apart.*’¹¹²

For the first ten years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the world was effectively unipolar. The question for Ukraine was whether it could be a federal state. Plokhy believes that the Crimea gained autonomy in early 1991, which ‘*envied by local elites in the Transcarpathian oblast [...] They, too, wanted autonomy. Odesa in the south and the Donbas coal region in the east were prime candidates for similar status.*’¹¹³ Plokhy notes that neighbouring countries reacted differently. In his view Hungary’s elites ‘*were not making any claims on current Ukrainian territories.*’¹¹⁴ Federalism becoming a ‘dirty word’¹¹⁵ in the Ukraine.

Plokhy’s book *The Gates of Europe: A History of Ukraine*¹¹⁶ begins with the establishment of terms denoting the nationality of the inhabitants of Eastern Europe. The term ‘Rus’ was introduced to Eastern Europe by the Vikings, and was adopted by Slavic inhabitants along with newcomer princes and warriors, who were quickly

108 Ibid. pp. 4–5.

109 Ibid. p. 64.

110 Ibid. p. 255.

111 Ibid. p. 264.

112 Ibid. p. 260.

113 Ibid. p. 282.

114 Ibid. p. 283.

115 Ibid. p. 282.

116 Plokhy, 2015b.

Slavicized. After the collapse of Kyivan Rus and the absorption of its lands by neighbouring states, the local population was referred to as ‘Rusyns’ in the Kingdom of Poland, ‘Ruthenians’ in the Austrian Empire, and ‘Little Russians’ in the Russian Empire. In the nineteenth century, the leaders of the Ukrainian national movement did not recognise their Little Russian identity and turned the medieval place name ‘Ukraine’ into an ethnotoponym.¹¹⁷ In the book, Plokyh uses the term ‘Rus’ mainly in relation to the medieval period, ‘Rusyns’ to Ukrainians of the early modern period, and ‘Ukrainians’ when writing about the modern period. Since the proclamation of the independent Ukrainian state in 1991, all citizens are considered Ukrainian, regardless of ethnicity, as this has been the norm in Western academic historiography.¹¹⁸ *‘Nation is an important – although not dominant – category of analysis and element of the story that, along with ever changing idea of Europe, defines the nature of this narrative,’* Plokyh concludes.¹¹⁹

The book title, *The Gates of Europe: A History of Ukraine*, is explained as follows:

The title [...] is of course a metaphor, but not one to be taken lightly or dismissed as a marketing gimmick. Europe is an important part of the Ukrainian story, as Ukraine is part of the European one. Located at the western edge of the Eurasian steppe, Ukraine has been a gateway to Europe for many centuries. Sometimes, when the ‘gates’ were closed as a result of wars and conflicts, Ukraine helped stop foreign invasions east and west; when they were open, as was the case for most of Ukraine’s history, it served as a bridge between Europe and Eurasia, facilitating the interchange of people, goods, and ideas. Through the centuries, Ukraine has also been a meeting place (and a battleground) of various empires, Roman to Ottoman, Habsburg to Romanov. In the eighteenth century, Ukraine was ruled from St. Petersburg and Vienna, Warsaw and Istanbul. In the nineteenth century, only the first two capitals remained. In the second half of the twentieth, only Moscow ruled supreme over most of the Ukrainian lands. Each of the empires claimed land and booty, leaving its imprint on the landscape and the character of the population and helping to form its unique frontier identity and ethos.¹²⁰

The pre-revolutionary Russian Empire questioned not only the existence of Ukrainians, but also their national statehood. However, in the Soviet empire, the Bolsheviks recognised the existence of peoples separate from the Russians – the Ukrainian and Belarusian peoples. Each of them gained national statehood, and with it the right to their own history. This was significant progress compared to the pre-revolutionary situation. However, in order to prevent possible manifestations

117 Plokyh, 2015b, p. xxiii.

118 Ibid. pp. xxiii-xxiv.

119 Ibid. p. xxi.

120 Ibid. p. xxi.

of separatism, the Kremlin repeatedly resorted to repression. Plokyh's popular book was written in 2014–2015, during the first stage of Russian-Ukrainian armed conflict in the east of the country, when the President of the Russian Federation reiterated that Ukrainians and Russians are 'one people'.¹²¹ The forced partitioning of the Cossack state between Muscovy and Poland (1667), and Russia's victory over Sweden at Poltava (1709), as well as the further incorporation of Ukraine's eastern half as 'Little Russia' forged an enduring narrative about the Kyivan origins of Russian nation. Plokyh's merit, states Elizabeth Jones, is that standard accounts of European nationalism rarely touch on Eastern Europe, but this book outlines that history in detail precisely in this context.¹²²

In the context of the Russian–Ukrainian war, which began in 2014, Plokyh notes that the perception of Ukrainians constituents of the Russian nations originates in the perpetuating myth of modern Russia about Kyiv as the 'mother of Russian cities'.¹²³ Ukrainian territories have always been located between Russia and the West, and when the moment of choice came, Ukrainians chose the West in protest against Ukraine's constant identification with Russia: in 1991, masse to vote for independence, in 2004 the Orange Revolution (1st Maidan Revolution) '*gave a common name to a number of 'colour revolutions' that shook authoritarian regimes*', which '*did not change the post-Soviet world, but they left [...] the hope that it would change one day*', and at the turn of 2013–2014 the Euromaidan or Revolution of Dignity (2nd Maidan Revolution) they took to the cold streets for Europe at a time '*when enthusiasm for the European Union was at a low ebb among its member countries*'. Then in spring 2014 the annexation of Ukrainian Crimea and starting Russia's hybrid military campaign in the Donbas region of Ukraine '*causing politicians to speak of a 'battle for the future of Europe' and a return of the Cold War in the very part of the world where it had allegedly ended in 1991*'.¹²⁴

In 1989, Mikhail Gorbachev created a concept 'Common European Home', which '*rules out the probability of an armed clash and the very possibility of the use of force or threat of force – alliance against alliance, inside the alliances, wherever*'.¹²⁵ The watershed outlined by Plokyh between Europe and non-Europe ('Russian world') has every chance of taking root for a long time in the Ukrainian and Western mentality, burying the dream of Greater Europe. On 22 March 2022, the President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy used Plokyh's metaphor of the 'gateway to Europe' in his address to Italian parliamentarians, stating: '*Ukraine is the gateway to Europe for Russian troops*'.¹²⁶

In response to a question by journalists in January 2023 on whether Ukraine will remain a frontier area between two civilizations, Plokyh noted that since the

121 Кульчицький [Kulchytsky], 2016, pp. 202–203.

122 Jones, 2022.

123 Plokyh, 2015b, p. 350.

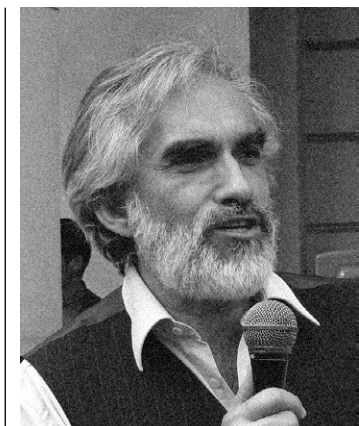
124 Ibid. p. xx.

125 Gorbachev's address to the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, 1989.

126 Address by President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy to the Italian Chamber of Deputies, 2022.

Second World War, the Russian-Ukrainian War is the largest military and political conflict in Europe, the first example in Europe since 1945 of the annexation of the territory of one state by another. It marked the end of the period of ‘long peace’ after the Cold War, a restructuring of relations in Europe and the world in terms of relations between Europe and Russia, and a major change for Ukraine. In his opinion, Ukraine has become a Central European state in many ways by that became an EU candidate, to being the most NATO-integrated country in the world, even compared to NATO countries, *‘because they all fight to their national standard, and we have mastered the standards of many NATO countries.’*¹²⁷

5. Ukraine, which could be a new Central European tiger – Yaroslav Hrytsak (1960–)¹²⁸



Yaroslav Hrytsak (1 January 1960, Dovhe, Soviet Union /now Ukraine/) is one of the most prominent Ukrainian historians, publicists, editors, and bloggers. He believes it is important not only to cultivation science in the strictest sense, but also to science popularization as widely as possible, as he calls himself – ‘public historian’. He graduated in history from Ivan Franko State University of Lviv. Hrytsak’s career as a historian was launched by a project led by Professor Jerzy Kłoczowski at the Catholic University of Lublin. In the early 1990s, Kłoczowski commissioned young Ukrainian, Lithuanian and Belarusian historians to rewrite the history of their nations.

It was here that he first encountered the Western historiography methodology. His obtained scientific degrees obtained from here, as well as the Institute of Ukrainian Archeography of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine. In Lviv, Hrytsak is a professor of the Ukrainian Catholic University and director of the Institute for Historical Studies of Ivan Franko National University. He has taught at several universities abroad, including the Central European University in Budapest.

The origin of the name ‘Ukraine’ has been of interest to many generations of historians. The name originates from the general Slavic word for ‘borderland, outskirts’. Hrytsak notes, that ‘Ukraine’ could refer to both the country and this outskirts.

127 Портников [Portnykov], 2023.

128 Yaroslav Hrytsak, Ukrainian historian, publicist, editor, blogger. Yaroslav Hrytsak gives a lecture “How to overcome history?” at the first class of the street university in Lviv on 22.04.2012. Author: Volodymyr_F. Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported, source of the picture: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:%D0%AF%D1%80%D0%BE%D1%81%D0%BB%D0%B0%D0%B2_%D0%93%D1%80%D0%B8%D1%86%D0%B0%D0%BA.JPG.

To say that Ukraine is an ‘outskirt’ of Russia is a fundamental misconception. It is based on the wrong assumption that all words have one and only one meaning. We know that this is not the case. The word ‘Ukraine’ has two meanings. Literally speaking, it is a cut-off territory [...]. The meaning of this word depends on the perspective – from where do you look at this land? If you look at these territories from the outside, relatively speaking, from the perspective of Warsaw or Moscow, this is the ‘outskirts’. If you look from the inside, it is your country.¹²⁹

He adds that this is not an exceptional case, citing the origin of Germany’s name as an example. *‘The word ‘Deutschland’ comes from the self-name of the local tribes, the Old Germanic word ‘diutisc’, and this word means ‘local [people]’. That is, Deutschland is a country of local people.’*¹³⁰

Hrytsak also addresses the issue of borders. He notes that *‘the main principle of modern Europe is that borders are inviolable.’* Adding that these borders *‘are imperfect, we don’t like them, but they are inviolable.’*¹³¹ While the Russia of today is looking everywhere for ‘Russian perpetual territories,’ the other former empires are not living in the past. The wisest of all was the Polish politician and public figure Jerzy Giedroyc, an opponent of mutual territorial and other claims, and publicist, political commentator Juliusz Mieroszewski. *‘In the 1950s, there was an elite that said that for the good of the Polish cause, it was necessary to recognise that Vilnius is a Lithuanian city and Lviv is a Ukrainian city,’*¹³² states Hrytsak. In 1977, Giedroyc initiated the ‘Declaration on the Ukrainian Cause,’ which was signed by Russian, Polish, Hungarian, and Czech dissidents and activists. They demanded self-determination for Ukraine and solidarity with the struggle for Ukraine’s state independence.¹³³ Jerzy Giedroyc and Juliusz Mieroszewski (leading figures of the Polish emigration in Paris) argued that the Central and Eastern European states should abandon the ‘historical–legal’ argument, and territorial claims, as these only weaken common security. They believed in a future historic moment when the societies of the ULB countries (Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus) could demand either autonomy or independence.¹³⁴

The concept of ‘two Ukraines’ created by the Ukrainian public intellectual Mykola Ryabchuk in 1992, provoked a really wide reaction. One answer was given by Hrytsak, response to Ryabchuk’s metaphor the concept of ‘twenty-two Ukraines’.¹³⁵ Ryabchuk claiming that the border of the former Russian Empire has left an eternal mark on the mentality of different parts of the country, making regional identities

129 Єрмоленко [Jermolenko], 2019, p. 76.

130 Ibid.

131 Ibid. p. 86.

132 Ibid. p. 87.

133 Шаповал [Shapoval], 2017.

134 Turkowski, 2019.

135 Грицак [Hrytsak], 2002.

a threat to statehood. In contrast, in Hrytsak's essay Ukraine's regional diversity presented as a resource that contributes to the country's sustainability.

Hrytsak authored the first popular history of Ukraine, 'An outline of the history of Ukraine. Formation of a Modern Nation in the XIX–XX Centuries,' whose first edition was published in 1996.¹³⁶ He reduces the entire modern history of Ukraine to the formation of the Ukrainian nation, whose geographical and political location, as well as borderline between the Catholic and Orthodox worlds, has determined its peculiarity. As he later stated in a 2019 interview: '*Ukraine was a Big Frontier, Big Borderland.*'¹³⁷ Published a quarter of a century later, in 2022, also its other popular book 'Overcoming the past: the global history of Ukraine'¹³⁸ questioned whether it is possible to 'overcome' the past – to go beyond national history and 'reboot' the country. According to Hrytsak, Ukraine's goal should be to join countries with open access and sustainable development, i.e. the idea of Europe must be deeply embedded.

In his essay 'Eastern Europe as an Intellectual Construction' back in 2011, Hrytsak wryly observed '*[a] spectre is haunting Europe – the spectre of Orientalism.*' This is the spectre whose '*intellectual shadow makes all the happy inhabitants west of the Elbe laugh or (depending on their professed moral principles and upbringing) to unravel at the savagery and poverty of their eastern neighbours.*' Meanwhile

[e]ach of the peoples of Central and Eastern Europe has a tradition in its intellectual history of presenting itself and its culture as the last bastion of Europe, beyond whose extreme borders – the San River [Ukrainian-Polish border river], Mukachevo [more precisely: Veretsky] Pass, or *Khutor* Mikhailovsky [railway junction on the Ukrainian-Russian border] – stretches the vast Asian spaces.¹³⁹

For a long time, 'Eastern Europe' has been used to express the 'otherness' of the territory between Europe and the East. In the autumn of 2014 in Lviv, prominent experts on the region – American historians Mark von Hagen and Frank Sysyn, Swiss historian Andreas Kappeler and Yaroslav Hrytsak – debated whether the concept of 'Eastern Europe' still has a *raison d'être* in the light of the war in Donbass, and if so, what the same should include.¹⁴⁰

All of them stressed that Eastern Europe is a concept that changes in time and space. Kappeler pointed out that until the beginning of the 19th century, the East–West division made no sense, and the North–South division prevailed, with the South representing the civilized world. Simultaneously, 'Eastern Europe' began to be subdivided into smaller regions. Sysyn pointed out that the concept of 'Central Europe' as such had been domesticated by Oskar Halecki's 'Borderlands of Western

136 Грицак [Hrytsak], 1996.

137 Yermolenko, 2019.

138 Грицак [Hrytsak], 2022.

139 Грицак [Hrytsak], 2001, pp. 17–21.

140 Reichardt, 2014.

Civilization: A History of East Central Europe' (1950), who based his theory on the fact that the Ukrainian and Belarusian territories of today's Rzeczpospolita were not part of the Russian civilizational space. 'West Central Europe' never gained a right to exist, but 'East Central Europe' did. The war will change that, and answer the question of whether the eastern edge of Ukraine is really part of the whole Ukrainian cultural sphere. 'East-Central Europe' is now a 'privileged club,' with a ticket to the European Community. Hagen drew attention to the concept of a 'New Eastern Europe,' by Robert Seton-Watson, who was a supporter of Czechoslovak and Polish independence and was able to influence US President Woodrow Wilson, and who was responsible for the peace plan that ended the First World War. This 'New Eastern Europe,' however, ended in the Second World War and was consigned to the dustbin. In wartime Ukraine, two competing ideals clashed: a cosmopolitan, inclusive and democratic Europe, with open borders; and a Europe based on conservative values and the preservation of order and discipline. Hrytsak's distinctive view is that both the North-South and East-West divisions are ancient to humanity, constantly changing but with a current content:

Ask any driver crossing the Polish-Ukrainian border if Eastern Europe exists. [...] the most visible criteria that could be used nowadays to determine where Eastern Europe starts would be GDP per capita or other related indices that reflect standards of living. [...] In many ways, the reason why 'Eastern Europe' is seen as a pejorative term [...] This negative association with the term is thus now a challenge for countries such as Ukraine.¹⁴¹

Hrytsak concludes that the Ukrainian revolutions, especially Euromaidan (2nd Maidan Revolution), played a significant role in the change, which differs from other protests in Eastern Europe in that it was successful, thanks to the nationalism factor. *'We cannot discount the role of the nationalist groups in the Euromaidan Revolution,'*¹⁴² he notes. *'Here is the irony of the situation that has been noted by a Russian observer: nationalists can make a revolution succeed – but they cannot win over a revolution.'*¹⁴³

Hrytsak's view of the Habsburg heritage is also interesting. Galicia serves as a common point in the history of Austria and Ukraine. According American historian Larry Wolff, the 'revindicated, invented, and recast'¹⁴⁴ Galicia was born out of the first partition of Poland in 1772. The name comes from the approximation of the names of two historical areas – the Habsburg possession of Galicia in northern Spain and Halych Principality of the medieval Kyivan Rus. For over 146 years, this Austrian Galicia was a single province, and was then dissolved as a result of Poland regaining independence in 1918. In 1945, Eastern Galicia became part of

141 Ibid. p. 56.

142 Ibid. p. 58.

143 Ibid. p. 59.

144 Wolff, 2010, p. 32.

Soviet-Ukraine, and now independent Ukraine. This, Galicia existed twice as long as Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia or Soviet Union. Based on Wolff's opinion, Hrytsak idealises the 'happy granny Austria.' His view is that although Austria was not as good, successful and tolerant as it is even portrayed in the literature, at the same time, it also was. He stated:

However, Austria was definitely better for Ukrainians than anything that came after it. [...] In addition, belonging to the Habsburg space was an entry ticket to European integration. This is a reason to say that we have already belonged, and therefore have a full right to belong to Europe now. The best prototype of the European Union, even before the European Union itself, was Austria-Hungary, where you could travel from Lviv to Trieste without a foreign passport. [...] Austrian Galicia was a real laboratory for national movements at that time. It is for all of these reasons that such a strong mark emerges. To this day, in both Lviv and Krakow, everything beautiful and of high quality is deliberately called 'Galician.' This is a mark of the Austrian era.¹⁴⁵

The label of Austrian Galicia is one of modernisation, with a West-East dimension: The West, where all this has long existed, and the East, where it has not yet. *'For us, this Austrian label is a symbol of the fact that we have already been there in the West, and therefore have the right to return there.'*¹⁴⁶

In 2014, in the aftermath of Euromaidan – that he thinks it should be called 'the revolution of values'¹⁴⁷ – Hrytsak published a small book, 'The 26th percentile, or how to overcome history,' in which he synthesises and presents his earlier ideas on modernisation in a new form. *'There is a huge demand for renewal in society today.'*¹⁴⁸ The author's starting point is that one cannot look at Ukraine without incredulity. Its territory is larger than that of France, its population is about the same as that of Spain, and its standard of living is on a par with Trinidad and Tobago. Yet, Ukraine has everything it takes to be a rich country and its people are well-off. So where lies the fault?

The first reason is statelessness, which occurred after the break-up of the Kyivan Rus. *'The state is always associated with force and violence.'*¹⁴⁹ *'Geopolitics, like nature, does not tolerate emptiness.'*¹⁵⁰

The second is the question of the nation. Hrytsak cites Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary as examples of the national state (with opposing nation-state). Some argue that states without a large national population or those that assimilate are the most successful. Some Ukrainians share this view and look

145 Грицак [Hrytsak], 2017.

146 Ibid.

147 Грицак [Hrytsak], 2014, p. 9.

148 Ibid. p. 5.

149 Ibid. p. 16.

150 Ibid. p. 17.

to their neighbours. However, this view is incorrect: only a fraction of the world's countries is ethnically homogeneous. Besides, not only 'objective' perceptions (census data) whereby two thirds of Ukraine's population consist of Ukrainian, but also 'subjective' factors, based on sociological surveys, show that the majority of Ukrainians feel Ukrainian, patriotic and are even prepared to fight for their country. Today, i.e. in the mid-2010s, Ukrainian society is much more united than it was in 1991, the year of state independence and the referendum; *'Ukraine is splintering, but not splitting.'*¹⁵¹

The third factor is historical tradition. The example of Italy's administrative reform in the 1970s is used to depict why such reform was successful in the north and not in the south. Ukraine, too has a strong regional division, and one might think that the differences arising from historical traditions are as great as that in the example of Italy. However, this is incorrect; it is clear that the difference between Lviv and Donetsk is smaller than between Lviv and Wrocław in Poland. The common denominator of Ukrainian regions, poverty, is in direct proportion to the level of corruption: the poorer the region, the higher the corruption.

The fourth factor relates asking the right questions. *'Ukrainian historians have been wrestling with the Ukrainian past for more than a hundred years.'*¹⁵² It is no coincidence, Hrytsak believes, that the first volume of Mykhailo Hrushevsky's fundamental *'History of Ukraine-Rus'* began with a quote from the Holy Scriptures: *'Know the truth, and it shall make you free'* (John 8:32). Ukrainian historians, however, were not up to the task, and as a result, the Ukrainian people remained invisible. Quoting the British and Polish historian Norman Davis, Hrytsak points out that this is not because historians are unprepared, but because foreign historians wrote about them (Ukrainians) as Poles or Russians when they did something good, and then the term Ukrainians was used when they did something bad. And Ukrainian historians constantly struggled to separate Ukrainian history from that of neighbouring peoples, to reveal its self-worth. The question was wrongly asked, *'[t]he Ukrainian nation should not be rebuilt, but modernised,'*¹⁵³ which cannot be imagined in any other way than a radical departure from the national paradigm. Modernisation is first and foremost about overcoming poverty, avoiding the pitfalls inherent in moving away from traditional societies. If we want to progress, he notes, we must orient ourselves towards the West. His main conclusion is that *'Modernisation should not be lost in the building or completion of the Ukrainian nation. Ukraine has exactly as much nation as it needs. It is not the nation that needs to be built or rebuilt, but Ukraine itself.'* On this road *'European integration is not a goal, but a tool.'*¹⁵⁴ And the goal is *'We want to join the countries of the rich club, where 25th percentile of the world's population lives. That is, to become the 26th percentile.'*¹⁵⁵

151 Ibid. p. 22.

152 Ibid. p. 28.

153 Ibid. p. 30.

154 Ibid. p. 118.

155 Ibid. p. 120.

This was Hrytsak's thinking in 2014, at the start of the Russian-Ukrainian war, and is an interesting comparison to his thoughts in 2022. In a May 2022 interview, he said that there are two competing models in the modern world: the West and the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa). Both are based on the free market; the difference is that the latter lacks political freedoms. While Ukraine might have been better off economically in alliance with the latter in the short term, it chose freedom instead. The war that was a result of this decision has a broader implication than merely the question of Ukraine's future; rather, it will dictate the future model of the world. In Hrytsak's optimistic opinion, in the area between the Baltic and Black Seas, Ukraine could be the regional leader, alongside Poland, and thereby be considered a 'new Central European tiger'.

Strange as it may sound, I wished for a crisis in the West. Crisis is the only thing that can shake the West up and awaken it. [...] every European crisis ends with a solution that sets a new direction in the world. This crisis is different because Ukraine has finally become part of this solution. Previously, Ukraine was bracketed out—it belonged to the Russian sphere, and the West could not or did not want to deal with it. Now the situation is entirely different.¹⁵⁶

6. Return to Europe – Andrii Portnov (1979–)¹⁵⁷

Andrii Portnov (17 May 1979, Dnipropetrovsk /now Dnipro/, Soviet Union /now Ukraine/) is a Ukrainian historian, editor, videoblogger, and public intellectual. He graduated from Dnipropetrovsk University and Warsaw University, and defended his academic degree at the Ivan Kryp'yakevych Institute of Ukrainian Studies of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine in Lviv. He has been a researcher at Ukrainian academic institutions and many foreign universities and scientific institutes. Currently, he serves as Chair Professor of Entangled History of Ukraine at the European University



¹⁵⁶ Mycaєва and Алиев [Musajeva and Alijev], 2022.

¹⁵⁷ Andrii Portnov, Ukrainian historian, editor, videoblogger, public intellectual, 7 December 2015, author: Nemtsev, Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International, source of the picture: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Andrey_Portnov_in_December_2015.jpg.

Viadrina in Frankfurt (Oder), and as Director of the Prisma Ukraïna Research Network Eastern Europe in Berlin.

Andrii Portnov's book 'Between "Central Europe" and the "Russian world"' was published in 2009.¹⁵⁸ The essays in this book deal with various attempts to conceptualise the history and contemporary problems of the region, which some refer to as 'post-communist countries,' others as 'Central and Eastern Europe,' and which the Russian nationalist approach terms the 'Russian world.' With the accession of the former Central and Eastern European socialist countries to the European Union, historical research related to the reassessment of the Soviet heritage has intensified.

Portnov writes that in the early 1990s, a large number of political scientists and historians were optimistic about the emerging post-communist states in Eastern Europe. According to the theory of transformation, the democratisation of political systems, liberalisation of economic relations, and cultural openness to the world, would allow the former Soviet republics to adapt quickly to the new rules of the game. Francis Fukuyama's 'end of history' thesis (1989), i.e. the complete triumph of democracy and liberalism in the world, was taken at face value by many. However, these illusions were dashed in a very short time. The post-communist countries were found to be unequally prepared, unequally capable of transformation, and the communist elites proved excellent at using the mimicry technique, not only to maintain but also increase their influence in some cases.¹⁵⁹

Portnov takes stock of the discourses and interpretations of history in the region, which some summarise as 'post-communist countries,' others as 'Central and Eastern Europe,' and still others as the 'Russian world.' Each territorial-geographical division carries with it a kind of evaluation under the guise of neutrality. However, neither a photograph nor a geographical concept can be considered neutral. With regard to the latter, Portnov cites the example that what is 'Transcarpathia' to Ukrainians is 'Subcarpathia' to Hungarians. Therefore, the division of the world into different regions is never neutral. This now commonplace statement has gradually seeped into academic discourse. According to Portnov, whenever we consider the mental division of Europe into 'West' and 'East' – which has replaced the North–South division (Russia, for example, gradually migrated from 'North' to 'East' in this concept) – the fact remains that after the Second World War this division became axiomatic in Western thinking. Civilizational values were associated with the West, while Eastern Europe remained a transitional zone between the Western power structure and Eastern autocracy.¹⁶⁰

Within this space, the creation of the concept of Central Europe is one of the most successful products of twentieth century political thought. It was only in the 1970s and 1980s that the concept really gained currency, thanks in particular to

158 Портнов [Portnov], 2009.

159 Ibid. p. 4.

160 Ibid. pp. 7–10.

the Czech novelist Milan Kundera, who placed Central Europe in the European cultural space. However, this conceptualisation was betrayed by the West in Yalta in 1945 when it was thrown into the hands of Soviet-Russian communism. Kundera considered the Soviet empire to be 'Eastern Europe' and presented 'Central Europe' as part of Western civilization.¹⁶¹

Quoting the British historian Timothy Garton Ash – *'Tell me your Central Europe and I will tell you who you are.'*¹⁶² – Portnov takes up the question of Ukraine in the conceptualisation of European regions. He notes that, among other things, Ukrainian history is completely absent from European historical syntheses, the only exception being Norman Davies' book ('Europe: A History,' 1996), and the Polish tradition, which considers Ukraine to belong, at least in part, to Central Europe. In 1994, Jerzy Kłoczowski, the founder of the Institute for Central and Eastern Europe in Poland, wrote that Ukraine has belonged to Europe since the adoption of Christianity.¹⁶³

The Poles' concept of Central and Eastern Europe could not be left unanswered by the Russians, especially considering that they felt excluded from this space. For the Russians, Kundera's delimitation of cultural borders was particularly offensive, because it deprived Russia of the opportunity to portray itself a victim of communism as well. According to Russian and American poet and essayist Yosif Brodsky, the communist regime was as much a product of Western rationalism as of Eastern emotional radicalism, and Eastern European intellectuals were victims of the geopolitical concept that divided Europe into East and West. Therefore, the concept of Central Europe is nothing other than a desire to become part of the West. The Russian historian Alexei Miller – who is a former lecturer at the Central European University (CEU), and now lives and works in Germany – argues that the concept of Central Europe was ordered by the West, and that the Kundera's essays are propaganda material, has been the main beneficiary of the destruction of Central Europe as an ideological construct. According to Miller, Central Europe is portrayed as a frontier beyond which, according to its inventors, begins a world of barbarism, a world unfit for civilization.¹⁶⁴

Portnov concludes his analysis stating that the concept of Central and Eastern Europe is as conditional and metaphorical as any generalised historical-geographical concept. Like all concepts, it helps us understand certain aspects of historical processes in greater depth, while simultaneously diminishes or excludes others. In other words, it is a concept that both simplifies the interpretation of reality, and provides an explanatory guide to the phenomena.¹⁶⁵

On 22 January 2014 *'[f]or the first time in independent Ukraine's history, people had been killed during a mass protest.'* Events gradually escalated into war, and as

161 Ibid. p. 11.

162 Ash, 1999.

163 Портнов [Portnov], 2009, p. 15.

164 Ibid. p. 21.

165 Ibid. pp. 25–26.

Portnov notes '[d]uring spring and summer 2014, 'eastern Ukraine' as an imagined entity ceased to exist,' and with it, the image of 'two Ukraines,' so popular in the Ukrainian and international media, has become a thing of the past.¹⁶⁶

Portnov was criticised in Western Ukrainian intellectual circles popular discourse for 'othering' the Donbas region— the idea that Ukraine can successfully get rid of the incurably sovietised Donbas. Portnov considered that loyalty to Ukraine and readiness to defend the homeland in a situation of war have pushed the issue of language preferences to the background, reducing the 'East of Ukraine' to Donbas, which has become a brake on the way to Europe, a convenient negative archetype.¹⁶⁷ After Russia's full-scale invasion against Ukraine

[t]he thesis of 'two Ukraines' and the conviction that the Russian-speaking population would be politically loyal to Russia seemed plausible to many. But even the first days of Putin's war showed how simplistic and far-fetched these conceptions are. Why didn't this occur? Ultimately, Russia's attack conclusively demonstrated that Ukraine has formed as a sovereign nation with a specific model of political loyalty and identity that cannot be reduced to language or religion.¹⁶⁸

Opposing Mikhail Gorbachev's vision about a 'Common European Home' stretching from 'the Atlantic to the Urals,' which in the intellectual narratives of former socialist countries 'Central Europe' was a synonym of a Western Europe captured by the 'East.' At the same time '[t]he enlargement of the European Union to the East – sometimes too optimistically called the 're-unification of Europe'—left Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine outside the EU.'¹⁶⁹ Even after the Orange Revolution, the EU's reluctance to promise Ukraine an integration perspective has discouraged Ukrainian elites from thinking more deeply about the country's geopolitical future. The next Ukrainian revolution turned itself into 'an attempt to imagine a new Ukraine.' In his 2018 essay, Portnov voices these tricky questions:

Does this mean that Ukraine will remain in an intermediary state between the EU and Russia (whether we call it a 'grey zone' or a 'bridge')? Will Ukrainian national mythology be forced to re-imagine itself without a 'return to Europe'?

And conversely: what will Europe lose by losing Ukraine? Bigger (in terms of territory) than any other EU member-state, Ukraine is an example of a diverse and heterogeneous society that has so far failed to explain itself to the outside world. It is telling that almost everywhere, talk on Ukraine

166 Portnov, 2016.

167 Портнов [Portnov], 2014.

168 Portnov, 2022.

169 Ibid.

is heavily dominated by stereotypes like ‘clash of civilizations’, ‘deep divisions’ and ‘civil war’. However, cultural diversity can also be seen as an advantage. Ukraine resembles a giant laboratory.¹⁷⁰

Portnov stressed the Maidan of 2013–2014, Russia’s later annexation of Crimea and the war in parts of Luhansk and Donetsk oblasts were not only a crucial challenge to the post-Soviet order and international law, but also a test of ideological preferences. The attitudes towards these events, language in which they are described a badge of political affiliation not only in East Europe, but also beyond its border.¹⁷¹ In 1995, the American historian Mark von Hagen, in his provocative and widely debated essay ‘Does Ukraine Have a History?’ recalled an obviously strong stereotypical association of ‘Eastern Europe’ with nationalism, antisemitism, and ethnic irredentism. In a debate revisited in *Slavic Review* 2022, Andrii Portnov and Tatiana Portnova argued that is ‘strong stereotypical association’ and expressed their hope that ‘a paradigm shift is inevitable.’

We are not calling to forget about Ukrainian nationalism and its crimes, but want to focus on the intellectual counterproductivity of the reduction of Ukrainian to the nationalist aspect of its intellectual and political history. [...] The European Union recognized Ukraine’s European aspirations only in the course of a cruel and devastating war, not in 2004, after the peaceful Orange Revolution, not in 2014, after the Maidan and the Russian occupation of Crimea. Let us not be too late this time. Ukraine deserves full historiographical legitimacy right now!¹⁷²

Summarising findings

In this study, we have examined, through the examples of a few prominent Ukrainian or Ukrainian-descent thinkers, the principles along which Ukrainian historians have imagined the representation of Ukrainian history and its place in the European historical space along the North–South, East–West dichotomy. The famous American historian Timothy Snyder pointed to the importance of this perspective in an interview:

My own idea about Europe is that you cannot understand European history without Ukraine, because Ukraine was in the center of the main themes of European history in the modern period. [...] So for me putting Ukraine in

170 Portnov, 2018.

171 Портнов [Portnov], 2016.

172 Discussion: War Against Ukraine, 2022.

the center is the way to connect European and world history. But Ukrainians will say – that is all fine, but we are tired of suffering so that you can understand the world. And we want to figure out our own national history.¹⁷³

The basis of the federalist democrat Mykhailo Drahomanov's development concept for Ukraine was the autonomous-federal system, and he presented the same in his works in the most reasoned, detailed and systematic way. Federalism was the ultimate goal of his political views. In practice, he advocated federalism as a form of government that ensures the rights of every individual and rejected authoritarianism. He denied the need to create an independent Ukrainian state, advocating instead for a programme of federalisation of the Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires. Drahomanov's political ideal was a federal structure of society, which he considered to be the best embodiment of the state system of England and Switzerland at that time.¹⁷⁴ He strove to prove that such a Ukraine has a place in Europe.

Ivan Krypyakevych authored numerous scientific and popular science works on the history of Ukraine from the Middle ages to the beginning of the XX century. The main place in his scientific work is occupied by the study of the Galicia-Volhynia Principality from the standpoint of the evolution of Ukrainian statehood, and the study of the Ukrainian Cossacks, especially the Cossack Hetmanate and Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytsky, who entered the European political arena under complicated historical circumstances. Krypyakevych argued for the equality of the Ukrainian historical process alongside the historical development of other European nations.¹⁷⁵

Ivan Lysiak-Rudnytsky's served as an 'intellectual guru' for a many scholars,¹⁷⁶ as his concept of the Ukrainian nation found continuity in ethnicity and discontinuity in politics (questions of statehood). He defined Ukraine as a 'non-historical' nation. Geographically, Ukraine was a corridor between Europe and Asia. The various Ukrainian regions under the rule of different states and empires had acquired a wide range of political and economic experiences, but at the same time they had established a lack of 'feeling of state.' In the 1960s he put it that way 'the central problem of modern Ukrainian history is that of the emergence of a nation: the transformation of an ethnic-linguistic community into a self-conscious political and cultural community'.¹⁷⁷ Its transformation into a political nation we can observe today was a consequence of the Russian-Ukrainian war. This fact also points to Lysiak-Rudnytsky's repute as a thinker.

Serhii Plokhly describes the evolution of Ukraine's perception of the impact of the cultural frontiers dividing Western and Eastern Christianity, adding that the North-South division was considered more relevant, based on a comparison of the

173 Cf. Kalenychenko, 2017.

174 Грицак [Hrytsak], 1992, pp. 123–124.

175 Задорожний [Zadorozhnyi], 2002, p. 93.

176 Kasianov, 2009, p. 13.

177 Cf. Kushnir, 2019.

development of settler and steppe areas with different forms of development. For many centuries, Ukraine was a 'gateway to Europe,' 'bridge between Europe and Eurasia' and 'a meeting place (and a battleground) of various empires.' During the collapse of the empires (1917 and 1991), there was no complete break with the imperial past; this could not have occurred, as they had no clear knowledge of their 'otherness' from the Russians, and finally the 2013–2014 turnaround gave impetus to exclusive national identification.¹⁷⁸ Vladimir Putin's thesis groups Ukrainians and Russians as one people, although the mistake was to equate the Russian language not only with Russian culture, but also with the Russian nationality.

Yaroslav Hrytsak focuses on the Ukrainian multicultural and multiethnic nation, and emphasised the links between Ukrainian history and world history. He sought to broaden the framework of nationalised history, asserting that a narrative that excludes non-Ukrainians cannot provide an balanced Ukrainian history. In the 19th century, and at the beginning of the 20th century, Ukrainian towns still had a significant ethnic minority population, the proportion of which was greatly reduced by the ethnic cleansing of later periods. Hrytsak followed, among others, Mykhailo Drahomanov, who also argued for a multiethnic Ukrainian history.¹⁷⁹ Hrytsak is a Eurocentrist, interpreting Ukrainian history as a component of Central Europe. The roots of this are to be found in Western Ukraine, which he sees as linked to Central Europe by the Habsburg heritage.

One of Andrii Portnov's main theses is that getting rid of the illusion of easy understanding of the subject, and indentifying the cultural and historical proximity of the two nations with a common political culture or historical memory is extremely important. The 2013–2014 turnaround proved that Russia was not ready to let go of Ukraine, and Europe was not ready to take it in. Europe has seen Ukraine historically and culturally, as part of Russia or as something 'between' Russia and the European Union.¹⁸⁰ The main task of Ukrainian politics, culture and diplomacy was to break down stereotypes and prove that Ukraine is a subject with its own interests and aspirations.¹⁸¹ Europe needed to discover the 'new Ukraine' so that Ukraine could return to Europe.

178 *Magistra vitae*, 2020, p. 230.

179 Kappeler, 2009, p. 60.

180 Яковленко [Yakovlenko], 2021.

181 Щур [Shchur], 2014.

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German Plans for Central Europe

Magdolna GEDEON

ABSTRACT

German plans for Central Europe had already appeared in the 19th century. At the heart of the Mitteleuropa idea was the creation of an economic area under German leadership. In the literature, List is considered the father of the Mitteleuropa idea, the first systematic developer of the integration of Central and Eastern Europe under German leadership. His work 'Das nationale System der politischen Ökonomie' [The National System of Political Economy], in which he scientifically summarised and systematised his previous writings, was published in May 1841. In this work, List expressed his views in defense of political unity and national economy and against the teaching of Adam Smith's school. List first advocated the realisation of a continental alliance against the English hegemony, and then, when the USA advanced, he believed that the English should also join the alliance. He wanted to promote the development of the economic region, by developing the railway and waterway network. Another famous German developer of the Mitteleuropa concepts is Friedrich Naumann. Within his work, the books and articles dealing with Mitteleuropa form a closed whole. These writings of his are closely related. Their time of origin also shows unity. Naumann elaborated his plan for Central Europe in his main work 'Mitteleuropa' published in November 1915. Central Europe was not to be a new state, but an alliance of existing states, the core of which would be the alliance between Germany and Austria-Hungary. It was to be a confederation and not a federal state.

KEYWORDS

Mitteleuropa, Adam Smith, political economy, confederation, Oberstaat, Friedrich List, Friedrich Naumann

Introduction

*'The concept of Mitteleuropa is closely related to German nation-building and identity construction. Since the beginning of the nineteenth century, German unification had been a major topic in intellectual and political debates. In those debates, Mitteleuropa was a central as well as a contested concept.'*¹ In the 19th century, this concept arose as a security policy alternative to the realisation of the Great German ideology, and

1 Stråth, 2008, p. 171.

Gedeon, M. (2023) 'German Plans for Central Europe' in Gedeon, M. (ed.) *Great Theorists of Central European Integration*. Miskolc-Budapest: Central European Academic Publishing. pp. 443–462. https://doi.org/10.54171/2023.mg.gtocei_12

as a defense against England's hegemony, in order to consolidate European peace and create an economic area.² Economic cooperation comprised the fundamental element of these plans.

The First World War provided new impetus to ideas about Central Europe. The study compiled by the German Imperial Government on 9 September 1914, that is, the September Program, contained a catalog of war aims. Among the goals outlined by the chancellor, Theobald von Bethmann Hollweg, were the weakening of France, pushing back of Russia to the east, and creation of a Central European economic association. While its members would have been ostensibly equal, in reality the alliance would function under German leadership and stabilise Germany's economic and political dominance over Europe.³

The *Mitteleuropa* plans emphasised the ways and advantages of economic cooperation, arguing for the inevitability of integration. However, these plans served the leading role of Germany, promotion of German interests, and advocated action against the preponderance of the other great powers. The two most significant representatives of the *Mitteleuropa* plans, who elaborated their ideas in the most detail, were Friedrich List and Friedrich Naumann, who devoted their whole lives to the realisation of these ideas.

1. Friedrich List (1789–1846)⁴



1.1. His life

Friedrich List was born on 6 August 1789 in Reutlingen, and was the son of a wealthy tanner. He attended a Latin-language school, after which his father wanted to train him as a tanner in his own workshop. However, List preferred to read books rather than master the craft of tanning. He therefore left his parents' home at the age of 17, and began to work as a scribe, while also beginning commercial studies with a lawyer in Blaubeuren.

He passed his first exam in Stuttgart, at the Royal Ministry of Finance, in 1808. He then spent a year in Ulm as a scribe. In 1811 he got a job as an accountant in the main office in Tübingen, and at the university he listened to lectures on chamber sciences, public law and the English constitution.

² Németh, 2020, pp. 15–16.

³ Kosiarski, 2015, p. 305.

⁴ Friedrich List, German-American economist and political theorist, lithographie von Josef Kriehuber, public domain, source of the picture: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Friedrich_List#/media/File:Friedrich_List_1845_crop.jpg.

In Tübingen, he met the Minister of Culture of Württemberg, Karl August Freiherr von Wangenheim, who later became his principal patron.

In 1813, he gave up official work in order to focus solely on his university studies. However, he did not take the university exam in 1814, answering instead, the public administration exam, following which he was employed in the Ministry of Finance in Stuttgart. Here, he became chief auditor and won the title of Rechnungsrat. Wagenheim, who in the meantime had become Minister of Church Affairs and Education, commissioned List to prepare proposals to reform university clerical training. List proposed the establishment of a faculty of political science at the University of Tübingen. At the faculty established on 17 October 1817, he was appointed (on Wagenheim's proposal) as professor of public administration, despite the fact that he did not have a university degree.

In 1819, during his trip to Frankfurt, he met merchants with whom he founded the Union of German Merchants and Manufacturers. This union was formed to achieve the abolition of internal customs duties and introduce external protective duties. To this end, petitions were submitted to the provincial government. When List lost the trust of Wilhelm I due to his political activity, he resigned from his professorship in Tübingen.

In 1819, he was elected as a member of the State Diet of Württemberg by the people of Reutling. After criticising the king and monarchical state organisation in his resolution proposal called the 'Reutlinger Petition', and strongly demanding the strengthening of civil rights, he was sentenced to ten months' imprisonment on 6 April 1822 for insulting majesty. He first fled from arrest to France, then returned to Stuttgart in 1824 to request a remission of his sentence. However, this did not succeed, in August 1824 he was arrested and taken to the Hohenasperg fortress. After serving part of his sentence, he promised to travel to America and renounce his Württemberg citizenship. Therefore, in exchange, he received permission to travel. On 26 April 26 he moved to New York.

In Pennsylvania, List acquired a newly discovered coal deposit. In order to transport coal to the coast, he financed the construction of a railway, with which he acquired a fortune of millions. In the American elections, List supported the campaign of Andrew Jackson, after whose victory he could have been appointed as a minister or vice president. In view of his homeland, however, Jackson, sent him to Germany as the American consul general. The immunity thus obtained protected him from the full execution of his former sentence.

In Germany, List advocated for the creation of a German customs union, and fought to create a modern economic infrastructure. He proposed the development of a railway and waterway network, and also called for the unification of laws and the tax system, as well as the creation of a national economy. His railway construction plans formed the basis of the railway sections being built. Since he did not receive any financial benefit from this, and his request for rehabilitation was rejected, he moved to Paris in 1836. There, he wrote for the *Allgemeine Zeitung*

about French domestic politics and published studies on the national economy. He returned to Germany in 1840, where he settled in Augsburg.

When List's American bank failed, he lost his fortune. On the advice of a friend from Stuttgart, the book publisher Cotta, he began writing a multi-volume basic work on commerce, handicrafts and the national economy. However, of the six planned volumes, only the volume titled 'Das nationale System der politischen Ökonomie' [National System of Political Economy] was completed in 1841, which was a great success. In 1842, with the help of Cotta, List founded the newspaper *Das Zollvereinsblatt*, in which he wrote approximately 650 articles over the course of his life.

After his health failed, List left for Italy. On the way there, he arrived in Kufstein on 26 November 1846. His financial problems, depression, boredom, and constant headaches drove him to commit suicide. His body was found on a hill in Kufstein on 3 December, with a pistol in his hand. He was buried in the city cemetery.⁵

1.2. List's work related to the Central European unity

In the literature, List is considered the father of the *Mitteleuropa* idea, the first systematic developer of the integration of Central and Eastern Europe under the leadership of the Germans.⁶ He mainly expressed his views from an economic perspective. A tendentious direction can be observed in his works. First, he aimed to create the German national economy.

*'A strong nation required a strong economy and vice versa. The nation-state's task was to protect the economy, and through the economy the national interest.'*⁷ After this, other states, such as Belgium, the Netherlands and Switzerland, would have joined the German unity. This unit would continue to grow towards the lower course of the Danube. Although List first saw the need to establish European unity vis-à-vis Great Britain, he eventually planned to create an alliance with Great Britain as well. He saw the development of transport, railway and water routes as necessary for the creation of state and economic unity. In his works, he called for the creation of an economic unit in which agriculture, industry and trade form a part.

The establishment of German unity in 1815 did not entail the unification of economic conditions. Internal tariffs levied by individual provinces made internal trade difficult and expensive and hindered industrialisation.⁸ For the abolition of internal customs, steps were taken outside the federal bodies and at the level of the provinces. Within the framework of the Union of German Merchants and Manufacturers, List fought for the abolition of internal tariffs and the introduction of protective tariffs, as he feared that the German national economy would end up as the 'water barrel and woodcutter' of the British. List considered the construction

5 For List's life, see Häusser, 1850. Braeuer, 1985 [Online]. Available at: <https://de-academic.com/dic.nsf/dewiki/474695> (Accessed: 23 May 2023).

6 Romsics, 1997, p. 19.

7 Strâth, 2008, p. 173.

8 Rahn, 2011.

of the railway network and the creation of the customs union as ‘Siamese twins’ in the modernisation of Germany.

The German customs union was established in 1834, and after moving to Augsburg, List once again advocated the development of the German railway network. At this time, the debate between the supporters of free trade and protective tariffs intensified. The forum for the debate was the *Allgemeine Zeitung*. While previously, national economic interests were discussed only in a restrained manner, this topic was now the subject of a lively debate in the world of politics. List was the first to arouse interest in the development of railways. With his articles on industry and trade policy, he promoted the entire German nation to learn about the theories that were, until then, only known within narrow circles. He believed that the development of the economy would require at least four railway lines, which would connect the East with the West, and the North with the South. In the columns of the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, a lively debate unfolded regarding the Commercial and Shipping Convention, which was established between the German customs union and England on 2 March 1841. This polemic raised the preference of national economic interests, which was also pushed by List, to a political level.

In the spring of 1841, List published several articles on the national trade systems of England, Holland, and Germany. In these writings, he provided historical evidence that the prosperity and decline of the economy is related to its protection and lack of protection.⁹ Following the publication of these articles, his work ‘*Das nationale System der politischen Ökonomie*’ [The National System of Political Economy] was published in May, in which he scientifically summarised and systematised his previous writings.¹⁰

In this work, List expressed his views in defense of political unity and national economy and against the teaching of Adam Smith’s school. According to him, free trade only works between nations of equal development. His book emphasises the promotion of Germany’s national interests. List derives his basic tenets from historical lessons. According to him, a unified national economy is necessary because agriculture can only develop properly if industry and trade also develop, and they mutually help each other.

According to List’s view, the translation of individual strengths into common goals promotes individual prosperity. The more people join together, the greater the prosperity. During List’s time, the state and the nation were the largest associations of individuals regulated by law. The greatest imaginable unity, the unification of all humanity, is not made possible by wars and national self-interests. Therefore, the perfection of the nation should be set as a goal.

However, the unity of nations is only beneficial if these nations are equal. Submission does not allow the setting of common goals. In addition to farming, nations

9 Häusser, 1850, pp. 245–254.

10 List, 1841. In English see List, 1856.

striving for independence must also pursue industry, commerce, and shipping. Ascension is more easily achieved through trade with developed nations.

The cosmopolitan economy proposed by Adam Smith lacks world peace. According to List, productive power is more important than wealth. The state of nations depends mainly on the totality of their productive forces, and productivity can be improved by increasing education. The prosperity of a nation does not depend on its accumulation of wealth (exchange value), but on how developed its productive forces are. Protective tariffs increase productive forces and industrial independence.

According to List, Adam Smith's teaching suffers from three main faults: 1) cosmopolitanism – it does not take into account the nature and needs of the nation; 2) materialism – focuses on the exchange value of goods, 3) particularism and individualism – does not recognise the nature of social work and the benefits of combining forces.

According to List, the nation stands between the individual and humanity. The task of the state is to provide national economic education and prepare the nation to enter the universal society of the future. The nation's territorial deficits can be eliminated by purchase or conquest, and different states' interests can be united by free agreements. Only fully developed nation-states can introduce protective tariffs. Political power not only affects foreign trade, but also promotes the nation's internal well-being. England gained political power through its Shipping Act. Against English supremacy, List urged a unified continental policy.

According to List, the main goal of rational politics is the unification of nations under the rule of law and order. However, this can only be achieved slowly. States must form various alliances with each other. Therefore, a continental alliance is needed against England's preponderance.

The chief obstacle in our day to a close union of the powers of the European continent, is in the fact that the central portion does not perform the part that belongs to it. Instead of serving as a medium between the East and the West in all questions of territory, constitution, national independence and power; a mission with which it is invested by its geographical position; by its federal system excluding all fear of conquest on the part of neighboring nations; by its religious tolerance and its cosmopolitical spirit; lastly, by its elements of civilization; this centre is at present but an apple of discord between the different sides of Europe, each of which entertains hopes of drawing to its side a weak power, because not united and ever uncertain and vacillating in its policy. If Germany, with her sea-coast, with Holland, Belgium and Switzerland, would form a strong commercial and political union, if this powerful national body would reconcile as much as possible existing interests, monarchical, dynastical and aristocratical, with

the representative institutions, Germany might guarantee a long peace to Europe, and at the same time form the centre of a durable continental alliance.¹¹

England has a huge colonial empire. According to List, the rebirth of Asia can only be achieved with the help of Europe. It is an important interest of all continental powers that the routes from the Mediterranean to the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf should not come into the exclusive possession of the British. Delegating the supervision of these important points to Austria would obviously provide all European states with the best security. The unification of the continental powers is a matter of life, because the experience of the past years show that the wars between them have increased the economy, power, colonies, wealth and shipping of the island nation.

According to List, Napoleon's mistake was that he wanted to replace English sea power with French land power. Napoleon did not care about the interests of other countries and cut off the traffic between the industrial countries of the continent and colonies. The alliance of mainland states can only be realised if France avoided Napoleon's mistakes. An effective continental political and economic system can only be created through the free association of continental powers.

List clearly pointed out that the English will soon be forced to create a European alliance against the emerging North America, just as the Germans and the French need an alliance against English supremacy.

In 1842 List investigated the prospects of German emigration into south-eastern Middle Europe. He estimated that German colonists could be sent there at one-fifth the cost of travelling to America. The Hapsburg state possessed three-fourths of the Danube; with its cooperation German settlers might continue to populate its lands, as they had begun to do in the days of Maria Theresa, and move beyond as well. A network of railroads and canals integrated with the Danubian waterway would be the framework for a German-Hungarian economic area extending southeastward from the Nord and Baltic seas. 'We have our backwoods as well as the Americans', wrote List: 'the lands of the Lower Danube and the Black Sea, all of Turkey, the entire Southeast beyond Hungary is our hinterland.'¹²

In List's 1843 article '*Österreich und der Zollverein*' [Austria and the Customs Union], published in the columns of *Das Zollvereinsblatt*, he provided a detailed explanation of the benefits for Germany and Austria if the latter joined the German

11 List, 1856, pp. 479–480.

12 Meyer, 1955, p. 13. Already in 1834, List formulated that Germany and the other European states should expand to the southeast, Austria should occupy the territories in the lower reaches of the Danube and the weakened Turkey's place in the Balkans to the Black Sea. See List, 1834, pp. 720–721.

customs union. The connecting link would be the Danube, the region of which is mostly owned by Austria, and through which Germany could reach the mouth of the Danube in the Black Sea. Emigration could be directed to these regions and transport should be developed there the most. *'How differently trade would develop in Austria if its neighbors to the north and south-east were Germans,'* declared List.¹³

Continuing to envision the engine of unification in the development of transport networks, in 1846, List wrote the following:

The Danube, once it has been regulated, is the best road for land transport, both between Hungary and the other provinces, and between the Austrian Monarchy and the western and eastern parts of Europe. The plan of the transport system in Hungary must be taken into account on the one hand for the connection between Galicia and the Danubian Principalities, and on the other hand for the connection to the western part of Germany. Both directions are more important from a political and military point of view than from a commercial and national economic point of view.¹⁴

To carry out the reform of the transport system, he also formulated a plan to establish a joint stock company.

The plan for Germany's alliance with England was further developed by List in his work *'Über den Werth und die Bedingungen einer Allianz zwischen Großbritannien und Deutschland'* [On the Value and Conditions of an Alliance between Germany and Great Britain]. In this article, he details that England can only compete with North America's vast territories and economic power by increasing its own territories in Africa and Asia. However, for this, England needs an alliance with Germany. The prerequisite for this alliance is the renewal of Germany. List saw that this renewal could be achieved by reducing the bureaucracy.¹⁵

*'List proposed the formation of an Anglo-German alliance which would have a dual purpose. Britain would help protect Germany from Russian or French aggression, while Germany would protect the flank of Britain's routes to India when the Empire had been extended to Egypt and the Near East.'*¹⁶ In the fall of 1846, List travelled to London to negotiate a political and economic alliance between Germany and England. However, without any political authority, this plan was doomed from the start; List returned from England disappointed and without any results, and these events contributed greatly to his suicide.

He wrote not soon before his death – 'would have to be succeeded by a German-Hungarian Eastern Empire, whose frontiers would have been

13 List, 1843, pp. 225–248.

14 List, 1850a, p. 308.

15 List, 1850b, p. 455.

16 Stráth, 2008, p. 176.

washing by the Black Sea and the Adriatic Sea, and which would be dominated by German and Magyar spirit.’ Apart from the theoretical framework of Mittel-Europa, more practical ideas, such as the Berlin-Baghdad railway, could also be linked to List,

Romsics summarises correctly.¹⁷

List advocated his plans not only in the press. He developed contacts at the highest political level to secure support for his suggestions for the agrarian and industrial expansion of Hungary and for the future Austro-German domination of the Balkans. He explained his ideas to Metternich, for example.¹⁸

As we have seen, shortly before his death he also travelled to London in order to implement the Anglo-German alliance. In addition to being a visionary and thinker, his plans were interwoven with logical thought processes, rationality and practicality.

2. Friedrich Naumann (1860–1919)¹⁹



2.1. His life²⁰

Naumann grew up in a conservative family in Störmthahl, near Leipzig, as the child of an evangelical pastor. He graduated in Meißen in 1879, and then studied theology in Leipzig and Erlangen. After his first theological exam in 1882, he worked in a house (the ‘*Rauhe Haus*’) in Hamburg where orphaned or neglected children lived. In 1885, he passed his second exam in Dresden. In 1886, he received a priest’s position in Langenberg. Here, he gained an insight into the delicate life of the workers. In his first writings published at that time, Naumann acted as the ‘shepherd of the poor’. From 1890, he worked

as a pastor of the *Inner Mission* in Frankfurt am Main, where he was engaged in social work. Among other things, he dealt with founding Christian associations,

¹⁷ Romsics, 2019, p. 7.

¹⁸ Stráth, 2008, p. 178.

¹⁹ Friedrich Naumann, German politician, unknown author, in: Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung, Archiv des Liberalismus, Audiovisuelle Medien, F3-240, source of the picture: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Friedrich_Naumann#/media/File:Portrait_Friedrich_Naumann_\(ca._1911\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Friedrich_Naumann#/media/File:Portrait_Friedrich_Naumann_(ca._1911).jpg).

²⁰ On his life, see Peschel, 2014; Meyer, 1904; Heuss, 1937; Heuss, 1997.

providing housing for the needy, caring for the poor, ensuring foundations' support for the elderly, and maintaining institutions providing care to children and young people. The *Inner Mission* was fundamentally close to socialism, as the goal of both was to help the needy. Here, he developed his theses on the relationship between socialism and the state, which in his opinion should be guided by the Gospel. This set Naumann on the political path, through the Christian-social trend. From 1890, Naumann participated in the Evangelical Social Congress, where he made acquaintances with theologians, economists and practical experts. At the end of 1894, he founded the Christian-socialist weekly *Hilfe*, where he worked as an editor. In 1896, he founded the *Nationalsozialen Verein* [National-Social Association] in Erfurt, of which he was the first president. In 1897, he left his priestly career to devote himself entirely to politics and the *Nationalsozialen Verein*. This association essentially functioned as a party that contested elections. In 1903, after an unsuccessful election run, the association was dissolved. Along with the majority of the association's members, Naumann then joined the *Freisinnigen Verein* [Freeminded Union]. In 1907, he won a seat in the Reichstag from the Heilbronn constituency, and in 1913 he was re-elected in Waldeck. In January 1919, after the First World War, Naumann was elected a member of the Weimar National Assembly, and in June as the president of the German Democratic Party, founded on 20 November 1918. He died in Travernünde in August 1919 as a result of a stroke. As can be seen from his biography, Naumann was a versatile politician. He belonged to the circle that supported the union of social democrats and liberals, although he cannot be described only a social liberal.²¹ His political career can be distinguished by three stages: Christian-socialism until 1895; national-socialism between 1896–1903; and a social liberal from 1903.²²

2.2. Naumann on Central Europe

Within Naumann's work, the books and articles dealing with Mitteleuropa form a closed whole. His writings are closely related, and their time of origin also shows unity.²³

In 1898, Naumann took part in a trip to Asia as a 'political shepherd', as he described himself in his travel report.²⁴ In this book, he also explained his geopolitical views. He rejected an alliance with Great Britain, as this would have led to a decrease in Germany's importance; any German weakness would have strengthened England. '*No friendship with England! National Policy!*', he wrote. Naumann considered it possible that the world war against England would break out before the collapse of the Turkish Empire.²⁵

21 Kellmann, 2021.

22 Fesser, 2002, p. 400.

23 Schieder, 1964, p. 376.

24 Naumann, 1913, p. 2.

25 Ibid. pp. 144–145, 153.

Between 1898 and 1907, he travelled to Austria-Hungary, North Africa and several times to France in addition to the Middle East. He considered Austria-Hungary a natural ally. His work *'Deutschland und Österreich'*,²⁶ published in 1900, is regarded by the literature as the beginning of his Middle European writings, even though it does not directly belong to this region. In this work, Naumann dealt with the Monarchy for the first time, which later played a significant role in his Central European plans.²⁷ In this book, he had already explained that Germany and Austria-Hungary should establish a customs union and a military alliance. He also saw this as necessary for the survival of Germanness in Austria-Hungary.

In 1914–1915, Naumann prepared his unified work on Central Europe in several articles.²⁸ After the outbreak of the First World War, he committed himself even more to the unification of the Central European states. In February 1915, he gave a lecture in Budapest, wherein he advocated the unification of Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, referring to historical events. At that time, he still believed that the alliance would also result in the victory of the Central Powers: *'In this war, which has made East and West Germany's enemies, the Central Powers will triumph in all directions.'*²⁹

Naumann elaborated his plan for Central Europe in his main work *'Mitteleuropa'* published in November 1915.³⁰ The states that did not belong to either the Anglo-French alliance or the Russian Empire were the subjects of Naumann's investigation. The first step would be the unification of Germany and Austria-Hungary, as all further Eastern European plans would depend on this. According to Naumann, Central Europe is the area that extends from the North and East Seas to the Alps, Adriatic Sea and southern part of the Danube plain. This area could function as a defense alliance and economic unit, from which all particularism must be eliminated. The formation of *Mitteleuropa* requires not only territorial unity, but also the creation of the Central European spirit. Since the small states themselves are no longer good for anything, they must remain in an alliance even after the war, which also gives meaning to the struggles of the war.

According to Naumann, after the war, border walls would be built, and Europe would be marked by trench politics. There would be two long ramparts from north to south. One would stretch from the Rhine to the Alps, the other from the Courland peninsula to the right or left border of Romania. Therefore, it was necessary to decide which friendships were worth forming. It is questionable whether a rampart should be built between Germany and Austria-Hungary.

However, there are many differences between Austria-Hungary and Germany. On the one hand, Austria-Hungary is an old unit, which transformed from states to a state confederation, Catholic, characterised by slower transformation, and with

26 Naumann, 1964a.

27 Schieder, 1964, p. 378.

28 See Werke, Band 4, pp. 442–484.

29 Lecture of Frigyes Naumann, 1915, p. 8.

30 Naumann, 1915; in English see Naumann, 1916.

more fields and pastures. On the other hand Germany is a new unit, where the state confederation becomes a federal state, Protestant, faster on the path of capitalist transformation, and characterised by a more business spirit, with more cities. In addition to the differences, there were also many opponents of unification. The alliance between the two states was necessary, the cooperation so far was not enough. It was of a defensive nature, and the peoples were not united.

Naumann outlined the history of Central Europe. Unity requires a new historical consciousness, and cannot be based only on economic relations alone. Spiritual development and the formation of a Central European feeling presupposes the forgetting of old grievances. A supreme power reigned north and south of the Alps, with brief interruptions from Charles the Great to Charles V. This is how a certain medieval Central European community of life and culture was formed. The Germans occupied the center of Central Europe, and the smaller peoples were attracted to them. However, the old German imperial history ended with the Confederation of the Rhine. The second era of Central Europe begins with the age of Napoleon. The age of Napoleon had a significant impact on the inner spirit of Central Europe, because it developed the peoples in a political and democratic direction.

The result of the Congress of Vienna was the restoration of Central Europe under Russian protection. Thus, the indirect ruler of the region was first Alexander I, and then Michael I. In 1848, however, a new democratic wave began from the west of France all the way to the Tsar's empire. The spirit of the West rose against the rule of the East, and parliamentary life began. Discussions of Central European affairs began in Frankfurt's St. Paul's Church in May 1848. However, a split then occurred in the Great-German and Little-German direction. Regarding Bismarck's role in 1866, Naumann emphasises that the Prussian Prime Minister at that time wanted to establish the foundation of a permanent alliance between the two Central European powers. Bismarck was more a friend of the Austrians than of the Russians.

The Franco-Prussian War of 1870–1871 entailed the final liberation of Central Europe from the influence of France. Central Europe was thus demarcated on the western side, and its area still had to be demarcated from Russia. Bismarck did not side with Russia in attacking Austria, which led to the Congress of Berlin in 1878, and in the dual alliance in 1879. This ended the traditional alliance between Russia and Prussia. The dual alliance between Austria-Hungary and the German Empire created a Central Europe between the West and the East.

Naumann also addresses the question of religion and nationality. The term Central Europe has no religious or national connotations, and does not evoke emotional resistance. The Central European type of man has not yet crystallised quite like the French or English type. The development of a historical understanding in Central Europe, in which Catholics and Protestants see themselves as part of a common past without giving up their spiritual values and self-awareness, is essential. The union of the north and the south may affect the parties sensitively

in the religious field. Therefore, religious and school matters can never be Central European allied matters.

The nationality issue is more of an Austria-Hungary problem. In Germany, the Poles mainly caused trouble for the Prussians. The non-German nationalities living in Austria-Hungary would be given autonomy in the 'Oberstaat'. Central European unity, however, would also solve nationality issues, and a Central European culture would emerge.

Most of Naumann's book deals with economic issues. The specific German spirit, that is the ability to organise, boosted the Germans in the economic field as well. Organisation is also an advantage in the performance of state duties. This organisational ability and the German economic system must also become decisive in Central Europe. Austria-Hungary lacks not the technology but the spiritual strength for economic recovery. Its population comprised of many beggars and emigrants. However, Central Europe can only be built on the strength of an educated, well-nourished population.

The war stimulated economic ingenuity in Central Europe, and stock management emerged. War farming and state intervention hid the deficit. The national economy gained a new meaning, and production was determined by state needs. The post-war financial policy would be based mainly on a state syndicate obliged to provide workers' insurance. The economic separation of Austria and Hungary is unreasonable, and it will be difficult to solve the financial problems by relying on taxes. The Germans could help with economic recovery.

Central Europe must occupy a special place in the world economy. The question is whether, in addition to the big centers – London, New York, Moscow – Central Europe can also become a center? After Great Britain, America and Russia, Central Europe can only be the fourth power. Naumann rejected the plan of the United States of Europe, stating that in his work he deals only with the alliance of Germany and Austria-Hungary. He lists the advantages and vast areas of the three great powers, one by one. Although Central Europe cannot catch up with these, the alliance itself cannot be delayed, because then the surrounding states would join with their possible colonies. Without these, it is not possible to join the ranks of the first-class world economic powers.

Naumann deals at length with the issue of customs, which was the subject of lively debate in his time. According to him,

the technical question at the root of the matter is whether the two, or three, commercial States desire to have and are able to have a joint commercial policy with intermediate frontiers between the countries, or two commercial policies in whose adjustment they co-operate. It is the old question of a federal State or a State confederation transferred to commercial policy.³¹

31 Naumann, 1917, p. 237.

In the area of customs, this necessitates a choice between preferential customs procedure and customs union. In the case of the preferential customs procedure, everything would remain unchanged in the states under public law, and the parties would only have to comply with the contract. Although the implementation of the customs community would entail public law tasks for the parties, according to Naumann, this should be implemented. However, before the establishment of the new Central European customs system, storage treaties based on state granaries and contracts on the Central European iron syndicate must be concluded.

During the discussion of constitutional issues, Naumann states that Central Europe will be the creation of the will of the people, so the idea of its implementation must be spread. It would not be a new state, but an alliance of existing states, the core of which would be the alliance between Germany and Austria-Hungary. It would be a confederation and not a federal state. When the confederation is established, it is necessary to determine the matters that would not fall under the jurisdiction of the central state (*Oberstaat*). These matters include: church matters, education, questions of language use, internal public administration, local administration, the constitution in the narrow sense. Already existing international treaties can serve as models for the treaties establishing Central Europe.

Naumann imagined that the states would conclude treaties with each other to manage common affairs.

They may be divided into two principal groups: treaties which are carried out by each State through its own officials in its own way and without joint control, and treaties which owing to their nature require a mixed Joint Commission to carry them out. The latter group thus paves the way for joint administration in limited spheres. It will be much more readily and frequently possible between two States with a permanent alliance and a joint trench system than between two States which still have to reckon with the possibility of mutual war.³²

With regard to the customs community, the stock economy based on joint state grain purchases, and the joint syndicate arrangement, permanent joint enforcement and accounting bodies must be set up. These would be followed by other joint offices.

But when once we picture to ourselves a certain number of such Mid-European Commissions or higher administrative departments, they form together something like a Mid-European Central Administration. For this reason the Commissions ought to be housed, so far as is feasible, in the same place. This place will become for Mid-Europe in a modernised and

| 32 Naumann, 1916, p. 261. |

better fashion what once, though with a mistaken constitution, Frankfurt-on-Main was or should have been in the old German Confederation.³³

In addition to the economic alliance, Neumann also urged for the creation of a military alliance. *'Any one who belongs to the military union is guaranteed by it in so far as this is within the power of the joint army.'*³⁴ This would have an impact on foreign policy. A joint foreign ministry cannot be established, *'but we shall mutually come to work better and better with one another. There will be no change in the Constitution, but here too a tradition will grow up'*.³⁵

According to Naumann, the joint participation of the central powers in the war only makes sense if the parties remain allies of each other even after the war. Thus, the realised *Mitteleuropa* will be the fruit of the war. Neumann believed that *'Mid-Europe will have a German nucleus, will voluntarily use the German language, which is known all over the world and is already the language of intercourse within Central Europe'*.³⁶

In a later writing, Naumann confirms that all war aims only make sense if *Mitteleuropa* is created. The Balkan Peninsula belongs to Central Europe, and therefore Bulgaria must also join the alliance. According to Naumann, if Bulgaria does not win and Turkey's position in Asia is not maintained, Central Europe will be defeated.³⁷ The Hungarians could act as intermediaries between Bulgaria and the central powers.³⁸ He further intended the independent Kingdom of Poland to also be part of *Mitteleuropa*. However, the accession of the Poles must be supported by both Austria and Prussia.³⁹

In 1917, the plan of the Austro-Polish solution was created to settle the situation in Poland. According to this, after the unification of the former Congress-Poland and Galicia, the Polish crown would also belong to the Austrian emperor. According to Naumann, this plan would have been feasible only after the unification of Germany and Austria-Hungary.⁴⁰

Naumann's book was translated into several languages in a short time. Its main aspects were aptly summarised by Géza Lengyel in 1916:

Naumann does not say: Gross-Deutschland, Naumann says: *Mitteleuropa*, and everyone argues with him, everyone frowns, everyone picks up a pencil, everyone finds supporting and refuting arguments. The notable

33 Ibid. p. 264.

34 Ibid. p. 281.

35 Ibid. p. 284.

36 Ibid. p. 108.

37 Naumann, 1964b.

38 Naumann, 1964c, pp. 872–882. Naumann saw an opportunity to further settle the Balkan issue in 1918, based on the peace treaty concluded with Romania. See Naumann, 1964d.

39 Naumann, 1964e; Naumann, 1964f.

40 Naumann, 1964g.

feature of Naumann's inventive, enjoyable, shapely, superior, and cunning book is that it prompts the reader to express his or her opinion, and almost makes the reader pretend. [...] And hardly a book has been published in the last two or three years, which has been approved or rejected by so many orally and in writing, and whose title, idea, and thought would have occupied minds to such an extent.⁴¹

Naumann devotedly defended his position on Mitteleuropa. On 29 February 1916, he wrote the following to his doctor, Ernst von Düring: *'My schedule is such that I spend the few weeks when there is no Reichstag in Austria, because it is my personal wartime task to pave the way for unification.'*⁴²

He defended his position against those who attacked his plan in several studies. In this way, he tried to dispel the objections of the merchants of the Hanseatic cities⁴³ and the concerns of those who feared that Mitteleuropa would be an obstacle to the resumption of the German colonial economy.⁴⁴

In 1917, he summarised the general principles of Central European cooperation. In the first principle, he stated that *'the military, political and economic rapprochement of the two Central European empires is the basis for the future security of the continent, a necessity for all those states that do not want or cannot belong to either the Russian or the English confederation.'*⁴⁵

In February 1916, Naumann and Ernst Jäckh founded the Central European Working Committee. And on 1 July 1917, the first issue of the weekly *Mitteleuropa* publishing the committee's announcements was published. In the introductory article, Naumann laments that no steps had yet been taken to realise *Mitteleuropa*. For this, according to him, the declaration of the two emperors about Central Europe should take place immediately. *'This would be the basis, the details can be worked out later.'*⁴⁶

In the summer of 1917, Naumann feared that the creation of the foundations of state law was too late. The situation for the conclusion of state contracts was no longer as favourable as during the first years of the war. Austria and Hungary were busy with their internal affairs.⁴⁷ With the first signs of peace negotiations, Naumann continued to urge the conclusion of the German-Austrian-Hungarian state treaty, because he believed that further peace policy depended on this step. The treaty was supposed to create military and economic unity, so that the central powers could negotiate together. The alliance would have been vital for

41 Lengyel, 1916, p. 484.

42 Fesser, 2002, p. 410.

43 Naumann, 1964h.

44 Naumann, 1964i.

45 Naumann, 1964j.

46 Naumann, 1964k.

47 Naumann, 1964l.

Austria-Hungary as well, since the Monarchy was threatened with dismemberment by the Entente powers.⁴⁸

On Christmas 1918, Naumann's last article about *Mitteleuropa* was published in the weekly newspaper *Mitteleuropa*, with which the newspaper ceased operations.⁴⁹ In it, he admitted that with the great collapse the idea of *Mitteleuropa* would also disappear, that neither Germany nor the peoples and states of the old Austria-Hungary would be able to conclude treaties. According to Naumann, the realisation of the *Mitteleuropa* plan would have created a friendly alliance across country and language borders. Whether or not this idea is lost depends on whether the concept of *Mitteleuropa* was an arbitrary idea or a necessary one.

If it is true that the nationalities living in Central Europe are dependent on each other and cannot exist permanently separated, if it is true that the technical and economic culture of the Czechs, Hungarians, and South Slavs exists in permanent interaction with German life, then these natural relationships will one day resurface by themselves.

According to Naumann, however, one should work instead of despairing. This applies not only to the Imperial Germans, but also to the Austrian Germans: '*We must not let the flames of our lives be extinguished.*' He believed that the supporters of *Mitteleuropa* would find each other in the National Assembly and on other occasions. Signing off with '*Auf Wiedersehen,*' the great thinker said his goodbye.

48 Naumann, 1964m.

49 Naumann, 1964n.

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Great Theorists of Central European Integration in France

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ABSTRACT

France played a key role in the negotiations on the peace treaties that ended the First World War, thus emerging as a major European power and key political player in the Central European region. In the period between the two world wars, French governments in Central Europe sought to preserve the status quo that they had established, and in the course of this process, developed several ideas to integrate the region into Europe.

Among the French ideas for the integration of Central Europe, I will first analyse the Briand project. In a 1929 speech, French Prime Minister Aristide Briand proposed a new form of European cooperation. His idea was to create a European Union of 27 European countries, in which the Member States would retain their autonomy, and cooperation would be established primarily in the economic sphere. After a favourable reception, he put his plans into writing, publishing them in 1930. The Briand Plan placed political issues before economic ones, leading to Hungary's and many other countries' disappointment.

A second idea was the Constructive Plan (*'Plan constructif'*), which was the antonym of the German-Austrian customs union of 1931, drawn up under the leadership of André François-Poncet, Deputy State Secretary, and published in a memorandum on 4 May 1931. In the document, the French government drew attention to four problems: the crisis in the cereals trade in Central and Eastern Europe; situation of the industrialised countries; question of capital and credit; and special situation of Austria.

The plan with the most significance was submitted by the French Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, André Tardieu, to the British and Italian governments in the form of a memorandum on 2 March 1932. The Tardieu plan was to provide urgent aid to the five Danube states – Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Romania and Yugoslavia – whose economic situation was close to collapse, mainly as a result of the difficulties caused by the agricultural crisis. However, the fate of the most detailed Central European plan was clearly sealed by the lack of agreement between the great powers, particularly German and Italian opposition, and the position of reluctance adopted by most of the Danube region countries. The Tardieu plan was conceived in February 1932, published in March, and in April it had practically failed.

Therefore, none of the three plans developed between 1930 and 1932 was eventually implemented. Following this, no other comprehensive ideas for the integration of the Central European area in 20th Century France have been put forward.

KEYWORDS

Tardieu-Plan, Briand-Plan, Central Europe, French Constructif-Plan, Central Europe between the two World Wars

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Introduction

In the 19th century, the focus of French thinkers shifted towards the idea of the European ideal.¹ The French interest in the Central European region only intensified in the first decades of the 20th century. France played a key role in the negotiations on the peace treaties that ended the First World War, thus emerging as a major European power and key political player in the Central European region. In the period between the two world wars, French governments in Central Europe sought to preserve their established status quo, and in the course of this process, developed several ideas to integrate the region into Europe. Among these ideas for the integration of Central Europe, the Briand Plan of 1930 ought to be mentioned first. We can also include the Reconstruction Plan (*Plan constructif*), which was an antonym to the German–Austrian customs union of 1931. However, the one with the greatest significance was the Tardieu Plan of 1932. Many studies have been conducted on the relations between Central Europe and France in the 20th century, but unfortunately the French vision of settling the situation in the region did not develop in the later decades of the 20th century.²

The Briand Plan (1930) and the ‘*Plan constructif*’ (1931)

The peace treaties following the First World War fundamentally redefined the borders of Central European countries. The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy was dissolved, new states (Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia) were created, and France gained a leading influence in the region. However, the economic crisis that began in the 1930s made the maintenance of the existing status quo increasingly difficult. To solve the difficulties in Central Europe, two comprehensive French ideas for a settlement – the Briand Plan of 1930 and the Plan Constructif of 1931 – were put forward.

1.1. The circumstances of the development of the Briand Plan, its points relating to Eastern Europe and its reception

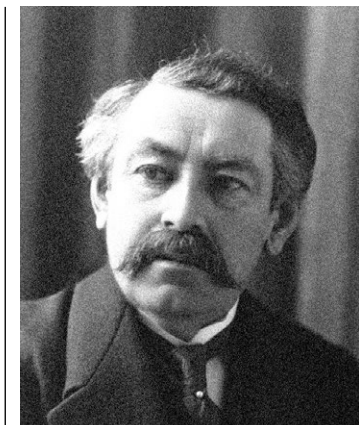
In 1927, the French Prime Minister Aristide Briand (1862–1932)³ accepted the honorary presidency of the Pan-European Movement. At the 10th meeting of the Assembly of the League of Nations on 5 September 1929, he proposed a new form of European cooperation.⁴ The essence of his proposal was to create a European Union of 27 European countries. According to his vision, the Member States would retain their

1 Pókecz Kovács, 2015, pp. 122–127.

2 Gazdag, 2019, pp. 7–13.

3 Aristide Briand. French statesman, unknown author, public domain, source of the picture: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aristide_Briand#/media/File:Aristide_Briand.png.

4 Ormos, 1997, pp. 59–60.



autonomy within the Union, and mainly establish economic cooperation. Briand's speech lacked specific detail and was deliberately vague, as he planned to clarify the details of his plan through bilateral negotiations. Less than a month after Briand's speech at the League of Nations, the New York stock market crisis took place. After a positive reception, Aristide Briand was asked to present his plan in a written form, which was done on 1 May 1930, and the memorandum was sent to the European governments on 17 May that year. The memorandum was entitled '*Memorandum of the French Government on the organisation of the European federal system*'.

However, the written version of the Briand Plan contained significant changes compared to the previous version, due to shifts in the world economic situation and the diplomatic discussions took place since the speech was delivered. In the written material, placed politics before economic interests. The main reason for this was that the customs union would have proved advantageous to the rival Germany, whose industrial products were predominantly sold on European markets. This would have offered Germany the markets of Central Europe. According to Briand, it would also have been inappropriate to prioritise economic issues as it would have made weaker states vulnerable to those with more advanced industries.⁵ The memorandum therefore already rejected a customs union, and underlined the participating countries' sovereignty and political independence. The future confederation would have been organised around three main bodies. As a supreme decision-making body, it would have set up a European Conference of representatives of the governments of the Member States, which would have defined the nature of the integration. To avoid the predominance of any particular state, the presidency would have been rotated among the member states on an annual basis. As a second body, a Permanent Political Bureau would have been established, consisting of a selected number of members from the European Conference, with executive and decision-making functions. The third body would have been the Geneva-based Secretariat, responsible for carrying out the administrative tasks of integration.⁶ This published draft of the Briand Plan prioritised the political status quo – including in Central Europe – over the resolution of economic difficulties, and therefore met disappointment in Hungary and many other countries. Of the 26 countries, Bulgaria was the only one to support the draft unconditionally, while Belgium, Poland and the Axis countries (Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Romania) basically supported it, while Hungary, Germany and Italy were reluctant to do so.

5 Diószegi, 2014, pp. 51–55.

6 Knapp, 2020, p. 3.

After the rejection of the French proposal by the major European powers, including the British, Italian and German governments, the Briand plan became an unrealistic utopia.⁷

1.2. The Concept of the French ‘Plan Constructif’ (1931)

Although the Briand plan only remained at the centre of the political debates for a few months, it still triggered changes in European countries’ foreign policy. For Germany, it became apparent that the creation of the federal system of the Briand Plan would hinder the revision of the country’s eastern borders, and thus Berlin’s foreign policy from 1930 onwards focused on economic cooperation. In its response to the Briand Plan, Hungary had already expressed its wish to set up a kind of agricultural cartel to facilitate the sale of surplus agricultural goods in Central Europe. This initiative was put on the League of Nations’ agenda and a Romanian-Austrian-Hungarian consensus was established on the issue. Subsequently, Romania took the initiative to set up a Central European agricultural bloc. The proposal was joined by Poland, and a successful conference was held with the participation of the Baltic States, the Danube countries, Balkan countries and Finland. The conference was followed by a series of meetings between the countries of the agricultural bloc; however, the initiative was ultimately unsuccessful, mainly due to Czechoslovak and French rejection.⁸

The initiatives to create an agricultural bloc raised concerns in Germany, which sought to remedy the worrying economic situation through bilateral agreements. One of the most significant steps towards this was the German-Austrian Customs Union, signed on 19 March 1931, which provided for the dismantling of customs barriers between the two states. The announcement of the German-Austrian customs union caused a ruckus in France. The French government, sensing a threat to its Central European influence, began to draw up a counterplan with a preferential tariff plan at its core. This was carried out under the leadership of André François-Poncet, Deputy State Secretary, in March 1931 as a response to the German-Austrian customs union. The swiftly developed draft was presented to the British government and published in a memorandum on 4 May 1931 under the title ‘*Plan Constructif*’. The memorandum stressed that the German-Austrian customs union was a prelude to the Anschluss, which was prohibited by international treaties. In the constructive plan, the French government drew attention to four problems: the crisis in the cereals trade in Central and Eastern Europe; situation of the industrialised countries; issues of capital and credit; and the special situation of Austria. The memorandum sought to reconcile the difficulties of the agricultural countries with the interests of the industrial ones. To resolve the cereals crisis in Central Europe, it proposed the introduction of a preferential system, supplemented by the creation of a consortium between the countries involved in the sale

7 Ormos, 1997, pp. 60–61.

8 Ormos, 2007, pp. 118–119; Diószegi, 2014, pp. 55–57.

of cereals. This consortium would negotiate with the countries that would buy the cereals. An essential element of the memorandum was the establishment of an agricultural credit union to finance the harvest, by providing the applicants with public loans. The French plan would have placed the supervision of a proposed new bank in the hands of the League of Nations. For other financial operations, such as the granting of loans and financing of production, a banking group supervised by the Bank of France was to be set up. The realisation of these financial plans would have been vital for the countries of Eastern Europe that were struggling with agricultural marketing problems. Regarding the Austrian problem, the Memorandum stressed the unalterable nature of the Treaty of Saint-Germain. On the economic front, it put forward proposals that would have, on the one hand, served the interests of the European cereal-producing countries, and on the other, that of Austria. The French proposal neither took German interests into account, nor provided a satisfactory solution to the problems of overproduction of cereals and lending, and was therefore dropped from the agenda.⁹

2. Emergence and Objectives of the Tardieu-Plan (1932)



On 2 March 1932, the French Prime Minister and Foreign Minister André Tardieu (1876–1945)¹⁰ sent a memorandum to the British and Italian governments to hasten the relief of the five Danube states – Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Romania and Yugoslavia – whose economic situation was close to collapse, mainly due to the difficulties caused by the agricultural crisis. The brief, which featured nearly three pages of text, was called the Tardieu Plan. It was vague on several points, in line with the French diplomatic language of the time, and was also littered with verbose phrases. The memorandum began with a reference to the financial report of

the Committee of Finance of the League of Nations on Hungary and Austria, concluding that both states were close to financial collapse. In its very introduction, the sombre text emphasised the need for the development of the closest possible economic relations between Austria, Hungary and their neighbouring countries in order to regain the confidence of the financial markets. The Tardieu Plan argued

⁹ Diószegi, 2014, pp. 58–69.

¹⁰ André Tardieu, French statesman, Agence de presse Meurisse, in: Gallica Digital Library, ID btv1b90554137/f1, public domain, source of the picture: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andr%C3%A9_Tardieu#/media/File:Andr%C3%A9_Tardieu_en_1928.jpg.

that the main cause of the situation was the global economic recession, but that the behaviour of the countries of the Danube region had also contributed to the crisis. In the memorandum, the French prime minister clarified that partial improvements would not lead to results and called for a comprehensive plan. The French government, in agreement with the British, proposed the creation of a customs union covering the Danube countries, which would, in their view, also solve a number of economic and political problems. The agreement was to be developed in agreement between the five concerned countries, taking into account the legitimate interests of third countries as far as possible. The French government considered that the prerequisite for economic restructuring was the sorting out of financial issues, followed by the establishment of the five countries' willingness to cooperate and, finally, the definition of economic preferences, conditions and limits. The Memorandum concluded by stating that the French government's intention was to serve European interests and that besides the five Danube States concerned, it was also counting on the Italian and British governments as well.¹¹

The development of the French Tardieu Plan was also influenced by Elemér Hantos, an attorney-at-law with an interest in monetary affairs, who was also Secretary of State for Trade in 1926.¹² Hantos drew up a detailed plan for economic cooperation in Central Europe, which he wanted to establish between the successor states of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, with Poland and Bulgaria as possible candidates.¹³ Hantos also presented his plan in the form of a memorandum at the League of Nations meeting in Geneva in 1931. Several sources indicate that the material published by Hantos was included in the Tardieu draft. A German newspaper described Hantos as the 'real father' of the plan, and Czech historian Bohdan Chudoba referred to the plan as the Hantos-Tardieu plan.¹⁴

After the publication of the memorandum, Tardieu came up with a specific proposal for a customs union. He proposed that Austria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia and Romania should grant each other a 10% tariff reduction and remove existing trade restrictions.¹⁵

Tardieu was aware that his plan could only be implemented with the help of the British, and so did everything possible to ensure that the London government was on his side. A conference was held in London from 6 to 8 April 1932 to discuss the French proposal.¹⁶ This conference was marked by Franco-German antagonism, but Italy¹⁷, along with Germany, also rejected the French proposal, whereas Britain

11 Diószegi, 2014, pp. 163–165.

12 Horel, 2011, p. 294.

13 Ormos, 2007, pp. 90–91.

14 Diószegi, 2014, p. 185.

15 Stambrook, 1963, pp. 79.

16 OL K 63. 448/50. Minutes of the London Conference. 6–8 April, 1932.

17 Bagnato, 1997, p. 120. Italian efforts were aimed at preventing Austria and Hungary from becoming dependent on Germany or France.

adopted a policy of benevolent neutrality.¹⁸ The conference thus concluded without any results, and the Tardieu plan practically failed.¹⁹

2.1. The Impact of the Tardieu-Plan on the Countries of Central Europe

The Tardieu Plan failed mainly because of the failure of the four great powers (France, Britain, Italy and Germany) to reach a consensus. However, the plan's failure was also because the idea was put forward during the negotiations that the great powers should first reach an agreement over Eastern Europe without the countries concerned, and only then could negotiations with the countries of the Danube region be held. Although the individual countries of the Danube Basin had different views on the Tardieu Plan, they shared the opinion that the Great Powers could not decide their fate without them.

2.2. Czechoslovakia and the Tardieu Plan

One of the main beneficiaries of the Versailles peace treaties that concluded World War I was the then-nascent Czechoslovak state. After the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, it became the dominant state in the region, mainly owing to its acquisition of a large part of the industry of the defunct Monarchy. As a member of the Little Entente, it was also one of the most important countries in Central Europe from a political point of view, and Prague became France's key ally to counteract the threat of its German neighbourhood. The German aspirations for influence in the Danube basin also alerted Czechoslovak leaders because, as a result of the peace treaties following the First World War, the new republic had nearly 3 million German-speaking citizens.²⁰

Following the publication of the Tardieu plan, politicians in Prague expressed their delight at the considerable overlap between the idea of the French Prime Minister's – who maintained good personal relations with the Czech Foreign Minister Beneš – and the Czechoslovak plans. This is evidenced by the opinion of Kamil Krofta, Political Director of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Prague, who said: *'The Tardieu plan is really our plan, that is, Beneš's. Its essence is cooperation between the five Central European countries without any interference from the great powers.'*²¹

Although the plan would have primarily served Czechoslovak interests, it was criticised by the leaders in Prague. The Czechoslovak government considered it to be in its interest to strengthen economic cooperation between the Central European states, but rejected the political objectives of the plan. Beneš nevertheless stated that cooperation could lead to servitude or, if it were to lead to some kind of confederation, the Prague government would prefer to reject any such cooperation. Czechoslovakia also was not in favour of the portion of the plan that gave Austria

18 Hamilton, 1997, p. 103.

19 Diószegi, 2014, pp. 198–211.

20 Ibid. pp. 171–172.

21 Ferenčuhová, 1997, p. 15.

and Hungary a prominent role in the settlement plan.²² Even after the failure of the London Conference and of the Tardieu plan, the Prague government stuck to the principles announced by the French government. This was reaffirmed at the Annual Conference of the Small Entente countries in Belgrade on 12–15 May 1932. They emphasised that cooperation between the five Danube countries would be the basis of their Central European policy, followed by economic cooperation with Italy and Germany. According to Beneš, until this was achieved, the Little Entente was to be considered the core of Central Europe.²³

2.3. Austria and the Tardieu-Plan

The greatest impact of the economic crisis was in Austria, where public finances came close to total collapse. France, along with Germany, now sought to extend its influence over Austria, while the Austrians attempted to avoid this, with the Austrian Chancellor Buresch requesting for help from the great powers, through a memorandum published on 16 February 1932. The Tardieu plan was regarded with interest by the Austrian public, as the economic situation was critical; however, Austria could not accept any solution in which Germany was not involved. The Austrian demands were presented to the British Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sir John Simon, on 5 April 1932, calling for preferential treatment for Austrian goods, the rejection of the principle of the maximum preferential tariff and financial restructuring. The preferential treatment of Austria applied mainly to the trade of industrial goods.²⁴

2.4. Hungary and the Tardieu-Plan

After the plan's publication, for a brief period, Hungary became the focus of French political attention.²⁵ Hungary welcomed the publication of the Tardieu Plan with great anticipation. After the First World War, the central element of Hungary's foreign policy was territorial revision.²⁶ The improvement of relations with France, a dominant force in European politics and in the Central European region at the time, was also a central issue, given the need to promote Hungarian interests more effectively. István Bethlen, the prime minister who dominated Hungarian political life in the 1920s, had already sought to move closer to Paris from the 1920s onwards. His ambitions were motivated both by the need to counterbalance the German and Italian foreign policy orientation of the time, and the desire to obtain the French financial support necessary for Hungarian economic development.²⁷ However, Bethlen's efforts to improve Hungarian-French relations were unsuccessful.²⁸ On 24

22 Diószegi, 2014, pp. 176–178.

23 Ferenčuhová, 1997, p. 29.

24 Kronsteiner, 1997, pp. 65–72; Diószegi, 2014, pp. 181–183.

25 Horel, 2011, p. 84.

26 Stambrook, 1963, p. 69.

27 Erényi, 1933, p. 183.

28 Romsics, 2019, pp. 240–245.

August 1931, Gyula Károlyi, who had been foreign minister since December 1930, succeeded Bethlen, who was forced to resign because of the world economic crisis. Károlyi was reputed to be a Francophile politician. Both French official circles and public opinion welcomed the fact that he did not mention the idea of revision in his first political statements, and he repeatedly confirmed his intention to work towards deepening Hungarian–French relations. However, Károlyi’s friendliness towards France did not change the perception of Hungary in Paris, as Tardieu noted in a letter to the former French Prime Minister Laval on 11 February 1932. In this letter, Tardieu criticised the Hungarian political aspirations to revise the Trianon Treaty, as well as the refusal to reach an agreement with the Czechoslovak government.²⁹ British policy was more sympathetic to Hungarian policy, since British Foreign Office experts considered Hungary’s excessive weakening of the Trianon Treaty to be a serious mistake. London believed that Hungary should be given economic aid and that Czechoslovakia should be persuaded to prioritise Hungarian grain sales, either by means of a special tariff or by setting a specific quota. The Budapest government also held intensive negotiations with Rome to improve economic relations. On 23 March 1932, Lajos Walkó, Minister of Foreign Affairs, informed the parliamentary finance committee about the Tardieu plan. In his presentation, he emphasised that the industrialised countries of the West were not able to absorb the entire Hungarian agricultural surplus, and therefore economic cooperation between the countries of the Danube basin was essential. At the end of his speech, he noted that ‘...the Hungarian government welcomes the French Prime Minister’s plan and has been in favour of it from the very beginning.’ The Hungarian Foreign Minister summarised the country’s interests in three points. He acknowledged the need for cooperation in the Danube Basin, but emphasised that agricultural products should also be made available on other markets (Swiss, northern Italian, German, French, Polish). Hungary, given its central location, should seek to exploit the advantage of transit transports, and finally, the priority of financial restructuring was highlighted.³⁰

However, the Tardieu plan was, rejected by the Hungarian political elite, and the majority of the Parliament adopted the position of former Prime Minister István Bethlen.³¹ In his parliamentary speech of 4 May 1932, Bethlen called for Italian–Austrian–Hungarian cooperation instead of the Danube countries’ cooperation, inspired by Paris and Prague. Relations between Bethlen and the Francophile prime minister Gyula Károlyi became strained, leading Károlyi to ask Horthy for his dismissal in July 1932.³² At the time, the governor did not accept Károlyi’s resignation, but his government was finally forced to resign on 1 October 1932.

29 Horel, 1997, p. 78.

30 Diószegi, 2014, pp. 183–187.

31 Bethlen, 1932, pp. 352–362.

32 Romsics, 2019, pp. 416–418.

2.5. Standpoint of Yugoslavia and Romania regarding the Tardieu-Plan

Yugoslavia was an ally of France; however, its economic interests were linked to Germany. France provided the Belgrade government with many loans, but its exports to Germany were four times its volume of the trade with France.³³ This double dependence limited the scope for Yugoslav politicians. The Belgrade government welcomed the news of the Tardieu plan with cautious optimism and, after hearing its ideas, declared its political content undesirable. The plan was officially supported by the Yugoslav government, although it was not considered satisfactory from an economic point of view. The government's basic position was that the industrialised countries should open their markets to agricultural products from the Danube region and provide new loans to assist the Central European countries that had been placed in a difficult financial situation by the crisis.³⁴

Romania's situation and position was similar to that of Yugoslavia. The Bucharest leadership maintained strong trade relations with Germany and was therefore concerned about participation in the French plan.³⁵ Furthermore, they were resented because, in addition to the Lesser Entente countries, France also offered a solution to Austria and Hungary. They were concerned that the Tardieu plan would favour Austria and Hungary, thus undermining Romania's prominent role in the Central European system established after the First World War. The Romanian government also urged that the negotiations should be limited to the countries of the Danube basin without the Great Powers. After pressure from London made it obvious that helping Austria and Hungary was an important aspect of the settlement, Romania, similarly to Czechoslovakia, engaged in delaying tactics.³⁶

We can therefore conclude that during the years of economic crisis, several French plans were put forward for the integration of Central Europe. The Briand Plan, published in 1930, presented a general vision for a European political settlement, but contained neither economic solutions nor proposals focusing on the specific characteristics of the Eastern European states. The 1931 '*Plan constructif*', the antithesis of the German-Austrian customs union, focused on solving the agricultural crisis and financial crises in Central Europe, but did not take into account German interests, and was soon dropped from the agenda. The most detailed plan for Central Europe was published by French Prime Minister Tardieu in 1932. However, its fate was clearly sealed by the lack of agreement between the major powers, particularly German and Italian opposition, as well as the lack of support from several countries along the Danube, including Austria, Hungary, Romania and Yugoslavia. The Tardieu Plan was drawn up in February 1932, published in March, and by April, it had practically failed. Along with it, the French idea of *Europe Centrale* was consigned to the repository of ideas that had no rational basis for implementation.³⁷

33 Bled, 1997, p. 190.

34 Pavlovic, 1997, pp. 33–38; Diószegi, 2014, pp. 178–180.

35 Bariety, 1997, p. 10.

36 Berindei, 1997, pp. 55–56; Diószegi, 2014, pp. 180–181.

37 Ormos, 2007, p. 131.

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