

Czechoslovakism in Mentalities of Košice's Inhabitants and Its Implementation in the Public Space of the City in the Interwar Era*

Ondrej Ficeri

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The establishment of Czechoslovakia in 1918 was refused by a large proportion of its inhabitants, mainly from the part of Czechoslovak Germans and Hungarians. Beside them, a certain number of Slovaks rebelled against the state project of Czech and Slovak political elites as well. Some of them preferred to remain in the frame of the historical Hungary because they shared with Hungarians for centuries transmitted cultural patterns and cultural repertoire, the use of which came by implementing the idea of Czechoslovakism to the threat. Rebelling attitudes against Czechoslovak statehood were registered especially in the ethnically heterogeneous regions and cities which were located in the contact zone between the territories with the majority Slovak population on the one side and the minority Hungarian one on the other. Analysing the archival documents, the author of the paper focuses firstly on reactions of indigenous inhabitants of Slovak origin of the city of Košice to the establishment of Czechoslovakia, secondly, on pursuits of the political elites to implement the Czechoslovak state idea in the public space of the city, its successes, failures and tensions between the Czechoslovak and Slovak (autonomous) camps of nationalists. Thirdly, the analysis of the electoral behaviour stands in the spotlight, according to which the majority of local indigenous Slovaks voted the oppositionist parties what indicates that, in the long term, the idea of the Czechoslovak state was refused by these inhabitants. The purpose of the study lies in recognizing differentiated attitudes of the Slovak interwar (mainly urban) society to the Czechoslovak statehood and, hence, in outlining an alternative story to the traditional, in the cultural memory reproduced narrative about the establishment of Czechoslovakia as a "national liberation".

Key words: Czechoslovakism. Nationalisation of Urban Space in Košice. Heterogeneous Urban Milieu. National Indifference. Ethnicity and Electoral Behaviour.

Introduction

The question, whether the disputed legitimacy of the Czechoslovak political doctrine of Czechoslovakism – an idea of the West-Slavic national community of Czechoslovaks, consisting of two branches, Czechs and Slovaks – contributed to the downfall of Czechoslovakia (in 1939 and 1993), remains an open dispute in the world historiography. A debate has been stirred especially after Elisabeth Bakke's influential work was published in 1999. Norwegian author vindicated her option that Czechoslovakism was refused even by the very people it was supposed to appease,¹ meanwhile her

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1 BAKKE, Elisabeth. *Doomed to Failure? The Czechoslovak Nation Project and the Slovak Autonomist Reaction 1918 – 1938*. Oslo: University of Oslo, 1999, 556 p. The author argues that the Czechoslovak nation project failed because the idea of Czechoslovakism sharpened national conflict and activated the final phase of the Slovak nation-forming process. The author is convinced that "the failure to create a Czechoslovak identity thus contributed to the dissolution of the state in 1993" (p. 533), however, she avoids to claim that Czechoslovakism was to blame for the downfall of Czechoslovakia in 1939.

opponents, e. g. German historian Peter Haslinger² or his Slovak colleague Milan Zemko,³ objected that rather the destabilizing effect of German and Hungarian revisionism from outside and inside of the state should be taken into account. In this study, I support the opinion of Elisabeth Bakke with a further ambition to amend her thesis by a claim that the Czechoslovakism did fail not only as a state-forming force, but also as a source of the legitimacy to retain the territorial integrity of Czechoslovakia according to the Treaties of Versailles and Trianon.

A research of attitudes of indigenous Slovak-speaking inhabitants of Košice to the Czechoslovak state idea appears to be a plausible tool for verifying Bakke's thesis concerning several reasons. Before the establishment of Czechoslovakia, Czech and Slovak political elites assumed that the majority of local inhabitants were of Slovak origin and became Magyarized only from the second third of 19th century on, due to the forceful identity politics of Hungarian governments.⁴ Their disenchantment grew bigger when realising that political affiliations of locals during the whole interwar period unaffectedly leaned towards pro-Hungarian parties which was, consequently, misused by Hungarian propaganda in 1938 – the same way as Slovak autonomism was misused by German propaganda in 1939 – and contributed to the overall international discreditation of the Czechoslovak state, and, in the broader context, to the destruction of the Versailles system laid out in 1918 – 1920.⁵

In the post-WWII period the pro-Hungarian attitudes of Košice's Slovak-speaking inhabitants became, naturally, a taboo in Slovak historiography as this local feature did not simply correspond with the national narrative and stood in opposition to the forcefully reproduced image of Košice, the second biggest city in Slovakia, as an ethnically pure Slovak city. At opposite pole was (and partially still is) the Hungarian historiography which interpreted the pro-Hungarian electoral behaviour of Košice's Slovak-speaking inhabitants as evidence of their "original" Hungarian ethnic identity.⁶

2 HASLINGER, Peter. Doomed to Failure? The Czechoslovak Nation Project and the Slovak Autonomist Reaction 1918 – 1938. In: *H-Net Reviews* [online]. April, 2001, [cit. 10.10.2017]. Available on the internet: <<http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=5098>>

3 ZEMKO, Milan. Bakke, E: Doomed to Failure? The Czechoslovak Nation Project and the Slovak Autonomist Reaction 1918 – 1938. In: *Historický časopis*, 2002, vol. 50, no. 2, pp. 350-355. Bakke's thesis was indirectly rejected also by the Slovak historian ŠUCHOVÁ, Xénia. *Idea československého štátu na Slovensku 1918 – 1939: Protagonisti, nositelia, oponenti*. Bratislava: HÚ SAV, 2011, p. 10.

4 During the Paris negotiations in 1918 – 1920, the Czechoslovak diplomacy used the Magyarization as the main argument against retaining the whole stripe of towns in the Slovak-Hungarian ethnic contact zone in Hungary. Compare the so-called Beneš' memoranda "La Slovaqui: LaTerritoire revendique de la Slovaqui". In: DEJMEK, Jindřich. *Edvard Beneš: Politická biografie českého demokrata. Část první: Revolucionář a diplomat (1884 – 1935)*. Praha: Karolinum, 2006, p. 238.

5 The territorial reduction (Munich Agreement in September 1938) and dissolution of Czechoslovakia (in March 1939) has to be understood in the context of contemporary foreign policy (Appeasement) of the United Kingdom and France whose representatives were not willing to carry out their obligations to guarantee the existence of Czechoslovakia. Although political representatives of both countries considered the destruction of Czechoslovakia as illegal aggression of the Third Reich, they de facto recognized the new Slovak state (5th May 1939, 14th July 1939 respectively). For relevant reading on the cultural history of the phenomenon of Appeasement in British politics and society compare: McDONAGH, Frank. *Neville Chamberlain, Appeasement and the British Road to War*. Manchester; New York: Manchester University Press, 1998, 196 p.

6 For further reading on Slovak-Hungarian polemic about the national character of Košice compare: FICERI, Ondrej. *Košice v slovenskej historiografii*. Košice: Dejepisný spolok v Košiciach, 2016, 266 p.

The objective of the paper is to evaluate what were the preconditions and possibilities of adaptability of the idea of Czechoslovakism in such a nationally indifferent (from the centralist point of view) region as was the city of Košice and its surrounding, secondly, what was the territorial origin of persons active in Czechoslovakization of the city, and thirdly, what problems, successes or failures they encountered in pursuit of implementation of this idea in the public space of the city, and in anchoring of the state idea in mentalities of locals.⁷ When answering the targeted research objectives, I have analysed historical representations retained in the archival documents of the state administration, memoirs and local press, combined with analysis of aggregated data from censuses and elections.



Fig. 1: A kiosk of Baťa concern at the "East of the Republic Exhibition" organized in Košice by the Czechoslovak authorities in July – August 1938 to demonstrate successes of the republican regime in the past 20-year-period. (Source: Východoslovenské múzeum v Košiciach, fond Historická tlač, further East Slovak Museum, V.273/ 65).

7 Under the term mentalities I understand wider mindsets of a certain social group with the unified or similar value system on a certain territory. BURKE, Peter. *Strengths and Weaknesses in the History of Mentalities*. In: BURKE, Peter. *Varieties of Cultural History*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997, pp. 162-182. In this case, the above mentioned definition anticipates existence of several social groups, differentiated depending on their attitude to the idea of Czechoslovakism: proponents of Czechoslovakism (typically constituency of the governmental parties), and opponents of Czechoslovakism (typically constituency of the oppositionist parties, including the Hlinka's Slovak People's Party). However, it is necessary to distinguish between the aversion to Czechoslovakism and to Czechoslovakia as a centralized state formation, or to its existence at all, even though these qualities could overlap in the sense of semantic nuances among the terms 'separatists', 'autonomists', 'irredentists'. Nevertheless, even in the case of implementation of Czechoslovakism in the contemporary public discourse, Peter Haslinger calls attention to its inconsistency because the terms 'Czechoslovaks', 'Slovaks', or 'Czechs' had been used next to each other causing linguistic ambiguity. HASLINGER, Peter. *The Nation, the Enemy, and Imagined Territories: Hungarian Elements in the Emergence of a Czechoslovak National Narrative during and after WWI*. In: WINGFIELD, Nancy (Ed.). *Creating the Other. Ethnic Conflict and Nationalism in Habsburg Central Europe*. Oxford; New York: Berghahn Books, 2003, pp. 169-182.

Rivalry across actors of competitive identitarian concepts

If we are dealing with preconditions for implementations of Czechoslovakism in Košice and its surrounding (the region of Abov), we cannot avoid the need to embed the development of the ethno-emancipation process of local inhabitants into a wider historical context. The reason is that the progress of the ethno-emancipation process on the territory of the east Slovakia differed from the one in the west-central Slovakia.⁸ In the 1st half of the 20th century several identitarian concepts were evolved on the territory of the east Slovakia the actors of which competed for nationalisation (ethnisation) of local residents. The identities of locals oscillated between a number of nationalisation "offers", whereby none of them was able to become permanently rooted here due to an insufficient time period and constantly instable geopolitical situation.⁹ The other reason was, from a long term perception, that a considerably large part of locals adopted an alternative pattern of identification and developed a group tradition with a specific value system which did not correspond with the mainstream (in this case with the Slovak, or Czechoslovak national ideology). It was the alternative concept of Slovjaks – an idea about the indigenous inhabitants of the east Slovakia which anticipated that these inhabitants form an independent ethnic category, different from Slovaks. The protagonists of the Slovjak concept accepted the idea of the Hungarian political nation when adopting the territorial belonging to the historical Hungary (as an integral part with a certain kind of autonomy), that is why Hungarian governments supported such pursuits.¹⁰

In the Slovak historical culture, it is not even sufficiently embedded that not only Hungarian political elites were in the interwar period in pursuits of improprating the east Slovakia. A part of Ruthenian political and intellectual elites called for an

8 The semantic meaning of the term 'the east Slovakia' is in mentalities of Slovaks unsettled and territorially mutable. In this paper, the east Slovakia means the territory of two current administrative units: the Košice and Prešov Self-Governed Counties.

9 Researchers of the concept of national indifference ask in what extent were individuals influenced by nationalists, or rather they refrained from pursuits of nationalists for a nationalized society and became immune and indifferent to nationalisation projects: LOZOVIUK, Petr. *Evropská etnologie ve středoevropské perspektivě*. Pardubice : Univerzita Pardubice, 2005, pp. 40-48. ZAHRA, Tara. *Imagined Noncommunities: National Indifference as a Category of Analysis*. In: *Slavic Review*, 2010, vol. 69, no. 1, pp. 93-119.

10 In the 2nd half of the 20th century, a scholarly dispute took its course between proponents and opponents of the Slovjak concept (Ondrej R. Halaga versus Imrich Sedlák and Ladislav Tajták) regarding its relevant underpinning: HALAGA, Ondrej R. *Austroslavizmus, uhroslavizmus a východoslovenské národné uvedomenie*. In: *Svojina*, 1949, vol. 3, no. 4, pp. 195-201. HALAGA, Ondrej R. *Košická administratívna oblasť za feudalizmu*. Košice : Archív mesta Košice, 1955 – 1958, 170 p. HALAGA, Ondrej R. *Memorabilia z Európy a vlasti*. Prešov : Universum, 2008, 504 p. SEDLÁK, Imrich. *Východné Slovensko v letokruhoch národa : Kultúrno-spoločenský, národno-politický a literárny integračný proces na východnom Slovensku*. Martin : Matica slovenská, 2012, 890 p. TAJTÁK, Ladislav. *K otázke vydávania učebníc vo východoslovenskom nárečí*. In: *Nové obzory*, 1962, vol. 4, pp. 43-58. TAJTÁK, Ladislav. *Poznámky k historickým otázkam v diele Ondreja R. Halagu. Východoslovenský slovník I. – II.* Košice; Prešov : Universum, 2002. In: *Historický časopis*, 2010, vol. 58, no. 1, pp. 123-134. The Hungarian historiography interprets the Slovjak concept as a regional phenomenon: ABLONCZY, Balázs. *Virtuális vármegye : Sáros 1820 – 1940*. In: ABLONCZY, Balázs. *Nyombiztosítás Letűnt magyarok: Kisebbség- és művelődéstörténeti tanulmányok*. Pozsony : Kalligram, 2011, pp. 15-35. BARNA, Ábrahám. *A szlovákság történelmi törésvonalai: konfeszionalizmus és regionalizmus*. In: KOZMA, Gábor – ILLÉS, Pál Attila (Eds.). *Hungaro-szlovakológia*. Budapest : Szent István Társulat, 2007, pp. 183-186. Lately, Veronika Szeghy-Gayer contributed to the debate when documenting that the origins of the Slovjak concept stemmed from the circle of the local Šariš (the county to the north of Košice) elite: SZEGHY-GAYER, Veronika. *Slovjacké regionálne hnutie v rokoch 1907 – 1918*. In: *Mesto a dejiny*, 2014, vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 68-83.

extension of the Ruthenian territory with Košice constituting a regional capital.¹¹ Last and not least, a part of Polish elites, the so-called Krakow group, presupposed a Polish origin of local dialects and proposed the seizure of the territory stretching as far as Košice.¹²

The most elaborated plan for creating a national community which would include the population of Košice and the surrounding area was developed by the Czech political elites which were jointed up with the Slovak ones in the course of the year 1918.¹³ However, the obvious absence of identification of local Slovak-speaking-inhabitants with an idea of Czechoslovakia – besides few personalities – constituted an obvious cleavage in the legitimacy claims for detaching the city and, at the same time, a problem in creating of a Czechoslovak imagined national community among these individuals.¹⁴ In contrary to the area of the west-central Slovakia and northern parts of the east Slovakia, in Košice and the surrounding Abov-Turňa County there were no signs of civic activism supporting the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic.¹⁵ At this point I refer to the polemic which has occurred in the Slovak

11 An annexation of the east Slovakia to Carpathian Ruthenia was requested by the Autonomous Agricultural Alliance (Autonómny poľnohospodársky zväz). Štátny archív (The State Archive, hereinafter ŠA) v Košiciach, fund (hereinafter f.), Košická župa (The Košice County, hereinafter KŽ) 1923 – 1928, prez. odd., box (hereinafter b.) 264, number (hereinafter no.) 3777, Situačná správa za I. štvrtrok 1927 (8. 4. 1927).

12 DEÁK, Ladislav. *Hra o Slovensko : Slovensko v politike Slovenska a Poľska v rokoch 1933 – 1939*. Bratislava : Veda, 1991, p. 66.

13 The east Slovakia including Košice figured as an integral part of the Czechoslovak national territory in every of the layouts dealing with the territorial extent of gradually establishing state: BENES, Edvard. *Détruisez l'Autriche-Hongrie! Le martyre des Tchéco-Slovaques à travers l'histoire*. Paris : Delagrave, 1916, 72 p. KUFFNER, Johann. *Unser Staat und der Weltfriede*. Prag : Verlag Josef Springer, 1918, the map supplement. MASARYK, Tomáš Garrigue. *Independent Bohemia*. London : J. M. Dent, 1915, p. 125. The role of maps in demarcation of Czechoslovak borders was analysed by: DEÁK, József. *A cseh-szlovák egység diplomáciai története*. Pécs : Dunántúl Pécsi Egyetemi Könyvkiadó és Nyomda, 1943, 176 p. HASLINGER, Peter. *Nation und Territorium im tschechischen politischen Diskurs 1880 – 1938*. München : Collegium Carolinum, 2010, 531 p. HAJDÚ, Zoltán. „Csehszlovák” térképek az államteremtés szolgálatában. In: FRISNYÁK, Sándor (Ed.). *A Felvidék történeti földrajza*. Nyíregyháza : Piremon, 1998, pp. 191-199.

14 For circumstances of the seizure of Košice by the Czechoslovak authorities compare the contemporary works: BALLAY, Eugen. *Rozpomienky na vskriesenie najvýchodnejšieho Slovenska v roku 1919*. Michalovce : Knižničiareň Zemplín, 1924, 24 p. CHALOUPECKÝ, Václav. *Zápas o Slovensko 1918*. Praha : Čin, 1930, 256 p. MEDVEČKÝ, Karol Anton. *Slovenský prevrat*. Vol. 1. Bratislava : Komenský – Vydavateľský a literárny spolok, 1930, pp. 131-148; Vol. 2, pp. 235-278. SEKÁČ, Ján. Pomery v Košiciach v dobe ich obsadenia našim vojskom a za vpádu maďarsko-boľševického. In: KRPELEC, Bartolomej. *Vpád maďarských boľševikov na Slovensko v roku 1919 : Pamätný spis domáceho odboja*. Bratislava : J. Zimák, 1936, pp. 59-64. KRPELEC, Bartolomej. *Prevratové udalosti v bývalej stolici Abauj-Turňanskej*. In: ŠTANCL, J. G. (Ed.). *Jubilejný almanach mesta Košíc a východného Slovenska 1918 – 1928*. Košice : Výbor pre oslavy desiateho výročia ČSR v Košiciach, 1928, pp. 30-36. ŠROBÁR, Vavro. *Osvobodené Slovensko*. Praha : Tiskové a nakladateľské družstvo Československých legionárov, 1928, pp. 464-470. The more or less recent scholarly works include: HRONSKÝ, Marián. *Boj o Slovensko a Trianon 1918 – 1920*. Bratislava : Národné literárne centrum – Dom slovenskej literatúry, 1998, 328 p. IRMANOVÁ, Eva. *Maďarsko a versailleský mierový systém*. Praha : Albis International, 2002, 416 p. KRAJČOVIČ, Milan. *Hranice Slovenska – plány a spory 1848 – 1922*. In: *Historické štúdie*, 2004, vol. 43, pp. 31-52. ORMOS, Mária. *Padovától Trianonig*. Budapest : Kossuth Kiadó, 1984, 452 p. SZTANCS, Gábor. *Kassa helyzete és sorsa 1867-1918*. In: HAJDÚ, Anikó (Ed.). *Multiethnikus világok Közép-Európában, 1867 – 1944* (Multiethnicky prostredie v Strednej Európe, 1867 – 1944). Budapest : Téka, 2016, pp. 219-237. ŠVORC, Peter. *Košice a začleňovanie Slovenska do nového štátu 1918 – 1919*. In: ŠUTAJ, Štefan (Ed.). *Košice a dejiny – dejiny Košíc*. Košice : Univerzita P. J. Šafárika, 2011, pp. 89-100.

15 The-First-Czechoslovak-Republic-myth about the Slovaks as passive expectants for a “national liberation” from the Czech Lands was refuted by current scholars. The most influential work on the topic: NURMI, Ismo. *Slovakia – a Playground for Nationalism and National Identity : Manifestations of the National Identity of the Slovaks 1918 – 1920*. Helsinki : Suomen Historiallinen Seura, 1999, 202 p. Compare also: MANNOVÁ, Elena.

historiography only recently, in the 2nd decade of the 21st century, concerning the credit of Czechs for “liberation” of Slovaks, when a prominent Slovak historian Milan Zemko asked how many Slovaks actually cared for such a “liberation”.¹⁶ In the above mentioned dispute I support the relevance of Milan Zemko’s thesis and in the following part of the paper I explain why.

To facilitate the ethno-emancipation process in the local milieu in accordance with aims of the protagonists of the Czechoslovak, i.e. later competitive Slovak identitarian concept, an extensive cultural transfer mediated by human resources from the regions which were considered as a crystallization core of the national territory was needed. Let’s quote a journalist Emo Bohúň, working in the local pro-governmental newspaper Slovenský východ, who arrived from Liptov (the central Slovakia) to “officialiate” in Košice in 1991: “*I was sincerely trying to become rooted in this city and hence boost the number of Slovaks who were arriving here in whole herds to find new home and help to change the ethnic form of this in history praised city.*”¹⁷ All of the leading state officials in Košice came from western parts of the republic, whether it was the Abov-Turňa County governors Ján Sekáč, Pavol Fábry, Ján Ruman and Juraj Slávik, or the Košice city mayors, nominated by the Prague government. Anton Prídavok, a writer from Kežmarok working in Košice in the interwar period, recalled events of the initiation phase of the Czechoslovak rule in Košice: “*Two men, the county governor and his adjunct, had constituted the most important state authority, until people from the west relieved the situation.*”¹⁸

Uhorská a československá štátna idea: zmena povedomia v slovenskej spoločnosti. In: MOMMSEN, Hans – KOVÁČ, Dušan – MALÍŘ, Jiří – MARKOVÁ, Michaela (Eds.). *První světová válka a vztahy mezi Čechy, Slováky a Němci*. Brno : Matice moravská, 2000, pp. 87-95. According to Nurmi’s research, not only Slovak political elites actively participated in the process of establishment of Czechoslovakia and delineating borders vis-a-vis the Hungarian authorities, but also common inhabitants in a mass extent. Also in the east Slovakia the “revolutionary” activities occurred, but not in Košice and the Abov region: TAJTÁK, Ladislav. *Národnodemokratická revolúcia na východnom Slovensku v roku 1918*. Bratislava : Slovenské pedagogické nakladateľstvo, 1972, p. 61.

16 ZEMKO, Milan. *Občan, spoločnosť, národ v pohybe slovenských dejín*. Bratislava : Historický ústav SAV, 2010, p. 97. Against the Zemko’s thesis protested FERENČUHOVÁ, Bohumila. Lingvistický, geografický a mocenský rozmer stanovenia hraníc Slovenska po roku 1918. In: MICHÁLEK, Slavomír et al. *Slovensko v labyrinte moderných európskych dejín : Pocta historikovi Milanovi Zemkovi*. Bratislava : Historický ústav SAV, 2014, pp. 105-119.

17 BOHÚŇ, Emo. *Dejiny veselé i neveselé*. Bratislava : Slovenský spisovateľ, 1960, p. 89.

18 PRÍDAVOK, Anton. Publicistika [online]. Východné Slovensko. [cit. 10.10.2017]. Available on the internet: <http://zlatyfond.sme.sk/dielo/1302/Pridavok_Publicistika/1>. Compare also a paper dealing with the proportion of Czechs in local army organizations (the so-called Legionaries) and with politics of their protectionism and employment benefits: DULOVIČ, Erik. Osudy a postavenie legionárov na východnom Slovensku v rokoch 1919 – 1929. In: *Historický časopis*, 2000, vol. 48, no. 1, pp. 54-74.



Fig. 2: A group photo of the local administration elite on the occasion of a visit of the Interior Secretary Jan Malypetr in Košice (Hotel Schalkház, between 1923 – 1924). From the first row: Pavol Novák (the city mayor) – Mikuláš Vrchovína (the municipal notary) – Ján Ruman (the county governor) – Jan Malypetr (the Interior Secretary) – Radola Gajda (the district military chief) – Ľudovít Bajza (the county governor assistant). None of the local officials was born in the east Slovakia. For identification of persons I am thankful to Ján Gašpar. (Source: East Slovak Museum, VIII.2486).

Mass immigration of Slovaks and Czechs in the course of the interwar period caused that in the scale of the most populous cities in Czechoslovakia Košice moved forward from the position of the tenth largest city to the position of the sixth largest one, leaving behind the traditional administrative and industrial centres of the First Republic such as Olomouc, Ústí nad Labem, České Budějovice and Liberec.¹⁹ A vacant field for immigration remained partly because of emigrated or involuntarily expelled Hungarians in the amount of at least 3 500 heads.²⁰ On the other hand, the statistics

19 For the urbanization process in the interwar Slovakia compare: BAŠOVSKÝ, Oliver. Niektoré problémy urbanizácie Slovenska. In: *Acta Geographica Universitatis Comenianae, Economico-Geographica*, 1972, vol. 11, pp. 49-66. BOKES, František. Sťahovanie obyvateľstva do našich miest. In: *Slovenská liga*, 1941, vol. 18, no. 10, pp. 258-262. HOLOTÍKOVÁ, Zdenka. Mestá na Slovensku v medzivojnovom období. In: *Historický časopis*, 1973, vol. 21, no. 2, pp. 189-204. ŠPROCHA, Branislav. Sťahovanie do najväčších miest Slovenska : Urbanizačný proces na Slovensku v 1. polovici 20. storočia. In: ŠMIGEL, Michal – TIŠLIAR, Pavol et al. *Migračné procesy Slovenska (1918 – 1948)*. Banská Bystrica : FF UMB, 2014, pp. 181-205.

20 KOVÁCS, Alajos. Kassa népességének fejlődése és összetétele. In: *Magyar Statisztikai Szemle*, 1939, vol. 17, p. 527.

for 1921 already declared 7 439 inhabitants originating in the Czech Lands.²¹ In 1930, statisticians investigated a particular number of inhabitants classified as of the "Czech nationality" in the two largest Slovak cities. In Košice there were 12 009 Czechs what represented 17,13 % of the local residents. A higher concentration of inhabitants of the "Czech nationality" were present, naturally, only in Bratislava (20 %).²²

Additional prospective carriers of the state ideology in Košice are to be found among the 7 000 of Slovaks coming from the west-central Slovakia (Tab. 1), even though in this case, it has to be assumed that a significant number of them carried the idea of an independent Slovak nation. The ethnic boundary²³ between the two national collectivities (Slovaks versus Czechs) was in the interwar period already distinctively legible, and the more proponents of Czechoslovakism were anxious to dissolve this boundary, the more its opponents were successful and in her further demarcating.²⁴

Tab. 1: A list of twenty-four political districts of the First Czechoslovak Republic which A) the most of Košice's immigrants were born in; B) the most of Košice's immigrants had origin in. Relates to the census of 1930.²⁵

A: Born in a district			B: Immigrated from a district		
1	Košice-district	4764	1	Košice-district	5563
2	Moldava	2123	2	Moldava	2368
3	Prešov	1774	3	Prešov	2362
4	Gelnica	1351	4	Gelnica	1558
5	Sabinov	915	5	Praha, the capital	1068
6	Liptovský Mikuláš	885	6	Spišská Nová Ves	964
7	Spišská Nová Ves	861	7	Trebišov	900
8	Bardejov	756	8	Sabinov	840
9	Levoča	740	9	Liptovský Mikuláš	821
10	Trebišov	738	10	Levoča	808
11	Martin	510	11	Bratislava, the county seat	713
12	Praha, the capital	496	12	Martin	510
13	Rožňava	422	13	Užhorod-mesto	577
14	Michalovce	419	14	Michalovce	560

21 Including the Sudetenland Germans.

22 *Zprávy Štátneho úradu štatistického*, 1933, vol. 195, p. 1538.

23 The concept of ethnic boundaries: BARTH, Fredrik. *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Difference*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1969, pp. 9-39.

24 For the Czech-Slovak relations and perception of Czechoslovakism in the Czech and Slovak societies compare: RYCHLÍK, Jan. *Češi a Slováci ve 20. století*. Vol. 1. Bratislava; Praha: Academic Electronic Press; Ústav T.G. Masaryka, 1997, 360 p. For a role of educational system in reproducing a distinctive Slovak national identity compare: JOHNSON, Owen V. *Slovakia, 1918 – 1938. Education and the Making of a Nation*. Boulder (Colo.): Columbia University Press, 1985, 516 p.

25 *Sčítání lidu v republice Československé ze dne 1. prosince 1930*. Díl I. Praha: Státní úřad statistický, 1934, 205 p.

15	Kežmarok	401	15	Rožňava	516
16	Vranov	367	16	Poprad	435
17	Poprad	352	17	Kežmarok	435
18	Kráľovský Chlmec	324	18	Kráľovský Chlmec	424
19	Stará Ľubovňa	310	19	Vranov	368
20	Ružomberok	264	20	Mukačevo-town	353
21	Humenné	249	21	Ružomberok	346
22	Berehovo	242	22	Berehovo	344
23	Brezno	238	23	Brno, the county seat	338
24	Brno, the county seat	233	24	Humenné	313

"Anti-Czech and anti-state population"

In documents of administrative provenience from the first years of existence of the Czechoslovak Republic, representations depicting only negative attitudes of local inhabitants towards incoming Czechs are to be found. The authorities complained that at the celebration of the second anniversary of the establishment of Czechoslovakia only the local military post took part, and, sadly, only a small number of Slovak-speaking residents. The matter extenuated the legitimacy of the Czechoslovak authorities to govern on this strategic territory all the more – as a report quoted – *"that the republic did not manage to acquire prestige among Hungarians"*.²⁶ A member of parliament, social democrat Vilém Brodecký reflected on the then clear-cut attitude between indigenous Slovaks and Czech newcomers perhaps in the most appropriate manner in an interview with Košice's police captain Josef Kohout: *"The policy regarding Slovakia was all wrong from the very beginning. Instead of conquering Slovaks with heart, we have been conquering them with a strong hand, i.e. by bayonets and whips. Regarding the hearts, we have already lost almost all of Slovakia, thus no wonder that Horthy's spies are successful in finding here a breeding-ground for their activities. Slovaks, who were certainly awaiting something completely different than a whip, which they had felt very much during the Hungarian rule, were disappointed, and now they are yelling 'Czechs away'. But who is to blame? In the first place those persons who were sent to Slovakia by the government to win the long downtrodden Slovaks' favour, but instead, these persons, when commanding by a strong hand, are unfolding Slovaks into Horthy's arms. There is no question that the privileges of the so-called exponent officials also contributed to this situation. (...) That's why, we are any better than Hungarians used to be."*²⁷

Aforesaid behavioural and emotional attitudes of local Slovaks towards Czechs did not escape the Hungarian intelligence agency's notice which despatched reports to Budapest about a continuity of Slovaks' sympathies towards Hungarians who, allegedly,

²⁶ Slovenský národný archív (the Slovak National Archive, hereinafter SNA), f. Archív Kancelárie prezidenta republiky v Prahe, 1919 – 1989, Zoznam k výberu xerokópií archívnych dokumentov z kancelárie prezidenta ČSR v Prahe. Original: fund D, b. 71, b. 15, no. 914/220, Situační správa z Podkarpatské Rusi a východního Slovenska (9. 12. 1920).

²⁷ SNA, f. Jozef Kohout, b. 11. Hlásenie o schôdzi zvolanej poslancom Brodeckým (29. 6. 1920).

regarded them as neighbouring friends. The sympathies were manifested in form of an anti-Czech sentiment, by singing the Hungarian national anthem and other Horthian military songs, and what more, even by those Slovaks who allegedly did not speak Hungarian at all. Some of the local Slovaks were irritated that the Czechs approached them with a superior disdain and complained about the Czech officials being rude and arrogant.²⁸

Czech newcomers also encountered a problem to find a rent in the city. Owners of properties (mainly wealthier Hungarians and Jews, but also Slovaks cannot be excluded) refused to accommodate Czechs *“just because they are state employees”*.²⁹ But with a rising number of Czechs in the city, the tension between the two ethnic collectivities was gradually diminishing. In 1922, the authorities commented that *“the relation of Slovaks to Czechs has been improved, but a lot of systematic work is needed to get it really right”*.³⁰ What was the point here?



Fig. 3: A march of national socialists and social democrats (Czechoslovakists parties) at the International Workers' Day celebration on 1st May 1929 at Hlavná Street. (Source: East Slovak Museum, author: Josef Polák, VIII.2168).

Already in the course of the period 1922 – 1923, a contention for the strategic city of Košice processed between protagonists of both competing identitarian concepts, the

28 Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár – Országos Levéltár (the Hungarian National Archive – Land Archive, hereinafter MNL-OL), f. A Miniszterelnökség Levéltára 1867 – 1944. K 26, A Miniszterelnökség központilag iktatott és irattározott iratai, b. 1239, no. 8615, A Felvidéki Liga 1920. évi augusztus havi jelentéséhez (14. 12. 1920).

29 Archív mesta Košice (Municipal archives of Košice, hereinafter AMK), f. Magistrát mesta Košice (hereinafter MMK) 1923 – 1938, b. 156, no. 10017, Košice, bytové poméry.

30 ŠA v Košiciach, f. KŽ 1923 – 1928, b. 260, no. 613, no. 543, Pravidelná situačná správa zo Župy abaujturnianskej, šarišskej a mesta Košíc (30. 6. 1922).

Czechoslovak one and on the other hand the Slovak one. In this battle protagonists of both concepts endeavoured to enforce a preferred criterium for forming the collective identity of those locals whose descent-based attributes (language, traditions, ancestors etc.)³¹ classified them for a membership in the group of "Czechoslovaks", eventually "Slovaks". Representatives of the Hlinka's Slovak Peoples' Party (HSLS) were aware of the key metropolitan status of Košice in the ethno-emancipation process of the whole east Slovakia, that's why they paid a pertinent attention to the political development in the city. Boosted by electoral gain of 2 246 votes (9,7 %) in the communal election on 16th September 1923, they organized a campaign rally before the county election which took part only few days later (30th September), with Andrej Hlinka being a prominent rally speaker. However, the intention of taking possession of the public space by organizing an illegal march composed mainly from not locally based Slovaks – Hlinka' proponents transported from the countryside on purpose – aroused resistance among proponents of the Czechoslovak political parties, especially social democrats, national socialist, Legionaries and railway employees. On 23rd September, the street clash of more than 2 000 headed crowd (the authorities were not able to estimate the exact proportion of both camps) lead to an open ethnic conflict. From the part of Czechoslovaks the crowd yelled: "Shame on you, ugh, you traitor, we have not voted for you" – form the part of Hlinka' supporters on the other side: "Shame on you, Czechoslovaks". The police did not manage to put the crowd under control and that's why the authorities ruled Hlinka's immediate departure from the city taking the first available train.³² The incident ended up in the benefit of the Czechoslovaks only seemingly, because Hlinka's supporters – had been performing such demonstrative actions – managed to attract considerable notice and in the following county election they won in the city even 590 votes more (13 %) than in the previous communal one (Tab. 2).

Tab. 2: Results of selected political parties in 1923 – 1937 (%).³³

	1923	1923	1925	1927	1929	1932	1935	1937
	c.	county	p.	c.	p.	c.	p.	c.
Czechoslovak	38,7	34,3	33,3	37,2	38,4	38,2	38,3	36,6
HSLS	9,7	13	11,4	5,2	9,3	4,6	9,8	5,3
KKSS	26,1	30	21,4	22,8	31,2°	17,5	30,4°	28,4°
KSČ	22,1	21,9	20,3	19,3	14,3	18,3	18,8	18,8

31 Terminology and the concept of ethnic identities according to: CHANDRA, Kanchan. *Constructivist Theories of Ethnic Politics*. New York : Oxford University Press, 2012, 500 p.

32 ŠA v Košiciach, f. KŽ 1923 – 1928, b. 260, no. 10509, Měsíční zpráva za září 1923.

33 AMK, f. MMK 1923 – 1938, b. 7, no. 526/628, Přehľad o výsledku volieb do obecného zastupiteľstva (18. 9. 1923). Národní archiv České republiky (the National Archive of the Czech Republic, hereinafter NA ČR), f. Ministerstvo vnitra – Stará registratura (Ministry of the Interior – Old Registry), b. 4960, no. 170.546/2, Přehled o výsledku voleb (1932, 1935, 1937); no. 31085, Přehled výsledků voleb ve městě Košicích (1927, 1929). SNA, f. Krajský úřad v Bratislave (hereinafter KÚ) I. Prezídium 1928 – 1938, b. 6, Výsledok volieb do krajského zastupiteľstva v roku 1928. *Československá statistika – svazek 1. Řada I. (Volby, sešit 1.)*. Volby do národního shromáždění v dubnu roku 1920 a všeobecné volby do obecných zastupitelstev v Čechách, na Moravě a ve Slezsku v červnu roku 1919. Praha : Státní úřad statistický, 1922, 168 p.

Explanatory notes:

c. – communal elections

county – county elections

p. – parliamentary elections

Czechoslovak parties (the parties with a political programme carrying the ideology of Czechoslovakism):

Republican Party of Farmers and Peasants (Republikánska strana zemedelského a maloroľníckeho ľudu)

Czechoslovak Social Democratic Party (Československá sociálnodemokratická strana robotnícka)

Hungarian-German Social Democratic Party (Maďarsko-nemecká sociálnodemokratická strana)

Czechoslovak National Democracy (Československá národná demokracia)

Czechoslovak National-Socialist Party (Československá strana národnosocialistická)

Czechoslovak Traders' Party (Československá živnostensko-obchodnícka strana stredostavovská)

Maxoň's Independent Civic Party (Maxoňova nezávislá občianska strana)

Czechoslovak Peoples' Party (Československá strana ľudová)

National Labour Party (Národná strana práce)

Jewish Party in Czechoslovakia (Židovská strana v ČSR)

Other parties:

HSLŠ – Hlinka's Slovak Peoples' Party (Hlinkova slovenská ľudová strana)

KKSS – Provincial Christian-Socialist Party (Krajinská kresťansko-socialistická strana)

KSČ – Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (Komunistická strana Československa)

* - in a coalition with the Hungarian National Party (Maďarská národná strana, MNS), in 1936 both parties merged under the name United Hungarian Party (Zjednotená maďarská strana).

Power struggle over symbolic identity-constructing coding of the public space

An ethnic conflict between proponents and opponents of Czechoslovakism had been latently persisting in Košice until the end of existence of the First Czechoslovak Republic during which time it distinctively shifted on the platform of the power struggle over the public space.³⁴ In this competition, Slovak autonomists (mainly HSLŠ, because the other autonomist party – Slovak National party – gained only a marginal vote figure in elections) got the short end of the stick because the decisive political tools for enforcing symbolic violence in the urban space, and thus for forming cultural memory of inhabitants were firmly in control of Czechoslovakists.³⁵

The crux of nationalization of the public space in Košice, the town hall of which was ruled by the Provincial Christian-Socialist Party (KKSS) in cooperation with the

34 The public space, conceptualized by Henri Lefebvre, is a socially, culturally and politically produced, in everyday practice used and publicly accessible social space. LEFEBVRE, Henri. *The production of space*. Oxford (UK): Blackwell, 1991, 454 p. Regarding the Košice case, compare also: BÍŘEŠOVÁ, Tatiana. Prezentácia štátnej ideológie vo verejnom priestore mesta Košice medzi rokmi 1918 – 1945. In: *Historie – otázky – problémy*, 2016, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 51-64. The author attempted to interpret transformation of ethnically coded places of memory in the city in a comparative and diachronic perspective (the Czechoslovak versus Hungarian places of memory).

35 Concept of symbolic violence: BOURDIEU, Pierre. *Practical Reason: on the Theory of Action*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998, 154 p. For more about political tools for controlling and restricting competencies of local self-governed authorities by the Prague's government in Košice, compare: DULOVIČ, Erik. Realizácia štátnej politiky županov Košickej župy v rokoch 1923 – 1928. In: *Historický časopis*, 2005, vol. 53, no. 4, pp. 659-696. KIRST, Jozef – POTEMRA, Michal. *Mestská správa v Košiciach v rokoch 1848 – 1945*. Košice: Štátna vedecká knižnica, 1984, pp. 136-257.

Hungarian National Party (MNS), did not occur until 1930s. The first site of memory referring to a local personality of the Slovak origin was unveiled only in 1926, eight years after the establishment of Czechoslovakia, as an initiative of the local branch of Matica Slovenská. The memorial site consisted of a plaque of Jonáš Záborský, the most significant representative of Slovak intellectual elites living in the city during the 19th century, located at Main (Hlavná) Street on the facade of the then Košice University building. The unveiling ceremony was under the patronage not only from the part of Matica Slovenská, Slovenská Liga, Slovak bishops Jozef Čársky (Košice), Michal Bubnič (Rožňava), Ján Vojtaššák (Spišská Kapitula), but also state officials: the Košice-district governor Juraj Slávik and the provincial military commander Josef Šnejdár. At his occasion, local government servants noticed that the speech of provost Karol Medvecký, who was cheering only the attending Slovaks, "even though more than a half of participants were Czechs, whose presence he totally ignored, has aroused annoyance".³⁶

Even in the case of another memorial site, far more prominent one, the statue of Milan Rastislav Štefánik, which was supposed to refer to Czechoslovak statehood, the initiators of its unveiling were neither state officials nor representatives of Czechoslovakist organizations. The idea to build Štefánik's statue at the spatially exposed southern corner of the Hlavná Street's insula, enabling an honourable vista against a background of the St Elisabeth Cathedral, came from the Association of East-Slovak Academics whose members were not exclusively affiliated to any political party. As the personality of Štefánik represented one of the most prestigious objects of the Czechoslovak culture of memory,³⁷ the Foreign Secretary Edvard Beneš had been appointed as the leading ceremony speaker. Management of the ceremony was aided also by the Municipal Cultural Committee in which the majority of members – in 1929, when the statue was unveiled on the occasion of 10th anniversary of Štefánik's death – were affiliates of the Czechoslovakist parties (national socialists and social democrats). Due to animosity between Czechoslovakists and Slovak separatist organisations, most of the second mentioned ones were not invited for the ceremony (Orol, the local branch of Matica Slovenská, the Association of Slovak Postmen, the Union of Slovak Railway Employees, the Association of Slovak Volunteers). Such a configuration of the power hierarchy was scandalized by the press of HSLŠ. By means of social influence and argumentation that Štefánik was first of all a Slovak and secondly a representative of Czechoslovakia, the HSLŠ officials achieved participation of the above mentioned organizations at the ceremony, hence, at the same time, they disabled coding of the Štefánik's memorial exclusively in the spirit of Czechoslovakism.³⁸

36 ŠA v Košiciach, f. KŽ 1923 – 1928, b. 263, no. 22002, Situační zpráva za IV. čtvrtletí 1926.

37 BABJAK, Juraj. Pomníky a sochy Milana Rastislava Štefánika vystavané na Slovensku v období rokov 1919 – 1945 a slávnosti ich odhalenia. In: MICHÁLEK, Slavomír et al. *Slovensko v labyrinte moderných európskych dejín: Pocta historikovi Milanovi Zemkovi*. Bratislava: HÚ SAV, 2014, pp. 83-104. KŠIŇAN, Michal. Štefánik a ideológia československého odboja. In: REPTOVÁ, Oľga (Ed.). *Odkaz M. R. Štefánika a jeho vplyv na výchovu k vlastenectvu: Zborník zo sympózia, október 2011*. Dunajská Lužná: Obec Dunajská Lužná, 2011, pp. 10-15. MACHO, Peter. Národný hrdina a politika. Štefánik medzi českoslovakizmom a autonomizmom. In: *Človek a spoločnosť*, 2004, vol. 7, no. 3, pp. 74-80. MACHO, Peter. Štefánik ako mýtus a symbol v historickom vývoji. In: *Slovenský národopis*, 2001, vol. 49, no. 3, pp. 314-327. ZEMKO, Milan. Milan Rastislav Štefánik medzi legendami a antilegendami. In: ČAPLOVIČ, Miloslav – FERENČUHOVÁ, Bohumila – STANOVÁ, Mária (Eds.). *Milan Rastislav Štefánik v zrkadle prameňov a najnovších poznatkov historiografie*. Bratislava: Vojenský historický ústav, 2010, pp. 211-218.

38 *Slovenská pravda*, 1929 (3. 5.); 1929 (10. 5.).

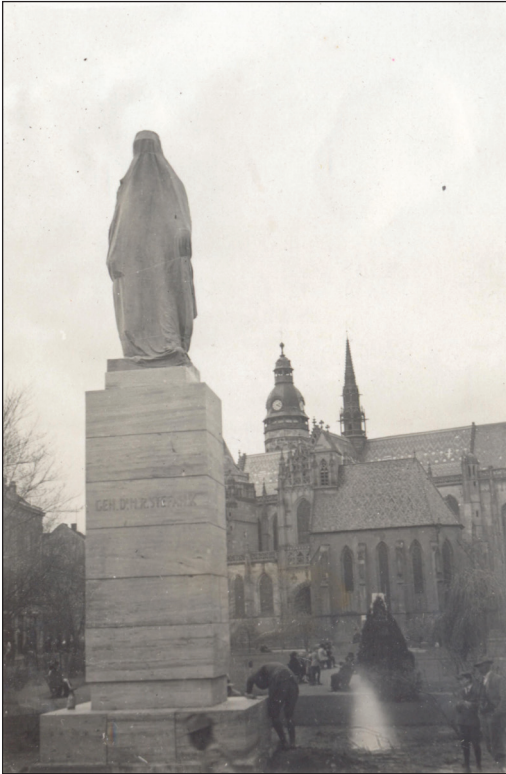


Fig. 4: The construction of the Štefánik memorial, 2nd – 4th May 1929. The statue was removed in 1938, transported to Prešov, repeatedly installed in 1945, however, dismantled again in 1949 by officials of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and finally destroyed. (Source: East Slovak Museum, VIII.463).



Fig. 5: The Štefánik memorial was unveiled by the Czechoslovak Foreign Secretary and co-author of the Versailles system Edvard Beneš. On 2nd May 1929, in front of the Košice's neo-renaissance railway station, from the left: the second person in the 1st row Vladimír Mutňanský (the city mayor) – Edvard Beneš – Josef Šnejdárek (the district military chief) – Jozef Gmitter (the municipal notary). (Source: East Slovak Museum, author J. Patetlová, VIII.3347).

The process of nationalisation of the public space graduated with unveiling of the Štefánik's memorial as shortly after leaders of Slovenská Liga initiated a campaign for renaming the whole Hlavná Street just in memory of this Czechoslovak and, at the same time, Slovak national hero. Proponents of renaming of this dominant cultural, social and transportation boulevard argued that *"we do not want to dislodge Štefánik to the periphery"*.³⁹ When opponents from the locally based political parties (Christian socialists, Hungarian nationalists and other municipal civic parties) opposed that even in 1906 the local authorities resisted the temptation to rename the Hlavná Street after the Hungarian national hero Ferenc Rákóczi II – buried in the St Elisabeth Cathedral – with regard to the 800 year continuous tradition of its original toponym, Slovak and Czechoslovakist organisations congruently attempted to historicize symbolic significance of the street by embedding its history into the Czechoslovak national discourse (...after all, Jan Jiskra lived here, Záborský as well, the Hurban's army camped down here, the Czechoslovak troops marched here on 29th December 1918, there are the Štefánik's memorial and Štefánik's barracks at the street...).⁴⁰ And even though, for the time being, the municipal assembly had blocked the renaming proposal, the representatives of Slovenská Liga did not give up and clearly expressed that *"we will not abide the possible refusal and we will keep it on file until the definitive favourable arrangement of the matter because we are aware of our responsibility vis-à-vis the nation and fatherland for our categorical insistency in the case of Štefánik Street in Košice"*.⁴¹

The persistence of Slovak and Czechoslovakist organisations had paid off as they grasped successfully at opportunity to discuss the proposal once again after the reshuffle of power fields in the local politics. After the census of 1930 when it turned out that the proportion of Hungarians decreased in the intercensal period 1921 – 1930 from 22,7 % to 19,9 %, ⁴² it became clear that the statistical decrease was interconnected with decrease of their social status due to the loss of the qualified-minority-status (a minimum 20 % threshold) and with it connected withdrawal of language rights. Even though the electoral strength of Christian-socialists and Hungarian nationalists had not been shrinking, the reshuffle of the political power was caused primarily by a downfall of minor municipal parties in benefit of the Czechoslovak Traders' Party (in 1928 gaining 2 % only, in 1932 already 7 %) members of which were keen on supporting any proposals imposed by the "Czechoslovak alliance". Eventually in 1933, the municipal council let the members of assembly vote again on proposal for renaming of Hlavná Street which was approved by 29 votes against 21.⁴³

With renaming Hlavná Street, the power struggle over ideological superiority of the public space was set forward to a new, more sophisticated level. This time, there were no two antagonistic, "Czechoslovakist" and "Slovakist", camps fighting against

39 AMK, f. MMK 1923 – 1938, b. 165, no. 69/930, Pomenovanie ulíc a číslovanie.

40 AMK, f. MMK 1923 – 1938, b. 165, no. 6983 (11. 4. 1929). In the document, there is a list of all organisations and associations supporting the renaming of Hlavná Street. Due to the space limitation I refrain from copying it here.

41 AMK, f. MMK 1923 – 1938, b. 165, no. 6983 (11. 4. 1929).

42 ĎURKOVSKÁ, Mária. Maďari v Košiciach v kontexte sčítaní obyvateľstva v rokoch 1921 a 1930. In: GABZDILOVÁ, Soňa – SIMON, Attila (Eds.). *Prístupy k riešeniu národnostnej otázky v medzivojnovom Československu*. Komárno: Univezita J. Selyeho, 2014, pp. 36-52.

43 AMK, f. MMK 1923 – 1938, b. 165, no. 6589, Zastupiteľstvo mesta Košíc (6. 5. 1933). Only Christian-socialists, Hungarian nationalist and communists voted against the proposal. The last ones requested the street to be renamed in memory of V. I. Lenin (successfully in 1949).

each other, but instead, the pro-republic and the pro-Hungarian camp, the second of which was successful in a continual preservation of the considerable political power (Tab. 3). This was possible only because a decisive number of the local pre-Trianon-settled Slovaks supported the Christian-Socialist party in regard to their continuously shared confessional sentiment, nourished by the locally anchored clergy and their pastoral activities (see further below).

Tab. 3: Electoral results in 1932 – 1937.⁴⁴

	1932		1935		1937	
Patrics/Votes	26 661	100 %	30 252	100 %	31 824	100 %
Czechoslovak	13 076	49 %	15 074	49,8 %	15 931	50,1 %
Oppositionist	8 674	32,5 %	9 505	31,4 %	9 895	31,1 %
Communist	4 863	18,2 %	5 673	18,8 %	5 998	18,8 %

Explanatory notes:

Czechoslovak parties: the above mentioned political parties (compare the Tab. 2), but in this case including Hlinka's Slovak Peoples' Party and other pro-republic parties: War Veterans-Invalids-Widows and War Sufferers Electoral Fellowship (Volebná pospolitost' vojnových účastníkov, invalidov, vdov a vojnových poškodencov), Jewish Party in the Czechoslovak Republic (Židovská strana v ČSR), Electoral Group of Traders, Officers and Sportsmen, Trade (Volebná skupina zamestnancov živností, obchodov a kancelárií a športovcov), Workers of Košice (Košickí robotníci a robotníčky), Trade Union of the Republican Officials (Odborová jednota republikánskych zamestnancov), Municipal Party (Mestská strana), Political Party of Taverners, Bartenders, Coffee Makers and Hoteliers (Strana hostinských, výčapníkov, kaviarníkov a hoteliérov), Maxoň's Independent Civic Party (Maxoňova nezávislá občianska strana), Christian-Catholic Civic Party (Strana kresťansko-katolíckych občanov mesta Košíc), Political Party of Poor People and Sport Fans (Strana chudobných občanov a priateľov športu).

Oppositionist parties: Provincial Christian-Socialist Party, Hungarian National Party, Jointed Jewish Parties (including other Jewish business parties and Zionist associations), in 1935 election including the Sudeten German Party).

Communist: Communist Party of Czechoslovakia.

Under these circumstances, confessional sentiments of locals seemed to constitute an unavoidable tool for implementing the idea of Czechoslovakism at the local level. A part of the local Czech intellectual elite, headed by a chief judge Maximilián Volek and supported by the authorities, attempted to underpin religious identities of Košice's inhabitants, regardless of their ethnic identification, for the purpose of reinforcing their belonging to the Czechoslovak Republic by means of a mutually shared religious and, at the same time, republican symbol. This time, St Wenceslas became an object of commemoration due to his catholic religion which seemed to be a far more appropriate and usable identity constructing element – in contrary to Jan Hus – in a predominantly catholic milieu of the city.⁴⁵ In 1932, in a preliminary report about

44 NA ČR, f. Ministerstvo vnitra – stará registratura 1918 – 1944, b. 4960, no. 22624.

45 More about the St Wenceslas cult in Czechoslovakia: ŠEBEK, Jaroslav. Svatováclavská tradice v meziválečném Československu 1918 – 1939 (v kontextu vztahu katolícké cirkve a spoločnosti). In: KUBÍN, Petr – MIKULICOVÁ, Mlada (Eds.). *In omnibus caritas: K počtĕ devadesátých narozenin prof. ThDr. Jaroslava Kadlece*. Praha : Karolinum,

the statue unveiling, it was stated that the statue “*will be permanently advocating the Czechoslovak state idea and will be an eloquent symbol of fraternal fusion of Czechs and Slovaks*”.⁴⁶ In 1934, when the municipal authorities agreed on the definitive location of the statue in front of St Urban Tower, hence in the sacral St Elisabeth Cathedral complex and, at the same time, in the honourable and centrally located public space, the exclusivist Czechoslovakist “ethnic” coding of the memorial was modified and – according to the actually produced discourse of the Czechoslovakist press – aimed to involve also the local catholic Hungarians: “*[The idea of the statue] is constructed on the base of religious views, and her extraordinary significance is embodied in the fact that the Czech saint [Wenceslas] comes [as a statue] into a milieu of three nationalities. The statue also represents the idea of the [Czechoslovak] state which is growing, regardless of ethnicity, into a massif of patriotic feeling.*”⁴⁷

Eventually in 1936, the statue was consecrated by Jozef Čársky, the bishop of Košice of Slovak origin. However, it is questionable to what extent were state officials successful in nationalising the public space by means of symbolic violence, hence in persuading the locals to acknowledge their right for executing the power on an ethnically heterogeneous territory and, finally, in re-forming their ethnic identities and loyalties in benefit of the Czechoslovak state. Electoral behaviour can offer a relevant answer.



Fig. 6: St Wenceslaus statue in front of Urban Tower, 2nd Half of 1930s. (Source: East Slovak Museum, R 8456).



Fig. 7: Dismantling of the St Wenceslaus statue in 1938. The statue was transported on the territory of Slovakia (Prešov) by Czechoslovak authorities, however, it got lost in the war years. (Source: East Slovak Museum, V.2).

2002, pp. 546-559. A contemporary interpretation: STAŠEK, Bohumil. *Svatý Václav a naše doba : Řeči posl. B. Staška o sv. Václavu a jeho významu pro dnešní dobu 1929*. Praha : Nákladem Ústřed. sekretariátu čsl. strany lidové, 1929, 43 p.

46 AMK, f. Mestský notársky úrad v Košiciach 1923 – 1938, b. 1, no. 153/8/932, Sv. Václav, postavenie sochy v Košiciach (20. 11. 1932).

47 Ako sa buduje pomník svätého Václava v Košiciach. In: *Slovenský východ*, 1934 (4th October).

Electoral results

The fundamental source of the legitimacy of the Czechoslovak authority to rule over the city of Košice and its surrounding rested in presupposition that the local inhabitants were of Slovak origin and became Magyarized only from the second third of 19th century on. Meanwhile Czechoslovak officials were not hiding excitement at the ethnonational transformation of the city, mirrored in the censuses of 1921 and 1930,⁴⁸ the electoral results disproved it. The authorities worried that the pro-Hungarian Provincial Christian-Socialist Party won recognition as the strongest political subject in the local milieu.⁴⁹

The Provincial Christian-Socialist Party was established shortly after the collapse of the Hungarian and Slovak Councils of Republics and after stabilisation of the geopolitical situation in the region in July 1919. Party leaders originated from the close circle of Košice's bishop Ágoston Fisher-Colbrie and decided to ground the party exactly in Košice what enabled effective distribution of the party support among the local inhabitants, mainly of catholic confession. By active anti-Czech agitation "from a house to a house" from the party headquarters at Hlavná Street 28, they persuaded not only municipal officials, guard officers, teachers, professors, clerics and traders, but according to official reports "also lots of local, nationally indifferent Slovaks".⁵⁰ Czechoslovak officials warned that Czechoslovak parties did not seize the starting opportunity and execute immediate agitation among local Slovaks what, in the end of the day, led to a victory of Christian-socialists over national socialists, national democrats or Hlinka's party: "Sadly, it is more than clear what has been wasted from the Slovak part, indifferent folk is totally uninformed, and is groping in the dark, so the

48 "In this city, before the revolution almost totally Magyarized, the digging it back for Slovaks is going probably forward more than in any other city in Slovakia." In: SNA, f. KÚ, Administratívne oddelenia a organizačné útvary 1928 – 1929, b. 180, no. 41592/923 (19. 11. 1923).

49 In the scholarship, this political party is somehow "automatically" classified as a Hungarian minority party (ANGYAL, Béla. *Érdekvédelem és önszerveződés: fejezetek a csehszlovákiai magyar pártpolitika történetéből 1918 – 1938*. Somorja; Dunaszerdahely: Lilium Aurum; Fórum Intézet, 2002, 347 p. ARATÓ, Endre. *Political Differentiation in the Hungarian Population of Czechoslovakia in the Post-World War I Years*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1975, 32 p. DEÁK, Ladislav. Zjednotenie maďarských opozičných strán r. 1936 na Slovensku. In: *Historický časopis*, 1998, vol. 46, no. 4, pp. 579-588. MALÍŘ, Jiří – MAREK, Pavel (Eds.). *Politické strany. I. Díl, 1861 – 1938: vývoj politických stran a hnutí v českých zemích a Československu v letech 1861 – 2004*. Brno: Doplněk, 2005, pp. 926-932. OLEJNÍK, Milan. *Politické a spoločenské aktivity maďarskej minority v prizme štátnych orgánov a dobovej slovenskej tlače (1918 – 1929)*. Košice: Spoločenskovedný ústav SAV, 2011, pp. 8-31. POPÉLY, Gyula. *Felvidék 1918 – 1928: az első évtized csehszlovák uralom alatt*. Budapest: Kárpátia Stúdió, 2014, pp. 73-77, 223-278. PURGAT, Juraj. *Od Trianonu po Košice: k maďarskej otázke v Československu*. Bratislava: Epoque, 1970, pp. 60-98. ZELENÁK, Peter. *Krajinská kresťansko-socialistická strana*. In: LIPTÁK, Lubomír (Ed.). *Politické strany na Slovensku 1861 – 1990*. Bratislava: Archa, 1992, pp. 150-157). However, such categorisation is untenable in regard to theories dealing with influence of ethnic differentiation on the party system. Compare: BIRNIK, Jóhanna Kristín. *Ethnicity and Electoral Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007, 280 p. As for the Provincial Christian-Socialist Party, neither her name (including her first name in the very initial period shortly after the establishment of the party in 1920, when she was named "Hungarian-German Christian-Socialist Party") nor the official party programme was coded exclusively to one ethnic group, but the contrary, it proclaimed cooperation of all "old-settled-inhabitants" of Slovakia and Carpathian Ruthenia – Hungarians, Slovaks and Ruthenians – in a fight for autonomy of these lands in the frame of Czechoslovakia, unofficially and ideally in the frame of Hungary. Also, the party organisational structure with three "national" sections was adjusted to this programme. In this sense, I classify the party not as an ethnic party, but as a multi-ethnic one, what was recently proved by Slovak sociologists Miroslav Barna and Vladimír Krivý who came with conclusion that the party was favoured not only by Hungarians but according to electoral results of 1929 also by 16,3 % of Slovaks and 8 % of Germans as well. BAHNA, Miroslav – KRIVÝ, Vladimír. *Ako volili národnosti a konfesie v parlamentných voľbách v roku 1929 na Slovensku. Možnosti nových metód ekologickej inferencie*. In: *Historický časopis*, 2016, vol. 64, no. 1, pp. 57-85.

50 SNA, f. Kohout, b. 11, Situačná správa (2. 1. – 9. 1. 1920).

*Christian-Socialist Party got a very simple job [to win them over].*⁵¹ The party leaders, first and foremost, bet on locally anchored confessionalism of Košice's Slovaks the continuity of which was represented by the personality of the Hungarian bishop Fischer-Colbrie. State officials were irritated that *"his popularity among believers in the diocese – as it is very well known – is unconditional and the locals hold by him with an almost incomprehensible devoutness"*.⁵² Hence, only the on Catholicism based Hlinka's Slovak People Party had the potential to jeopardize electoral advantage of Christian-socialists, however, despite permanent agitation among Slovaks, living mostly in Košice's periphery, Hlinka's people were not successful in rupturing continuous linkage of those to Košice's clergy, also because these individuals were not familiar with Slovak nationalist Catholicism, speaking nothing about secularism promoted by the state.

In the 2nd half of 1930s, when the fusion process of KKSS and MNS had been accomplished, Czechoslovakist press expected that the merger of both parties into the United Hungarian Party would drift the "Slovak votes" into the camp of pro-republic parties whereas both her newly set programme and name anticipated a shift in the original, multi-ethnic coded programme of the party.⁵³ However, these expectations did not come true. Even in the communal election of 1937, the United Hungarian Party gained the most of the local votes (28,4 %) what fidgeted state officials because it was more than clear that popularity of this oppositionist party among the local Slovaks during almost two decades of existence of Czechoslovakia had not been decreasing, let's quote the central authorities: *"Again, the results of the elections indicates that it is not enough to address the periphery only in the electoral period, but it is necessary to permanently work among inhabitants of the periphery who are indeed Slovaks, but they are missing on national consciousness, which is subordinated to confessional feelings."*⁵⁴ Eventually, in the last years of existence of the First Czechoslovak Republic, the electoral cohort of the United Hungarian Party was not decreasing also as a result of unfavourable development of Czechoslovak position in foreign politics, and secondly, because of goodwill of the government to negotiate the so-called minority status.⁵⁵

But why did unfavourable electoral results subvert the legitimacy of the Czechoslovak authorities on the ethnically heterogeneous territory, to be precise, in a city, the Czechoslovak image of which had been constantly reproduced and, at the same time, contested? It was members and employees of Hungarian governments who were in the interwar period receiving reports from the Prague's embassy and Bratislava's consulate about "smooth" elections in Bratislava, Košice or Užhorod – in the cities where the Czechoslovak statistics showed a decrease of inhabitants of Hungarian ethnicity (nationality) – with satisfaction.⁵⁶ *"The most convincing evidence that the data collected in the Czech censuses were falsified is the fact that in secret ballots the voters*

51 SNA, f. Kohout, b. 11, Situačná správa (A no-dated fragment from the 1st half of February 1920).

52 NA ČR, f. Presidium Ministerstva vnitra AMV 225, b. 455, Měsíční správa za měsíc duben 1925.

53 Čo bude so slovenskou zložkou kresťansko-sociálnej strany? In: *Slovenský východ*, 1936 (31st January).

54 SNA, f. KÚ I. Prezídium 1928 – 1938, b. 188, no. 29X60, no. 7301.

55 SNA, f. Kancelária krajinského prezidenta v Košiciach 1936 – 1938, b. 45, no. 43/1936, Kresťansko-soc. a maďarská národná strana – organizačné pravidlá, no. 9540 (9. 6. 1938). The minority status was a proposed, but never approved legislation from 1938 which would grant a territorial autonomy to minorities (Hungarians and Germans) in Czechoslovakia.

56 MNL-OL, f. Külügyminisztérium Levéltára 1918 – 1945, K63, b. 53, no. 88/1935, A csehszlovák parlamenti választások eredménye a Felvidéken (27. 5. 1935).

voted in majority for Hungarian parties what would not be possible if the proportion of Hungarians in Košice accounted for only 20 %⁵⁷ – claimed the Hungarian statistical expert Alajos Kovács when persuading the Hungarian intellectual audience about the legitimacy of Košice's seizure by Hungary in 1938. Namely, Hungarian political and intellectual elites not only considered all voters voting for the pro-Hungarian parties being automatically Hungarians, or, alternatively, other inhabitants who wished to become nationals of the Hungarian state anyway, but also pointed to the fact that even more "Hungarian" votes were bound to other political parties, especially to the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, and hence refused to acknowledge a slight dominance of the pro-Czechoslovak parties (including HSLS) in the last election of 1937 (Tab. 3) because they considered their voters being immigrants from the Czech Lands or western Slovak regions, who got anything to do in Košice anyway.⁵⁸ Thus, political affiliations of the urban populace served in favour of the Hungarian political representation in the Komárno and Belveder negotiations in 1938 as one of the main arguments to delegitimize Czechoslovak claims⁵⁹ and, hence, in favour of the territorial revision of Trianon, which, in the end of the day, meant the renewed seizure of Košice by Hungarian authorities in November 1938.

57 Központi Statisztikai Hivatal Könyvtár, f. Kéziraktár, Kovács Alajos, no. VB 0924.

58 In fact, around 25 000 Czechs and Slovaks left the city after it was announced that Košice were becoming a part of Hungary on 2nd November 1938. KNEZSA, István. *Adalékok a magyar-szlovák nyelvhatár történetéhez*. Budapest : Athenaeum, 1941, 60 p. RÉVAY, István. *A belvederi magyar-szlovák határ*. Budapest : Athenaeum Ny., 1941, 66 p. KNEZSA, István. *Kassa magyarsága*. In: *Kassa 1941*. Kassa : A Kassai Kazinczy Társaság, 1941, pp. 30-37. TELEKI, Paul – RÓNAI, Andrew. *The Different Types of Ethnic Mixture of Population*. Budapest : The Hungarian Coordinating Committee for International Studies, 1937, 30 p. The thesis about the supremacy of Hungarians in Košice, based on electoral results, is "successfully" reproduced in the Hungarian historical culture until today. Compare: POPÉLY, Gyula. *Népfogyatkozás: a csehszlovákiai magyarság a népszámlálások tükrében 1918 – 1945*. Budapest : Regió, 1991, p. 113 and other chapters as well. KOVÁCS, Éva. *Electoral Behaviour as an Indicator of National Identity in Košice between the Two World Wars*. In: *Regió. A Review of Minority and Ethnic Studies*, 1995, no. 2, p. 65 and Conclusion. According to the author, Czechoslovak censuses did not mirrored the actual ethnic composition of locals, on the contrary, only democratic ballots can be considered a plausible indicator for drawing an ethnic map of the city. The author came with a hypothesis that minimum as many Hungarians supposed to be living in the city as many votes gained the "Hungarian" parties (KKSS, MNS). Her methodology was followed by SIMON, Attila. *Magyar idők a Felvidéken 1938 – 1945 : az első bécsi döntés és következményei*. Budapest : Jaffa Kiadó, 2014, p. 156. SZEGHY-GAYER, Veronika. *Felvidékről Szlovenská : magyar értelmiségi útkeresések Eperjesen és Kassán a két világháború között*. Dunaszerdahely; Pozsony : Kalligram, 2016, pp. 106-114. Yet, the last mentioned author yields the argument that the majority of indigenous inhabitants of the city spoke both languages and their identities were situationally switching between the two nationalizing projects, the Hungarian and the Slovak (Czechoslovak) one: SZEGHY-GAYER, Veronika. *A szlovák-zsidó-magyar-cseh Kassa a 20. század első felében*. In: *Korall. Társadalomtörténeti Folyóirat*, 2017, vol. 68, pp. 99-121.

59 MNL-OL, f. Külügyminisztérium Levéltára 1918 – 1945, K64, b. 75, no. 1938-7-1455, Feljegyzés a magyar és csehszlovák küldöttségek között Komáromban, 1938. évi október hó 11.-én délelőtt 9 órakor megtartott értekezletéről.



Fig. 8: A public rally of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia in Košice in 1927. The party abandoned the Czechoslovakist ideology in 1924. Due to its internationalist and social policy, the party was popular among many poor Slovaks and Hungarians and it became the second strongest leader in the local politics. (Source: East Slovak Museum, R 6070).

Conclusion

In an effort to nationalise the ethnically heterogeneous city of Košice, Czechoslovak authorities supported a mass immigration of loyal nationals into this strategic city from regions which were considered as a crystallising core of the national territory. By means of cultural transfer, these persons were supposed to execute implementation of the idea of Czechoslovakism in the public sphere of the local urban milieu and, hence, to contribute to reconstruction of national identities of local inhabitants in benefit of the new state. In this pursuit proponents of Czechoslovakism interfered with agents of the competitive identity-constructing concept of the independent Slovak nation (representatives of the Hlinka's Slovak Peoples' Party). Even though in 1920s the both camps encountered against each other in the fight for fixation of the definitive status of the collective identity (Czechoslovaks versus Slovaks), in 1930s they cooperated in visual de-Hungarization of the city. Despite this, the electoral behaviour, which constitutes a relevant indicator of a success in implementation of the idea of Czechoslovakism and Czechoslovak statehood on the ethnically heterogeneous territory, testifies a non-decreasing support for oppositionist (pro-Hungarian) parties. Hence, in the long term, the electoral results subverted the legitimacy of the Czechoslovak seizure of Košice which was conveniently misused by Hungarian political elites as an argument contributing to the territorial revision of Trianon in 1938. The invalidity of Czechoslovakism shattered viability of the Czechoslovak political

representation to cope with the actual foreign policy of neighbouring countries and other important players of the world foreign affairs.

In the historiographic debate about the failure of the controversial state doctrine of Czechoslovakism, I support the stance of Elisabeth Bakke. The presented Košice's case study testifies that the idea of Czechoslovakism, as well as the idea of Czechoslovak statehood, was not accepted even by those members of an imagined community whom it was presupposed to be addressed (Slovak-speaking population). The idea was not attractive for majority of the originally settled locals, who spoke Slovak language, and this condition had not been changed during the almost twenty years (but still too short) existence of Czechoslovakia. A switch in attitudes in this matter occurred only with an extreme ethnic conflict during the WWII, and in the course of the post-war radical nationalist politics of identity in the era of the third Czechoslovak Republic in 1945 – 1948 and following years.

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